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WAR IS...

PlayStation.2 051 OCTOBER 2004 WHAT LINKS THE HELGHAST AND STORMTROOPERS? (SEE PAGE 130) PLAYSTATION.CO.UK

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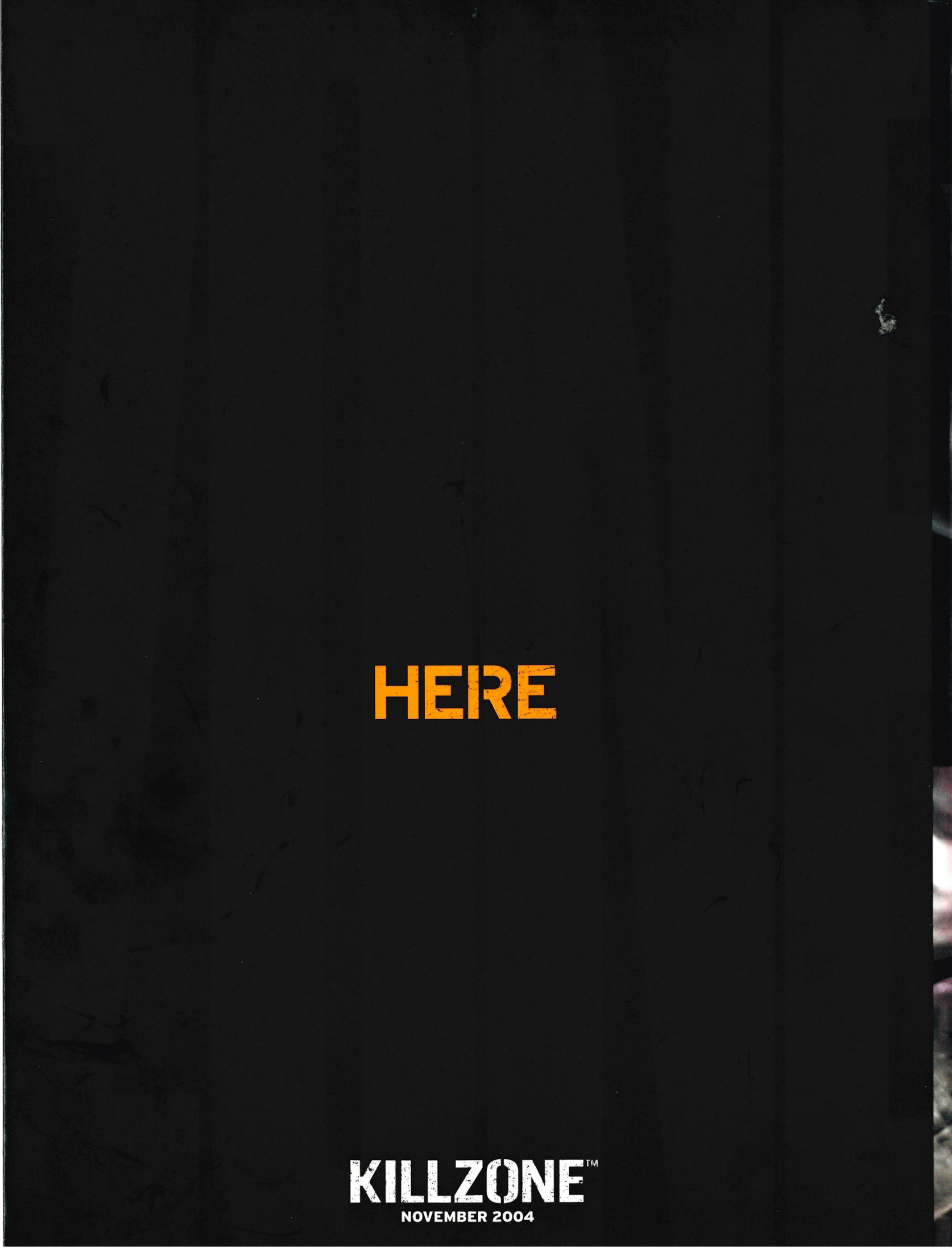

HERE
KILLZONE™
NOVEMBER 2004

review

KILLZONE

Duck and cover, as we deliver the most important review of the year. The waiting is finally over, but does Sony's über-shooter live up to its monumental hype? The answer's explosive, and you can only read it here...

What's the most important thing to remember before launching a devastating surprise attack? Anyone who said careful planning can leave the room now. The correct answer is, obviously, cool uniforms. Black preferably, and with lots of skull badges and eagle insignia to really scare the crap out of the locals when you abseil down from the dropships. Of course, bad guys *always* have impeccable dress sense – presumably because quality tailoring is the mark of true evil. We're talking baby-murdering Teutonic Knights, the massed ranks of the Wehrmacht saluting in unison and Vader leading the Imperial assault on Hoth. Essentially, what you want is an outfit that says, 'we're going to crush you, but in style'. And in this respect the Helghast don't disappoint.

Their uniform is equal parts fascist chic and rubber fetish perviness. The first time you see them emerge from the smoke – all jackboots, Swastika-inspired emblems and gas masks – is truly breathtaking. Better, though, is the first bullet you put between a pair of those glowing orange eyes. And because the Helghast look so utterly evil, it feels just as thrilling when, some 15 hours later, you blow the last one away. But make no mistake, the Helghast are the real stars of *Killzone* – not your plucky band of survivors – secretly, we even sympathise with their politics. The game is set at an indeterminate point in the future, by which time mankind has colonised other solar systems. But while everyone else is off having sex with pleasurebots on luxury planets, one particularly grumpy bunch of outsiders decide to set off for the distant world of Helghan.

"NICE WORLD, LET'S NUKE IT"

Putting it kindly, the place is a shithole of galactic magnitude. The Helghan atmosphere is toxic to human life, scorching the colonists' lungs and making their hair fall out – more pressingly, there doesn't appear to be any decent restaurants. But over time the inhabitants begin to adapt to their new environment, their bodies changing to enable them to breathe the caustic air. But the mood remains understandably grim within the ultra-militaristic society. Gradually, a strong leader emerges ('strong' in this sense meaning 'boggle-eyed mentalist') who outlines his plan to take revenge on humanity at a rally that even Hitler would've considered *slightly* too bombastic. And before anyone can say 'look out, Poland!', the invasion is underway...

The first target is an outlying Interplanetary Strategic Alliance colony called Vecta. Unprepared for such a massive attack, the defenders are soon being overrun by the seemingly endless hordes of Helghast infantry. Vastly outnumbered, you're thrown into battle as Jan Templar – an ISA special

Tango's new 'you've been sniped' campaign

The opening level is like *Saving Private Ryan* in space

There will be a corner of a foreign field that is forever Vecta...

PlayStation.2

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER GUERILLA
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-2 (OFFLINE) 1-16 (ONLINE)
OUT NOVEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.KILLZONEPS2.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

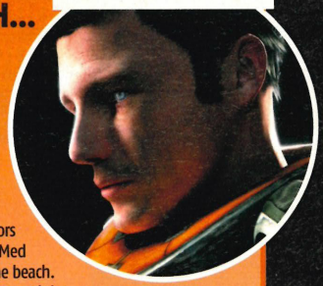
Hey, we've only been covering it, like, for ever... It's an FPS telling the story of an elite squad operating behind enemy lines as humanity engages in civil war beyond the stars. Cool, non?

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE KIDDING, MR VISARI

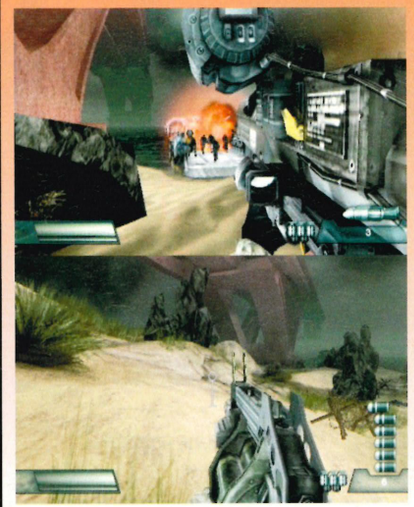
The Helghast are led by a tyrant called Scolar Visari – voiced to suitably Hitlerian effect by Brian Cox, who recently starred in *The Bourne Supremacy* and also played The Director in *Manhunt*

IN THE 'ZONE WITH... TEMPLAR

We will fight them on the beaches



The whole Helghast landing sequence is essentially two fingers flicked at *Medal Of Honor: Frontline*. Your squad joins up with some fellow ISA survivors at a hotel (barely Club Med quality) overlooking the beach. Landing craft soon arrive and the Helghast are swarming up towards your position. Luckily, those mounted machine guns aren't ornamental. Once the shooting starts it's like playing the D-Day landings but being the Germans – and every bit as cool as that sounds.



forces captain and the first of *Killzone*'s four playable characters. Thanks to superior technology you're protected by an energy shield (sneakily 'borrowed' from *Halo*) that recharges – provided you can avoid being shot for a few seconds. This has a key impact on how *Killzone* plays. Storming in simply isn't an option, because even with the shield you can be cut down in seconds. Instead you're forced to find cover, use suppressing fire to keep the enemy's heads down and snatch kills when you can. Consequently, there's a palpable sense of *actually* being involved in a firefight – and it's a galaxy away from the other futuristic shooters we've endured. Yes, *Fire Warrior*, we're talking to you.

Squeezing off short, controlled bursts is essential, because your gloriously designed gun jumps around like a cat in a bath with extended

WELCOME TO HELGHAN

Introduce yourself to the various ranks of Helghast. They wouldn't stop moving around and mouthing off, so we had to kill them

LIGHT SOLDIER

Poorly armoured but quick on their feet, these are the Boy Scouts of the Helghast infantry. They also look like Duncan Goodhew after a heavy night in Soho and are about as much use in a firefight.

Most likely to say: 'I'm pinned down!'

BASE SOLDIER

Expect to spend a lot of time trading hot death with the Helghast regulars, pictured here in a jaunty hat rather than the practical helmet. Often found in large numbers, they'll use squad tactics to smoke you out.

Most likely to say: 'Medic!'

ELITE SOLDIER

Things get trickier with these badasses, who typically come equipped with light-machine guns and just love rolling grenades between your legs. Exposed crania mean that headshots are the only way to go.

Most likely to say: 'Frag out!'

ASSAULT SOLDIER

Trust us, you will come to hate these tough mothers. Appearing towards the end of the game, their helmets mean headshots are a waste of time. Instead, aim for the weak spot around their abdomen. And pray.

Most likely to say: 'Reloading!'

BASE COMMANDER

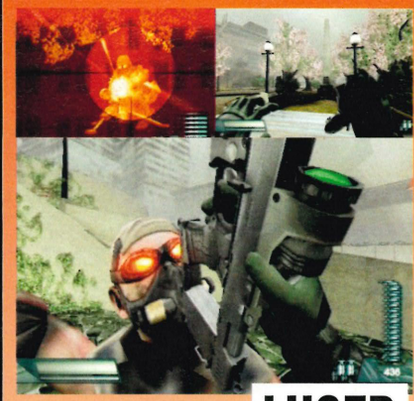
Officer characters also turn up further in, stiffening the morale of the infantrymen and usually proving hard to take down. We usually stick a couple of extra rounds into the corpse. Just to 'send a message'.

Most likely to say: 'Kill him!'

■ **Dropships swoop in on several levels to dramatic effect**

9 MINUTES AND 57 SECONDS IN HELL

There isn't a dull moment in *Killzone*, as this run through the first ten minutes of one of the early missions shows. So let Luger be your guide as we take you through the action in pictorial form. Gasp as Luger uses thermo-vision to pick off a patrol. Swoon as her bum wiggles while she climbs a ladder. And panic as you realise there's a sniper aiming at you from the building opposite. Get your head down for God's sake, love...



IN THE *'ZONE* WITH... LUGER

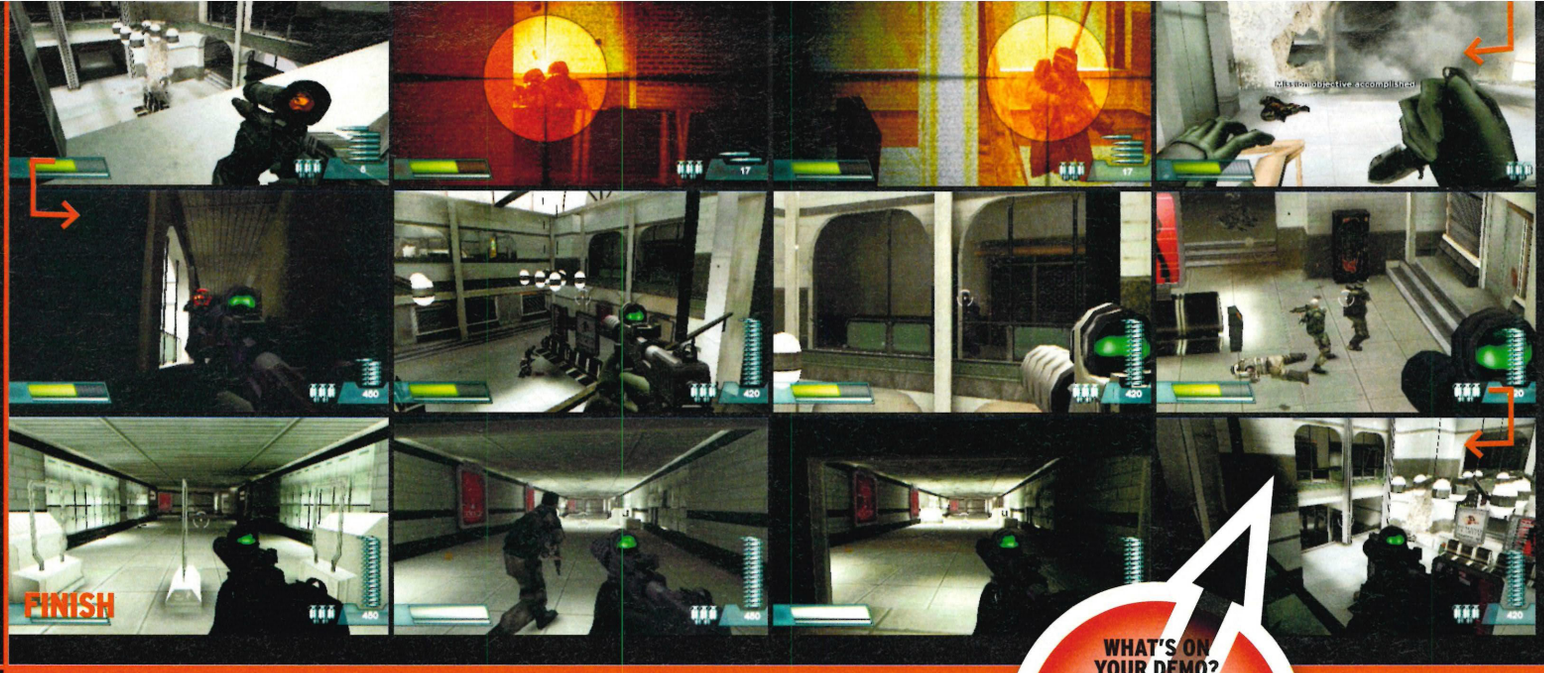
If you go down to the park today... it'll be absolutely infested with Helghast

Early on, Luger and Templar head outside for a romantic stroll in a park. Their idea of romance involving slightly more bloody guerrilla warfare than most courting couple's. The outdoor environments – all cherry blossom trees and drifting mist – provide the perfect showcase for Luger's peerless sniping skills. And, as you can see, she's quite tasty at close quarters, too. Sigh.

firing. Missing targets that are just a few feet away initially feels frustrating – but once you stop panicking and come to know the weapons more intimately (our sniper rifle is called Kylie), drilling the Helghast scum becomes eye-rollingly satisfying. Particularly because the regular soldiers go down easier than Parisian girls, and you never tire of hearing them scream for a medic in their raspy voices. Uh, the Helghast that is. More often than not you'll be faced by dozens of the bastards, too – so the art of taking headshots becomes critical. Once mastered, though, you can thin out enemy squads in half the time. Plus, you've got to love the SPLATCH noise as brain goop exits skull.

"BUT I SHOOT WITH THIS HAND"

At the top we said the Helghast were the real stars of *Killzone*, but the guns run them a close second. We especially love the sound effects, which are loud like Satan's own stereo. Judicious use has also been made of the Dual Shock's vibration function, which at times shook so hard that it actually started guffing out air. Clearly, this is the benchmark by which all future shooters must be judged. In another lift from *Halo*, *Killzone* restricts

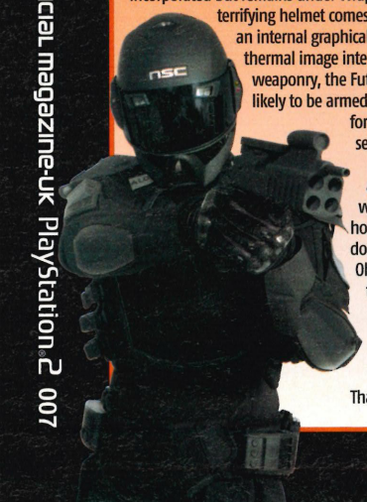


THE FUTURE IS NOW

Can't wait to be shot by sinister men in rubberised suits?

Our obsession with *Killzone* now runs so deep that it will almost come as a disappointment if we aren't invaded by terrifying fascist stormtroopers some time soon. Fortunately, the Americans have got matters in hand. Over at the US Army Soldier Systems Center in Massachusetts, they're working on the Future Warrior project. First unveiled at the Institute For Soldier Nanotechnologies (Christ, does such a place really exist?) he's set for battle readiness in the year 2025. The ominous-looking suit will feature liquid body armour that solidifies when struck by a bullet and nanomuscle augmentation that will increase the wearer's strength and speed. Thanks to more nanotechnology the soldier will also be impervious to chemical and biological attack.

Power for the suit's microclimate conditioning and transdermal nutrient delivery systems is provided by an onboard micro-turbine. (Honestly, we're not making this stuff up. It's real.) Stealth technology will also be incorporated but remains under wraps for now. That terrifying helmet comes equipped with an internal graphical display, plus thermal image intensification. As for weaponry, the Future Warrior is likely to be armed with 'fire and forget' soft-launch seeking missiles. We've got absolutely no idea what they are, but hot damn if they don't sound exciting. Oh and we're also told the suit will automatically be able to detect 'friendly or enemy lasers'. That's right, lasers.



WHAT'S ON YOUR DEMO?

On 7 October you'll be able to play *Killzone* courtesy of the demo on next month's DVD. The level is set in the slums and ends in the dropship attack shown in those amazing screens we first saw over a year ago!

■ No, really, we're here to 'liberate' you. Please stop crying...

US ARMY SOLDIER SYSTEMS CENTER, NATICK, MASS.

you to carrying three weapons at a time. The idea being that your selection will radically alter the way you play. Predictably, though, you come to rely on a few favourites – like the versatile Helghast assault rifle with shotgun attachment – and save more unusual equipment like the sniper rifle and grenade launcher for special occasions. That said, it's slightly disappointing that the really exotic stuff is quite scarce. We certainly would've liked more time with the ace 'laser designator' – which is used to call in aerial bombardments – and the enormo-sized 'squad cannon'.

More troublesome are the reload animations. Much has been made of their coolness (and yes, they *do* look delicious) but little said about just how long they take to complete. Obviously, it's a balancing thing, and the more powerful the weapon the longer reloading tends to take – but when you're being shot in the lungs, the last thing you want is to start fiddling with knobs as if you're trying to tune in Kiss FM. Also problematic is the disorientating way that the screen tilts while this is going on. The effect is even more pronounced when you hit L1 to lob a grenade. Which is irritating, because it's ace when you do manage to land one perfectly, sending ruined Helghast bodies arcing through the air. But the technique never feels truly comfortable. Despite that criticism, when it comes to player immersion, for the most part *Killzone* gets it spot on.

TOUR OF BEAUTY

Particularly impressive is the way the storyline gradually unfurls. Having fought his way out of the trenches – imagine the Somme in space – Templar makes his way through a factory district infested with Helghast and regroups back at ISA headquarters, which is also under heavy attack. Here the true nature of your task becomes clear. You're ordered to track down a Helghan double agent called Hahka, who has vital information that could alter the direction of the war. So begins an epic journey that takes in devastated cities, storm-blasted docks, luxuriant jungles and glacial mountain passes. We don't want to spoil things by revealing the setting for the eventual climax, but suffice to say it lives up to the build up.

Tellingly, despite the hugely varied locations, *Killzone* retains its unique visual style throughout – giving Vecta a distinct and coherent sense of place. The goal was to create 'reality with a twist', meaning all the buildings and weapons had to look functional and reflect their real world equivalents. Most impressive are the urban environments, which feature bombed-out concrete buildings that are futuristic but still instantly recognisable from TV coverage of modern conflicts. The deliberately muted palette suits the gritty tone perfectly and, combined with detailed

Picking off the Helghast from distance is satisfying

IN THE 'ZONE WITH...

RICO

***Killzone*'s own jungle cat 'gets some'**

Slightly disappointingly, the jungle area is made up of glass corridors (meaning you can't really stray off the path) in the same way as *Medal Of Honor: Rising Sun*. However, this also means there isn't anywhere for the Helghast to hide – making it perfect for using Rico and his megalithic chaingun. Remember watching Blaine mowing people down with that mini-gun in *Predator*? Well this is like that.

texturing and some stunning lighting, fully justifies *Killzone*'s tag as the best-looking shooter on PS2. Cinematic touchstones like *Saving Private Ryan* and *Black Hawk Down* are obvious, but older readers will also recognise the influence of classic 'future war' comics like *Glimmer Rats* and *Rogue Trooper*. Stirring stuff for men of a certain age.

Admittedly, the outdoor levels are more of a mixed bag. The textures in the mangrove swamp seem bland and smudged after the magnificently detailed docks that precede them. Part of the problem is that in built-up areas the horizon can be concealed with looming architecture, but out in the open the job has to be done by thick fog – and on a couple of occasions it makes *Silent Hill* look like St Tropez. But the fact we prefer some levels over others is only to be expected. The important thing is that there are no weak ones, and the true mark of *Killzone*'s quality is that you want to resample the missions almost as soon as you finish them – largely to experience the

The explosive special effects give the action in *Killzone* plenty of punch

In no way modelled on the Nazis. Oh no, not at all...

visceral gunplay using one of the other characters. By the time you've blasted your way through the Waypoint mall and into the city's storm drains, the team will be up to full strength and you can switch characters between levels. Each of the four team members has unique equipment and abilities, giving them all a distinct play style. Pleasingly, many of the levels have different routes through, depending on who you pick.

DON'T FORGET THE FOUR PLAY

Unsurprisingly, the ISA characters fit neatly into generic action roles. The second recruit is Luger, a Shadow Marshal who specialises in assassination, wears a slinky stealth suit and comes equipped with a handbag-sized sub-machine gun. She's more vulnerable to enemy fire than the others, but to compensate she can drop targets with a single shot using the pistol's silenced alternate fire mode. Luger can also climb ropes, crawl through ducts and use *Splinter Cell*-style thermo-vision. We like her a lot. Next up is Sgt Rico Valasquez. This boy's none too bright, but he's armed like a one-man Guns & Ammo convention. Rico's default weapon is a gyroscopically balanced machine gun, which – hello! – might as well just be called 'that gun from *Aliens*'. Because he's such a doughboy, Rico can't escape up ladders – so if you choose him you can expect heavy resistance. But hey, what's not to like about mowing down waves of Helghast?

YOU CAN EXPECT HEAVY RESISTANCE, BUT WHAT'S NOT TO LIKE ABOUT MOWING DOWN HELGHAST?

The final addition is Colonel Gregor Hahka, the double agent voiced to agreeably sneery effect by Sean Pertwee. Naturally, he's comfortable using Helghast technology, meaning their weapons kick up less in his hands. Hahka can also reprogram the flying attack drones that buzz you on later levels and sneak past sensors, making him very much the intellectual's choice. But right until the final reel, doubt surrounds Hahka's true allegiance. We're not going to pretend that David Mamet's going to lose sleep over the storyline, but *Killzone*'s against-the-odds yarn is delivered with such enthusiasm that it's impossible not to enjoy. Likewise, the interplay between characters – Rico's hatred for Hahka turning to grudging admiration, Templar and Luger's doomed romance – although clichéd, remains a guilty pleasure of 'let's do this thing, people!' proportions.

Going into action with three heavily-armed chums makes *Killzone* a much less lonely experience than other shooters. But although you are technically part of a squad, the gameplay is light years away from the likes of *Rainbow Six 3*.

■ The team comes under attack from a tank in the jungle

MORE WAR ON THE WAY

Killzone's ending makes it clear that more instalments are planned, with Guerilla already working on a sequel for PS2. We've also heard whispers that a PSP version is in the works as well.

'HAVE YOU GOT ANYTHING BIGGER?'

Check out five of the finest weapons in *Killzone*'s arsenal. Hey, no fingering the trigger

HELGHAST SQUAD CANNON

In all but name, this is the same explosive-firing cannon used by Clarence Boddicker's gang at the end of *Robocop*. Ammo's in short supply, but there's no arguing with the stopping power. Or the 'KER-CHUNK' as you crank another tank shell into the barrel.
How long to reload? Just enough time to light a post-murder cigarette.

ISA CHAINGUN

Rico's default weapon lays down an absolutely withering curtain of bullets in primary fire mode and launches missiles in secondary. Arguably the coolest weapon in the game, but prone to overheating during extended shootouts.
How long to reload? Sufficient to text your missus to say why you're late picking her up.

HELGHAST SNIPER RIFLE

Fact: sniper rifles are sexy. And with its tangerine orange scope and thunderous sound effect, *Killzone* has got the Rachel Stevens of long distance death. Oh, and you've just got to love the way your character pops the lens cap off.
How long to reload? Make a cuppa while he arses around with the next magazine.

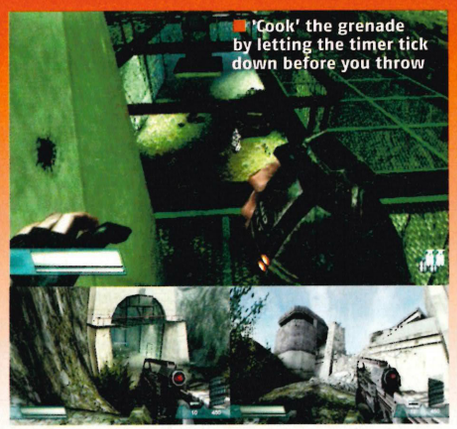
ISA ROCKET LAUNCHER

Normal fire works exactly as you'd expect, but using the alternate mode you can guide the rocket in with a laser. The trick is riding the initial kick and then 'painting' the target. Perfect for taking out aggravating Helghast tanks and APCs.
How long to reload? Check footie scores on Teletext while the next rocket is loaded.

HELGHAST GRENADE LAUNCHER

Makes a delightful 'ptoom' noise when you fire it and proves super handy when it comes to exploderising advancing squads of Helghast. Learning to judge the arc of the grenade takes time, mind.
How long to reload? Write your first erotic novel in the time it takes to replenish all six barrels.

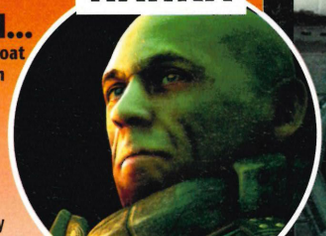
■ "I know this isn't the right time, but I've always loved you"



■ 'Cook' the grenade by letting the timer tick down before you throw

IN THE *'ZONE* WITH...

HAHKA



The Helghast turncoat comes into his own towards the end

The assault on the Helghast missile silos is one of the coolest section in the games. Having made your way through a ravine, the team arrive at the enemy base and climb up the rubble from an artillery strike. Playing as Hahka, once inside you can order the flying drones to attack the Helghast. Within seconds the enemy are pouring out of nearby blast doors, so you jump on the emplaced grenade launcher and start the carnage. Incoming, indeed.

■ One of the best levels, but we can't tell you why... yet

For starters, your compadres can't be killed because it would arse up the plot. (Although George did empty an entire magazine into Luger, 'just to check'.) Instead, once they've taken a certain amount of damage they temporarily retreat to safety. Having the other characters alongside you, shouting instructions and laying down covering fire gives *Killzone* a unique sheen of cinematic gloss. Given how ambitious it is, there are inevitably times when you catch them doing something crackers, like standing out in the open and blasting away at a non-existent target. But when it works, and they storm a room or take out a troublesome sniper, it more than compensates for the occasional off-key moment. Anyway, most of the time you're too busy wasting the Helghast to notice.

The grenade-firing pistol is perfect as a back-up 'piece'

Use the melee attack when the fist icon appears

FRAG THE WORLD!

In addition to its meaty single-player mode, *Killzone* is also the full online enchilada

Much as we like wandering around *My Street*, admiring how empty our street actually is, as an online game its little cartoon face doesn't exactly scream 'must play'. So, until now, for networked kicks we've mainly stuck with *SOCOM II* and *Rainbow Six 3*. But we've always known bigger, and unquestionably better, things were on the way. And this month we've been treated to the first truly essential network games, in the form of *Burnout 3* and *Killzone*.

Social types who enjoy people *actually* being in the house can dip their Dual Shocks into the split-screen co-op mode (be warned, the visuals take a hit) but broadband-blessed readers'll want to take the action online *tout de* bloody *suite*. Once inside the lobby – 'no, sir wouldn't like help with his luggage' – there's a decent array of maps and modes to get into. The eight levels are all based on environments from the single-player game and, because you play as either an ISA or Helghast infantryman, there's a pleasurable sensation of being a bit-part player in one of the war's key moments.

Having sampled all of the different gameplay types (see Death À La Mode) it's clear *Killzone* is going to become a key online PS2 game for fans of aggressive macho posturing everywhere. Which, chances are, means you. The action is chunky, and inevitably less considered online than off because people tend to sprint around. Actually, it's more of a jog because to sprint in *Killzone* you have to click L3 and after a couple of seconds your man's knackered. Which we're not mad on, but hey ho.

Next month we'll be bringing you a massive blowout detailing our experiences online. But, until then, rest assured that come November the gunfreaks will be migrating from the *SOCOM* servers en masse. We'll be there, and you lot will no doubt be shooting us in the kidneys and making jokes about our mums over the voice communicator. Some things never change.

All the weapons are available in multiplayer

Sticking together helps in the team-based modes

Guerilla's testers give us another merciless hammering

WAR IS... DELAYED

Stand easy, men. The invasion now commences in November. But fear not, the gameplay is done and dusted. The reason for the hiatus is so Sony can check that the online infrastructure is ready to handle the masses

DEATH À LA MODE

In addition to the usual deathmatch options, *Killzone* also features some more outlandish multiplayer modes. Happily, there's no 'capture the flag'

ASSAULT

One team must defend a key objective from the advance of the other. Points are still scored for kills, but the side in possession of the objective at the end will also receive a five-point bonus.

DEFEND & DESTROY

Much as above, except this time both teams start controlling a number of objects – small radar stations being one example – which they must defended from the opposing forces.

SUPPLY DROP

Both sides must scuttle around the map trying to hoover up supplies that have been dropped by parachute. One point is awarded for hanging on to the gear for 15 seconds, with a further five scored if you can get it back to base.

DOMINATION

This one's a fight for control of the battlefield, with both teams under orders to capture and hold strategic objectives such as bunkers, gun emplacements and weapons caches. We unzip and mark our territory the old-fashioned way...

For the most part, the Helghast are smarter than the average videogame grunt. Keep them pinned down and they're happy to stay behind cover, leaning out to take worryingly accurate potshots. But if they've got the numbers, or you haven't fired in a while, they advance on you in force. They'll also make good use of weaponry, switching to shotguns at close range. Don't expect MENSA standard displays of intelligence, though. The Helghast are here to die, and die in great numbers – and it's very much mission accomplished on that front.

K-DAY IS COMING...

Here's the important part: *Killzone* looks and feels different to every other shooter on PS2. If, like us, you've been reared on the Casanova smoothness of *TimeSplitters 2*, *Killzone*'s comparatively slow movement speed will come as a shock. But the more considered pace is deliberate – designed to reinforce the realism created by those outstanding visuals. We could've done without R3 being used for running, but the controls can be configured so it's no biggie. More annoying is the fact that your men can climb over some objects but not others, despite the fact they're clearly the same height. But taken in context it's a small complaint.

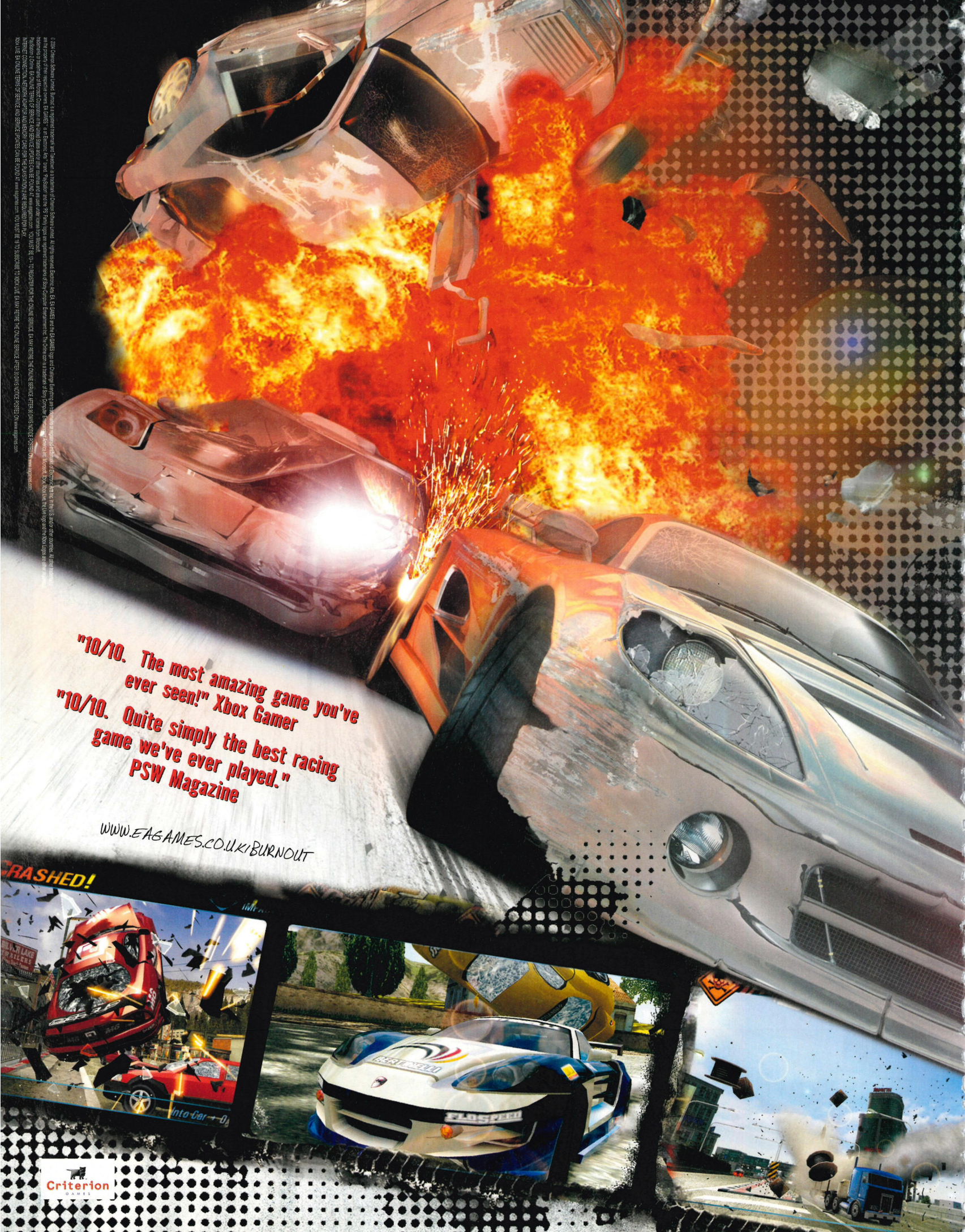
Comparisons with *Halo* ultimately prove wide of the mark. Yes, they're both set in sci-fi universes, but *Killzone* takes its inspiration from contemporary warfare – dirty, noisy and brutal. There are no gibbering aliens or mauve lasers on Vecta. *Killzone*'s real competition comes from *Medal Of Honor*. Both rely on funnelling players through a series of grandstand set pieces, but here's the difference: *MOH* games are like pop albums with the hit singles placed at the start – think Omaha Beach from *Frontline* and Pearl Harbor in *Rising Sun* – after which the quality dips. With *Killzone*, the action's relentless from the start, and there's always another show-stopper around the corner – whether it's a dropship fireballing into a building or armoured personnel carriers spewing out Helghast squads. It soon becomes completely addictive, with a compulsive need to see what's coming next. Put simply, as a single-player shooter, *Killzone* destroys the competition. Prepare yourselves. The Helghast are coming. ■ **Tim Clark**

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK VERDICT

Graphics	09	Stunning, except for occasional fogging
Sound	09	Ferociously loud, and chilling lack of music
Gameplay	09	Fresh, brutal and thoroughly enjoyable
Lifespan	09	You'll keep coming back, plus it's online too

The shooter we've been waiting for since PS2 launched. Visually it's amazing and the gameplay rocks harder than you dare dream

9/10



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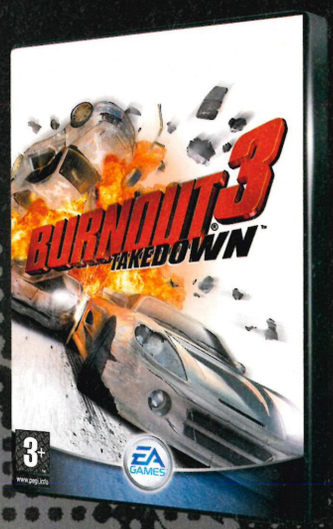

PlayStation.2 XBOX

BURNOUT 3 TAKEDOWN

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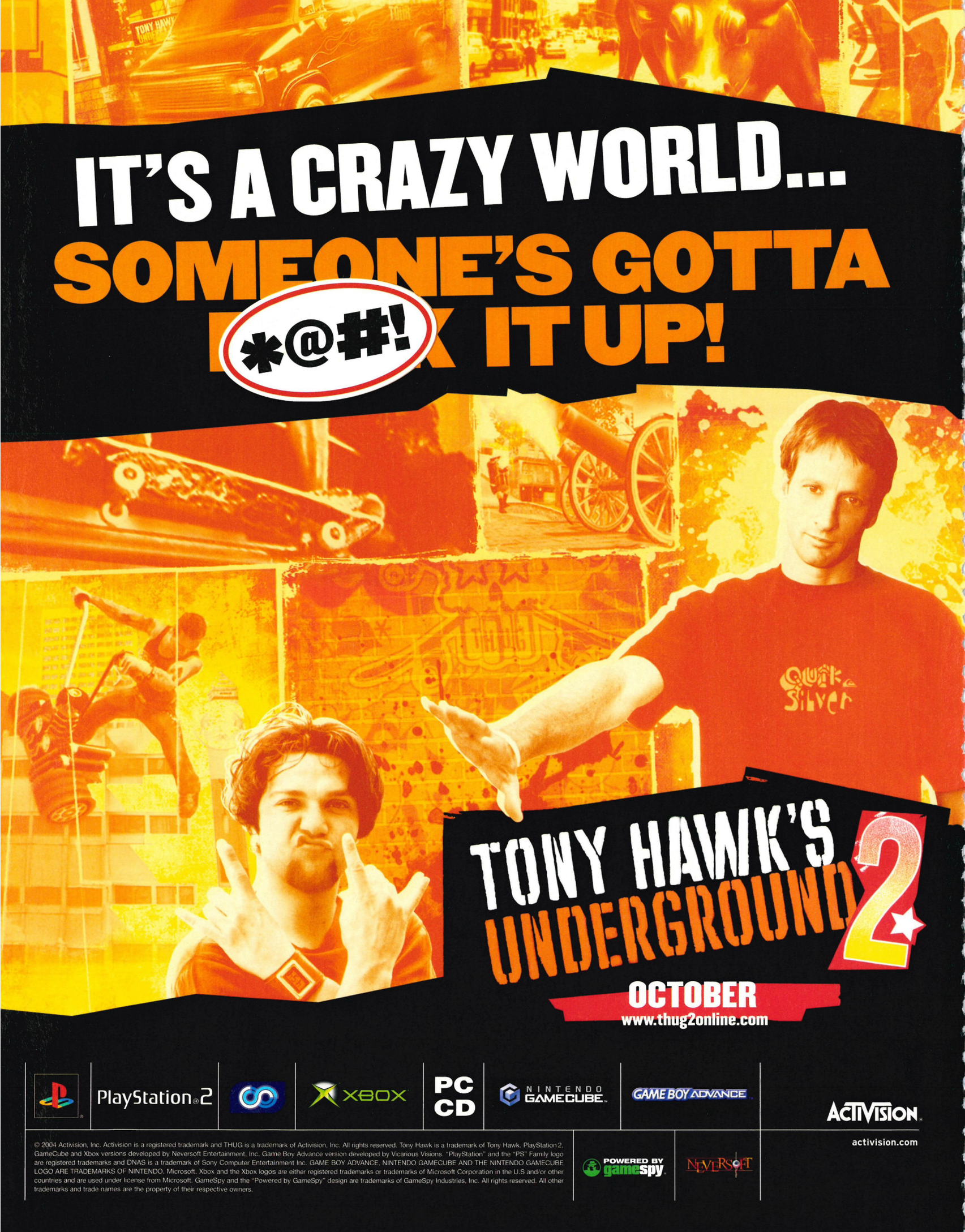
Challenge Everything



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Media with passion

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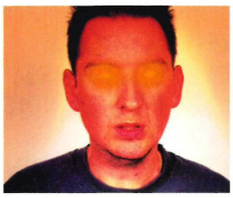
ANGER MANAGEMENT CLASS...

IT'S BEEN A TOUGH MONTH AT *OPS2* AND THE STRESS IS STARTING TO TELL ON SOME...

* Continuing the sci-fi theme from *Killzone*, we wondered what the team's favourite space age characters were... then wished we hadn't



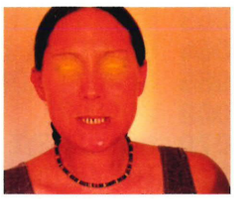
TIM CLARK
Tim's all about the anger. He's been known to push over old ladies and kick puppies when he gets on one. This month, though, all has been calm because he's done nothing but play *Killzone*. All month. That's all month.
Just for you: That'll be *Killzone* (page 2).

GEORGE WALTER
George's normal Zen-like calmness – bourne out of knowing that he's always going to disagree, whatever anyone says – was taken to the limit this month as everyone started agreeing with everything he said. Like watching a wasp caught in a glass.
Just for you: The DVD, of course.

MICHAEL FRENCH
A great hulking, scary man with rippling bits and sparks flying from his forelock, Michael rages around the office like a genetically spliced and diced cross between a pitbull and The Thing from the *Fantastic Four*. You *can* see it, can't you...?
Just for you: It has to be *Burnout 3* (p 94).

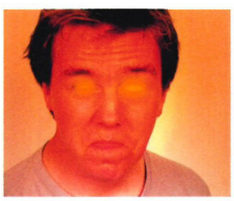
SIMON MIDDLEWEEK
Being called Wednesday again for the first time since school has got to mild-mannered Simon, who designed most of this month's magazine from under his desk while eating Wagon Wheels and singing "I know my ABC" again and again.
Just for you: Return of the *Prince* (p 49).

NIKI EARP
Niki followed up last month's Brazilian ("amazing") with a Mexican ("cute") and is planning on going after a Bulgarian next ("I like 'em"). We're not sure what's going on but we continue to listen and nod and wonder what is going on in Nearp's head.
Just for you: *FIFA 2005* looking good (p 86).

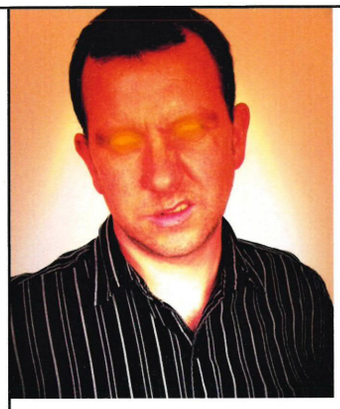


HELEN PRIOR
The rock goes on but tales of savage drinking and riders demanding small pots of Joosters line her path to stage have become second nature, so no one is listening any more. We're still waiting for the first reader to claim to have seen Hel's band Scuba-Jo in action.
Just for you: The return of *Pro Evo* (p 60).

BEN RICHARDSON
Posh lad Ben embarrassed himself no end this month, not only by crashing repeatedly while trying to drive a rally car with Colin McRae, but then going on to describe a motorbike handlebar as a "steering stick" while the perplexed Scot looked on.
Just for you: Driving *Colin 2005* (p 100).



NATHAN DITUM
The phone lines have closed, the votes are in and have been independently assessed and Nathan's new nickname – as voted for by you – is... Natty Boy. No, it's rubbish so we're calling him Nate Dogg instead.
Just for you: All the *GTA: San Andreas* love he can give (p 62).



"ADMIT IT: IT'S THE LOOK IN MY EYE THAT DOES IT FOR YOU, ISN'T IT?"

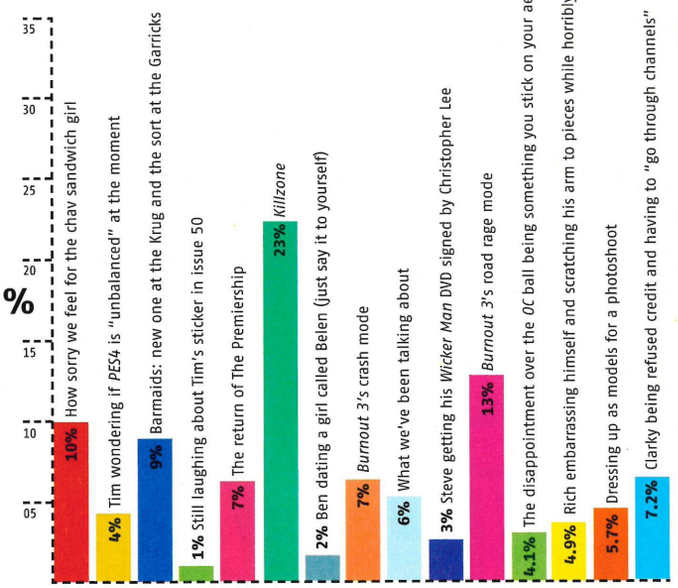
So, how was it for you? The *Killzone* review that we've been promising for so long has been and gone and now you know. Did it surprise you? Probably not, I expect. But it should make you happy to know that it's all worth it: the waiting you've done and the wait still to come. Because what might not make you happy is that – despite the single-player game being finished – *Killzone* won't be out for another two months while they test the online modes. Now while this is clearly bad news for you, we do have a few reasons to be cheerful.

1. It is absolutely, definitely, completely and a stone cold guarantee that this is the first review you can read. It has to be – they finished the game and handed it straight to us.
2. Next month we'll have the one and only playable demo on the DVD – a full month before the game is released.
3. You'll also be able to win a life-sized Helghast for your front room next issue.
4. Expect a full online review, more competitions, a guide and lots more in the next two months. The review might be in but we're still the only magazine for *Killzone*.

See you on Thursday, 7 October. Expect a few surprises...

RICHARD KEITH Editor

WHAT WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT



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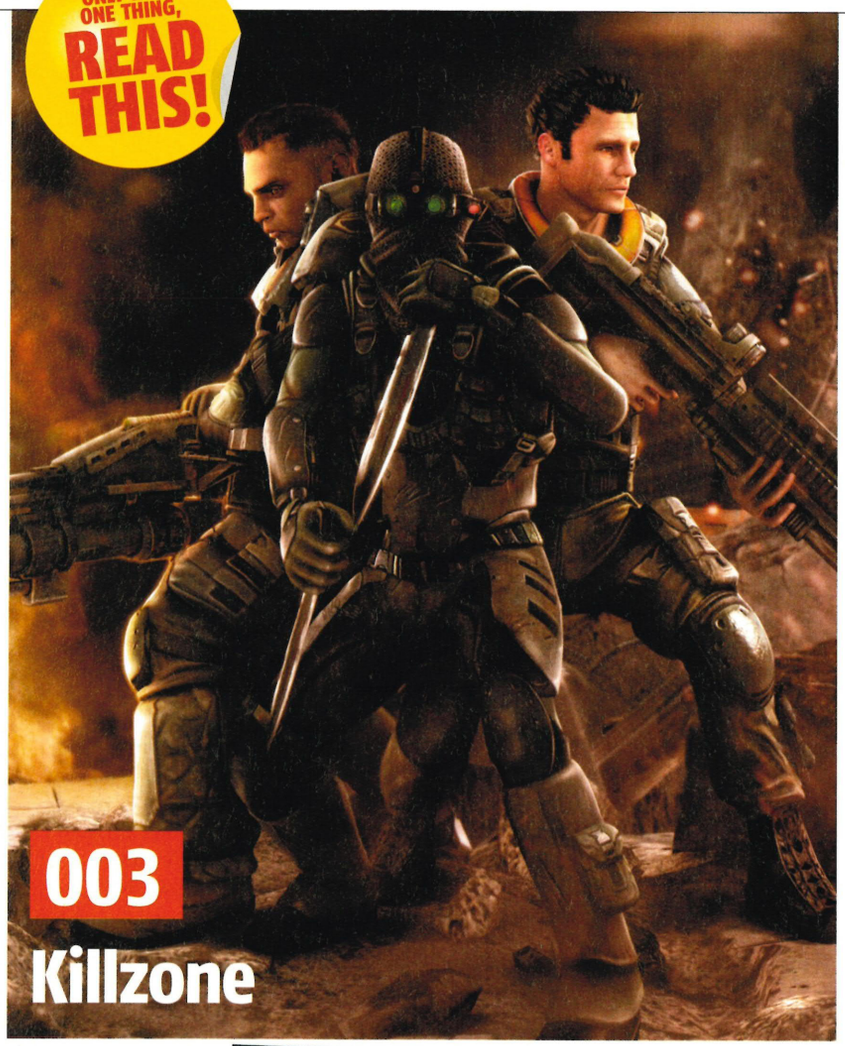

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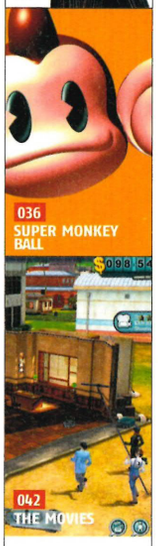

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YOU GOT IT!

COLLECTOR'S EDITION COVER

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ING SPIDER-MAN 2, SPLINTER CELL 2: PANDOR DRIV3R, PSI-OPS, SHREK 2 AND 100s M

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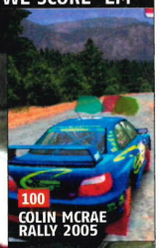
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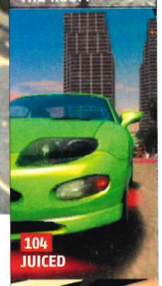
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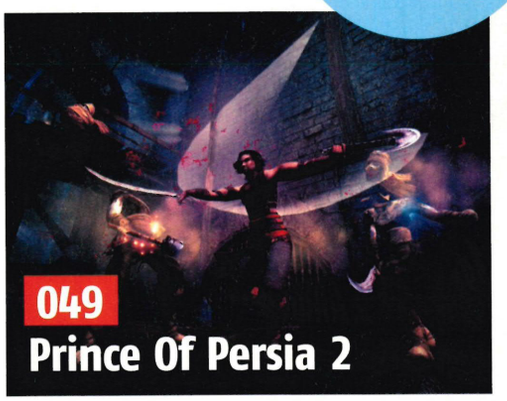

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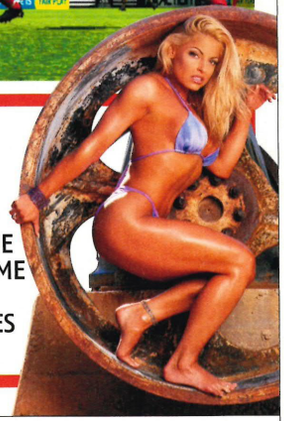

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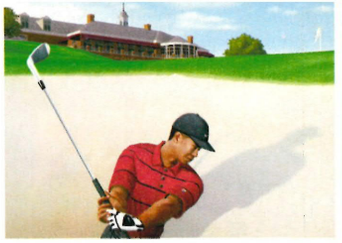

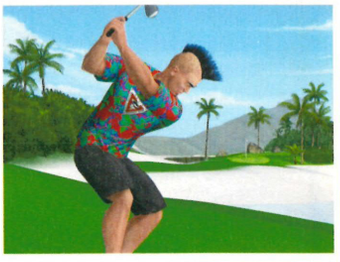

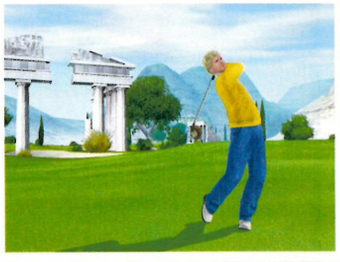

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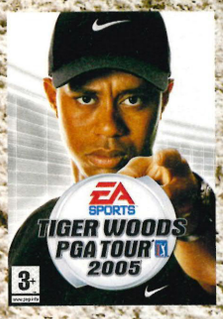

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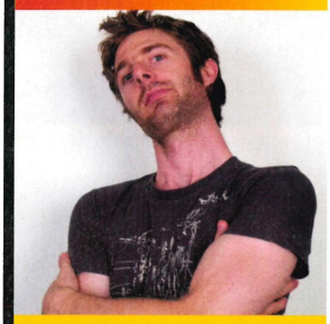


So you've had the new disc for a few issues now. It's time to tell us what you think. What new features do you enjoy the most? What would you like to see more of? How many girls have been wooed by young Ben's charms in Ask *OPS2*? Let me know and we'll make the disc even better than it is already. In the meantime feel free to consume this disc with a lusty passion. It wants it.

George

George Walter,
Disc editor

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

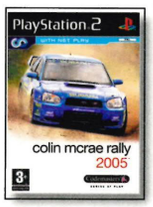
WHY WON'T MY DISC WORK?

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

HOW DO I ACCESS SAVES?

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

Note: If you have important saves on your disc, back them up. We cannot be held responsible for any saves lost during the process. Come on now, it's only sensible.



01 COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005

See why we're still Colin's best mate

What you get: Quite a lot really. Three courses (Gemany, UK and Sweden) and three cars (Peugeot 206, Lancia Stratos and the Celica GT-FOUR). Select a car, choose you favoured location and see exactly why *Colin McRae* is still the most satisfying rally game experience you can have.

02 RATCHET & CLANK 3

Platforming – reinvented

What you get: A unique early look at the most innovative instalment of this unbelievable science-fiction platformer. See why we're still convinced *Ratchet & Clank* will be one of the must-buy adventures of the year!

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And there's more...

THIS MONTH'S EXCLUSIVE EXTRA DVD CONTENT

03 DJ: DECKS & FX

Pretend to be a DJ

What you get: To see how this DJ in a box could be the end of overpaid super-jockeys. All you need for party central is this and a PS2.

04 CRISIS ZONE

Defend the local shops

What you get: Terrorists have taken over a London shopping mall and are making an almighty great mess. Wade in all guns blazing.

05 SPYRO: A HERO'S TAIL

Puff like a purple dragon

What you get: One for the kids. We give nippers the chance to experience this new *Spyro* adventure.

SPY

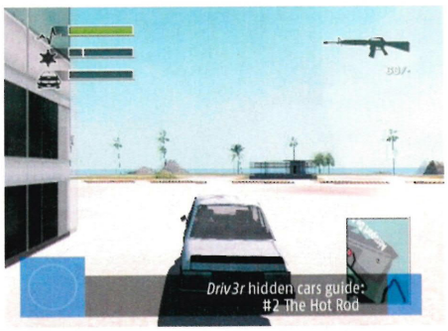
The biggest news first

ENTHUSIA
It's a car game. We forgive you if you didn't guess from the name. It doesn't exactly say 'car game'. *Enthusia* is Konami's first foray into GT-style racing and this early trailer shows you what to expect.

MERCENARIES
Ohh! Oooh! It's that war game that's a bit like *GTA*! Watch us bumble around a few levels blowing things up and generally looking very cool indeed.

METAL GEAR SOLID 3
The intro sequence ripped straight from the first playable code. Yes, you can see exactly what the game will look like months before release.

colin mcrae rally 2005



REPLAY

More from your games

DRIV3R HIDDEN VEHICLES GUIDE
We've found all the hidden cars you need. Check out our maps that show you exactly how to locate them too.

GOAL OF THE MONTH
Another raft of absolute crackers to revel in.

CHALLENGES
We want videos of you being good at games.

MONITOR

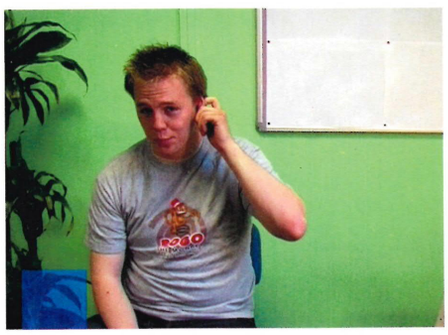
Hands-on previews

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2
Neat video that shows very small cars driving up a woman's body. Once you've got over that there's some info on the new game's open city racing.

RUMBLE ROSES
Sexy girls fighting. That's about it.

TONY HAWKS UNDERGROUND 2
How do they keep Tony fresh? Easy – get rid of him and replace with a sexier younger man in the shape of Bam 'I'm mad me' Margera.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005
So we don't have to explain in words how *Tiger Woods 2005* is better than *2004*...



COMEDOWN

Bonus features

COLIN MCRAE INTERVIEW
You asked Colin some questions about his new game. We put a camera in front of him and asked them. Here's the result.

ASK *OPS2*
More of the *OPS2* team's ill-advised witterings. Nah, actually, make that 'intelligent observations'. Well, apart from Gentle who just shouts in his posh voice.

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DESIGNER GORETURE

BY CAPCOM

"Quite simply you haven't seen a Resident Evil game look this good before." PSW Magazine

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postal

IT'S *OPS2*'S LETTER-LOVING SOAPBOX. GET ON AND HAVE YOUR SAY...

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

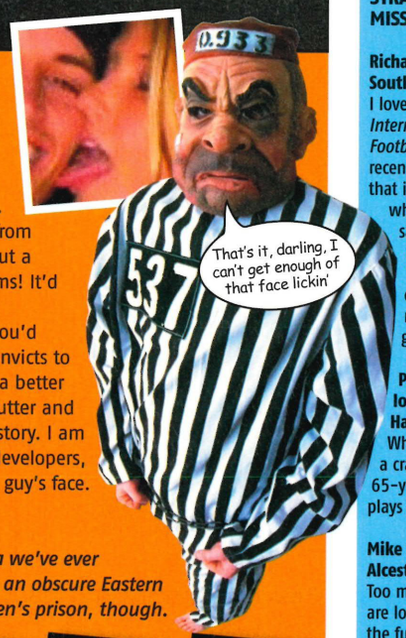
YOU GET THIS!
Been dressing up? Got a game-related tattoo? We want to see what you've got to show, so get writing! This month, letters published here will receive a copy of *Second Sight*. The Star Letter also wins *Resident Evil Outbreak*, *NBA Ballers*, *Psi-Ops* and *ShellShock: Nam '67*, all courtesy of Gamestation.co.uk. Only main Postal letters receive games. Write to: The Editor, c/o Postal, *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW or email ps2postal@futurenet.co.uk. Letters will be edited for length and clarity.

star letter

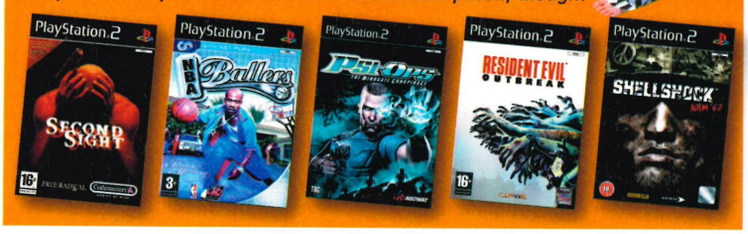
BARELY LEGAL

As a lady gamer, I think I've come up with an excellent game for girls. I think it must have been the shadow or something, but in *OPS2#48* the picture of the bloke from *25 To Life* on page 26 looks just like Charles Bronson. Not the dead actor, the nutter fanny-magnet from Wakefield nick. It got me thinking – what about a game based on women who get it on with crims! It'd be brilliant!

Sort of an RPG with action elements, and you'd have to send 'special' pictures of yourself to convicts to make cash. Maybe you'll make him vow to be a better man, and so you'd gain dignity. Bag a celeb nutter and your ratings rise when the tabloids want your story. I am available for consultations with all the major developers, but for the moment here's a pic of me licking a guy's face.
Katie Phillips, Blackburn



Phillips, this is possibly the greatest game idea we've ever received. Obviously we've already flogged it to an obscure Eastern European developer. In our version it's a women's prison, though.



HYPE EATER?

With a new *Metal Gear Solid* game coming out in the not-too-distant future, things feel very different to when the last game, *MGS2*, was being developed. Back then, every magazine, website and journalist covered it so much because they were overcome with excitement – and rightly so – but strangely there hasn't been much coverage or hype built up for *MGS: Snake Eater*.

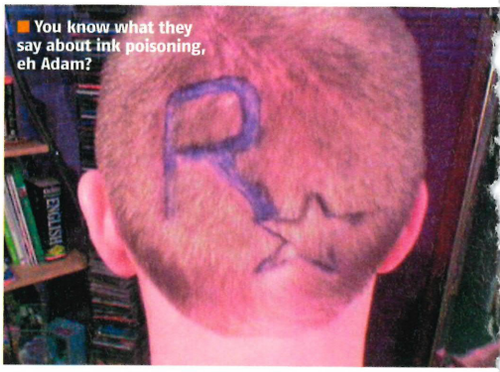
As it improves on the series so much – outdoor environments, guards with better hearing and awareness – and is filled to the brim with innovation, why is it that *OPS2* hasn't jumped on the *MGS* bandwagon? *Killzone* has been covered so much that I'm sick of reading about it, although the 15-minute trailer was great.

All I'm saying is that, okay *Killzone* looks great, but *MGS3* looks so much better. It's going to be the end to probably the most influential and inventive series in the existence of videogames, so why not give us more about Snake?
Mr Beetleman, Aberdeen

You know, Beetleman, you're absolutely right. We couldn't care less about Snake Eater. That's why it's appeared in all of the last five issues, racking up 14 pages of info-jammed coverage in the process. And it's also why we've sweated hot tears securing the exclusive review and demo for you. Nope, we don't care at all...

A CUT ABOVE

First, thanks for the amazing look you gave us at the forthcoming *GTA: San Andreas*. Like so many people I am eagerly awaiting the game and found myself revisiting the other games to attempt to quench my gaming thirst. Anyway, as I usually try to have an individual haircut, I thought I'd let my enthusiasm be seen by the world.
Adam Forrester, Chester


You know what they say about ink poisoning, eh Adam?

We dig what you're doing, fella – although the haircut does have a slight DIY tattoo vibe going on. To get himself in the mood for the imminent arrival of* San Andreas, *Timberlake has doubled his daily burger intake. Note: daily.

CUT 'N' PASTE

SENTENCES EXPLODING LIKE SHRAPNEL FROM THE MONTH'S STRANGEST MISSIVES...

Richard Miles, Southampton
I love *England International Football* but I recently noticed that if you lip read what the players say, it's all swear words! This completely ruins the game!

Peter Ioannou, Hastings
Why do you give a crap about this 65-year-old who plays games?

Mike Scully, Alcester
Too many people are looking to the future.

Chris Hansen, Merseyside
Is it just me or does the guy in *The Suffering* advert look exactly like Paul Ince?

A B Grey, Swansea
Can I have the 'All Guns' cheat for *Lord Of The Rings* please?

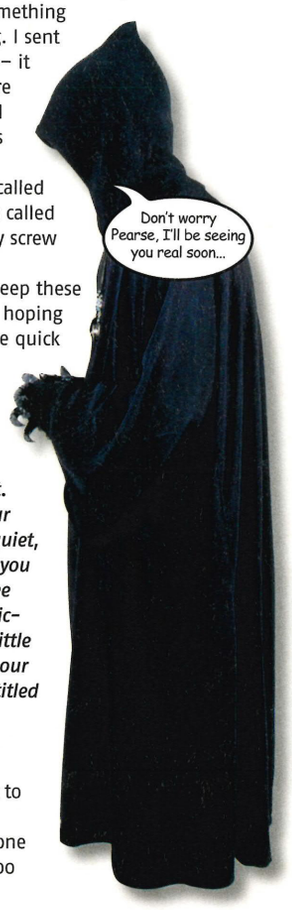
Peter Brown, Hornchurch
Anyway, could you try and make that game The Ripper Returns as I'm drawing him?

Richard Bromley, Dorset
Well done on the excellent new DVD George. Pity about the beard though.

WRONGED WREADER WRITES

I was wondering if you kept the old 'it should be a game' entries – I'm not on about your mag but the old *Official PlayStation Magazine* – because since I entered, not only one but two of my ideas have come to light and to be honest with you, I'm pissed off.

First off is one which could have just been coincidence. *Ants*. It came out a few years ago but *after* I sent it in as an entry – it was exactly the same as my idea. The second is something which is just annoying. I sent in an idea for a game – it was a platformer where you played Death, well actually you played his son Death Jr. Now I've seen news of a game called *Death Jr*. My entry was called *Death Jr*! How can they screw me like this?



I know you don't keep these game ideas, I was just hoping that I could make some quick cash. But I guess it's back to selling myself on the docks.
Pearse Phillips, email

You're absolutely right. We've been selling your ideas for years. Keep quiet, though, and we'll cut you in on the deal. Let's see now,* Death Jr... *generic-looking platformer... little discernable buzz... by our calculations you're entitled to just under a fiver.

A STEP TOO FAR

What is Rockstar trying to prove? With *GTA: San Andreas* things have gone too far. There will be too

much happening at once and PS2 will not be able to cope. What with the character getting fat, losing stamina, pedestrians jeering, getting haircuts and so on – what about the loading times? It's hard to believe they'll be short and it will undoubtedly be really jolty.

PS *Driv3r* is a much better game than any of the *GTA* games.
Daniel Sheldon, via email

Erm, we're guessing that Rockstar is 'trying to prove' that it can redefine the videogaming landscape any time it wants. Yes, there may be the odd bit of pop-up – but at least Rockstar's games come out on time and are, like, y'know, fun to play. They're old-skool like that... Oh, and having the fattest gangster in* San Andreas *state will rock harder than you dare dream.

***PS* Driv3r *isn't even better than* True Crime.**

HEAD SHOTS

My friends and I were without our PS2 for a day recently and so were very bored indeed. So, as any right-minded individual would do, we decided to dress up as Hitman. Fortunately the police eventually understood we weren't trying to kill anyone and let us go.
Tom, Alex and Ed, via email

You dressed up as Hitman but didn't shave your head? That's a lack of commitment right there. To be honest you look more like Clive Owen's assassin from* The Bourne Identity. *Which is no bad thing, really... he should be the next Bond, you know.

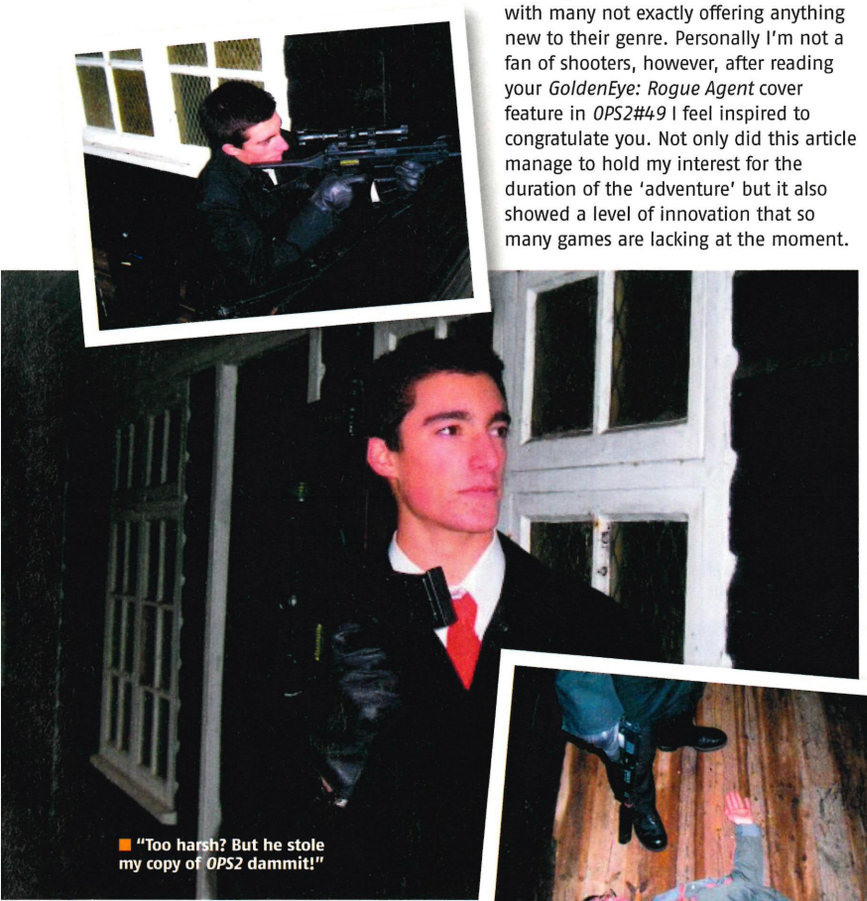
NETWORKING

I noticed that a lot of people are writing in to say that network gaming is bad. Vincent Cook for example – what an idiot, saying that online gaming is too expensive. Has he actually looked into it properly or has he just read his mum's copy of Argos? As for James Thomasson – what does he know? People aren't going to lose interest in *SOCOM*, and it's not the only game people play online. I've got plenty of network games, and there are more people playing multiplayer over the Internet than you might think. If anyone else out there thinks online is not cool, send them round to me. I'll stick them in front of a TV with networked *Hardware* and they'll never want to leave.
Henry Flitwood, London

Isn't the whole point of network gaming that you don't have to get people over to your house? Still, it's a kind offer. Shall we say Friday tea-time? Get the biscuits in, there shouldn't be more than a couple of thousand of us.

ROGUE SHOOTER

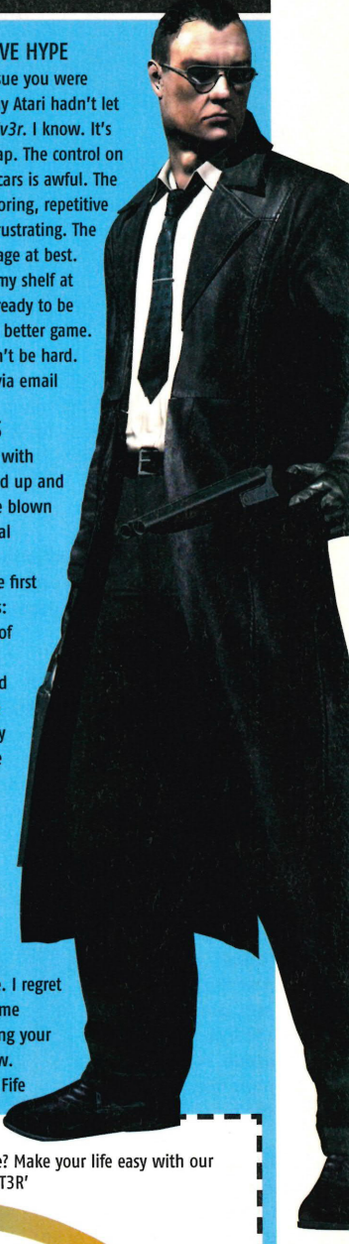
As I'm sure you are aware, there's a huge number of FPS/driving/stealth games heading for release in the near future, with many not exactly offering anything new to their genre. Personally I'm not a fan of shooters, however, after reading your *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent* cover feature in *OPS2#49* I feel inspired to congratulate you. Not only did this article manage to hold my interest for the duration of the 'adventure' but it also showed a level of innovation that so many games are lacking at the moment.



"Too harsh? But he stole my copy of *OPS2* dammit!"

THE BIG (ISH) ISSUE

DRIVER 3. DRIV THREE RRR. DRIV3R. CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL, IT'S A TOPIC MORE EXPLOSIVE THAN A FIESTA FULL OF SEMTEX AND IT'S BEEN INCINERATING THE POSTBAG WITH YOUR INFLAMED OPINIONS. YOU'VE READ OUR VERDICT, YOU'VE PLAYED THE GAME (NOT ALWAYS IN THAT ORDER...) AND YOU'VE BUNGED US YOUR VIEWS. AND FOR THAT, WE CAN ONLY THANK YOU – NOTHING MAKES OUR DAYS MORE INTERESTING THAN ALL-OUT VERBAL TRENCH WARFARE.



DRIV3 THIS BY

I am writing with MASSIVE DISAPPOINTMENT after having bought *Driv3r*. I worship the words you write, and so when your previews gave the game what I took to be a 'thumbs up' I went out and pre-ordered it. Had I waited for your review I never would have bought this poor excuse for a PS2 game. I totally relate to your 'Diary Of A Madman' piece – the frustration of this game would force anyone to throw their Dual Shock across the room.
Marc Weaver, Birmingham

SHOP SMART

I was strolling round Tesco when I saw *Driv3r*, five days before the official release date. Of course, I bought it and rushed home. The video scenes are so well presented that I was engrossed even before I'd started to play. The game's great and I see many hours of neglect of duty as I strive to complete mission after enthralling mission of what's arguably the best *Driver* yet.
Shaun Bennett, via email

THE SCOR3

I'm writing in response to your *Driv3r* review. *DRIV3R* DESERVES MORE THAN YOU GAVE IT! 6/10? I don't understand. I admit the game has a lot of flaws and pissed me off quite often, but it's the only game in a long time that makes you feel like you deserved – and really fought to complete – a mission. It's about time games were this difficult! I don't think you could handle the game – why should you have to be told to avoid enemy cars?
Dean Wright, via email

DON'T BELIEVE HYPE

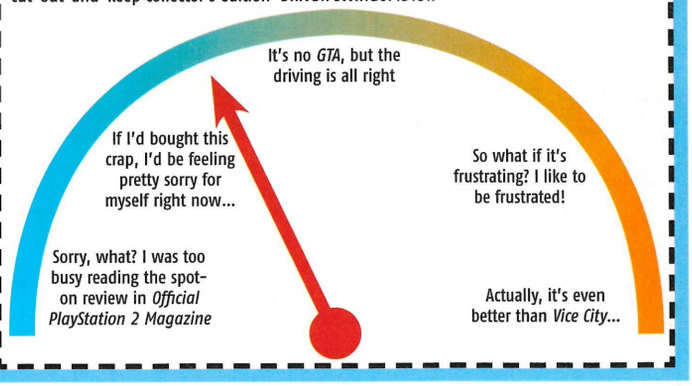
In your July issue you were wondering why Atari hadn't let you review *Driv3r*. I know. It's because it's crap. The control on foot or in the cars is awful. The missions are boring, repetitive and stupidly frustrating. The graphics? Average at best. It's sitting on my shelf at the moment, ready to be swapped for a better game. Which shouldn't be hard.
Mike Burns, via email

TAKE A MISS

Settling down with *Driv3r*, I loaded up and prepared to be blown away. My initial thought after completing the first few levels was: "What a load of rubbish." I persevered and completed the game – I really wanted to like it, especially after paying £40. But *Driv3r* lacks playability, longevity, good graphics and a decent learning curve. I regret buying the game without reading your spot-on review.
Colin Farrell, Fife

CUT OUT AND KEEP!

Finding it hard to keep track of the raging *Driv3r* debacle? Make your life easy with our cut-out-and-keep collector's edition '*DRIV3R* SWINGOM3T3R'



letters

■ **Oddjob's dance routine had brought the house down**

As a result of this I shall be paying more attention to previews of the game to see how it develops, and I'm sure the publisher of *Rogue Agent* must feel that it made the right decision in letting you have the first look.
Tom Megaw, Doncaster

Ah shucks... thanks for the kind words, Tommy. Head on over to page 70 for our latest impressions of the game.

HELEN LOVE

I am in love. With Helen Prior... Mmmm. I know she is in a band, Scuba-Jo, and I want to see her badly. I am in a band called Nemesis, which is admittedly heavier but still good. Could you *please* tell me where her next gigs are?
Jon-Paul McDonald, Berwick-upon-Tweed

Helen's a regular fixture on the Bristol 'scene'. Just turn up, find the grottiest pub, and chances are she'll be rocking out inside. Avoid the front row, though – she's a spitter.

BLAST-PHEMOUS?

Gaming is a religion, and so I have created the gaming commandments. They're on paper – stone tablets won't travel well in the post...

1. Thou shalt not attempt more than four 'uber' tricks in one air in *SSX 3*.
2. Thou shalt not allow thy siblings near memory card while saving.
3. Thou shalt not enter any race on *Gran Turismo 3* in a Toyota Yaris.
4. Thou shalt not abandon stealth on *Metal Gear Solid*. This way lies madness.
5. Thou shalt not shoot a teammate in the leg just 'cause he's blocking your way through a door in *SOCOM II: US Navy SEALs*.
Sam Caveen, Wirral

Erm, surely there are supposed to be ten commandments? Here are the others:

6. *Thou shalt not watch your brother's screen in* Splitters 2 *deathmatch.*
7. *Thou shalt not carelessly leave a beverage near a PS2 while playing.*
8. *Thou shalt not worship graven X-shaped images.*
9. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's Master League team.*
10. *Thou shalt buy* OPS2 *every month, for this pleaseth the Lord.*

AHEAD OF MYSELF

I've just read about how Microsoft is predicting its next console to beat Sony and I thought: "what a load of dog logs!" Then I bought *OPS2#49* and was very excited to see the latest news and a video of *Killzone*. "Great!" I thought, "This will really stick it to Microsoft." But, although you might think I'm overreacting, it's all looking a bit, well, crap. This is the *Halo* killer? The framerate is jittery, and in multiplayer it's even worse. And those voices? A woman casually remarks "Here they come" in the heat of battle, as calmly as if she was ordering a drink. What's going on? Sony can't rely on first-party games any more, the competition is hotting up and it needs to take notice, or Microsoft really will be winning the next generation war.
Kristian, Chester

She says it calmly because she's an ice-cold killer who soaks up the pressure of imminent death at the hands of gasmask-wearing freaks like a sponge soaks up the blood of readers who write in moaning about our new fave game. Which is our way of saying that the framerate's fine. Forget about beating Halo *and just enjoy* Killzone *for what it is – the best single-player shooter on PS2.*

■ ***Killzone*** **runs fast and slick, like lard on a furnace...**

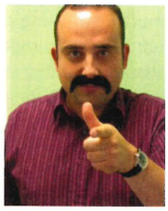
handbag! Oooh, 'ark at you!

YOUR PANTS ARE ON FIRE, LIAR!

I was reading your magazine the other day when I suddenly realised something. YOU PEOPLE ARE LYING B***ARDS! You claim to have played the unbelievably cool-sounding *Black* yet you say that there is only one screenshot! The conclusion? You are lying! You can't have played it! How do I know? Because any plonker with half a brain cell could surely have whipped out a camera and taken a few shots. Somebody should smack you across the face and tell you that lying is wrong.
Mark, Dublin

Had we whipped out a camera during the* Black *presentation, we probably would have been smacked in the face. Criterion is notoriously secretive and isn't about to let any idiot (well, Timberlake) start snapping its new baby with a disposable happycam. But for the record, we have played it – twice – and it rocks. Expect a call from our lawyers.

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



GOT SOMETHING TO SAY?

Focus your rage, young one. There's no point sobbing in the corner, the remains of our magazine shredded around your naked, tear-stained body. If you're *that* upset about a review score, an idiotic rant by one of the other readers, or just George's pig-headed refusal to shave, then there's only one solution: get your righteous fury down on paper and send it to us. We'll take your views on board, consider them carefully and then 'file' the letter in the basement. Something's got to power the furnace through the lean winter months.

Savage Our Subs FOUND A WRONG? MAKE IT WRITE

As Mistress Of Grammar at *OPS2*, Helen keeps her eagle eyes on the page, hunting out mistakes. But she has been known to miss the odd one... and that's where you come in.

#1 On page 18 of *OPS2#49*, you said Ben's 'hardresser', which should be 'hairdresser' surely folks?
Elliot Hutchinson-Cox, via email

#2 In your article on page 31 of *OPS2#49* you wrote 'tonight's main even'. It should be 'event'.
Tom Garratt, Milton Keynes

Write to:
HELEN, YOU PLANK!
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IT WASN'T MY FACE THAT MADE ME FAMOUS

Patrick Vieira

Out October

FLUID FOOTBALL

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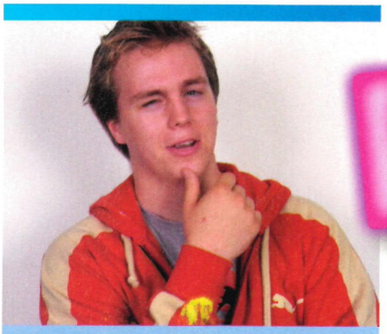
spy

BOILING THE STEAMING PS2 BROTH DOWN TO DELICIOUS, ESSENTIAL NEWS EDIBLES

WELCOME TO SPY

The fertile news oasis providing fact shelter in the PS2 desert



Looking contemplative this month, aren't I? Quzzical, you might say. Want to know why? 'Course you do. And even if you don't, I'm gonna tell you anyway. It's all down to the hypnotic array of dazzling pink bits and flashy writing you can see on the right – *Scarface* is here.

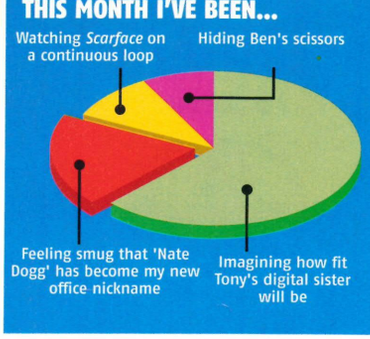
So why the crumply face? Well as a longstanding worshipper of cinematic gansgter epicness, the announcement that I'd soon be snorting industrial quantities of the white stuff and leering at my sister as Cuban master criminal Tony Montana was almost too good to believe. I'm getting there, though.

As well as *Scarface* we have the usual flood of news goodness for you, including the arrival of *Super Monkey Ball* on PS2, the upcoming fantasticness of the PlayStation experience and plenty more.

Nathan

Nathan Ditum,
Staff writer

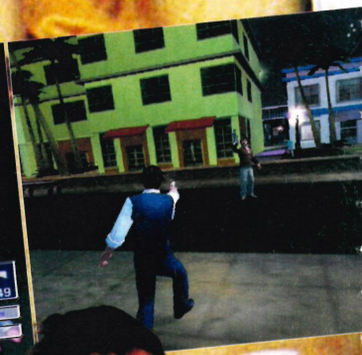
THIS MONTH I'VE BEEN...



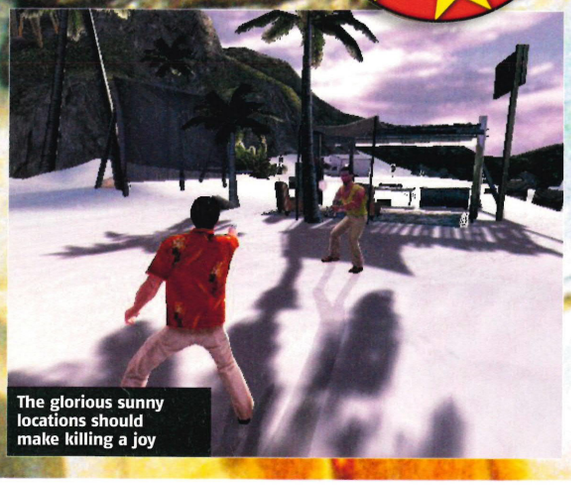
FIRST WITH ALL THE BIG GAMES!

"SHOOT DAT PIECE O'CHIT!"

Could cocaine-hoovering *GTA*-spawner be the best film licence ever?



only in... PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK



The glorious sunny locations should make killing a joy

As we predicted a full two months ago, so it will be. Brian De Palma's iconic '80s gangster spectacular will definitely be making its glitzy, chainsaw-toting way to PS2. For those who somehow don't know what we're talking about (let's assume you're too young), here's the deal. Ten years after he starred in *The Godfather*, Al Pacino proved he was still the (method) man by playing ruthless, foul-mouthed Cuban exile Tony Montana and making him one of the most revoltingly memorable characters in movie history.

Arriving in Miami alongside a swarm of Cuban immigrants, Montana rapidly starts scrabbling his way up the ranks of the local underworld. In a sun-drenched flurry of blood, swearing, spraying flob (Pacino's lispy, fat-tongued accent has to be heard to be believed) and uber-violence, he makes it to the top,

spy

SPY CONTRIBUTORS TIM CLARK, NATHAN DITUM, MICHAEL FRENCH, KIRSTEN KEARNEY, RICHARD KEITH, GEORGE WALTER

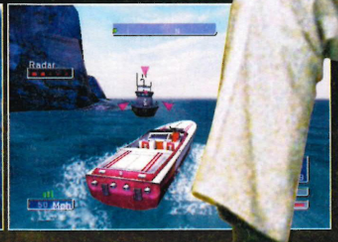
LATINO HEAT

Early signs are that the pulsing Miami-based world of *Scarface* will be enormous. Here's a small selection of the things you'll be doing in order to build your lavish drugs empire

MIX WITH THE UNDERWORLD
Gather information, negotiate deals and intimidate rivals to succeed.

DRIVE-BY SHOOTING
Kill from the safety of your vehicle. With a bazooka.

INTERNATIONAL DRUG RUNNING
Sidestep inquisitive customs officials using planes to shift your goods.



HIGHTAIL IT TO SEA
The last resort. Jump in a boat and leg it.

only to crash and burn in a mind-spazz of drug-addled paranoia. An absolute classic.

The film was so visually distinctive that it inspired a generation of films, games and real-life underworld figures. The *GTA* series borrowed from it extensively – the soundtrack for *GTA3*, the '80s Miami setting, chainsaws, lavish boss mansion and, oh, lots more for *Vice City*. And now, from the look of these screenshots, it seems as though the *Scarface* game is ready to call in the favour, pinching the basic look, feel and gameplay from Rockstar's hit series. We're talking specifically about the third-person perspective, the variety of vehicles (loads of cars, boats and planes), the mission-based storyline and all that pink neon.

Not that we think this is necessarily a bad thing. So far all we've seen of the brilliant original film on PS2 are echoes and pastiches in other games. If developer Radical Games can jack the new *Scarface* up with the things that gave De Palma's movie its brutal energy, this could be a truly impressive prospect. We're not just talking about being able to cut people up in the bath here. The original actors' voices would be a real coup – Pacino, of course, but how about mob boss Robert Loggia and love interest Michelle Pfeiffer, too? Then just pack the thing full of the locations, scenery, characters and showdowns from the film and we're in business. With Hollywood scribe David McKenna on writing duties, and Miami, Florida Keys and the Bahamas all confirmed as key locations, *Scarface* is shaping up to be "The world Chico, and everything in it." It's due in the autumn of the year of our Lord, 2005, so until then why don't you try stickin' jou head up your ass – see if it fits. ■ **ND**

You can fire weapons from your vehicles, like this speedboat

STAR WARS IS COMING!

7 reasons why *Star Wars* is your destiny

1 ***Stars Wars: Episode III Revenge Of The Sith*** is coming out on 19 May and we'll see exactly where Anakin got that black hat from.

2 ***Stars Wars: Episode III Revenge Of The Sith*** the game will be out on 5 May. We're pleased to see that LucasArts has done the right thing and farmed the game out to The Collective (the people behind *Indiana Jones And The Emperor's Tomb*). You'll be able to play as either Anakin or Obi-Wan in what – from what we saw of a very early version of the game – will be a beat-'em-up with lightsabers.

3 A ***Star Wars* Lego videogame** has been announced, and while we know what you think – "Well that'll be pump, then" – we think it might just be quite good. Expect amusing Lego-style characters and the chance to play scenes from *Episodes I-III*. It'll also have co-operative play you can drop in or out of and a free play mode where you can decide to give in to the dark side of The Force. The publisher, Giant Interactive, tells us that, "It has to be played to be believed."

4 ***Star Wars: Battlefront*** is released on 24 September. No, it's not reviewed in this issue – they're having some trouble finishing it, apparently – so either make your decision on last month's playable demo (0870 444 8656 for back issues if you missed it) or wait for our review next month.

5 We'll not stop going on about it.

6 **The original trilogy** – in its 'special edition' format (including an aged Hayden Christensen as the ghostly form of Anakin standing with Obi-Wan at the end of *Return Of The Jedi*) – will be released on DVD for the first time on 20 September (turn to page 136 for the review and then go and win yourself a copy on page 130).

7 LucasArts has announced that there's going to be a live-action **TV show based on the *Star Wars* universe**. Hopefully it'll revolve around the roots of the Sith and the Jedi and not just a youth-orientated take on *Star Wars* with raw recruits at the academy learning all about life, love and Jedi powers.

ABOUT TIME TOO

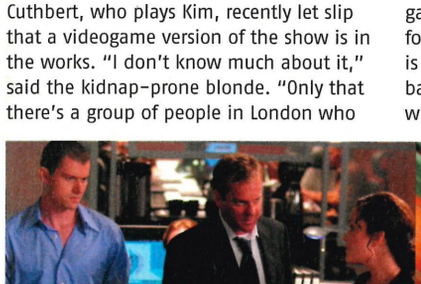
PS2 + 24 = GREATEST GAME EVER!

Loose-lipped starlet lets slip the existence of our dream game

Initially, we had our reservations about the third season of *24*. With Jack hooked on smack and his daughter Kim implausibly working for the Counter Terrorist Unit (and sporting an unflatteringly asymmetric new haircut) it looked like our favourite show might just have jumped the shark*. But within a few hours the series had hit its brilliant (but typically preposterous) stride. Now it's over, and beyond *Match Of The Day* and *Seinfeld* reruns, there's really nothing worth watching.

But here's the good news. Elisha Cuthbert, who plays Kim, recently let slip that a videogame version of the show is in the works. "I don't know much about it," said the kidnap-prone blonde. "Only that there's a group of people in London who are really cool. They came by the set, they hung out, took a lot of pictures and talked to me about some things." Cuthbert also revealed that although the game is still in the early stages, the developer is shooting for a 007 vibe.

So who's making it? Press Trilby in place, we do a bit digging and discover that the game is being developed over here, but not in London. (We should have guessed, Americans think we all come from London.) We can't say who's publishing it just yet, but think PS2 exclusive. There's also no word on a release date, but we reckon the game's likely to launch alongside the fourth season of the TV show, which is due to air next year. Naturally, we'll be backing it all the way. Just remember where you read about it first. ■ TC



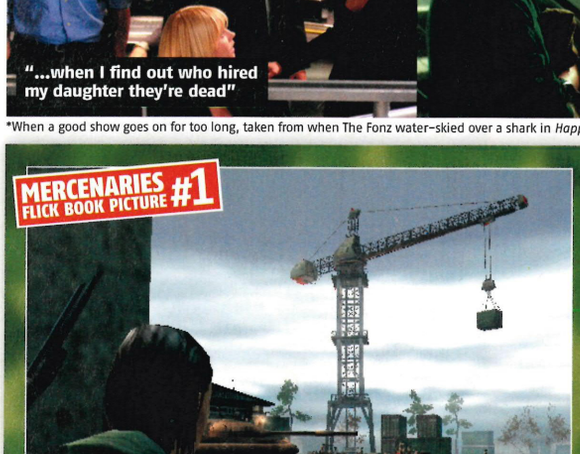
"...when I find out who hired my daughter they're dead"

Elisha makes a brave but doomed attempt to stop us looking at her bum

ALLSTAR

*When a good show goes on for too long, taken from when The Fonz water-skied over a shark in *Happy Days*.

MERCENARIES FLICK BOOK PICTURE #1



Look at the crane standing there mocking you. Blow it up now

"BABY, I THINK I'M GOING TO POP..."

Each month **Mercenaries** gets a little closer, and each month we get more excited

Let's not be coy about this, we love watching things explode. Almost anything, in fact. Just so long as there's a fountain of glowing shrapnel and a smoking crater afterwards. Which explains why nothing bursts our gaming bubble quite like buildings that refuse to die.

That's why we're so excited about *Mercenaries*. We've played with its fantastic new physics engine before and it enables you to obliterate everything you come across. So when these beautiful new screens of the resultant carnage arrived we thought, "How better to while away the time until the game's release than to present you with a delightful picture story playing out the destruction over the next few pages?" Just hold the magazine tightly between index finger and thumb and flick yourself to detonation gratification. ■ ND

INFO NUDGE

EA GETS *BLACK* POWER

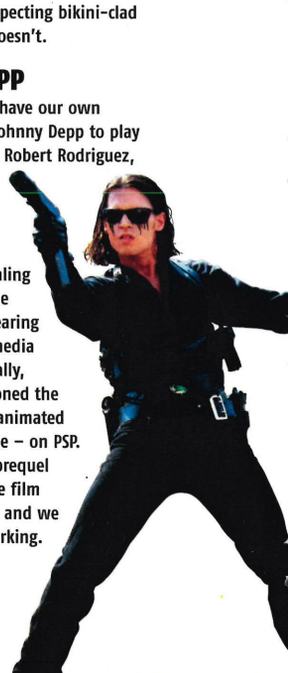
The self-imposed shroud of secrecy surrounding *Black* has been bugging us for some time. Sure, we played the game before anyone else *and* uncovered the first screenshot three months ago, but as the days and months pass our fervour grows. Now the mists are parting and *Black* is heading for the spotlight. Last month publishing behemoth EA realised that it loved Criterion so very, very much – well, you would after playing *Burnout 3* – it might as well buy the developer wholesale. *Black* was part of the package. The FPS, which Criterion insiders told us will "blow *Killzone* away", is due on PS2 next year.

JUMP *THIS* SHARK

As is the fashion all of a sudden, another classic movie is about to be lovingly nurtured (or, of course, mangled) into a game. After *The Godfather*, *Scarface* and, er, well them, comes *Jaws*. The classic shark thriller is being worked up for PS2 by Vivendi for next summer. Early details suggest that you'll get to be the shark itself, which sounds great, but will have to solve 'action puzzles' as well as feast on unsuspecting bikini-clad bathers, which doesn't.

DIGITAL DEPP

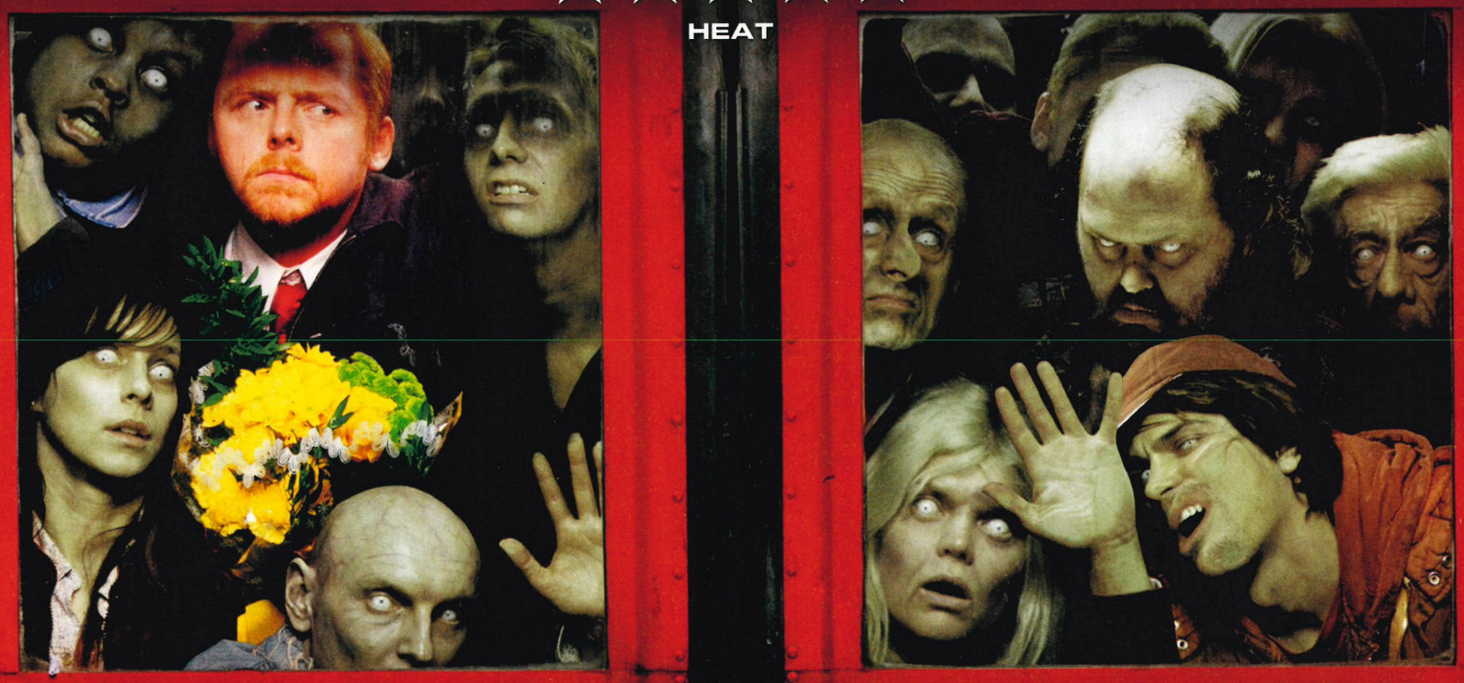
We may soon all have our own little version of Johnny Depp to play with (easy, Hels). Robert Rodriguez, director of *Once Upon A Time In Mexico*, has suggested that Depp's scene-stealing CIA agent from the film may be appearing in various multimedia projects. Specifically, Rodriguez mentioned the possibility of an animated movie and a game – on PSP. Let's hope it's a prequel as he finished the film without any eyes and we can't see that working.



"AN INSTANT CULT CLASSIC, THIS IS THE SMARTEST, FUNNIEST, BRITISH COMEDY FOR AGES"

★★★★★

HEAT



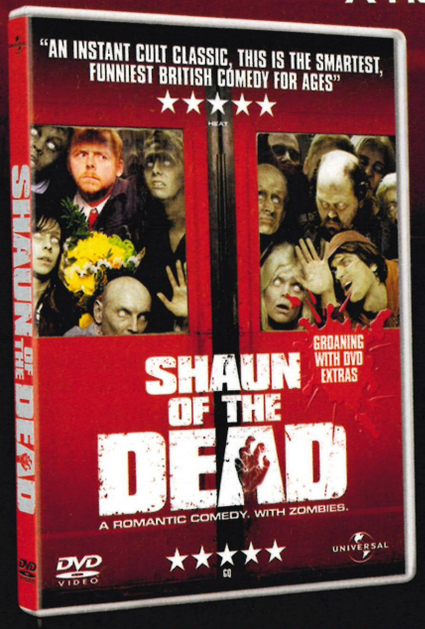
EVER FELT LIKE YOU WERE SURROUNDED BY ZOMBIES?

SHAUN OF THE DEAD

★★★★ MAXIM

★★★★★ GQ

A ROMANTIC COMEDY. WITH ZOMBIES.



"ARGUABLY THE BEST BRITISH FILM OF THE LAST DECADE"

ARENA

"DEAD FUNNY"

★★★★

FHM

GROANING WITH DVD EXTRAS

SHUFFLING ONTO DVD & VIDEO

SEPTEMBER 6

STUDIO CANAL

WORKING TITLE

UNIVERSAL

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ROLLERCOASTER OF LOVE...

IS SONY TAKING YOU FOR A RIDE?

PlayStation Experience returns, but it's moved to a theme park!

After two years at London's Earl's Court, the PlayStation Experience – Sony's annual 'you get to play games for sorta free' event – has decided to up sticks and go somewhere a bit more exciting: Alton Towers.

Things will be a bit different this year, with the Staffordshire theme park having a dedicated 'PlayStation Experience' area from Thursday, 16 September for a week, where you'll be able to play some as yet undisclosed pre-release games. And go on the rides, of course.

And then it gets a lot more interesting, because it'll all climax with a massive VIP day on Thursday, 23 September, where the Experience will take over the park with plenty of top titles, competitions and activities, and will end with some 'big name' bands (none of which have actually been announced yet) rawking out and a swanky after show celeb-heavy party.

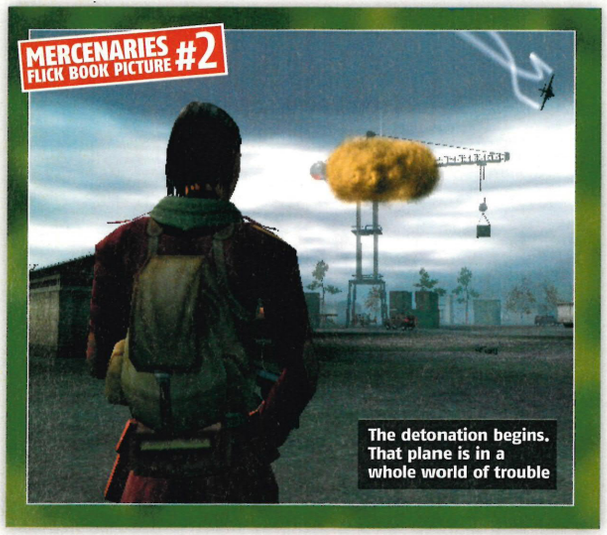
Details of how you can get into the big day were still scarily rare at the time of printing, but you can head over to www.playstation.co.uk round about now to find out more about the games, bands and perhaps even get the chance to win tickets to the whole shebang.

And don't worry if you can't make it, as it'll all be shown on TV at a later date. But we do hope to see you there. ■ RK

No 18+ titles, we're told

All your favourites will be there, but only in digital form, obviously

REX FEATURES

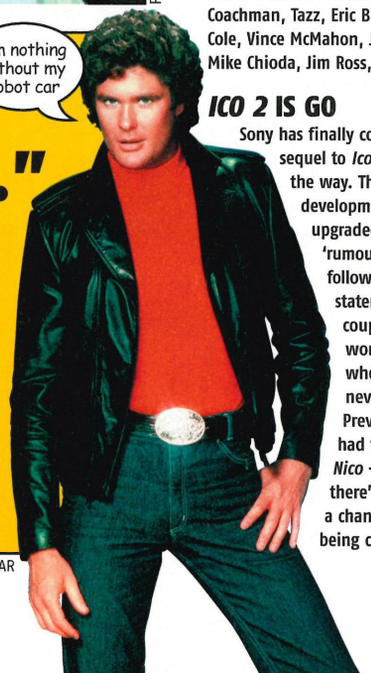


The detonation begins. That plane is in a whole world of trouble

"ONE MAN CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE..."

...As long as he has a talking car. **Knight Rider** is back for more

Although *Knight Rider: The Game* (*OPS2#27* 4/10) was a truly awful piece of software, we're secretly hoping that the proposed sequel will restore the good name of Michael Knight. What is for sure, though, is that it'll be a mission-based driver with KITT able to fire weapons, shooting mini-games, a multiplayer mode and some predictable 'special features', such as night-vision and the like. We suspect that *San Andreas* isn't *too* concerned. ■ RK



ALLSTAR

INFO NUDGE

BASKET CASE

Street basketballer, *NBA Street*, is dribbling back onto the, er, streets for more over-the-top ball action with funky new places to take your game to and plenty of new ways to dunk your load. With the now-standard customisation options in full effect, star attractions from the real world of the basket and the ball abounding and the expected EA sheen, *NBA Street V3* should be a tidy affair when it's released early next year.

WWE: THE FULL ROSTER!

A-Train, Batista, The Big Show, Booker T, Bubba Ray Dudley, Charlie Haas, Chavo Guerrero, Chris Benoit, Chris Jericho, Christian, Chuck Palumbo, D-Von Dudley, Eddie Guerrero, Edge, Garrison Cade, Hardcore Holly, JB Layfield, John Cena, Kane, Kurt Angle, Mark Jindrak, Matt Hardy, Molly Holly, Randy Orton, Rene Dupree, Rey Mysterio, Rhyno, Ric Flair, Rico, Rob Van Dam, Sable, Scotty 2 Hotty, Shawn Michaels, Shelton Benjamin, Stacy Kiebler, Tajiri, Torrie Wilson, Triple H, Trish Stratus, Undertaker, Victoria. LEGENDS: Andre The Giant, Bret Hart, Legend Kane, Legend Undertaker. NON-PLAYABLE: Earl Hebner, Jonathan Coachman, Tazz, Eric Bischoff, Michael Cole, Vince McMahon, Jerry Lawler, Mike Chioda, Jim Ross, Paul Heyman.

ICO 2 IS GO

Sony has finally confirmed that a sequel to *Ico* is definitely on the way. The PS2 game's development has been upgraded from 'rumour' to 'fact' following an official statement after a couple of years of wondering whether it would never happen. Previous rumours had the game called *Nico* – although there's just as good a chance it'll end up being called *Ico 2*...

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Authentic 1960s soundtrack including music from Iggy Pop and the Stooges, Deep Purple, the Standells and more...

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Utilise any means necessary to gain control of key enemy territory - gather intelligence and call in air strikes

Xbox version supports 8 players online in 9 multiplayer levels! Download new maps and missions!

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XBOX

XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED

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MONKEY TENNIS?

Cute monkeys! Playing footie! In balls!

Monkey Bowling is worth the price alone

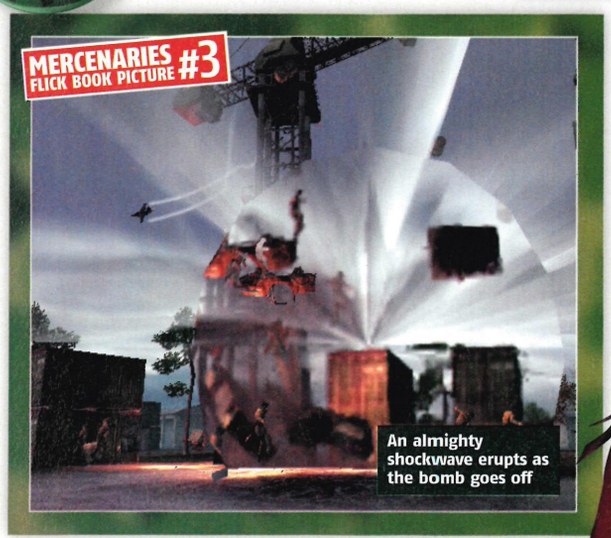
CHEERS SEGA!

It *only* took you two years to bring us the genius that is **Super Monkey Ball**

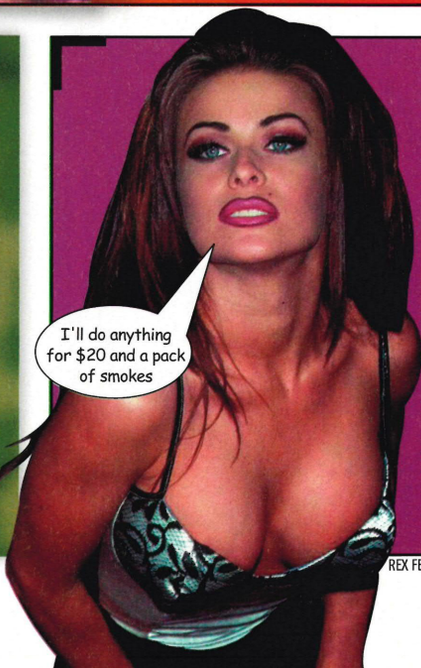
None of us have been to the zoo in years. That's mainly due to our disappointment at the lack of Manumission-style sex shows in the panda enclosure. But we could be tempted back, if the keepers started trapping the cutest monkeys in Perspex balls and then rolling them across increasingly treacherous obstacle courses. Inhumane? Maybe, but just look at their little crap-smeared faces hurtling around ribbon-thin corkscrews. Now try telling us they're not happy.

Due to its Gamecube exclusivity, we've had to pretend *Super Monkey Ball* didn't exist, restricting ourselves to secretive weekend sessions and knowing glances between fellow chimp-fanciers. But it seems Sega has finally sobered up. *Super Monkey Ball Deluxe* is due out on PS2 early next year. *Deluxe* compiles the first two games and then slaps on more extras than you can shake a baboon's arse at. The maddening-but-brilliant 'story' mode (whereby you roll your chosen monkey across a series of extravagantly designed mazes suspended in midair) features 300 stages – 114 from the first game, 140 from its sequel and a further 66 designed exclusively for this edition.

But here's what we're really excited about: *Deluxe* features all 12 of the party games from *Super Monkey Ball 1* and *2*. We simply cannot stress the genius of 'Monkey Bowling',



An almighty shockwave erupts as the bomb goes off



REX FEATURES

ELECTRA PUTS IT ABOUT ON PS2

Sexy sims action hots up as Hef nails Carmen

Last month we revealed how *Playboy: The Mansion* will let you throw parties packed with scantily clad ladies and celebrities. Sounds good, right? Would it sound any better with celebrity strumpet Carmen Electra as well? If yes, then you're in luck. Play your cards right and she'll pop up as the guest of honour at your fancy mansion bash, alongside other stellar personalities (alright, it's just Tom Arnold at the moment, but there's time...)

Carmen has also agreed to appear in *Def Jam: Fight For New York* and is rumoured to be among the 'talent' in *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*. With both those games due in October, and *Playboy* not hitting shelves until a month later, it looks like a rare case of sloppy seconds for dear old Hef. **ND**

'Monkey Target' and 'Monkey Golf' enough. The day you get bored of chipping a monkey out of a bunker is the day you might as well pack up your PS2 and start Macramé classes. However, we do have a worry. Our new boy Frenchy points out that the Gamecube's analogue stick (the only control used in the main game) has 'hexagonal grooving' to make locking the monkey into a straight line easier. We've got faith in the humble DualShock being up to the task, though, and Frenchy's been told never to mention grooving again. ■ TC

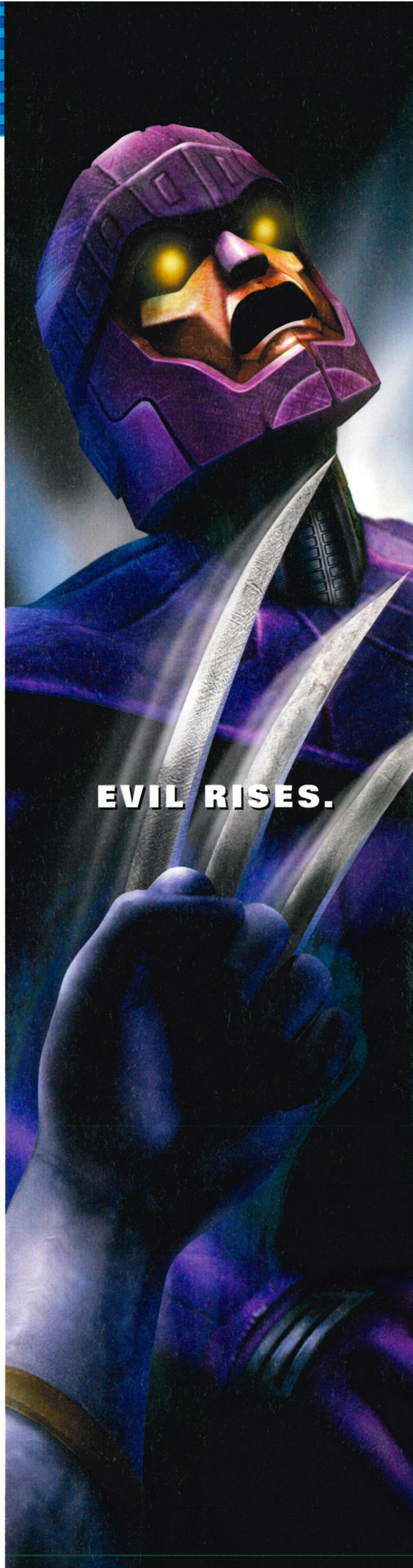
HI SCORE

- *GTA: San Andreas*, generally. It's really not far off now, you know
- The merciless, pummelling genius that is *Burnout 3*. It pities all other driving games
- *Killzone* living up to its hype with ease. Demo next month, gang
- Being recognised in the street by a small boy, shouting "I love the mag!"
- Feeling giddy with excitement over the arrival of *PES4*

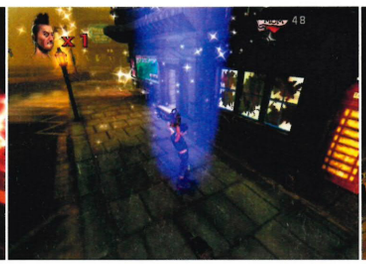
IN THE FADE

- Feeling slightly concerned about the new 'heavier' feel of *PES4*
- Not being allowed to tell you who's making the *24* game... yet
- Improperly dressed girls making the team 'lose their heads'
- Monica Belucci downplaying *that* kiss with Jada Pinkett Smith (see page 54)
- Trying to understand how the time travel works in *Prince Of Persia 2*. Failing

GAME OVER



could be a classic



FINALLY, IT'S THE ANARCHY-'EM-UP, RULE-HATING GAME WE WANTED...

Attacking people with guitars? That's anarchy for you

The intro to *Stairway To Heaven* causes untold damage

JOHNNY WHATEVER

ETA: Summer 2005

WHAT WE KNOW

We're so punk rock, the team spits in each other's faces and says good morning with a head butt before starting work every day. It's gross. This is why we like the sound of this one, which puts you in the scuffed Doc Martens of a Johnny Rotten-alike grizzled rocker, spitting at the crowd and cursing Her Majesty. Set in a futuristic London where music has been outlawed, it tells the story of punk-lovin' anarchist Johnny Whatever's rebellion against 'The Man'. Johnny isn't armed with a gun or grenades to bring about his revolution, however – his weapon of choice is an electric guitar, with the gameplay fusing rhythm action and combat. You have to strum along to the beat, which unleashes all kinds of attacks. Pitched as George Orwell's *1984* fused with *Parappa The Rapper* – with a power chord or two from *Gitaroo Man* thrown in for good measure – there's already talk that the game's concept is being pimped to Hollywood studios and TV networks to create 'subversive' comedy musicals for telly and cinemas. Christ.

COULD BE A CLASSIC BECAUSE...

Okay, so on first glance you probably won't be entirely confident that this will be any good at all, let alone a classic. And yes, they'll need to tone down the Americanised stuff you can see in the screens – that 'Mom' rating looks out of place in a futuristic fascist London, for a start – but hear us out for a minute. The ravaging battlefield of videogames is dominated by just a handful of decent heroes (Snake, Fisher, Dante, etc) but it's seriously lacking a British anarchist musician. Now, we're not going to start unpacking the Union Jack bunting *or* set it on fire in celebration – and we're aware old Brit babe Lara is currently swanning it up in the States, having a little nip / tuck – but the idea of a rhythm *and* action game, orchestrated by a punk rocker should appeal to the rawk god inside us all. Imagine strumming out a few chords and using them to create attacks you'd expect from *Soul Calibur II*? Hmm, we like the sound of that. ■ **MF**

Stand back and admire the charred burny mess you've created

BRANDO'S DYING WORDS: "PS2 RULES!" (OR THEREABOUTS)

The Godfather himself claims games are better than films before heading to meet the Don upstairs...

Word has it that the recently departed Marlon Brando performed one final moment of acting brilliance before kicking the bucket – mumbling his dialogue for the upcoming game of *The Godfather* films. Apparently he enjoyed himself so much, he told the producers that he thought the medium of videogames was 'the way forward' for entertainment. Good to know we have his blessing – it's better than a threat to buy us some concrete shoes, anyway. We've also heard that other actors from the films, such as Al Pacino, are also set to record voices for the game, which is due out from EA next year. ■ **MF**

ALLSTAR

PSP BATTERY WON'T FADE AWA

Handheld power source explained. No, it's not red Kryptonite...

As brilliant as the PSP most certainly will be, we've had our concerns about the new system. Well just one, actually... the battery. Luckily, new information has arrived to reassure us. It seems the battery life will vary depending on which function of the versatile portable you use. Here's how the PSP is likely to fare against the competition.

BATTERY FACE-OFF How PSP stands up to other handheld gizmos

MOVIES

PSP Vs PANASONIC DVD-LS5

Panasonic DVD-LS5
Battery life: 2.5 hours

PSP
Battery life: 2-2.5 hours

UMD movie playback requires constant disc-spinning and screen use, resulting in the quickest drain of the PSP's battery. Still, at around 2.5 hours, this is comparable to a dedicated portable DVD player. And, because retrieving data from a memory stick is more power-efficient, swapping them for UMDs could increase playing time to around ten hours.

MUSIC

PSP Vs iPOD

Fourth generation Apple iPod
Battery life: 12 hours

PSP
Battery life: 4 hours

Power diverted from the screen increases UMD music playback durability to around four hours. Significantly less than the latest iPod (the newly-released 4G iPod comes in at 12 hours, four more than the 3G model), but again, storing music on a memory stick will extend battery life significantly, with 20 hours being a realistic estimate of what you can expect to get.

GAMES

PSP Vs NINTENDO DS

Nintendo DS
Battery life: 10 hours

PSP
Battery life: 4-10 hours

Battery life will vary depending on the type of the game you're playing. For instance, accessing load information from the disc drains power quickly, so if the game you're playing loads new levels frequently your play time could be as low as four hours. More efficient organisation could see battery length challenging PSP's arch-rival, the Nintendo DS.

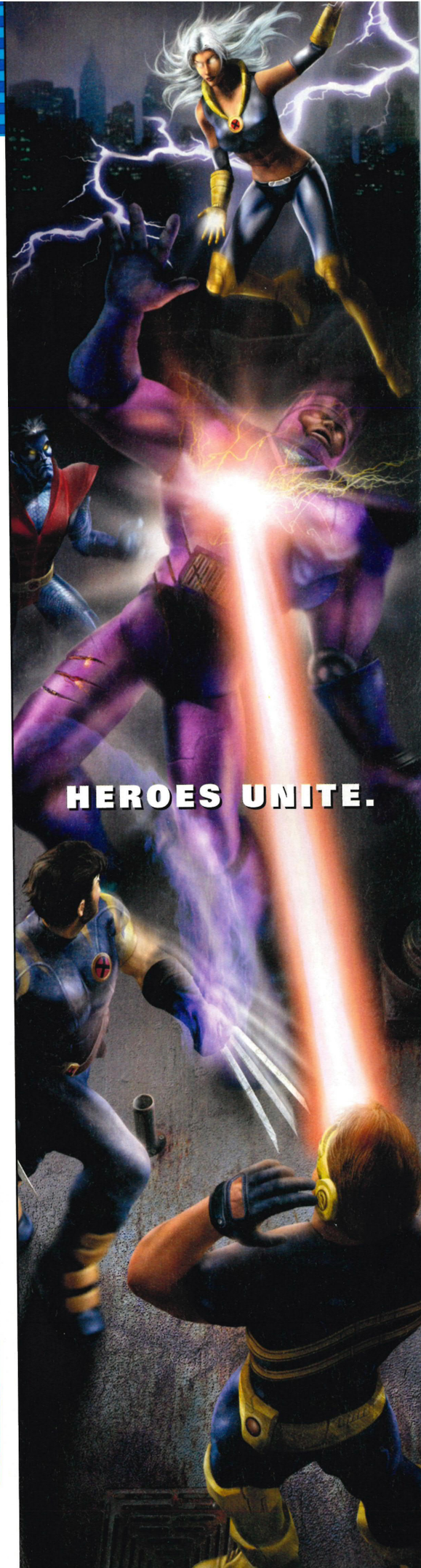
PLEASURE

PSP Vs SEX INSTRUMENT

The Rampant Rabbit
Battery Life: 4 hours

PSP
Battery Life: ?

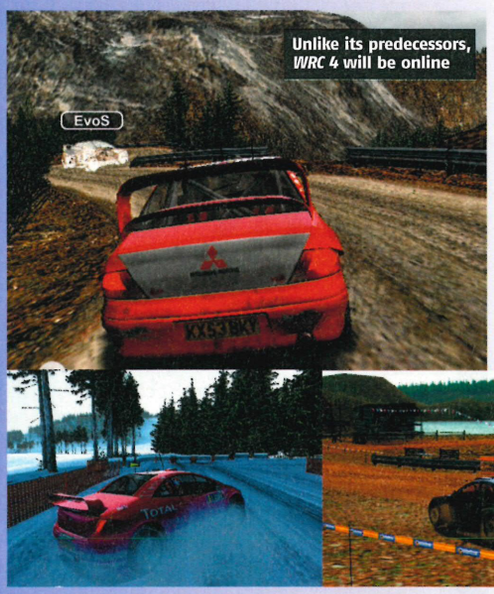
This is one use for the PSP you might not have considered, but we promise there is someone out there who will have. How much pleasure you squeeze out of the legendary rabbit really depends on how you use it and exactly what kind of lights-out action you enjoy. Whatever you do, though, don't get the two systems confused. The PSP's sleek, but it's not *that* sleek.



SPOILER ALERT

WHAT'S THE POINT OF *WRC 4*?

With *Richard Burns* already out and *Colin McRae* about to follow, do we really need *another* rally game? Martin Kenwright, the top fella at Evolution Studios (the people making *WRC 4*), says yes...



Unlike its predecessors, *WRC 4* will be online

THE LICENCE
We have all the official teams, all the cars and drivers, not mention all 16 official WRC rallies – that's over 100 unique stages."

HANDLING
"A real rally car should be easy to control – the drivers have so much else to worry about, they don't need a difficult-to-handle car on top of it. We've tuned it with race drivers and refined it with gamers. We're pretty sure this is the whole package and not just on D-pad. With a force feedback wheel it becomes a whole new game. Give it a try and we think you'll be amazed!"

TECHNICAL RALLY STUFF
"We really did our homework on the handling model, building a new car-simulation system from scratch using techniques from the automotive industry. For instance, our slip-angle tyre model means there are no central pivots of fake forces. The car's motion comes entirely from the wheels, gravity and aerodynamics."

ACCURACY
"[For the courses] all our data comes from satellite imagery and we're able to recreate stages with up to one metre accuracy. We've taken thousands of reference photographs from each of the countries."

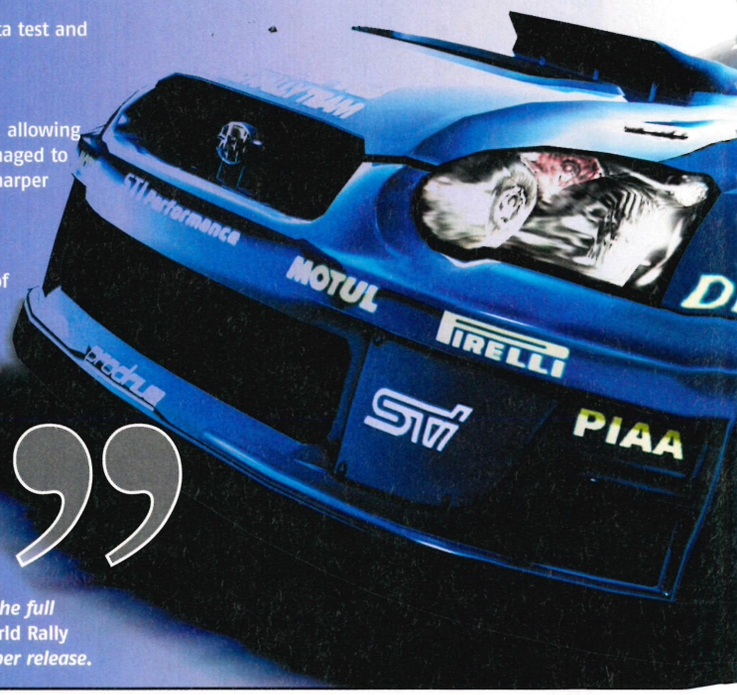
NOT BEING TOO ANAL
"There are certain WRC rules you can't include for reasons of practicality. For example, we have no penalties for going over the repair time. The point is that players aren't rally mechanics, and it wouldn't be right to penalise them for going over budget."

ONLINE
"We've recently had the game in a public beta test and the comments have been overwhelming."

TECHNICAL GAME-MAKING STUFF
"We've improved the rendering performance, allowing us to draw much further out. We've also managed to make things like buildings and trees much sharper and effectively look more real."

COOL EFFECTS
"One thing that really shines is the number of windscreen effects we have. From things like rain and snow falling on the screen and the way the wiper blades smear and clean the glass, to the gradual build-up of dirt."

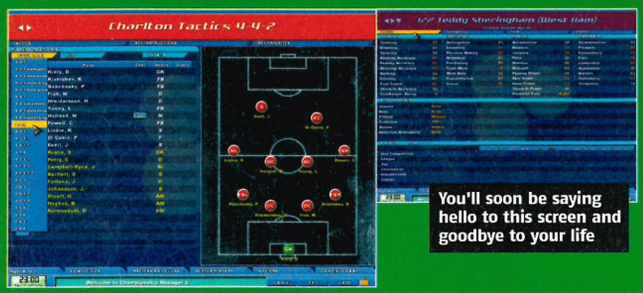
NOT CARING ABOUT COLIN
"While we do look at other racing games, we focus more on the real sport. WRC is our inspiration. Rally is the most adrenalin-packed motor sport there is and we want to capture its essence in a game."



We'll have a closer look at (deep breath for the full title)* WRC 4: The Official Game Of The FIA World Rally Championship *next month before its November release.

Q: WHAT GAME SOLD 124,627 COPIES ON PC IN A SINGLE WEEK? A: *CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 4*

And why do we care so much? Because **Championship Manager 5** is on its way to PS2...

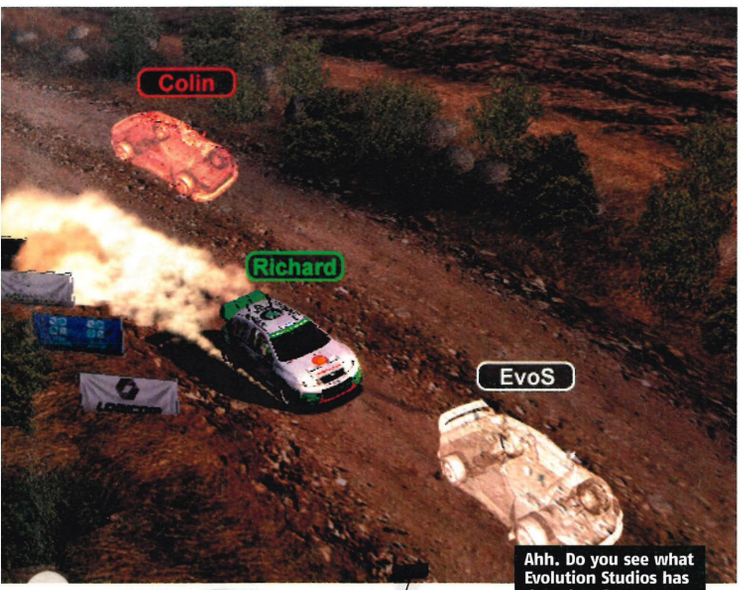


You'll soon be saying hello to this screen and goodbye to your life

When it comes to football management, there is only one name – *Championship Manager*. And, finally, this colossus of the footie world is going to be released on PS2, which should cause some worries to those console stalwarts of the genre, *LMA Manager* and *Total Club Manager*, who're both releasing their annual updates next month.

Since its launch more than ten years ago, *Champ* – as it's known – has become a phenomenon, with its enormous database, hundreds of researchers round the world, spot-on tracking of young players and the sort of depth that you can only really appreciate by giving up your day job. It has spawned a massive online community, its own magazine and stunning sales, culminating in the 124,627 who bought last year's version in its first week on sale.

It did make the move to Xbox last year, but the first conversion from PC to console was hugely disappointing, so we hope the new developer – the old development team, Sports Interactive, has parted company with publisher Eidos and is making its own PC-only game – is able to retain the depth of *Champ* with the user-friendliness of, say, *LMA Manager*. We'll be busy scouting it right up until its debut some time next spring. RK



Ahh. Do you see what Evolution Studios has done here?

Kwik Fitz

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

CONFIRMED: There will be a *Killzone* sequel on PS2

RUMOURED: A Brit hottie will head up publicity for *Need For Speed Underground 2*

CONFIRMED: *Mortal Kombat 7* will appear on PS3

RUMOURED: *Mashed 2* is currently in pre-production

CONFIRMED: *True Crime 2* is on its way next year

CONFIRMED: Keanu Reeves comic book adaptation movie *Constantine* is being made into a game by SCi

CONFIRMED: Activision is making a *Fantastic Four* game to coincide with the movie

RUMOURED: *SingStar Party* – due this November – will focus on duets

CONFIRMED: A *Psi-Ops* motion picture is being made

CONFIRMED: The next *Silent Hill* game will be on PS3

RUMOURED: EA is going to make a game based on next year's *Batman Begins* movie

TOTAL WAR – JAPANESE STYLE

Kessen isn't just about watching any more – it's time to get your hands dirty

Get more involved in this Japanese scrap-athon

Ever heard of *Kessen*? There have been two instalments so far and both have been steady, if unspectacular ancient Japan-set strategy war titles where you set up battles and then watched in glorious cut-scene quality visuals as they were played out. But for *Kessen III*, publisher KOEI is upping the stakes a bit and you'll be able to affect battles as they happen.

Another change is that whereas before you could only command a small part of the army, you're now the big fella in charge, and in control of the entire fighting force.

As ever with *Kessen*, there'll be a mountain of cut-scenes setting up the plot – which tells the 'based-on-a-true-story' tale of Oda Nobunaga's 16th Century battle to bring peace to Japan. The bulk of the play will still be setting up your attacks and planning strategy. But the change of emphasis means that this should be a lot more interesting than the old dynamic, which sometimes felt like you were fiddling with a spreadsheet before settling down to watching a movie. We look forward to waging some war of our own come its release next summer. ■ RK

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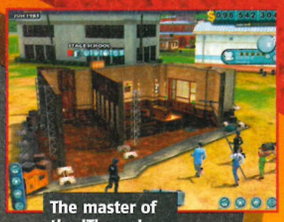

The master of the 'Theme' games returns

WANNA BE A PLAYER?

What would *you* do if someone gave you a movie studio to run?

Us? We'd throw out all the romcoms, period dramas, Hugh Grant films, anything 'worthy' and, if we're really honest, anything lacking at least casual nudity. But that's just us, right? Well, we'll be able to see about that next year when the long-time-a-coming project *The Movies* finally appears from Lionhead Studios (the people behind PC behemoth *Black & White*).

You start by setting up a movie studio from scratch back in the silent era and attempt to make it into a major player by building up your Hollywood lot, developing stars and making movies. And that's where it gets a bit more interesting than, say, *Theme Park World*, because you actually *can* make the films yourself. You decide the genre, choose the set (as you get bigger you'll build more sets, giving you more scope to make different kinds of flicks), the actors (you'll have some on contract) and then, if you want, you can direct it yourself. You can even use the simple but usable software to edit the scenes you've set up – we've seen it running on a PC and it looked easy enough – or add credits and effects. Your movies are then judged by critics who will pick apart any inconsistencies or poor ideas. This in turn can affect the box-office take – your only source of income.

Until its expected winter 2005 release, we'll be planning how we're going to make our own versions of *The Godfather*, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Glengarry Glen Ross*... ■ RK

IT MAKES SENSE

HANDS OFF!

New **Spider-Man** game on the way, plus we reveal Kirsten's special request...

ALLSTAR

"Are you okay? You look a little flat tonight"

Imagine being the lead character artist on *Spider-Man 2*. When it comes to bringing Kirsten Dunst to life digitally, do you go for total realism or do you go the extra mile... work late... and make her norks as big as the PS2 can handle. It's a no-brainer, isn't it? Unfortunately, the actress – who had final approval over Mary Jane's appearance + wasn't entirely impressed. "They made her boobs gigantic," reveals Dunst, adding that she told Activision to, "Tone down the boobs please!" Strangely though, she seems unconcerned that her virtual face appears to have been constructed using fire-damaged polygons. Next month: Colin Farrell moans that his cock looks too big in the *SWAT* game. In other Spidey news Activision has announced that in the absence of a movie release next year it's making *Ultimate Spider-Man* based on the popular comic-book re-imaginging of Spidey's life. ■ TC

She's got game

Because not all gamers stop to scratch their balls

Fresh from leaving the toilet seat up, brawling at the footie and downing ten pints of ale soaked up with a kebab, our game girl Kirsten Kearney puts forward the argument that yes chaps, girls can do it longer...

I switch on my PS2 at 2pm on Saturday. At 4 o'clock I go for a pee. I start feeling hungry at about 5:30pm, but I don't pause the game for another 45 minutes. I throw a frozen lasagne in the vague direction of the oven, get a fresh can of Coke, run back and un-pause. I start feeling shaky around 8 o'clock and realise I've just cremated a lasagne. I try to eat lasagne ashes while holding the controller. Give up and have fizzy cola bottle sweets instead. I bite the top off the last fizzy cola bottle, pretend to drink it, chuckle to myself and decide that this constitutes a screen break. I start to feel nauseous around 10pm but have to just get past this next bit of the game. Finally, I stagger to bed at midnight and dream that I'm still playing the game.

A gaming marathon is an ethereal and unpredictable treat. When you first get a PS2 you do it all the time. After a while, you recall fondly such things as friendship and the use of your legs and learn to ration your gaming time. Once in a while, though, you hit on that wholly immersive gaming experience that has you jumping up, blurry eyed and crazed, brought back to the real world by the sound that all gamers fear... the tweeting of birds as dawn shockingly breaks – although, due to the feeling it gives you, it not so much brakes, but smashes on the ground like a large basketful of crockery dropped from a very high block of flats.

In the last six months I've done the bloated time-sucking, eye-bleeding marathon twice. The games that sucked me into these mammoth sessions? (Drum roll) wait for it... *MetropolisMania* and *SOS The Final Escape*. Yes, those classics... you've never heard of them, have you? That's the thing though, like with serial killers and people who are exceptionally good at *SingStar*, it's never the ones you expect...

Do you let the skirt wearers in your life play your PS2? Then tell us about it. Mail Kirsten at ps2postal@futurenet.co.uk

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MOST WANTED

UK GAMES AWARDS 2004

The clock is ticking, friends, and there are now just a few weeks left to send us your Most Wanted entries. So get on with it and make a difference!

WIN! THE ULTIMATE GAMING PRIZE!

It's our educated opinion that the year of our Lord 2004 will go down in gaming history as one of the best that we've seen since a packet of fags cost £1.99. And, best of all, we're about to enter the greatest part of the year, with a truly stunning selection of games pouring from the bubbling fountain of videogaming excellence – and, naturally, all of the best stuff is heading to your PS2 so make sure you vote in the most important category – Most Wanted PlayStation 2 Game. We're *pretty* sure who's gonna win, but you never know. And if, for some reason, you're looking forward to games on other platforms you can vote for them as well. It's okay, your PS2 won't mind too much as you eye up those other consoles, you tart.

THE WINTER OF OUR DISC CONTENT

So it's going to be a winter of pure concentrated gaming joy, and here's the proof... In the coming months you'll be able to play *Devil May Cry 3*, *Gran Turismo 4*, *GTA: San Andreas*, *Killzone*, *Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater* and loads more. Y'see, we've already *played* most of these games and know that they're all 100% gems; pixellated perfection in practically everything they do. And, as you read our magazine, trust our opinion and vote accordingly, we'd guess you've got a good idea, too.

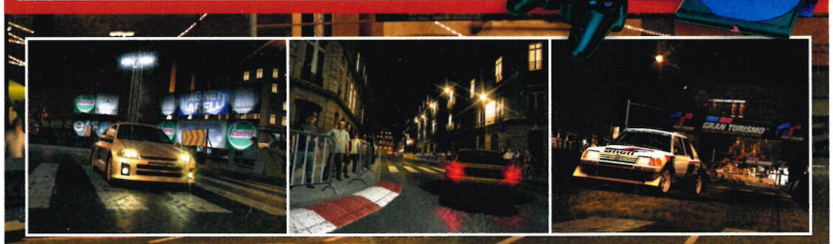
But the sands of time are slipping through our game-soaked fingers like, um, sand, and the chance for you to vote is escaping. You've got until 30 September to register your choice (take a look to your right to find out how to do it) and, along with the immense satisfaction that you're making a real difference to which of the gaming behemoths runs off with the shiny winner's bauble, you're also entered into a prize of such indescribable brilliance that we suspect new and intricate forms of cheating may be developed just to try to win it.

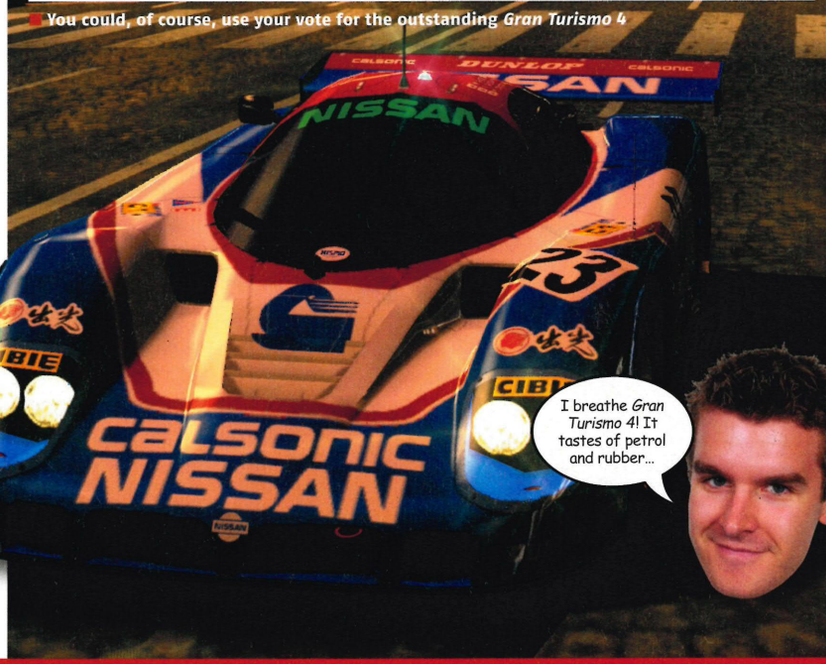
And so the talking is over. It's now time to put your vote where your mouth is and let the whole world know that the ultimate videogame of 2004/2005 is... ■

THE MOST WANTED PRIZE

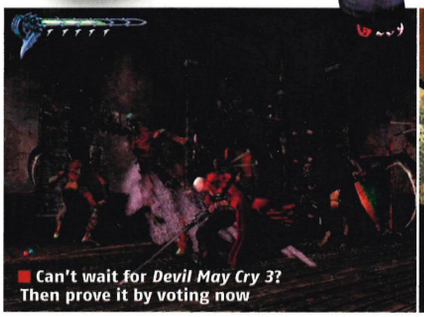
One lucky punter is going to walk off with a very special prize indeed. In fact, it's our professional opinion that a magazine has never given away such a stupendous grouping of plastic, computer circuitry and expensive-looking kit before. Like, ever

- A Widescreen TV
- Surround Sound Speakers
- PlayStation 2
- GameCube
- The winning game title from each Most Wanted category
- Xbox
- PC





■ You could, of course, use your vote for the outstanding *Gran Turismo 4*



■ Can't wait for *Devil May Cry 3*? Then prove it by voting now

■ *TimeSplitters Future Perfect* is well worth your vote, if you ask us

AND THE NOMINEES FOR MOST WANTED UK GAMES 2004 ARE...

Go on, make a forthcoming videogame very happy...

MOST WANTED PLAYSTATION 2 GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	VOTING CODE
Devil May Cry 3	Capcom	PS1
Gran Turismo 4	Sony	PS2
Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas	Rockstar	PS3
Killzone	Sony	PS4
Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater	Konami	PS5
Prince Of Persia 2	Ubisoft	PS6
Pro Evolution Soccer 4	Konami	PS7
The Getaway: Black Monday	Sony	PS8
TimeSplitters Future Perfect	EA	PS9
WWE SmackDown! Vs Raw	THQ	PS10

MOST WANTED SPORTS GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	PLATFORM	VOTING CODE
Championship Manager 5	Eidos	PC	SG1
Football Manager 2005	Sega	PC	SG2
Pro Evolution Soccer 4	Konami	PC/PS2/Xbox	SG3
WWE SmackDown! Vs Raw	THQ	PS2	SG4
WWE WrestleMania XXI	THQ	Xbox	SG5

MOST WANTED DRIVING GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	PLATFORM	VOTING CODE
Forza Motorsport	Microsoft	Xbox	DG1
Gran Turismo 4	Sony	PS2	DG2
Need For Speed Underground 2	EA	GC/PC/PS2/Xbox	DG3
OutRun2	Sega	Xbox	DG4
Richard Burns Rally	SCi	PC	DG5

MOST WANTED FPS GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	PLATFORM	VOTING CODE
Doom 3	Activision	PC	FP1
GoldenEye: Rogue Agent	EA	PS2/GC/Xbox	FP2
Half-Life 2	Vivendi	PC	FP3
Halo 2	Microsoft	Xbox	FP4
Killzone	Sony	PS2	FP5

MOST WANTED ACTION/ADVENTURE GAME

GAME TITLE	PUBLISHER	PLATFORM	VOTING CODE
Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas	Rockstar	PS2	AA1
Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater	Konami	PS2	AA2
Prince Of Persia 2	Ubisoft	PS2	AA3
Resident Evil 4	Capcom	GC	AA4
The Legend Of Zelda: Four Swords Adventures	Nintendo	GC	AA5

HOW TO VOTE FOR YOUR MOST WANTED UK GAMES OF 2004 *AND* BE IN WITH A SHOT AT AN INCREDIBLE PRIZE

Got a portable telephone receiver or a personal computation machine equipped with a connection to the World Wide Web? Then you, dear reader, are hot to trot...

SMS:

1. Txt MOSTWANTED followed by a space
2. Then the VOTING CODE (eg DG1)
3. To be entered into the competition to win the MOSTWANTED PRIZE, you need to answer the following tie-breaker question in no more than 140 characters: I like the game I've voted for because...

Example: MOSTWANTED DG1. IT'S GOT THE BEST GAMEPLAY & GRAPHICS BY MILES. I'VE BOUGHT EVERY VERSION, SO I KNOW I'LL STILL ABSOLUTELY THRASH ALL OF MY MATES AT IT! (NB. We've given this lame-o example so you won't be tempted to do the same. Get creative!)

4. Send your txt to 83130 (message costs 25p inc VAT plus your normal text cost)

ONLINE:

1. You can also vote by logging on to the Games Radar website. All you need to do is click on the MOST WANTED logo, and follow the instructions. To be entered into the competition to win the MOST WANTED prize you need to answer the following tie-breaker question in no more than 140 characters: I like the game I've voted for because...

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Text messages cost 25p Inc VAT plus your normal text cost. Service provider: Opera Telecom, B1 2JB. The closing date for entries is 30/09/2004. The winner of the Most Wanted Prize will be notified by telephone on 15/10/04. Multiple entries are allowed. Terms and conditions apply. This competition is not exclusive to this magazine. The editor's decision is final; no correspondence will be entered into. Entrants must not be an employee, agent or subcontractor of the promoters, or a relative of any of those persons. The promoter is Future Publishing Limited, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW, Company No: 02008885. No purchase necessary. There is no alternative to the prizes stated. The address for postal entries is 'Most Wanted UK Games Awards 2004', Future Plus, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW. Proof of posting will not be taken as proof of delivery. Winners' names will not be published. Written requests for details will be honoured.

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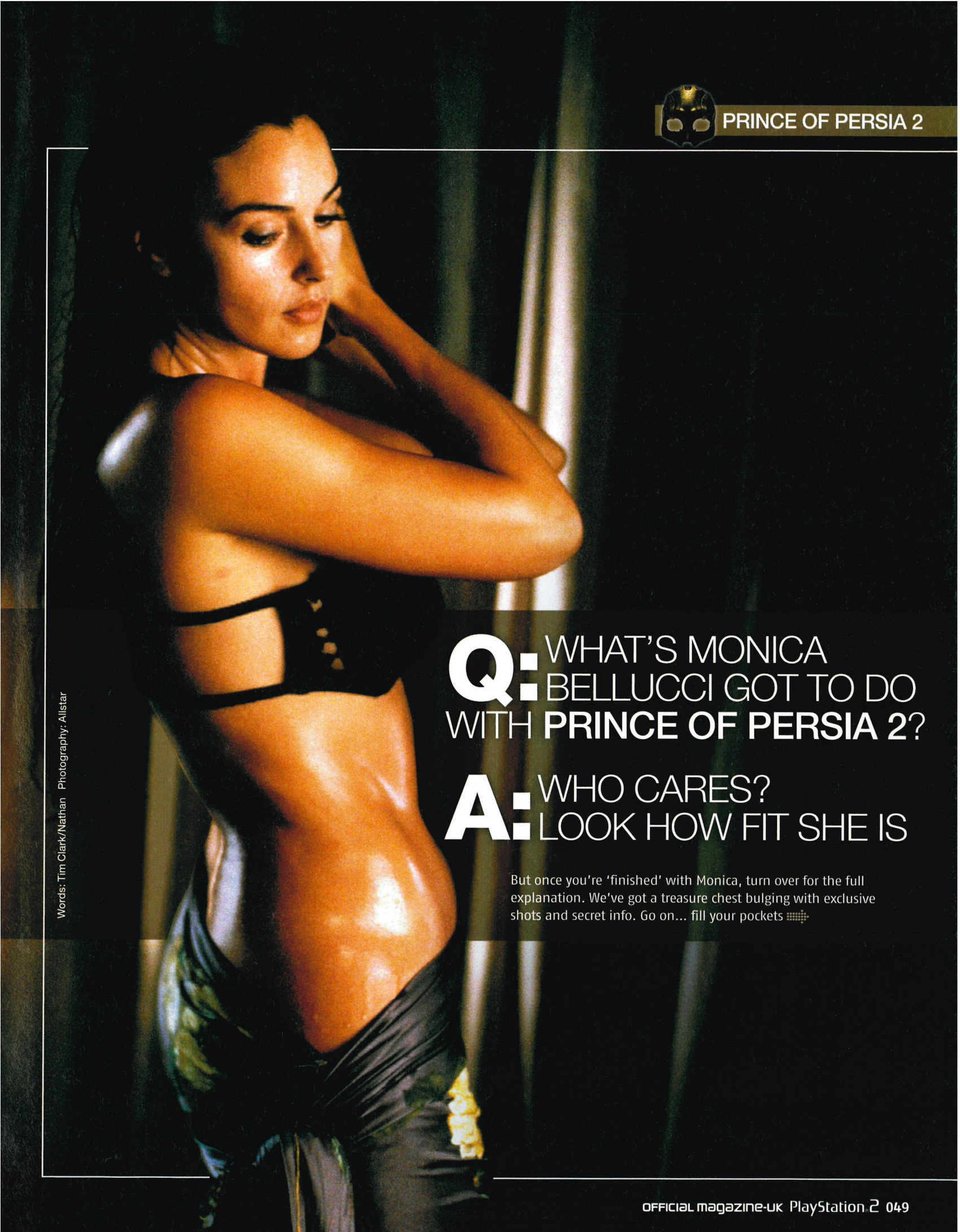


Q: WHAT'S MONICA BELLUCCI GOT TO DO WITH **PRINCE OF PERSIA 2**?

A: WHO CARES? LOOK HOW FIT SHE IS

But once you're 'finished' with Monica, turn over for the full explanation. We've got a treasure chest bulging with exclusive shots and secret info. Go on... fill your pockets

Words: Tim Clark/Nathan Photography: Allstar

Two blades this time, indicating just how utterly nails the prince now is

A mean, tormented look, a bit like Jim Caviezel in *The Count Of Monte Cristo*

The Amulet Of Time gives the prince his magical powers. Looks a bit Argos

Q: SO, WHAT'S HE BROODING ABOUT?

A: LIFE, TIME TRAVEL BEHEADING DUDES, YOU KNOW, THE USUAL

Outside, intercontinental ballistic missiles arc over Europe, launched 'accidentally' by a rogue Communist general on an epic vodka bender. Let's call him Zoltan, for argument's sake. The three-minute warning sounds and you scramble under the bed in the futile hope that a six-year-old Posturepedic mattress might provide some defence against a ten-megaton blast. Switching on the small torch that dropped out of a cracker last Christmas, you're understandably surprised to find Monica Bellucci also hiding under the bed. "Bonjourno darling," she says. And suddenly the day doesn't seem like a *total* write-off.

See, no matter how grim the situation, the addition of a really hot Italian actress will always make things easier to bear. Now imagine introducing Her Curviness into a scenario that's already brilliant – like being an inventor who's just designed a time travel machine that also plays MP3s and makes toast – and the effect is magnified even further. Such is very much the case with *Prince Of Persia 2*. Developer Ubisoft has taken something already dribbling with quality, and then added the digital equivalent of a glacé cherry on top in the form of La Bellucci.

She provides the voice for Kaileena, one of the three new girls in the game, and we've got an almost sinister amount of info on all of them, including an exclusive interview with Monica. But don't go thinking we've just spent the whole month scouring 'specialist' websites for the right picture. No siree. That was art lady Niki's job. The rest of us have been playing *Prince Of Persia 2* until the disc was sobbing little shiny tears. We've also been trying to make sense of how the whole time travelling fandango works. But before that, time for a quick recap. [Cue the Turkish Delight music.] Having spazzed up the space-time continuum in the last game, the prince is now being hunted by a supernatural assassin called The Dahaka, who has pursued him across the world like a particularly intense ex-girlfriend. Unlike most ex-girlfriends, however, The Dahaka is totally indestructible. Having exhausted all other possibilities – "look, I've said I'm sorry" – our boy heads for the island where the Sands Of Time originated, hoping to travel into the past, prevent its creation thereby erasing his cock-up. Yup, that's *bound* to work.

Jolly rodgered

Gameplay begins on the deck of the prince's schooner, which is being overrun by unearthly swordsmen. The whole sequence is designed to show off the new, freeform combat system – and in full flow it's a truly majestic sight. Using his newfound skills, the prince can flip through the air and decapitate opponents with a single swipe. It's just one devastatingly cool move in his vastly expanded repertoire. Our biggest criticism of the last game was its repetitive fighting system, which had you wading through seemingly interminable waves of enemies using a handful of flashy combos. What, *another* wave of identikit enemies? Stop, you're spoiling us...

Understandably then, the development team has focused its energy on making the combat as fluid as the already brilliant

Scimitar Smackdown!

Taking a look at exactly what's so damn good about the new fighting system in *Prince Of Persia 2*

■ Dual wielding
Having ditched the dagger of time, the prince puts his newly freed hand to good use by picking up a variety of pointy death implements. Among the weapons that can be snatched from fallen enemies are curved swords, hefty axes, giant cleaving blades and a dirty great hammer.

■ Finishing moves
Our prince is all grown up now – and he's got the brutal moves to prove it. When near-to-death enemies change to a unhealthy pale colour, it's time for him to put them out of their misery by decapitating them (either one, or two-sworded), impaling them or tearing them into two spinning halves.

■ New moves
As well as dozens of new attack combos and special moves, the prince can now kick, throw his secondary weapon and get enemies into a lethal strangle hold from behind. The new system also enables him to choose from a range of devastating finishing moves after simple attacks.

■ Variety of enemies
There are no more spawning waves of enemies to slow the action down. They've been replaced by a range of nasty new sand creatures who push the prince to his acrobatic limits. Different foes will defend better against certain attacks, so princey has to continually change his strategy and vary his moves.

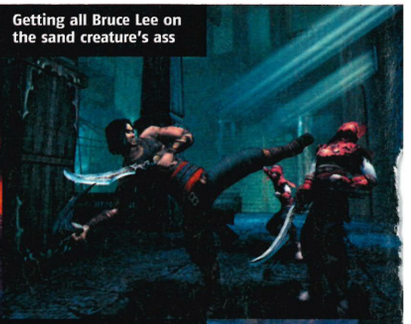
■ Environmental attacks
Developer Ubisoft wanted the acrobatics and fighting to form one coherent whole, and it's done a fine job. The prince can now swipe at sand creatures while sliding down a rope or performing his patented wall run. He leaps from poles and rebounds from walls in a whirlwind of gymnastic deadliness. Beautiful.

■ Bosses
A big change from the last game, where the Vizier was the only real Boss the royal fella had to deal with. This time out he'll face off against a horde of big end-of-level opponents, including the Brute (like a cave troll, but bigger and meaner), the Crowmaster and the Empress Of Time herself.

Rope swinging is the newest of our boy's acrobatic tricks

Not even curtains are safe from the Prince's wrath

Not only is there a greater variety of enemies, but they die more theatrically


Getting all Bruce Lee on the sand creature's ass

Hefty sword, nasty decap. We like this new prince

acrobatics. No small task, but as the prince rolls under a blade, flips his attacker into the air with his feet and then springs off a wall to deliver the fatal blow – all in one buttery smooth motion – it's clear the sequel's on the right track. The increased feeling of choice and control is palpable and once the sound effects are in place (we're hoping for blood spurts borrowed from *Kill Bill Vol 1*'s House Of Blue Leaves sequence) and the animations have been tweaked, the action promises to be tight and kinetic. But although clearly a huge improvement, we'd hate for fighting to become the heart of *Prince Of Persia 2*.

From the moment *POP2* was unveiled we've had our doubts about its new, darker direction. The worry being that this was 'dark' as seen through the eyes of a marketing executive with an Evanescence album. The decision to take the sequel in a more adult direction (in this case adult meaning that the prince has got stubble and looks *really* cross) is an obvious response to the first game's misfire last Christmas, when it initially failed to break into the upper reaches of the charts. However, thanks to strong word-of-mouth, *The Sands Of Time* eventually went on to sell over a million copies worldwide. Nonetheless, the thinking is that this time The Kids are going to go Sunny Delight mental for the prince's designer violence. But we couldn't help thinking that it was a shame the first game's gorgeous sun-kissed locations have been replaced by earthy browns, slate greys and the odd splash of crimson. Or so we thought...

The opening battle on the ship climaxes with a duel between the prince and Shahdee. She's the chick who seems to be in charge of the attacking creatures and, presumably in a bid to distract opponents, is wearing an outfit thrown out by Ivy from *Soul Calibur* for being too pervy (that'll be it on the right). Following a couple of 'interactive cut-scenes' – more like mini-games, but pleasant enough – our boy's thrown overboard. Having washed up on the shore of the island he's attacked by crows. Once they've been dispatched there's a chance to really admire the surroundings. Truth is, despite the more sombre palette, visually *POP2* is nothing short of astonishing. Exploring the surrounding countryside – waterfalls, rock faces and twisted trees – the sensation is of being inside one of those paintings used as backdrops in Hammer horror films. Suddenly the notion of the prince as a doomed hero starts to make sense.

Bellucci-voiced Kaileena will help the prince much like Farrah did last time

Turn the palace's traps against your enemies

Time travel made simple

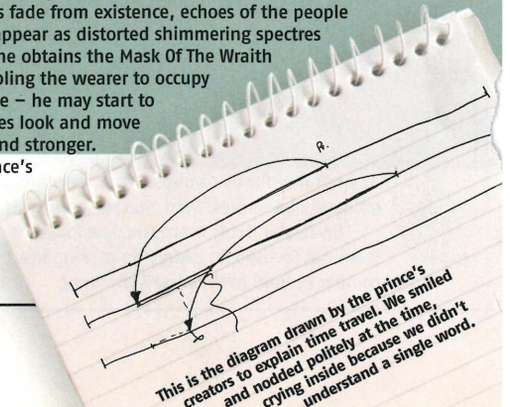
Step aside please Mr Hawking. *OPS2* is here to talk you through the basics of temporal teleportation. Brain in gear? Then we'll begin...

The Empress Of Time's run down doer-upper palace gets the full restoration treatment as the prince slips back through the ages. Looks proper plush

So The Dahaka has forced our boy to try his hand at time travelling again. But this time it won't be limited to making good those iffy 'yeah, I can make that gap' decisions. On the Island Of Time – birthplace of the destructive sands from the last game – the prince travels centuries, not just seconds, into the past, thanks to handy warp points dotted around the gloomy isle. The visual effect that warping has is astonishing – the Island's looming and decrepit architecture reverting to its ancient opulence before your eyes. And it's no mere gimmick, either. The prince's ability to time travel is crucial to the gameplay, enabling him to overcome tricky four-dimentional puzzles – obstacles to his progression that can only be overcome by changing something in the past.

This time-hopping isn't without its consequences, though. Each time the prince changes history, the timeline from the point at which he arrived to the point he travelled back from no longer exists – he's changed that course of events. Multiple leaps will result in several timelines, or portions of timelines, being invalidated by the game of temporal changing rooms our hero is playing. If you're confused then just take a look at the handy diagram below given to us by the boys at Ubisoft to soothe our brainache...

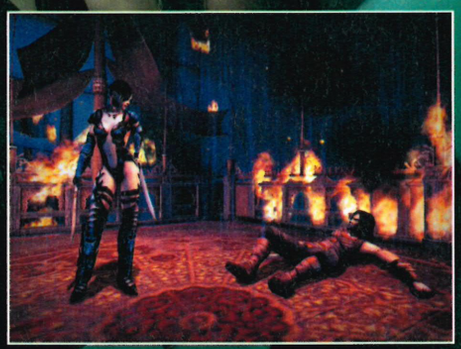
As the superseded timelines fade from existence, echoes of the people and events fading with it will appear as distorted shimmering spectres in the prince's 'present'. Once he obtains the Mask Of The Wraith – a handy ancient artifact enabling the wearer to occupy two spaces in the same timeline – he may start to notice that some of these echoes look and move a lot like himself. Only faster. And stronger. This is the Sandwraith, the prince's mysterious time-hopping double who'll make our boy look like a right girl. Plenty more on his role in next month's issue.


This is the diagram drawn by the prince's creators to explain time travel. We smiled and nodded politely at the time, crying inside because we didn't understand a single word.

Lips like over-ripe cherries, inspired by *Dark Angel*'s Jessica Alba

Outfit and cleavage borrowed from Salma Hayek's star turn in *From Dusk Till Dawn*

Armoured knickers, which on close inspection appear to be leaking slightly



Q: IS SHE A GOODIE OR A BADDIE?

A: THAT'S SHAHDEE, AND A BIT OF BOTH, AS IT HAPPENS

It may take ten minutes to climb this beast, but it's worth it for this moment

Princey wished he had never joined the circus

An invitation to acrobatic limb-freeing violence

Even better, any notion that fighting would take centre stage at the expense of gymnastic puzzles proves wide of the mark.

The prince is soon scrambling up sheer surfaces, swinging from poles, flipping off ledges and doing all the things that made you love him last time. Having negotiated a few outdoor areas you stumble across the location for the main game proper. Looming on the horizon stands an enormous, decrepit palace. It's hairs on the back of the neck time, because you just know that inside awaits the most fiendish architecture ever designed on PS2. Somewhere in an American office, Lara sheds a silent tear.

Once inside, we aren't disappointed. A tour of the new environments has us exploring overgrown gardens, a vast library and caverns so foggy it's hard to see the path beneath the prince's feet. Once again, progress is a case of weaving your way through corridors loaded with traps and lethal drops, then entering vast sepulchral halls which initially seem so complex that getting up to the exit high in the rafters seems about as likely as flying to the moon using a kite. But then that's the biggest thrill: mentally drawing acrobatic lines across the palace's geometry and then just going for it.

Admittedly, the puzzles are similar to last year's, but designed on an even grander scale. And the prince *does* have a couple of new tricks up those preposterous trousers. Our Nathan is most excited about the chance to climb and swing on ropes. "It's exactly what I was hoping for," he said with total sincerity. Meanwhile the rest of us are more enthused about the chance to slide down a huge curtain while using a dagger on the fabric to slow our fall. Go practice it in the front room now. Brilliant, isn't it?

Quantum leap

Of course, the best thing in the first game was the chance to manipulate time, rewinding your actions to avoid fatal falls. Naturally, these powers remain, but they've also been tweaked. Slowing time is now far more effective because the prince remains at normal speed – enabling him to make it past traps and though pressure-activated doors. It's also effective in combat, letting you dance around the oversized boss monsters. Pleasingly, you don't have to actually suck the sands out of the corpses of your enemies – instead the precious dust is attracted to our boy's flashy new medallion, much like the magnetised bolts in *Ratchet & Clank*.

One thing we're yet to see, though, is how much impact the time travel will have. But in terms of the puzzling, it's arguably the most interesting thing about *POP2*. Using warp points, you'll be able to return to the palace's opulent past, altering the layout of rooms to alleviate blockages and then returning to the present. It's another ambitious idea, and married to the other innovations – that mysterious character who looks a *lot* like the prince, for instance – should ensure that this sequel hits the charts running.

Barring the hateful guitar music used during fights, our doubts about the combat and darker tone have largely been dispelled. Crucially, the action is going to be much more organic this time. Whereas the first game relied on a staccato fight-explore-fight-explore rhythm, the new game smoothly integrates the two elements. And given that there isn't another game on PS2 that comes closer to giving its players the same sense of complete control, there's little reason to think that *Prince Of Persia 2* will come in at anything below classic. ■

> The thinking is that this time The Kids are going to go Sunny Delight mental for the prince's designer violence

"Stop it, you're making me blush!"

Having found out that Monica Bellucci was going to be in *POP2*, we had a long discussion and reluctantly decided to do the interview...

OPS2: So Monica, what's your impression of the games industry?

MONICA: Videogames are not just for children but also for adults too. You can compete with other people and games are so intelligent that one can compete with oneself.

OPS2: Fascinating stuff. Obviously you've featured in a game before – *Enter The Matrix*. So what we'd like to know is, what was it like kissing Jada Pinkett Smith? Take your time.

MONICA: Hmm, It was just acting.

OPS2: Oh. [Panics] What's your take of the prince as a character?

MONICA: Like in fairytales, the prince wants to change his destiny even though he must fight and maybe lose in order to do so. So, he's a hero, actually.

OPS2: What can you tell us about the character you'll be voicing in *POP2*? Will she look like you?

MONICA: I like Kaileena because she's a mixture of many things – she's intelligent and mysterious, and fascinated by the prince because he wants to change his destiny and she doesn't think it's possible... She won't look like me though.

OPS2: Shame. What did you most enjoy about this experience?

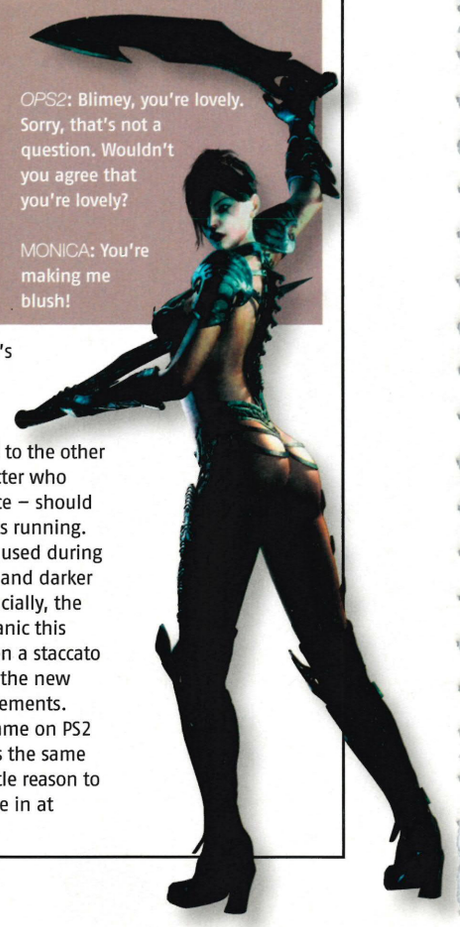
MONICA: It reminded me of being told stories when I was young. As a child you get wrapped up in the emotion of adventure and mystery – that's what *Prince Of Persia* is like. But, this time round I got to be part of the story telling process.

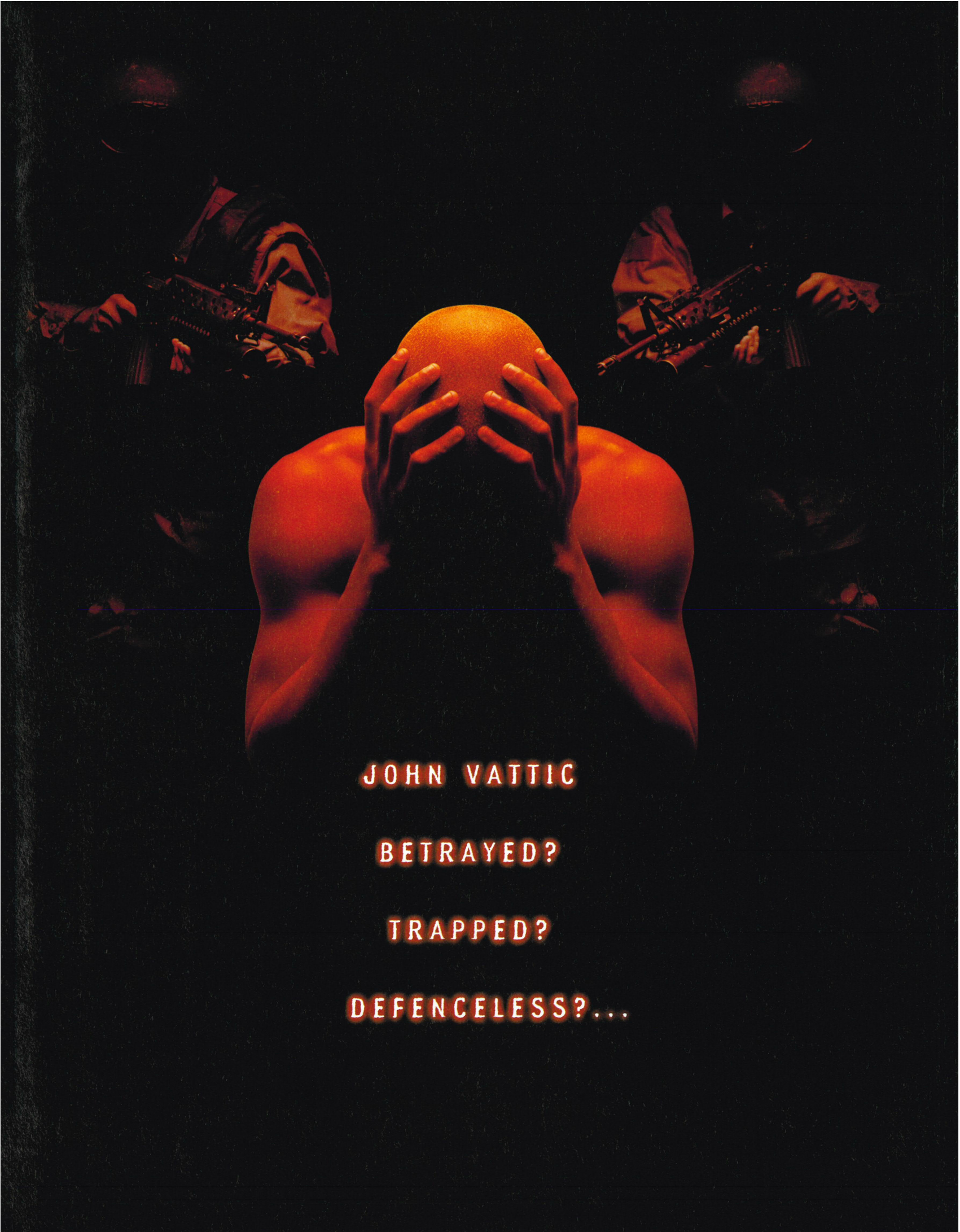
OPS2: If you created a videogame, what kind of experience would you want players to have? What would it be called?

MONICA: I'd like them to have a thought provoking and unique experience in the sense that they'd not be able to experience the same thing with any other game. My game would be called Pace e Amore. [Peace And Love]

OPS2: Blimey, you're lovely. Sorry, that's not a question. Wouldn't you agree that you're lovely?

MONICA: You're making me blush!




JOHN VATTIC
BETRAYED?
TRAPPED?
DEFENCELESS?...

SECOND SIGHT™

"WILL BLOW YOUR MIND"
Official PS2 Magazine

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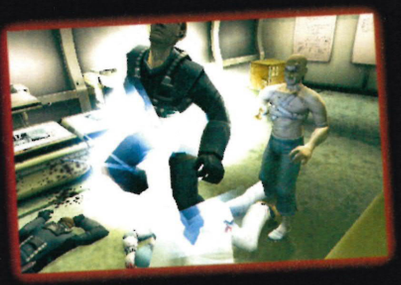

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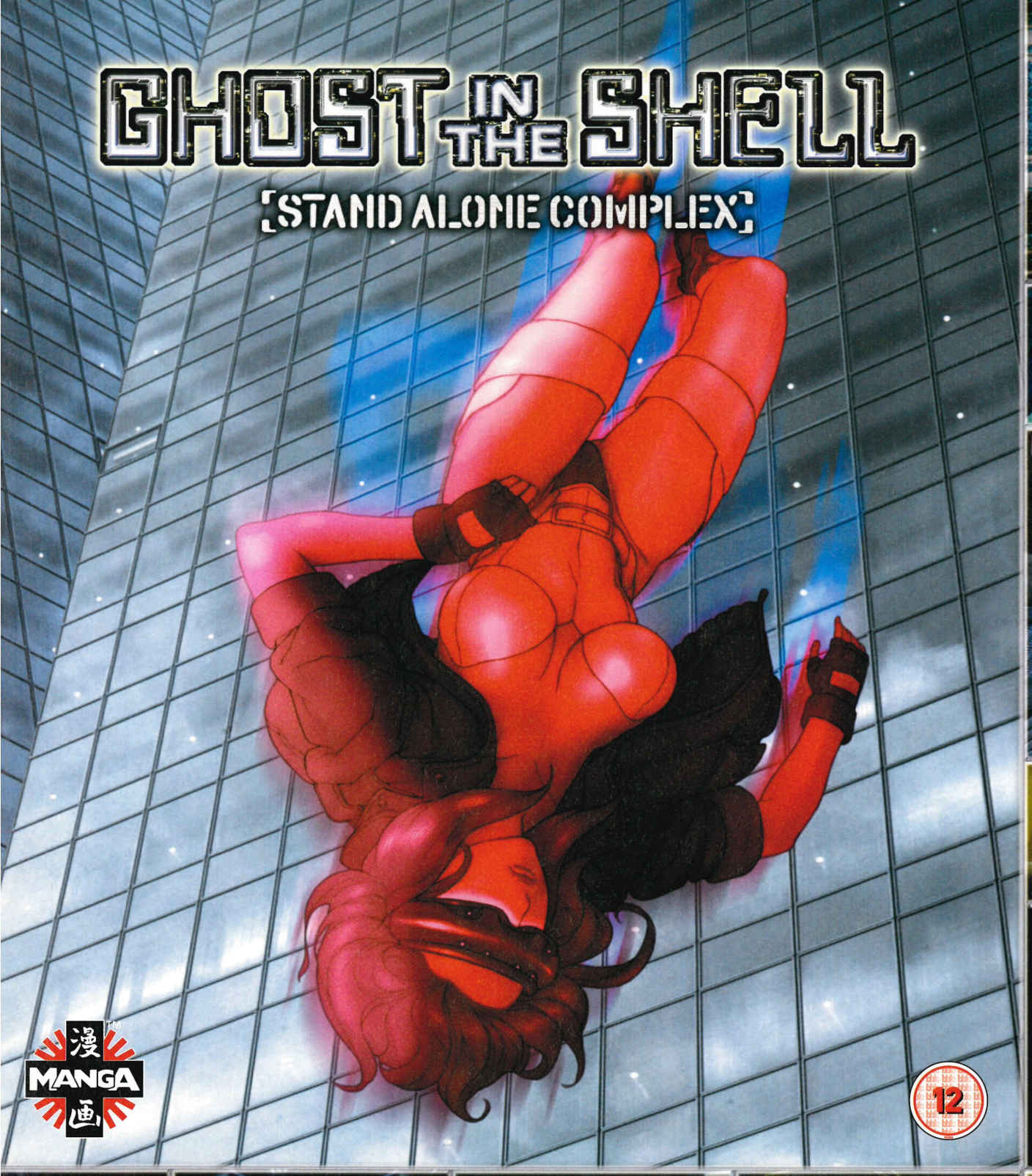

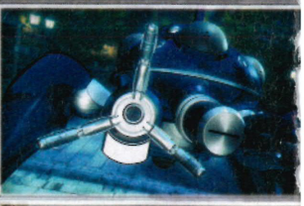

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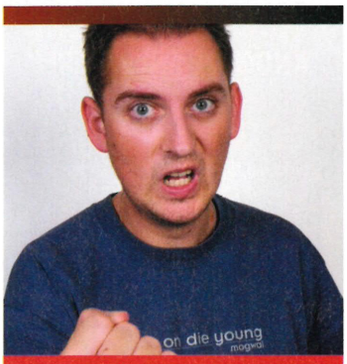


You already know how we feel about the *Pro Evolution Soccer* series. Love just isn't a big enough word – utter devotion probably comes closer, but that's two words. Sometimes, though, even we're surprised by how big the national obsession has become.

Waiting for a haircut in my local barbers, I can now play *PES3* while waiting to answer awkward questions about why my head doubles as a museum for insects trapped in wax. In Liverpool there's even a pub where drinkers play each other on a big screen. Not as part of some special tournament, either. It's on *all the time*.

Recently, a 'friend' of mine (let's call him, erm, Tom) spent a weekend visiting relatives. Unfortunately, I... sorry, *he*... forgot to take his copy of *PES3* to play on the family PS2. Hands shaking, he drove down to the local Blockbuster to hire a copy. No dice, since all five copies had been stolen. Desperate, he decided to buy another one on Platinum. Hours later, the game had already paid for itself. *That's* how much we love *PES*. Now turn the page and let the affair start all over again...

Tim Clark,
Deputy editor

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4

FINALLY, SOME LICENSED PLAYERS! WE BRING YOU THE LOT, BALLS AND ALL...

062 **GTA: SAN ANDREAS**
So close you can almost smell the tills burning – but there's still plenty of new info to spill

064 **VIEWTIFUL JOE**
A two-foot nutter trapped in a movie trying to get his girl by, er... oh forget it, just go and find out

066 **MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION**
The classic beat-'em-up goes to another level with sub-games and online play

068 **OBSCURE**
The slasher movie comes to PS2. Watch out for hockey masks and crap Halloween costumes

070 **GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT**
Silence may be golden, but we're blabbing like a nervous crim about this one

072 **THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY**
You knew there would be some skirt, dincha? And you couldn't wait to get an eyeful, couldcha?

074 **TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON 2**
The amazing story of how even the dullest of games can reinvent itself as 'looks quite good now'

076 **DEVIL MAY CRY 3**
For those in the mood for some simple brutality and a no-nonsense approach to demon hunting...

078 **TIMESPLITTERS FUTURE PERFECT**
Love is blossoming, good people, and we'd like to introduce you to the *other* object of our affections

080 **ODDWORLD STRANGER**
The infamous *Oddworld* series is heading back to the PlayStation world, farts and all

PLUS

061 STAR OCEAN: TILL THE END OF TIME
063 CLUB FOOTBALL 2005
073 THE RED STAR

"See, I told you I had a big sword"

PUBLISHER **KONAMI** | DEVELOPER **KONAMI** | WEBSITE **WWW.KONAMI-EUROPE.COM**

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4

KONAMI'S FOOTBALLING MAESTRO RETURNS AND SUDDENLY THE WORLD IS A BRIGHTER, HAPPIER PLACE

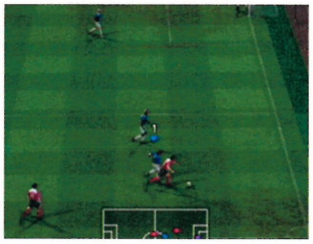
It's a bit like finding out that gorgeous girls love awkward shy men, that burgers make you thinner, that size really doesn't matter after all and that Santa does exist and you've been a really, really good boy this year. What are we talking about? *Pro Evolution Soccer 4*, of course – we've been playing it with Keano-like intensity all month and it's everything we could have hoped for, and more.

Despite the fact that Konami's wonderful footie series hasn't let us down yet, we approached our first match with caution. As the history of English football has taught us, expectation can be a very painful thing. We needn't have worried, though. After the customary settling in period (at least that's what Ben called it after repeated 4-0 drubbings from everyone) it was apparent that this is another classic in the making.

We've played it for hours and hours already but, like every other game in the series, it's so crammed full of tactics, skills, teams, options and, oooh, everything, that we feel like we've barely scratched the surface. The English version won't be finished until nearer the October release date so we've been playing an early import with Japanese commentary (cries of 'offsidomas!' and 'shootoh!' ring around the office regularly). When it does arrive on our shores it'll be tweaked, refined and polished harder than Beckham's silver boots. Until then, have a look at the most significant improvements we've found so far. It's going to be a cracking season. ■ ND

LOOKING GOOD, FEELING GREAT

The players look a little taller this year, and leaner, too – more accurately proportioned in relation to the pitch and ball than their *PES3* predecessors. They feel more realistic, too – there's an incredible sense of weight and solidity when players come into contact with each other, and on-the-ball tussles feel less predictable and more physical than ever.



Cross-pitch balls are now more accurate than ever

KNOCK IT ANYWHERE

Not only does the passing feel more direct but there's a greater range of them to choose from. Holding ⊗ now picks out the furthest player in the direction you're holding with a low pass, while you can alter the strength of the L1 + ⊗ through ball by pressing ⊗ for longer. And, for the first time since *Pro Evo 2*, the option to use a flick of the analogue stick to pull off ultra-precise custom passes returns, meaning it's possible to deliver a pass just about anywhere.

All the deadball situations have been tweaked

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK hands on

WHO'S THE DADDY?

It now feels like you're completely in charge. Players have a far greater degree of ball control than before – they bring down passes with efficient little chest-downs, hop over the ball rather than let it hit the back of their legs and there are more tricks, flicks and step-overs to master than we knew existed.

THE REFEREE

The on-pitch appearance of the referee definitely adds to the game's authentic atmosphere. But the real improvements are in his handling of the game. The advantage rule is now perfectly judged – play continues just long enough to see if anything develops, and the freekick's always

monitor — PlayStation OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

WE'VE BEEN WAITING a long time and all the indications are that we won't be disappointed. Everywhere we look we see improvements, and it's so smooth it's untrue. October can't come quick enough

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID | WARM | HOT | BOILING | MELTDOWN

PES4 IS YOUR FRIEND

The AI is improved beyond recognition. In the single-player mode especially, the difference is astounding. Hold the ball up for a few seconds in the last third of the field and watch as your teammates create options all over the place with crafty, well-timed runs.

Similarly, in defence the computer defenders are less likely to double up on attackers and so create overlaps and holes in the back four. It's almost like you're playing with your mates the whole time.

FREEKICKS AND THROW-INS

Set pieces have been given the full make-over treatment. A simple press of SELECT before you take a freekick and another player will step up alongside your selected kicker, with the option of teeing the ball up from either side or, if you hold R1, having a cheeky crack himself. Throw-ins have also changed, with the thrower able to chuck the ball in whichever direction he's facing, enabling other players to run onto the ball to avoid the close attention of defenders.

CONFIDENT PASSING

The passing is much crisper. Gone are the lazy, suicidal taps across the defence, and the occasional punt into nowhere. Short passes have more urgency so it's easier to build attacks and players now regularly knock the ball about with the outside of their boot.

awarded if the fouling side gains possession. The man in black is also less keen to whip out his red card, with cautions or a 'talking to' more usual for a first offence, and he's not afraid to let the occasional firm but fair challenge go.

ALSO 1 MONTH AWAY...

PUBLISHER **UBISOFT** | DEVELOPER **TRI-ACE/SQUARE ENIX** | WEBSITE **WWW.STAROCEAN-EUROPE.COM**

STAR OCEAN: TILL THE END OF TIME

RPG OBSESSIVES MAY WET THEMSELVES... NNNNOW!

This is *Star Ocean*'s debut on PS2 but is actually the third game in what's been a well-respected series. It's set 400 years after *Star Ocean: The Second Story* which is about how long it's been since the last, sprite-based RPG in this series was out.

All the clever touches that made the earlier PSone games great have been buffed up. There's Item Creation where you cook up your own weapons and armour by blending items won in battle. Then there's the Private Action system, which offers multiple endings based on how you treat other characters.

The graphics are impressive, with a doe-eyed, manga cartoon look substituted for more mature *Final Fantasy*-style looks. There's even a surprisingly accessible real-time battle system which doesn't suffer from the RPG-tarring repetitiveness that puts so many off. And with no random battles to deal with, your characters can move freely around the 3D battlefield.

Till The End Of Time has the complexity and lifespan of a *Final Fantasy* game but can it really square up to the undisputed champ? It's certainly the best contender we've seen in a while. ■ KK

PlayStation 2 official magazine-UK hands on

HOT OR NOT?

Stunning, but whether it has staying power remains to be seen

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

PUBLISHER **ROCKSTAR** | DEVELOPER **ROCKSTAR NORTH** | WEBSITE **WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/SANANDREAS**

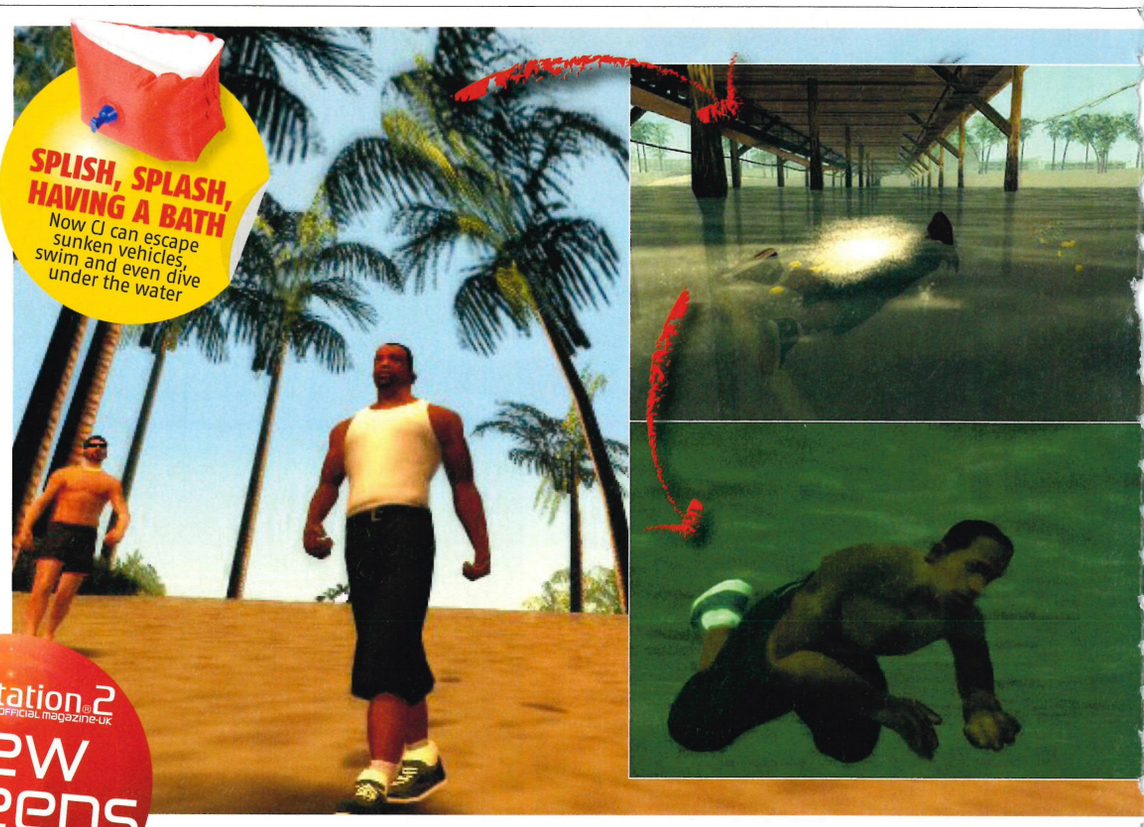
GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

COME ON IN, THE WATER'S LOVELY...

Oh, man, this is going to take some getting used to. It's not like we didn't see it coming, though. We've known about the swimming in *San Andreas* since our feature back in *OPS2#48*. But we've also played the earlier *GTA* games so hard that avoiding large bodies of water has become a way of life – holiday jaunts to the seaside are spent eyeing the sea suspiciously.

In marked contrast to his baby pool-fearing predecessors, CJ will keep his head above water no matter how rough the sea or quick the tide. Just like standing still on dry land, treading water is his default action if no buttons are pressed. Push the analogue stick in any direction and he'll break into an energy-preserving breaststroke, while tapping ⊗ will speed him up into a front crawl until his stamina is drained. How long this takes depends on how often you take your man swimming – the more he swims, the better he gets.

Sound a bit strenuous? If exercise isn't your thing, then there are more calorie-laden alternatives. Be careful, though, as these new screenshots clearly demonstrate the effect a few too many burgers will have on our gangbanging protagonist. And once you've chugged so much grease that even your XXXL vest is beginning to chafe a little around your staggering man girth, your only option is a strenuous workout to shift the weight. That probably means hitting the gym – as in the treadmill and punching bag shots shown here – although taking to the courts for a game of basketball will also increase your fitness. After all, being the widest wide boy possible may be cool but it's got seriously detrimental effects – a chronic lack of athleticism will prevent you from completing certain missions.



SPLISH, SPLASH, HAVING A BATH
Now CJ can escape sunken vehicles, swim and even dive under the water

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK **new screens**

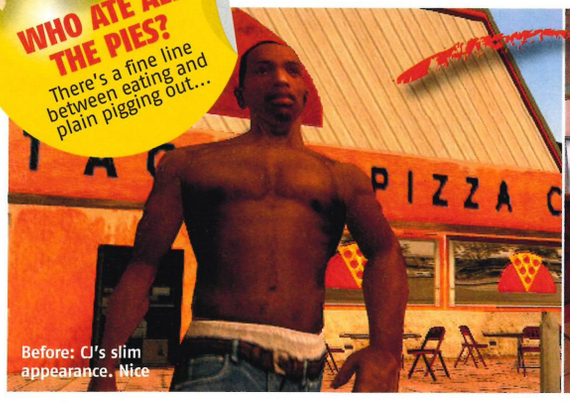
ON THE CHARM OFFENSIVE

Of course, obesity's also a bit of a turn-off for the ladies. If the impossibly glamorous women populating the streets of *San Andreas*' LA-based Los Santos are anything to go by, that's a reason for pushing out a few more reps on the rowing machine right there. These classy ladies are clearly not going to be that impressed with splattered ketchup stains all over your best 'I love Compton' vest or by people continually stopping to ask if you could be Biggie Smalls' long-lost twin.

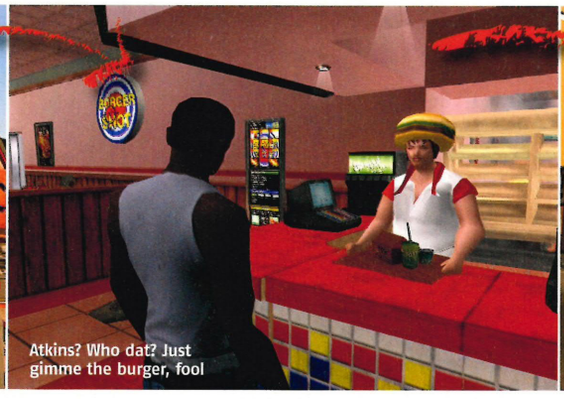
Entertaining the neighbourhood honeys isn't the only action to be had after dark in *San Andreas*, though. For the first time in the *GTA* series, your lawbreaking capabilities stretch to burglarising individual homes. So rather than sitting in your house on your ample beef-fed behind, watching TV and lamenting your lack of a date for the evening, why not grab a shotgun, don a balaclava and watch TV in someone else's home? Or, better still, take their TV and sell it, then use the money to buy yourself a date? We're not saying you should do it. You just *could*, that's all.

And if this doesn't make you feel better, you can always console yourself by taking a look around the city itself, which is shaping up to be absolutely mind blowing. The glorious beach at sunset, the South Central-style Grove locale, the neon haze of the city at night – LA has been captured perfectly and we can't wait to take our first ride through its streets. Our biggest gasp, though, was reserved for the enormous, multi-layered, spaghetti junction-dwarfing freeway intersection on the city's outskirts (see the shot over to the right). It made us realise, perhaps for the first time, exactly how big the whole thing's going to be. Bring on 22 October. ■ **ND**

WHO ATE ALL THE PIES?
There's a fine line between eating and plain pigging out...



Before: CJ's slim appearance. Nice


Atkins? Who dat? Just gimme the burger, fool

After: CJ's so fat, if he got cut up he'd bleed gravy

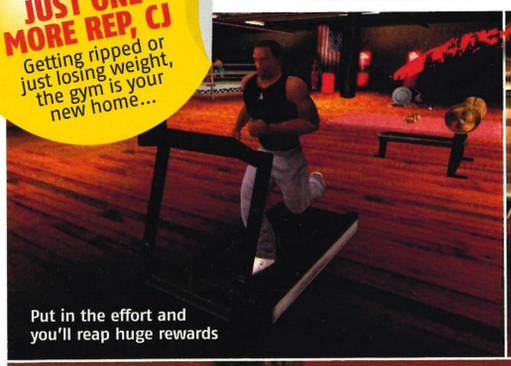
monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

TRYING TO PUT INTO WORDS how excited we are at getting hold of this potential masterpiece is getting increasingly difficult. Let's just leave it at this: it's the most excited we've been about a game. Ever

HOT OR NOT?

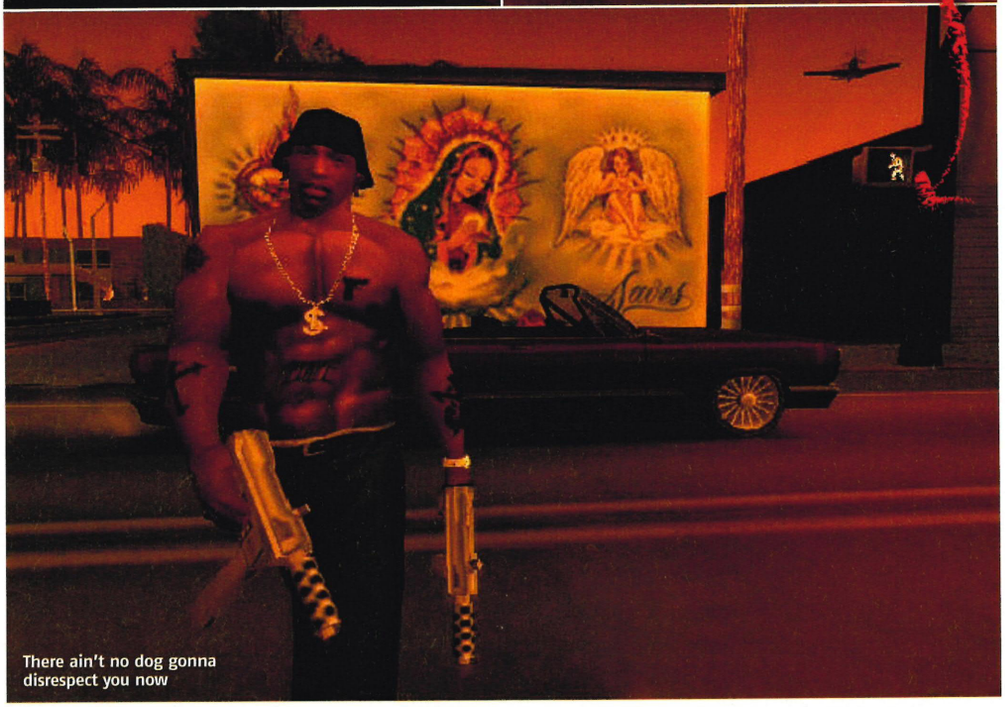
TEPID | WARM | HOT | BOILING | MELTDOWN

JUST ONE MORE REP, CJ
Getting ripped or just losing weight, the gym is your new home...

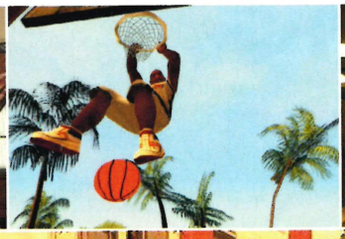


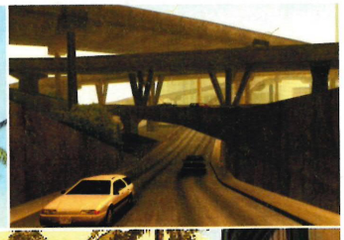
Put in the effort and you'll reap huge rewards

Listen closely. Can you hear *Eye Of The Tiger*?



There ain't no dog gonna disrespect you now





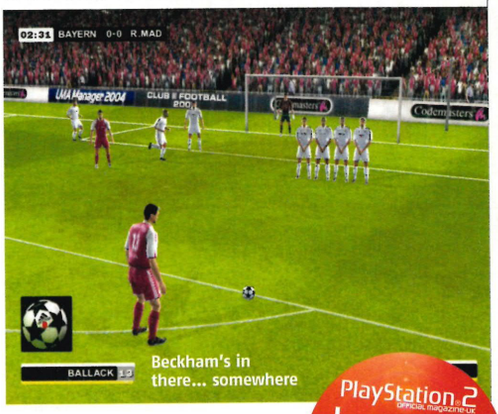
Stylin' bling threads attracts the laydeez

ALSO 1 MONTH AWAY...

PUBLISHER **CODEMASTERS** | DEVELOPER **CODEMASTERS** |
WEBSITE **WWW.CODEMASTERS.COM/CLUBFOOTBALL2005**

CLUB FOOTBALL 2005

MORE PROOF – IF ANY WERE NEEDED – THAT IT'S A TWO HORSE RACE AGAIN THIS YEAR...



Beckham's in there... somewhere

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK **hands on**

Club Football's central gimmick revolves around the idea that fan culture is so strong people want to buy a game that has their favourite team's badge stamped on the front. The problem is, once you look past the packaging, licensed kits, 'realistic' player likenesses and official stadia, the game itself is still proving rather weak.

Most instantly noticeable is the comedy passing system. We managed to play an entire ten-minute game without once seeing a throw-in. How? Well, not only do players appear to hit the ball with the same force no matter how far apart they are, it always goes straight to their feet. This doesn't just apply to flat, on the ground passing, but the chipped through-ball is equally deadly. And wrong.

Club Football doesn't look like football does on TV either. Where *PES* and *FIFA* have 'blink and it could be *Match Of The Day*' quality visuals – you'd have to be blind, drunk and extremely foolish to mistake this for anything other than a videogame. This is because of jerky animation, lack of fine detail in the pitches and ball physics that frequently *defy* physics.

Codemasters will undoubtedly claim this is still an improvement over last year's version, but when an 'improvement' still fails to get anywhere close to the competition, there's little to congratulate. And this club-themed game thing... how do they know which versions to make more of? Only, we saw a very sorry looking Borussia Dortmund box propping up a supermarket budget game stand the other day... ■ **GW**

Just think, you could be playing *PES* instead of this...

HOT OR NOT?

Improvements marred by lack of, erm, improvements

TEPID | WARM | HOT | BOILING | MELTDOWN

ETA 1 month
Oct 2004

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK
hands on

PUBLISHER CAPCOM | DEVELOPER CAPCOM STUDIO 4 | WEBSITE WWW.VIEWTIFULJOE.CO.UK

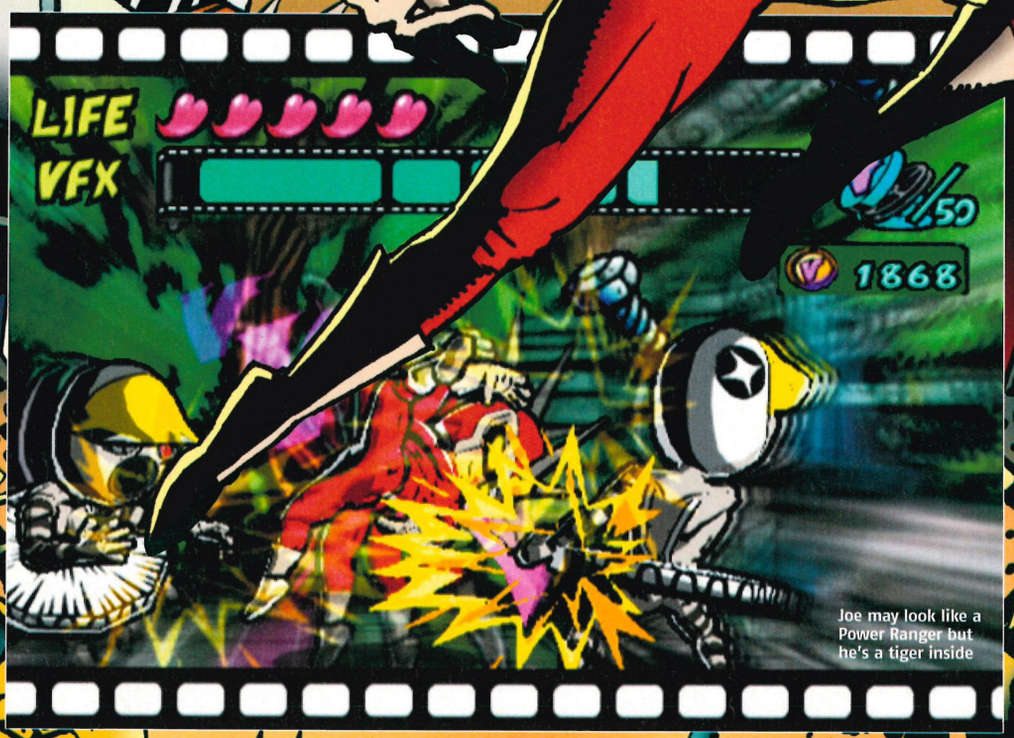
VIEWTIFUL JOE

BIG SCREEN ADVENTURES WITH THE LITTLE MAN IN RED

You're short – around two inches tall, actually – and you look a little like a shrunk Fred Durst. Voodoo Fred, perhaps, victim of vicious central African headshrinkers, who threw your body into the deal for free. To cheer yourself up, you head off to the cinema, only to catch another bad break when your girlfriend is stolen by an enormous mechanical hand erupting from the screen. Unlucky, that. What's that you say? You're going in after her? Well, good luck.

So goes the basic premise of *Viewtiful Joe*. Gamecube dabblers may well be aware of this visually distinctive platform 'n' puncher already. But for the benefit of PS2 monogamists, welcome to gaming as it once was – a 2D scrolling environment with puzzles to solve and enemies to kill. 2D it may be, but flat it is not. Graphically, *Viewtiful Joe* is almost unique, exploiting its B-movie setting with some camp-but-cool enemies and levels, and using layered backgrounds to give an unconventional impression of depth. The on-screen action – based around Joe's frenetic kick and punch fighting style – is initially baffling. But you'll soon overcome the disorientation, especially when Joe becomes 'Viewtiful' Joe. Now he's able to slow time, calming the on-screen mayhem and making previously too-quick-for-the-eye attacks visible. Other film-themed powers become available as you progress, speeding Joe up and enabling special moves. It's fast and addictive stuff.

The GC version was reputedly harder than the genetically spliced offspring of Wolverine and Bruce Lee, but as we've had little difficulty with the bits we've played maybe some sensible tinkering has gone on. And, for no real reason, *Devil May Cry*'s Dante is now an alternative playable character, with his own special moves but the same storyline. Yay. ND



Joe may look like a Power Ranger but he's a tiger inside

monitor | PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

JOE'S BEEN AROUND FOR a while now and his familiarity makes it hard to get really excited. But games this imaginative and fun are rare, and it's far too good a gaming prospect to ignore

HOT OR NOT?

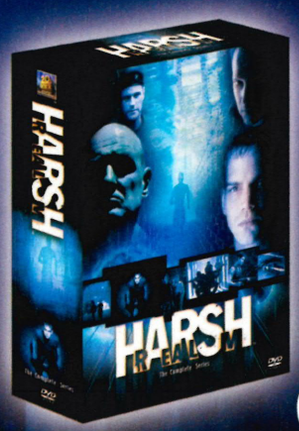
TEPID | WARM | **HOT** | BOILING | MELTDOWN

FROM THE CREATOR OF THE X-FILES™, CHRIS CARTER...

HARSH REALM

THE COMPLETE SERIES

RELEASE DATE: 26TH JULY

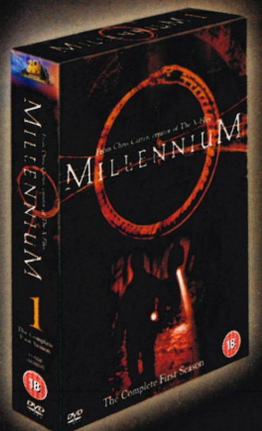


Lieutenant Thomas Hobbes' last mission is to enter a virtual reality military programme 'Harsh Realm'. To succeed, he must defeat the top player who holds the secret to get back to the real world.

MILLENNIUM

THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON

Millennium is the story of former FBI profiler Frank Black, whose psychic insights help him see into the minds of killers in order to bring them to justice.



RELEASE DATE: 12TH JULY

COMING TO DVD IN JULY 2004

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www.FOXTVDVD.co.uk

PUBLISHER MIDWAY | DEVELOPER MIDWAY | WEBSITE WWW.MKDECEPTION.MIDWAY.COM

MORTAL KOMBAT: DECEPTION

THE BLOODIEST BEAT-'EM-UP EVER RETURNS WITH A WHOLE NEW BAG OF GUTS

If *Mortal Kombat* was a buffet – an oriental buffet, naturally – it would include the following:

- Distinctive motion capture graphics spring roll
- Incomprehensible plot soup, served with god, dragon and demon croutons
- Spicy finishing move chicken
- Multiple fighting style fried rice
- Thick, dry, but not unpleasant gameplay seaweed
- Unlimited rice wine refills. Blood available as non-alcoholic option

Essentially, we're talking about quite a nice buffet. No other buffets really do the same thing as the *Mortal Kombat* buffet. It's extravagantly violent, it's visually distinctive and, although the gameplay is a little stiff, it's enjoyable for its style and excesses.

Of course, *Mortal Kombat* isn't really a buffet. We've just suggested it was to make a point. And before the point disappears behind the rusty barbed-wire fence in our brain, from which this unwieldy mess of an analogy emerged in the first place, we'd best spell out exactly what it was. As perfectly demonstrated by last year's *Deadly Alliance*, *Mortal Kombat* is good, but not great. Solid, but uninspired. It is okay.

It makes sense, then, that rather than rip the game to pieces and begin entirely from scratch, developer Midway has chosen to play to *Mortal Kombat*'s strengths and protect its weaknesses. All the old favourites make a return – imaginative fighting stages, massive amounts of gore and, of course, brutal finishing moves – only there's more of them and they've been pushed to a gruesome extreme.

This is the moment to enter that button combo for the killing fatality

Take the fatalities, for instance. Ripping out your opponent's spine and watching his body crumple to the floor has long been a cornerstone of the series. But now each character will have multiple finishing moves, and the ones we've seen are more imaginative and plain cruel than before. Highlights include Li Mei's awesomely destructive pressure point finisher. She steps forward and delivers dozens of blows in a blurred frenzy, leaving her opponent teetering and unbalanced. For a second it looks like a big anticlimax – is this it? – before her wobbly victim disappears in an explosion of trademark *Mortal Kombat* claret.

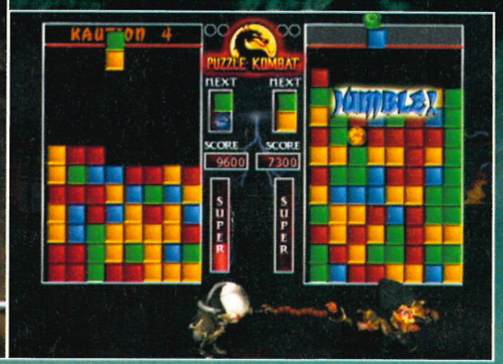
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK hands on

YOU GOT THE MOVES

The level design, too, has been revamped and made far more violent. The fighting environments are now interactive – you can kick opponents, *Dead Or Alive*-style, through fences, walls and other scenery onto lower parts of the arena. This being *Mortal Kombat*, though, a second fall on the same level results in a stage fatality – instant death to whoever's done the falling, caused by landing uncomfortably on a unfortunately placed spiky rock, or from just falling to bits on impact. Environmental traps located on certain levels – like the iron ore press on one of the arenas we played – have a similarly lethal effect.

Accompanying the main arcade mode are three fairly pointless but mildly-diverting mini-games. The biggest of these looks set to be the new Konquest mode – essentially a stripped-down RPG, featuring the arcade story's central character, Shujinko. Then, in descending

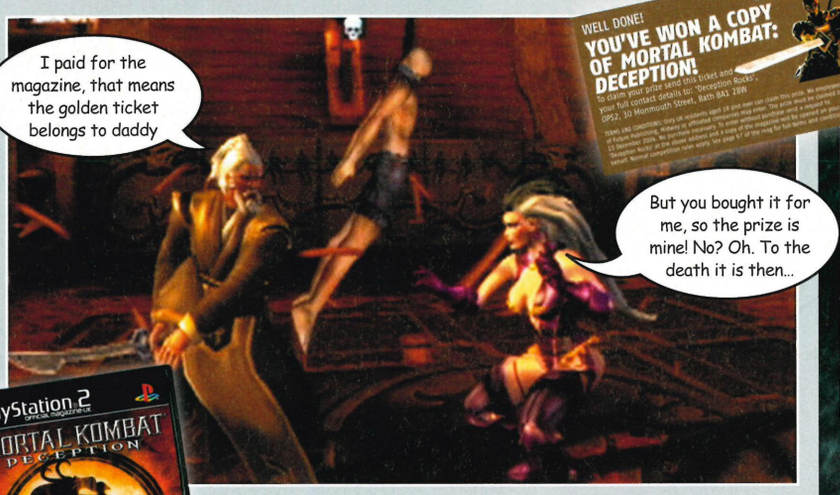
A lot of the characters and moves will be familiar to fans

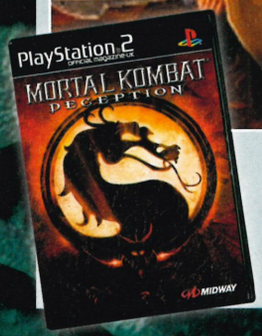


WIN!

YOU MAY ALREADY OWN THIS GAME!

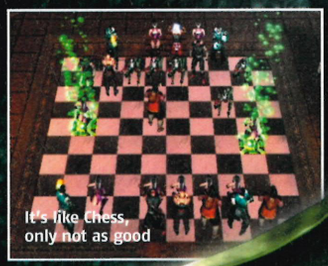
Did a golden ticket fall out of the bag? No? Sure? Gutted. Better luck next time, eh. Yes? Then you've won a copy of *Mortal Kombat: Deception*. See below for what to do





For the 20 of you lucky readers holding a shiny golden ticket, congratulations! All you need to do now is send your ticket along with a picture of yourself, your name, age, telephone number, address and anything else you think we might like to know about you to: 'Deception Rocks', *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. As soon as we get hold of the finished game – and believe us, we'll be the first – we'll send you your copy. See page 141 for full competition terms and conditions. All normal competition rules apply. And again, well done you!

Baraka's blades are still one of the coolest weapons around


It's like Chess, only not as good

order of interest, there's a new *Tetris*-style puzzle game (complete with miniature character animations for your amusement), and a chess-like board game – in which players take control of the battles for board positions.

The cynic inside us can't help but think that these add-ons exist to flesh out a game that's not confident about standing solely on the strength of its one-on-one fighting engine. There's still work to be done, but there was nothing in the game we played to suggest *Mortal Kombat* will come close to challenging the God-like smoothness of *Soul Calibur II*. Then again, it might not have to – *Deception* is confirmed as being online, making it the first and only game of its type to enable worldwide play. This is a massive advantage, and, when the points are stacked up, we reckon it could well make all the difference to the gameplay. ■ **ND**

monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

BEHIND THE AMUSING blood-splattered bells and whistles, *Mortal Kombat: Deception* is an above average (just) slap 'n' slasher. Normally we'd be less than excited, but online play could be its secret weapon

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN

PUBLISHER **UBISOFT** | DEVELOPER **MICROIDS/HYDRAVISION** | WEBSITE **WWW.OBSCURE-GAME.COM**

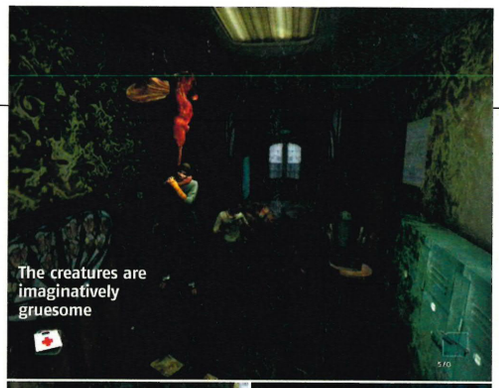
OBSCURE

WE WONDER WHY WE'VE NOT HEARD MORE ABOUT THIS HIGH SCHOOL HORROR BEFORE. AFTER ALL, IT'S ACTUALLY QUITE GOOD

Like some crawling, mutated shadowbeast from the game itself, *Obscure* has crept up on us without much warning. How did this happen? No, it's not part of some obliquely clever marketing campaign ('It's called *Obscure*, guys, what sells it better than it actually being, like, obscure?' 'You're fired, Jenkins'). And it's certainly not because Ubisoft has been hiding it from a critical tongue-lashing – in the few hours we spent with the game, it surpassed all our expectations and left us eager for more.

It's a mystery, then. A bit like the one in the game itself. Except with less monsters and, you know, real. Anyway, *Obscure*'s mystery is set on a high school campus, where five rent-a-stereotype kids – Kenny the jock, Josh the geeky journo, Stan the stoner, Ashley the independent woman and Shannon the caring best-friend – gradually uncover a sinister plot involving dodgy scientific experimentation and the kidnapping of students. Don't worry if this sounds clichéd – it is, of course, but that's the point. *Obscure* shamelessly riffs on a host of '90s teenage slasher flicks – the tongue-in-cheek self awareness of *Scream*, the entire plot, setting and characters from *The Faculty* – but combines them better than we bitter cynics believed it would – although that *was* before we got our hands on it.

The school's damp problem was getting out of hand


The creatures are imaginatively gruesome

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK **hands on**

Zombie students are no match for your boomstick

BACK TO CLASS

Behind all the hip trimmings – the fine opening cut-scene and Stan's remarkable likeness to Josh Hartnett – the game plays a lot like a refined, faster-paced version of *Resi* or *Silent Hill*. There's all the wandering, collecting and puzzling that's sure to be familiar from these survival horror stalwarts, but with the emphasis placed on smoother action and frustration-free menu navigation.

Typically, each character has a torch to find their way around the school and the camera is fixed to heighten cinematic tension (potentially annoying, but it worked flawlessly in the areas we played), and you move your character with the left analogue stick, while shining your flashlight with the right. The resultant play of light and dark is easy to control, gorgeous to look at and, as you'll discover when your torch catches something nasty lurking in a corner, brilliant at ramping up the tension.

Given the multiplayer 'issues' we've recently experienced with *Resi Outbreak*, the two-player option in *Obscure* is a truly refreshing change. Jack in a second controller and a mate can join you – something never offered by the *Resi* or *Silent Hill* series. It's a clear statement of intent from a game that's determined to inject action and attitude into a genre that's too often caught napping. ■ **ND**

monitor — PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK

***OBSCURE* SUCCEEDS BY DOING** very well what other games can only do satisfactorily. Yeah, we know it's silly, but it does – and it doesn't care. And it's so close to release it's hard to see what could go wrong...

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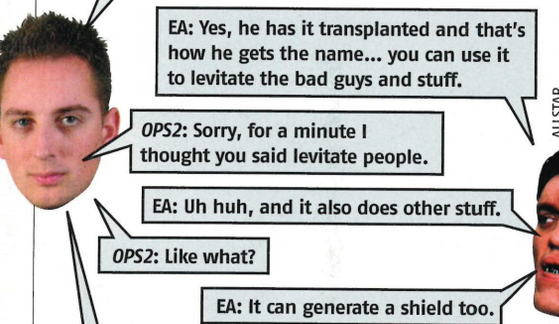
PUBLISHER EA | DEVELOPER EA VANCOUVER | WEBSITE WWW.EAGAMES.COM/OFFICIAL/GOLDENEYE/ROGUEAGENT/US/HOME.JSP

GOLDENEYE: ROGUE AGENT

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK hands on

YOUR MOTHER LIED, SON. CRIME DOES PAY, AND ALL THE GIRLS LIKE A BAD BOY

Sometimes it's possible to ignore even the most outrageously implausible premise and just enjoy the ride. The film *Face/Off* being an obvious example, "Hi honey, I'm going to be home late because I'm having the face of our son's killer transplanted onto mine... hey, stop crying." But we remain slightly concerned that *GoldenEye*'s storyline has strayed onto the wrong side of the road marked 'preposterous'. Which by Bond standards is some going. We don't have an issue with the idea of working for Goldfinger against Dr No – it's more the details that are problematic. Having played the game recently, we called our source on EA's orbiting satellite to clarify some specifics...



OPS2: So his eye is actually golden, then?

EA: Yes, he has it transplanted and that's how he gets the name... you can use it to levitate the bad guys and stuff.

OPS2: Sorry, for a minute I thought you said levitate people.

EA: Uh huh, and it also does other stuff.

OPS2: Like what?

EA: It can generate a shield too.

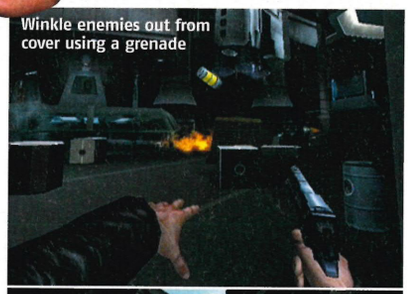
OPS2: Oh... right. But the eye is *actually* golden?

EA: Please hang up the phone now.

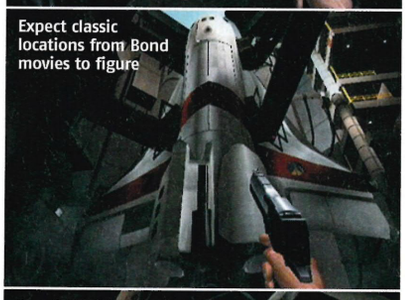
Assuming you can accept the eye, the game comes on as a predictably solid but – at this stage – slightly unspectacular shooter. Obviously, the production values are top notch – with impressive-looking scenery and satisfyingly chunky character models. The enemies take cover intelligently and using the shoulder buttons to fire dual weapons independently is certainly a buzz. So why is it that we feel slightly underwhelmed? Part of the problem seems to be the way some bad guys take bullets without reacting, which should obviously be sorted in the final code. More pressingly, the multiplayer map we tested felt cramped due to overly tight design – making movement and aiming awkward. There's still a reasonable amount of time left though, and the major set pieces in the story mode are sure to be explosive. One word of warning for EA though: next time you show us *GoldenEye*, don't have *TimeSplitters Future Perfect* running in the same room. It just seems cruel. ■ TC

Try concealing this monster up a Brooks Brothers bespoke suit...

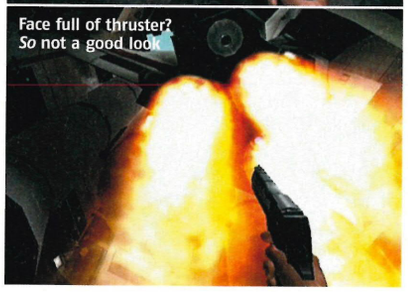
ALLSTAR



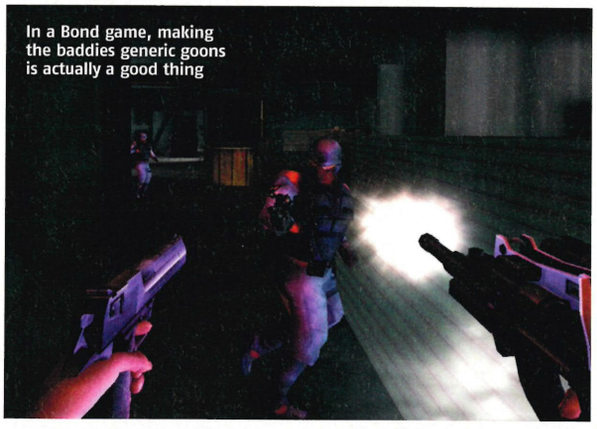
Winkle enemies out from cover using a grenade



Expect classic locations from Bond movies to figure



Face full of thruster? *So* not a good look



In a Bond game, making the baddies generic goons is actually a good thing

Firing your two 'pieces' independantly with the shoulder buttons feels mint

monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

STILL A WAY TO GO if EA hopes to deliver a game worthy of the illustrious name, but we're not writing off *Rogue Agent* just yet. A bit more research time in Q's lab could see this one come good at the end

HOT OR NOT?

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GENIUS AT PLAY™

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PUBLISHER SONY | DEVELOPER LONDON STUDIO | WEBSITE WWW.PLAYSTATION.CO.UK

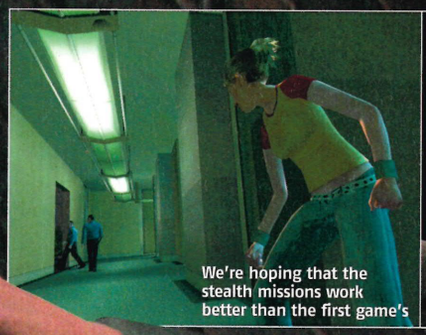
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK new info

THE GETAWAY: BLACK MONDAY

"HELLO TREACLE, CAN I BUY YOU A... [BANG] ...JESUS, YOU'VE JUST SHOT ME!"

Samantha Thompson is exactly the kind of woman your mother warned you about. Unless your mother is also a brassy tart who grew up on the mean streets of Bethnal Green – in which case she's probably making jellied eel canapés in preparation for a fackin' Cockney wedding. Sammi, as she almost certainly prefers to be known, provides the love interest in *The Getaway: Black Monday*. Aged just 19, she's the third playable character in the game – joining copper Sgt Ben Mitchell and East End roughneck Eddie O'Connor, whom she met while hanging out at a boxing club.

Despite her slight build, Sam is used to mixing with the hard lads. But, as she's armed with nothing more than an Argos sovereign ring, you aren't going to want to charge in while playing as her. Instead, her gameplay will be entirely stealth-based. Whoa there... come back. Okay, the stealth in the last game worked like a mobile phone dropped in the toilet – but this time London Studio is determined to get it right. That's why Sam has an entirely different set of moves to the other characters, enabling her to peek around doors, crawl through vents and swing from poles. Well, it actually says vault from beams here, but we assume they mean swing from poles, too.



We're hoping that the stealth missions work better than the first game's

DRY YOUR EYES, MATE...

Her natural athleticism should give the game a chance to show off its swanky new interior locations, providing a different perspective on many of the environments as she sneaks around rooftops while the lads are shooting each other's faces off below. Apparently, Sam got into gymnastics as a means to break out of the juvenile detention centre she was sent to for a hacking conviction. Oh yeah, we forgot to mention she's also a bit handy with a mouse, having previously owned her own successful online casino. What? [Quickly checks notes] Yup, that's right. Well, it definitely beats working behind the perfume counter in Boots.

Sam ran into trouble with the law because she was also using her computer skills to assist in robberies – bypassing security systems and acquiring building plans. Don't blame her, though. We reckon an ex-boyfriend (probably called Wayne or Lee) led her astray – and after a couple of WKDs most of these girls will do anything you ask them. She also smokes, in case you were in any doubt that she's a bit of a bad girl (but with a heart of gold, obviously). No brand was specified, but we're guessing Lambert & Butler Menthols. ■ TC

Sammi will have a whole load of athletic moves exclusive to her character

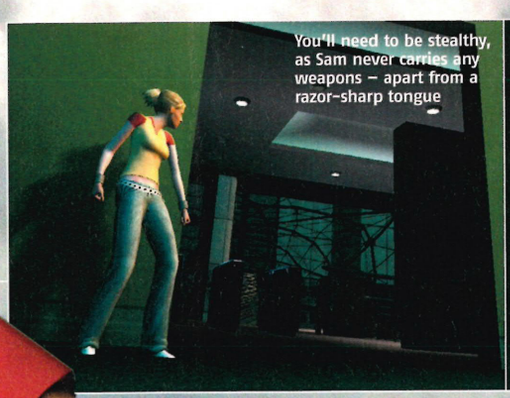
Go on, spit on his head... we dare you

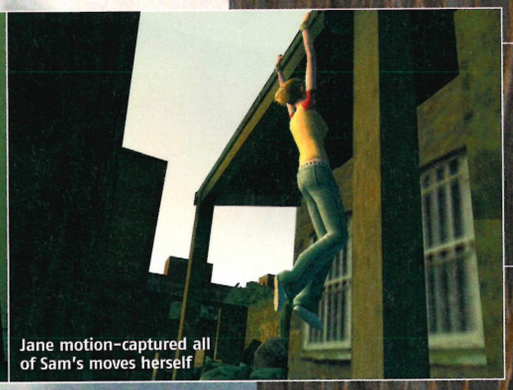
monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

SAM'S A WELCOME ADDITION to the *Getaway* family and, although the stealth still concerns us, the prospect of more X-rated *EastEnders* is getting us excited again. We'll have more info next month

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN


You'll need to be stealthy, as Sam never carries any weapons – apart from a razor-sharp tongue


Jane motion-captured all of Sam's moves herself

SHE'S A PEACH!

Sam is played by actress Jane Peachey, who previously appeared in *Sex 'N' Death* and, erm... *Ripper II*. No, us neither. But she's a lovely girl, as we found out

***OPS2*: Seriously, do you have much in common with Sam?**

Peachey: Well, I'm young, intelligent and from the East End, and I definitely think that anything is possible. But that's probably where the similarities end. I couldn't fight my way out of a paper bag.

***OPS2*: Do you think that a videogame can capture the atmosphere of the London underworld as well as a movie?**

Peachey: Sure. Videogames are like mini films these days, and as long as you create believable characters with good dialogue it works. The animation is so good that sometimes it looks like you're watching film footage anyway.

***OPS2*: How is working on games different to working on TV or the movies?**

Peachey: I think it's a lot harder. I was covered in wires and optical balls and had to act natural working with wooden props! It's quite hard but a lot of fun, too. I found the whole process very interesting and would definitely do it again.

***OPS2*: Can you tell us what sort of impact Sam will have on the story of *Black Monday*? Does she have a big part to play?**

Peachey: Sam makes things happen. She's clever and will always find a way out of a bad situation. She can help people or do it on her own, either way you can rely on her – she'll always get the job done. I can't say any more or I'll give the game away.

***OPS2*: The female character in the last *Getaway* game was a proper nutter and shot up a whole load of cops. Who'd win in a fight between her and Sam?**

Peachey: Sam would 100% win. She doesn't believe in guns and doesn't need them. She uses her martial arts, strength and intelligence to outsmart anyone who gets in her way.

***OPS2*: Do you think the hardmen in these films are sexy? Ray Winstone, maybe?**

Peachey: I think girls always like a bad boy, so yeah, the guys in these films are sexy. I've met Ray Winstone, and he's a genuinely cool guy – and of course he's hugely fanciable, too!

ALSO 2 MONTHS AWAY...

PUBLISHER **ACCLAIM** | DEVELOPER **ACCLAIM** |
WEBSITE **WWW.THEREDSTARGAME.COM/INDEX.HTML**

THE RED STAR

STUCK FOR A BAD GUY? WHY NOT LOOK TO THE EAST...

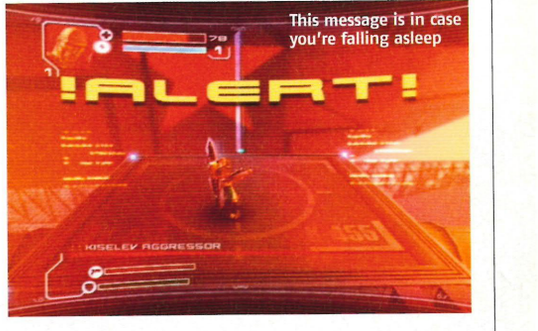
And you thought you'd never see another sideways-scrolling beat-'em-up

PlayStation 2 official magazine-uk **hands on**

The Red Star (the game) is wholly based on *The Red Star* (the comic book) and is set in The United Republics Of The Red Star (which isn't Russia, honest) during the rise of a tyrannical dictator by the name of Stal... sorry, Imbohl. Here we have a man who's not only killed millions, but also someone whose name is an anagram of Him Lob. Or Limb Ho. But the evil beard stroker is about to come unstuck, as a renegade group is planning an uprising...

It's fitting that a game set in a country based on the Russia of the '80s should also have gameplay that would appear to be from the same time frame. The version we played looked decidedly old-skool, as, after picking one of three characters, you're thrown into a gaming world of sideways scrolling action, attack combos and end-of-level bosses.

However, looks can be deceiving, because the fusion of play styles is actually quite modern. Weapons lock on, shield and special moves give it a varied punch of fast, frenetic action that should be just the ticket after calculated fights in *SOCOM II* or *Soul Calibur II*. First impressions may leave us a bit cold, but this one is slowly warming up. ■ **DM**



This message is in case you're falling asleep

HOT OR NOT?

We're hoping the old-skool gameplay shines through

TEPID | WARM | HOT | BOILING | MELTDOWN

The North Korean battle environments are looking fantastic

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK new screens

PUBLISHER **UBISOFT** | DEVELOPER **UBISOFT** | WEBSITE **WWW.GHOSTRECON-2.COM**

GHOST RECON 2

MADE-OVER SHOOTER LOOKS LUSH AND TRIES TO MAKE US CRY...

Here at *OPS2* we've been having a bit of a think, and we reckon that over the years we've enjoyed a more tender relationship with our furniture than we have with our old squad mates from *Ghost Recon*. Gifted with all the charm and personality of a crash test dummy, losing these comrades in the midst of battle was about as poignant as clipping our nails. They were lifeless, easily despatched and readily replaceable. Without wanting to labour the point unnecessarily, we think that previous games in the *Ghost Recon* series have been emotionally uninvolving.

So it was with interest that we discovered that, as well as the massive improvements in combat, exploration and graphics (everything, basically), developer Ubisoft has also set out to invest *Ghost Recon 2* with moments and storylines delivering more 'emotional impact'. There's no word yet on exactly how this will translate into in-game specifics, but it will almost certainly result in more meaningful interaction with those previously wooden team members. Improved dialogue could foster genuine camaraderie among your troops, while individualised and likeable characterisation could encourage you to think of your guys as more than disposable bland-o-grunts. And if you're anything like us, you've always got time for overblown homoerotic death scenes ('just hold me, Mitch... I don't wanna die alone'). Brings a tear to our eye.

The third-person perspective shows off the new visuals

GHOST BUSTING

As these exclusive screens testify, the all-new game engine has turned the once drab and unspectacular visuals into a richly textured feast for the eyes. They also offer the first real glimpse of *Ghost Recon 2*'s North Korean setting. Looks like the action-taming, sparsely populated wide open spaces of the earlier games have been wisely shoved to one side in favour of some choice up-close-and-personal battle environments. Excellent.

When all this is considered alongside *Ghost Recon 2*'s newly struck balance between tactical pondering and blazing action (basically less of the former, more of the latter) and its simplified squad-bossing control system, it would appear that things are definitely looking up for the one-time social pariah of squad shooters. ■ **ND**

"Before we attack, I just wanna say, I love you guys"

monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

EVERY BIT OF NEWS we hear about *Ghost Recon 2* is good news. All the problems we had with the original *GR* are being eliminated like so many North Korean insurgents in the mist. We're excited

HOT OR NOT?

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

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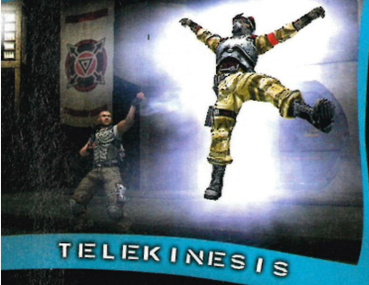
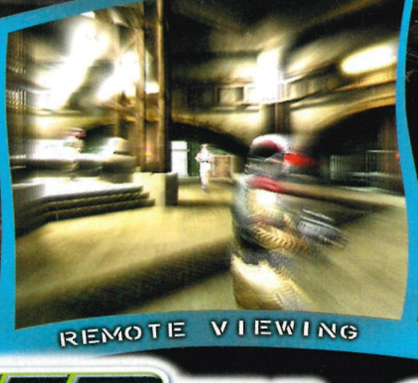
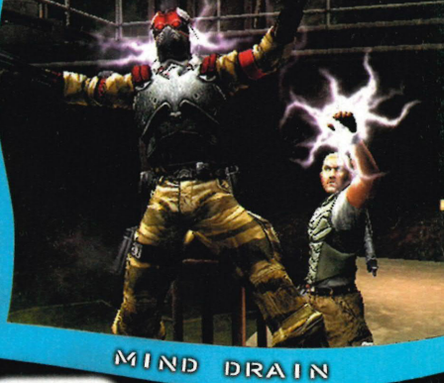

TELEKINESIS

PYROKINESIS


REMOTE VIEWING


MIND DRAIN

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"TRULY ASTONISHING" 10/10 - P2

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PlayStation.2

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MIDWAY

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PUBLISHER CAPCOM | DEVELOPER CAPCOM | WEBSITE WWW.CAPCOM.CO.JP/DEVIL3

DEVIL MAY CRY 3

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK hands on

AND WE MIGHT CRY TOO. TEARS OF JOY, THOUGH. 'COS *DMC3* IS SET TO DELIVER...

If the *Devil May Cry* titles were laid end to end in chronological order, they'd represent a downward spiral of quality. Now that may sound like a rather damning statement to open up our hands-on play of the third instalment, but as this is in fact a *prequel* to the previous adventures, it sits at the top of our quality-o-meter. While the second fired blanks, the first was an instant classic, and this rounds off the trio with style. And that's no lie. From what we've played, *DMC3* really is shaping up to be the best of the lot.

Although the basic setup is the same – battle against an attack of horrible evil things with gymnastic gunplay that would make a Hong Kong movie stuntman weep – this time things are spiced up by two things. The first is the appearance of Dante's half-brother, Virgil, and the prospect of a fight between the two (we're half-hoping, half-expecting a Dante vs Virgil showdown) makes everything just that little more interesting. The second is that the emergence of our white-haired warrior's demonic powers – this is set before the first game, remember – is also dealt with. Those powers have been restructured across a style system, which lets you choose between a different combination of skills based on Dante's swordsmanship and gunplay before each level. It seems to work very well, although the results are dependent on how you play.

Out of the crop of styles we sampled, our favourite attack was the Gunslinger mode's Twosome Time special move which, after a simple jab of ◎, sees Dante twirl his handguns while firing shots in circles all around him. Firing the weapon soon becomes as effortless to the player as shaking pompoms is to a pretty cheerleader.

BETTER THE DEVIL

Speaking of pretty, *DMC3* has certainly been turning our heads. It's a real beauty, albeit in a floaty Gothic dress and kinky rocker boots. But we digress... The dark overtones have been kept, but also tarted up a little. There's an interesting hybrid of locations going on, as seen when our adventure ended in an old theatre that housed an underground nightclub, complete with snaking staircases, a *Saturday Night Fever* dancefloor and – get this – a podium dancer pole that Dante can swing around for an extra attack move. The camera has also been repositioned, offering a better perspective on what's going on – so not only does the game look better overall, it also helps you see things clearer.

We can't tell you how polished and buffed up this feels. Somehow Capcom has managed to put the new car smell back in. And so we await those tears. With a nice new box of tissues. ■ MF

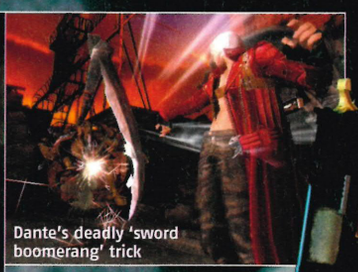
monitor PlayS...

FOR A CHARACTER POWERED by the burning fires of hell, Dante is about as ice cool as they come. Our playtest was just a taster – and now we're itching to holster up and have another go. Watch this space

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN

Dante on the stripper's pole. *Dancing Stage* eat your heart out



Dante's deadly 'sword boomerang' trick

Expect more monster slaying – but gnarlier

You choose a style before each level

"GOOD OLD FASHIONED ENTERTAINMENT"
WWW.DVDTIMES.CO.UK

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CHECK OUT THESE OTHER HOT TITLES ALSO ARRIVING IN SEPTEMBER!

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PUBLISHER **EA** | DEVELOPER **FREE RADICAL DESIGN** | WEBSITE **WWW.EAGAMES.COM**

TIMESPLITTERS FUTURE PERFECT

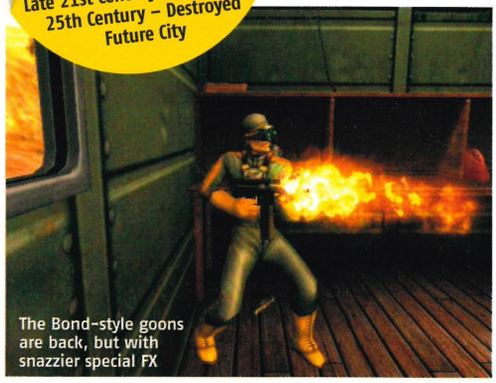
OUR *'SPLITTERS* STORIES USUALLY READ LIKE LOVE LETTERS. SO THIS MONTH WE WENT ALL THE WAY...

You'll never look at a first-person shooter in the same way again

QUANTUM LEAP

***TimeSplitters Future Perfect* features ten levels set across five time zones**

1920s – Scottish Castle
1960s – Missile Train
1980s – Haunted Mansion
Late 21st Century – Future City
25th Century – Destroyed Future City

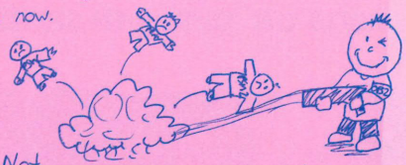


The Bond-style goons are back, but with snazzier special FX

Dear Free Radical Darlings,

You don't mind if we call you that, do you? Cool. Well, firstly thanks for taking the time to show us how the new game is coming along. Sorry if we made you feel nervous, what with all the giggling and that. Honestly, we're not like that with the other developers. Maybe it's because *'Splitters* feels like it's designed JUST for us. You guys are the only ones who get what we really want from a shooter – which, specifically, is cheese-dream characters moving faster than sound and shooting each other in the knees with rocket launchers. And spank our bottoms if *Future Perfect* doesn't deliver exactly that. Don't tell the Killzone boys, but we reckon it's the best-looking shooter on PS2. It's almost embarrassing how crisp and detailed the environments are – and Satan only knows how you keep the whole thing running at 60 frames-per-second.

The opening level of the 'story' mode is an absolute cracker, too. Oh, and you're right, the Scottish castle has definitely got a *Where Eagles Dare* vibe going on. Don't worry about people calling the game too linear, either. Is a rollercoaster too linear? No, it's a grab-your-nuts-and-scream thrill ride. Which is exactly how *Future Perfect* feels. There are too many genius touches to list here, but we particularly like the biplanes that swoop down, spraying machine gun fire. Of course, the gameplay is like quicksilver – and the way the enemies go down clutching their bullet wounds just plain ROCKS. We're also glad to hear the difficulty level is going to be balanced slightly more forgivingly this time. Oh, and did we mention how cool the time-bending bits where you get to help out a version of yourself from the past are? We have now.



You're probably wondering what we thought of the multiplayer mode. Well, we realise it wasn't your fault that online play was removed from *'Splitters 2*, but it BROKE OUR HEARTS. Not this time, though. Having played 16-man 'capture the flag' until our eyes bled, we can't wait to take the finished game online. The Martian map was nice and tight, and the battles had a really satisfying feeling of ebb and flow. It's just a shame you couldn't tell us about any of the secret modes and challenges yet – but perhaps that trust will come with time. Anyway, if it's okay with you, we'll pop up to your place before the next issue for a big feature. You were joking about that restraining order, right?

Love,

OPS2 X

SPLITTERS 4 EVER!

monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

HAVE WE GONE TOO FAR? Maybe. But of all the games we've played recently, none have matched the fizzy-eyed sense of excitement we get from playing the loved-up wonderment that is *Future Perfect*

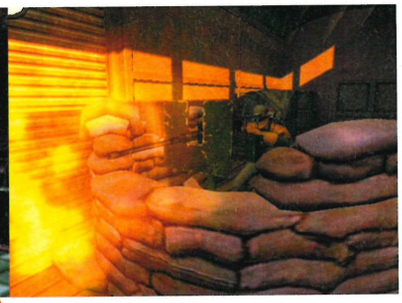
HOT OR NOT?

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

Branson ordered the Virgin Apache to attack rival locomotives

Fanboys will note these enemies look like 'The Machinist'

Post-*Kill Bill*, jump suits are very much in



Trust us, *Future Perfect* moves quicker than a footballer leaving a lap-dancing club

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK

hands on

Grenades are an important addition to the '*Splitters* arsenal

Biplanes strafe you on the Scottish castle level

The map never knew what hit it. Largely because it was paper...

ETA 6 months
Mar 2005
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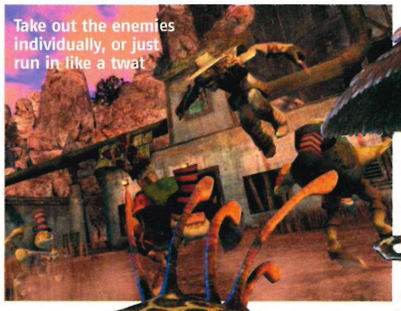
Check out the chipmunk, looking not entirely delighted


Take out the enemies individually, or just run in like a twat

PUBLISHER **EA** | DEVELOPER **ODDWORLD INHABITANTS** | WEBSITE **WWW.ODDWORLD.COM**

ODDWORLD STRANGER

SPAGHETTI WESTERN FROM BEYOND THE STARS, ANYONE?

Videogames, as a general rule, don't really *do* funny. Much in the same way that female comedians don't really *do* jokes. Okay, *Driv3r* was hilarious – but not for the right reasons. There are notable exceptions though, like the *GTA* and *Oddworld* games. Following a brief fling with the 'other' console, *Stranger* marks the return of the *Oddworld* series – and its unique sense of humour – to Sony hardware. Not returning, however, will be Abe and Munch, the regular stars. With the pathetic extraterrestrials off on gardening leave, the scene is set for a new hero and completely original gameplay. A good thing. Mainly because trying to explain what happened in the previous games might've induced a coma in the more sensitive among you.

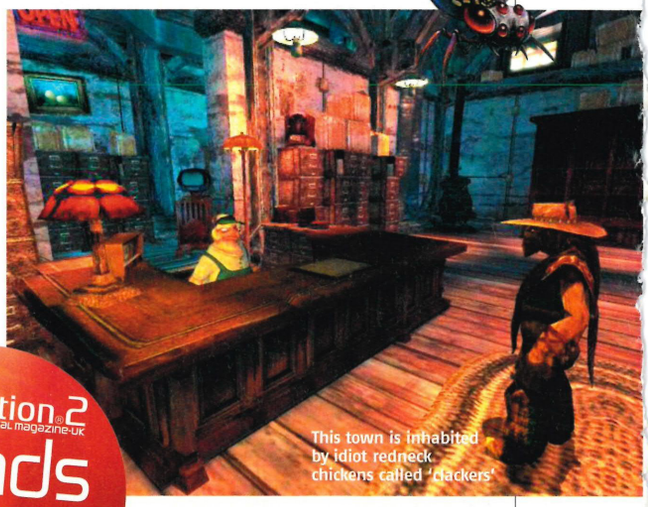
PEOPLE ARE STRANGE...

The star of this one is Stranger – an alien bounty hunter who looks like the result of a teleporter accident involving Clint Eastwood and Chewbacca. The core gameplay involves heading out into the desert to capture outlaws, in order to finance an expensive operation needed to cure some unspecified medical problem. What you get is an intoxicating blend of third and first-person action. Stranger explores the dusty gulches and open prairies on foot, dropping to all fours when you want to move at speed. Once an enemy is encountered, a click of the right stick shifts the game into a shooter perspective to make targeting baby simple. However, Stranger is only armed with one weapon – a double-barrelled crossbow. "Rubbish!" you say. Wrong. It's a masterstroke.

Rather than firing bolts, the bow's equipped with two types of living ammunition, chosen from a range of eight different bugs and furballs. Mount a chipmunk on your weapon and it cockily tries to persuade you not to fire it at the enemy. Understandable, because the alien bandits have an irrational hatred of the little critters and will stamp them into paste. Like we said, properly funny – and not entirely pointless, because this means you can lure bad guys in close using the doomed mammals, then blast them with Boombats or Stingbees (creepy-crawlies that act like grenades and machine gun bullets, respectively). Sounds mental? It is, but in a good way.

Once your target is incapacitated – they're worth more alive than dead – Stranger can suck him up using a can of vac-u-spray, ready to be cashed in at one of several towns. What we've seen so far is a mere appetiser, but the game – which has been in development for over two years – already feels fresh like a summer morning on Saturn. And that's pretty fresh. We'll have more soon, with a full look at the different creatures available for brutalisation, plus info on the story. Until then, send your indignant lists of hilarious comediennes to the usual address. ■ **TC**

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK
hands on


This town is inhabited by idiot redneck chickens called 'Slackers'

Green eyes... burning like fire

monitor — PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK

WE'D FORGOTTEN HOW much we liked the *Oddworld* games – but *Stranger* is innovative, cracking looking and genuinely amusing. It's been a while since any of us typed those adjectives in the same sentence

HOT OR NOT?

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

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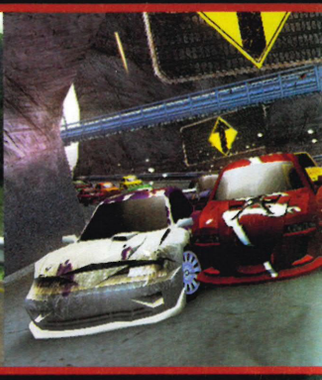

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PUBLISHER **EA** | DEVELOPER **EA VANCOUVER** | WEBSITE **WWW.EAGAMES.COM** | OUT **NOVEMBER**

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

ON THE DVD

FRESH DETAILS AND THRILLING NEW SHOTS FROM THE MODDED-UP SEQUEL

So, what do you already know? If you've been keeping up you'll have spotted that *NFSU2* is adding open street racing to the party – with the *Underground* now spread over an entire city with five distinct districts, an out-of-town mountain to ride up and down and former *FHM* covergirl Brooke Burke to make it all look even more pretty.

Well, we've been chatting to executive producer Chuck Osieja about what else is in the game and you're about to know as much as anyone else outside the development team. Are you ready...?

First of all, you don't just load up the game and sail into the whole city. It's a bit tougher than that. "The experience is built around discovery," says Chuck. "The more you discover inside the city, the more opportunities are available to you." So you open up new bits of the city as you go along, and that gives you access to parts and upgrades as well. "Sure there will be races and shops that will appear to every player when they start the game," Chuck adds, "but there are also other layers of shops, races and competitors that you have to find."

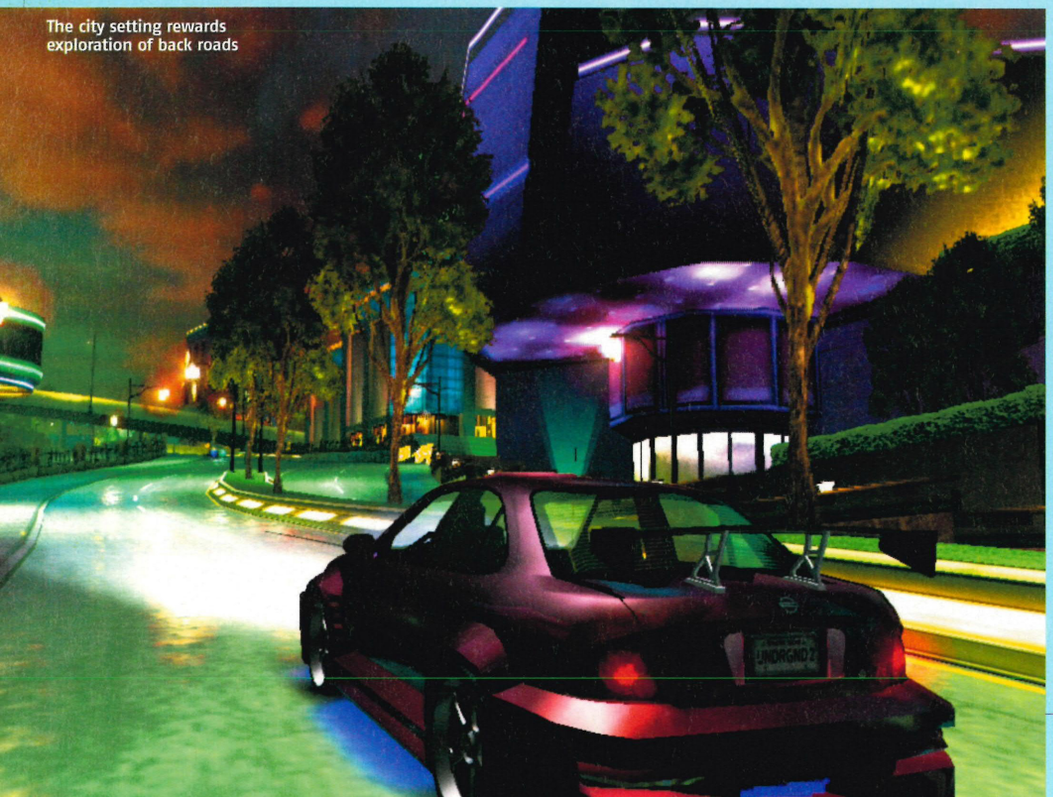
And once you do open it all up? Well then it's all yours, baby. "You can drive from the radio tower at the top of the mountain to the three nuclear cooling towers in the industrial section, travelling through most of the areas of the city. It takes from 15 to 20 minutes, and when you do it you get a real sense of the scale and size of the world."

THIS IS MODERN LIFE

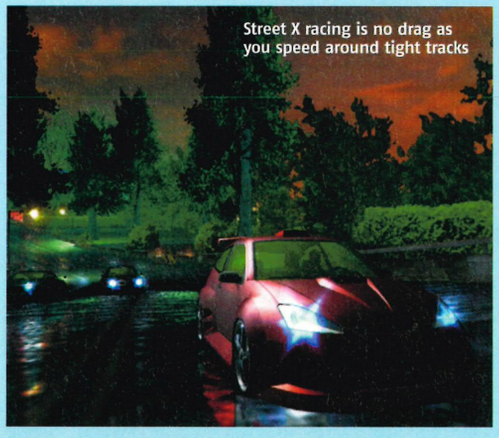
With the city getting bigger it was obvious the ability to customise your motor would increase as well. You might have heard that there are ten new ways to mod your ride, including scissor doors, split hoods, spinners, NO2 purge, headlight colours and more. But what you might not know is that, according to Chuck, these upgrades aren't just about making your drive look cool. What you do to it will affect how you play. "We've designed the game to force the player to think about where and how they spend their money. If you just spend it on performance parts you will win some of the races but you'll be leaving significant bank on the table in other events. The career is non-linear this year so you have to make the right choices to get access to the best opportunities and make the most money."

Another interesting nugget Chuck let slip was the new online ranking system. There'll be performance-based leagues in an attempt to avoid mismatches (*OPS2* has been on the wrong side of them a few times, and it wasn't pretty) so the better your reputation, the higher the division you'll be in. Another new online innovation is the outrun mode (see New Race Modes Announced!). Unlike in the single-player game where it's one-on-one with one car trying to lose the other, it'll be a four-player race – *Mashed* style – with the slowest being eliminated if they drop 300m behind the leader.

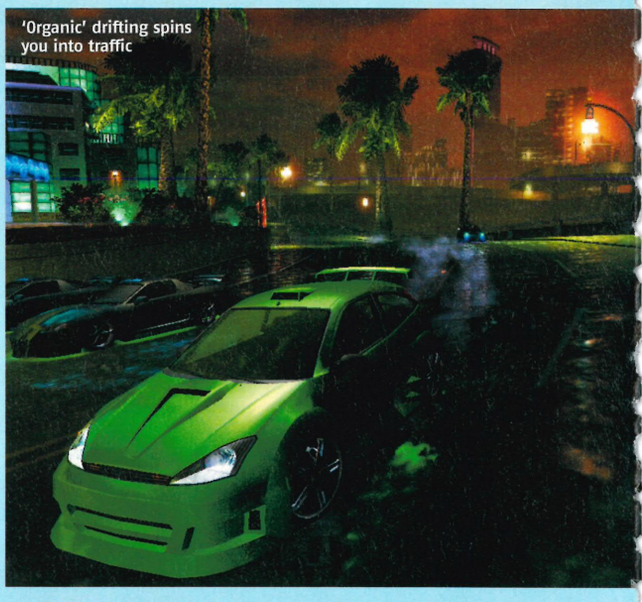
If this info burst has got your racing muscles twitching, it's time for you to watch the trailer on our cover DVD and then take part in our competition. What are you waiting for...?



The city setting rewards exploration of back roads



Street X racing is no drag as you speed around tight tracks



'Organic' drifting spins you into traffic

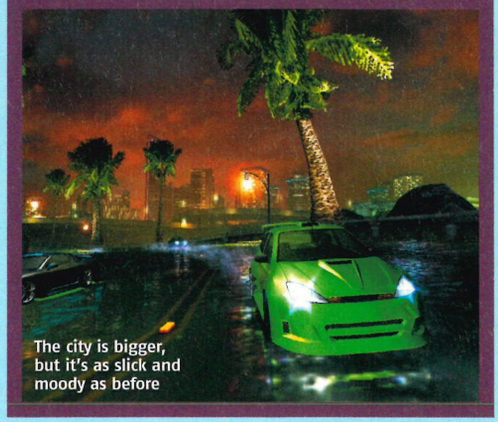
NEW RACE MODES ANNOUNCED!

We've been keeping our ear to the ground when it comes to *NFSU2*'s new modes. Here's what we've heard...

OUTRUN RACING
Challenge someone to a 'follow the leader' race where the leader has to get 300m ahead to win. There is no set track, you just roam around the city laying down the challenge to other tuner cars cruising the steets and, if you can match their speed, the race is on – instantly, as there are no loading times. According to exec producer Chuck Osieja, these can go on for more than 20 minutes if you're both well matched.

STREET X
Pronounced 'Street Cross' it's four cars with tight handling on short 'technical' circuits. The tracks are so short you can do five laps in two minutes. "It's a circuit version of last year's drag racing – very fast and intense with blistering pace and lots of banging," according to Osieja (note: he means cars hitting each other, not people having sex).

ORGANIC DRIFT
In *NFSU* there was a drift mode but you could only use it in enclosed environments – garages, the ship yard – but with 'organic drift' you can get out in the open and drift down the winding mountain roads. "What makes this mode really cool and different is that it's all downhill, which makes for a different style of drifting, and there's traffic on the roads. You really have to pay attention to the oncoming traffic," says Osieja.



The city is bigger, but it's as slick and moody as before

Street rep can be topped up with online races

WIN! THE CHANCE TO DRIVE A FERRARI!

OPS2 HAS GOT TOGETHER WITH *NFS UNDERGROUND 2* PUBLISHER EA AND OUR SISTER MAGAZINE, MODDING BIBLE *REDLINE*, TO OFFER TEN READERS THE CHANCE TO RACE FOR THEIR DRIVING SEAT IN A FERRARI PLUS A TOTALLY AMAZING GAMING SETUP TO BOOT...

Ten readers from *OPS2* and another ten from *Redline* can win a track day at Castle Combe racing circuit in Wiltshire where they'll race off in a series of hotter than July motors, including a racing-prepared Ford Focus, Subaru Impreza WRX rally car, a Formula Ford racing car and go-karts before slugging it out on the track that really counts – on a PS2 with *NFSU2*.

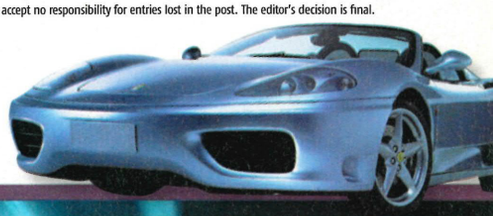
As if that wasn't prize enough, the overall winner will then walk away with a plasma TV, a PS2, a copy of the game and an exclusive track day where you'll be able to drive a range of super cars including a Ferrari, Porsche and more!

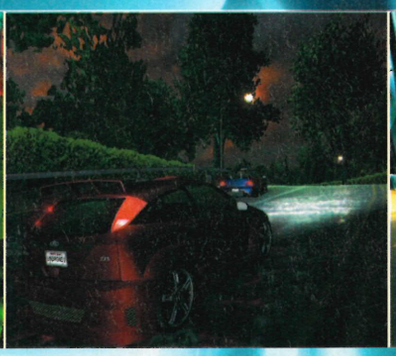
And how can you win this incredo-prize? All you have to do is fire up this month's cover DVD and have a long, steady look at the *NFSU2* trailer. Then answer the two questions on the right there, fill in the tie-breaker and send it in two us. The best ten will find themselves racing around one the country's oldest and best racing tracks at the end of November.

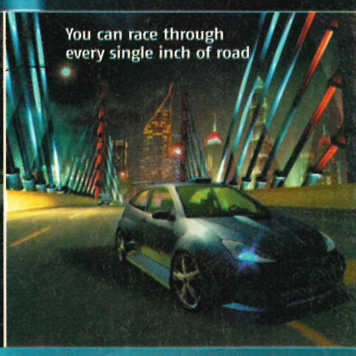
- **1. Which car ends up in the starter's mouth?**
- **2. What is the name of the hotel right at the end of the trailer?**
- **Tie-breaker (answer must be no more than 20 words): Why should you win?**

Terms and conditions

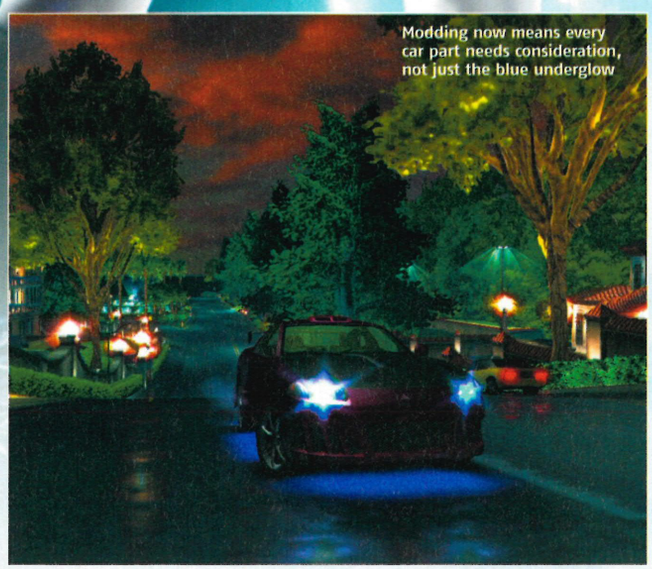
Send entries to 'I Need Speed', *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Entries to reach us by 6 October 2004. All entrants must be 18 or over and have a valid driver's licence. Track day will be on Friday 19 November unless otherwise informed. No purchase necessary. Competition only open to UK residents. No correspondence will be entered into. No employees of Future Publishing, EA or any affiliated company may enter. No cash alternative is offered to this prize. If prize becomes unavailable, we reserve the right to replace it with another of equal value. Multiple entries will be disregarded. We will not advise non-winners of the result. Normal competition rules apply. We will accept no responsibility for entries lost in the post. The editor's decision is final.



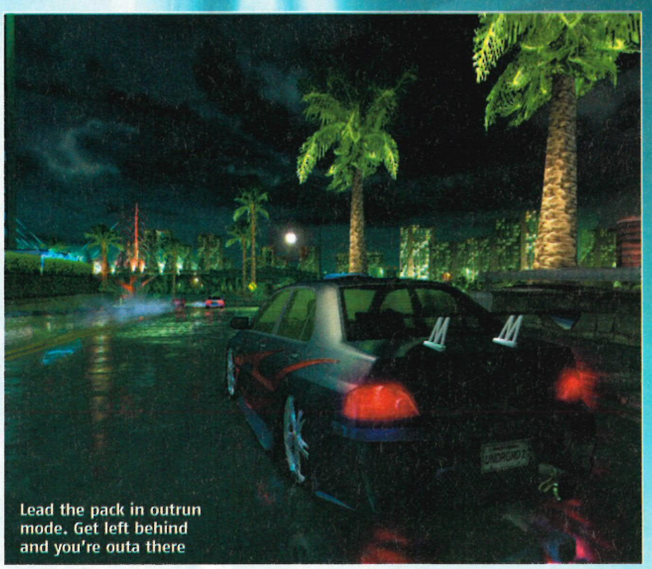




You can race through every single inch of road



Modding now means every car part needs consideration, not just the blue underglow

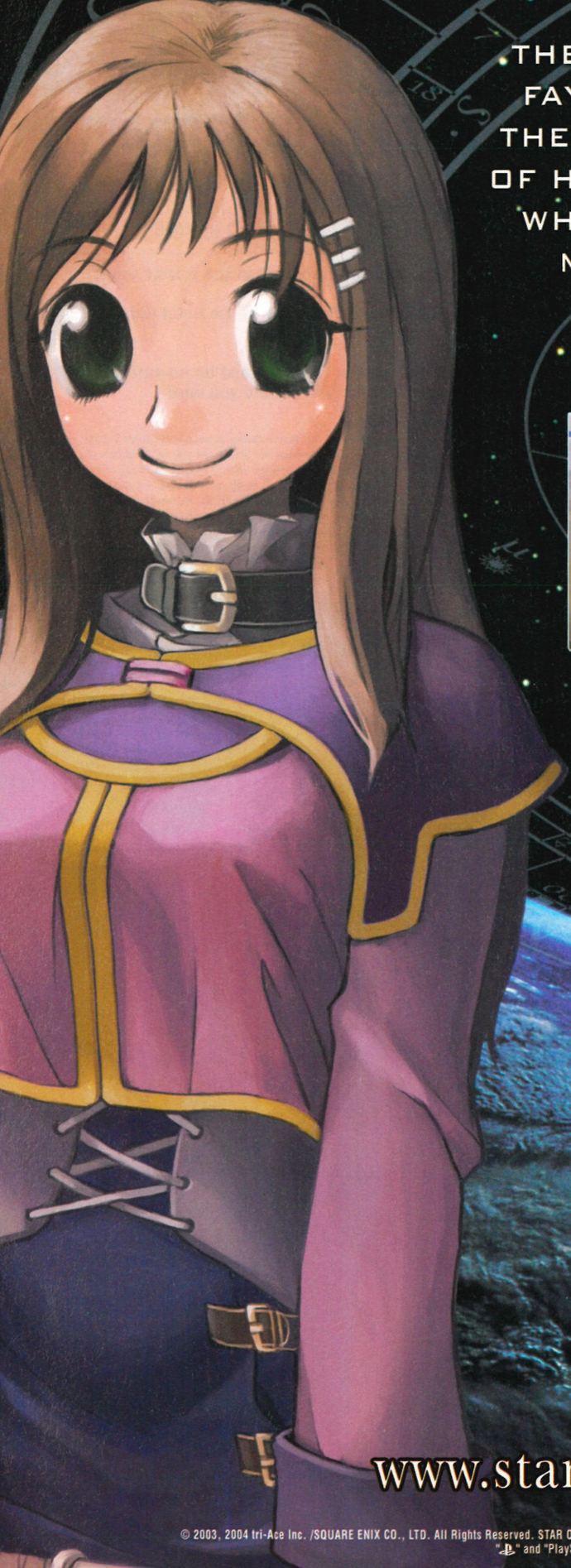


Lead the pack in outrun mode. Get left behind and you're outa there

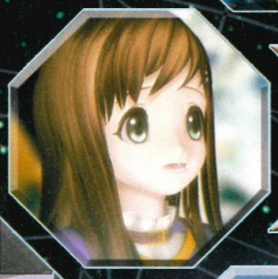
LIGHT TRAVELS AT A SPEED OF 299,792,458 METRES PER SECOND.

YOU AREN'T QUITE THAT FAST.

IT'S A BIG UNIVERSE. BETTER GET STARTED.



THE YEAR IS SO 772. FAYT'S VACATION ON THE PEACEFUL WORLD OF HYDA IS SHATTERED WHEN AN UNKNOWN MILITARY FORCE ATTACKS.



SEPARATED FROM ALL HE KNOWS AND LOVES, FAYT MUST BRAVE THE GALAXY TO RECOVER ALL THAT HE HAS LOST.

"A MINIMUM OF 60 GAMEPLAY HOURS, AND IT IS TO DATE THE FINEST RPG TO BE RELEASED ON THE PLAYSTATION®2 CONSOLE."

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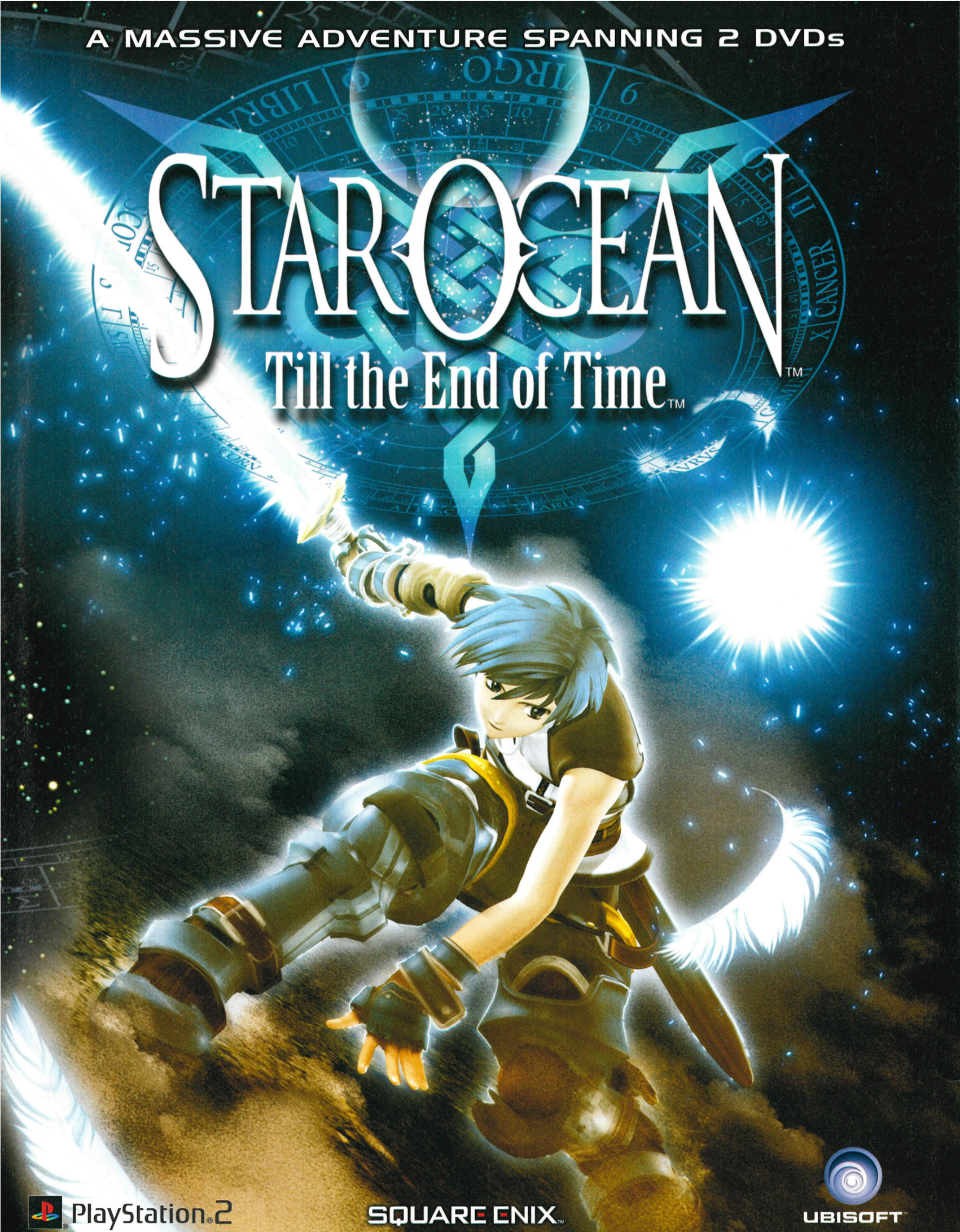
A MASSIVE ADVENTURE SPANNING 2 DVDs



PlayStation 2

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TOUCH SENSITIVE

WORDS: TIM CLARK/PHOTOGRAPHY: ROB SCOTT

Each year FIFA sells like prawn sandwiches at a ManYoo game. But although the game has improved, so far it hasn't closed the gameplay gap on Pro Evo. This year, though, EA reckons it really is playing the beautiful game...

ROONEY DOES THE MATH

"This year's *FIFA* will have 18 fully licensed leagues and 38 national teams, which gives you a grand total of, erm... carry the four... 15 different players. No, wait... erm, it's no good boss.

Want to hear the *FIFA* conspiracy theory? Yeah, you do. Each year EA invites us over to see the new game and offer feedback on how it can be improved. And each year when we get there it's painfully apparent that, to put it kindly, the code 'needs work'. Here's where it gets weird, though. Some of the other games hacks reckon that we're *deliberately* shown a ropey version so that when the review code arrives – and isn't rubbish – it's such a surprise that we add an extra mark out of sheer relief. This, of course, is mental. Programmers are perfectionists (prima donnas, even) who would rather pull out their own teeth – barehanded – than show off anything less than their best work. But we mention the story for good reason: the big surprise this year wasn't how much *FIFA* needed to be fixed, but how little.

Like its predecessors, *FIFA 2005* has been developed on EA's sprawling Vancouver campus. Which, as offices go, could hardly look more like a Bond villain's base without the addition of an underground monorail and retractable death ray. These days, though, the team is no longer overloaded with Canucks whose hearts secretly belong to ice hockey. Instead, EA has drafted in scores of footie-mad Europeans to build its most accurate simulation to date.

Dominating the main building's glassy foyer are enormous posters of this year's stars: Patrick Vieria, Fernando Morientes and (a slightly off-key-looking) Andriy Shevchenko. Nothing unusual there, until you think a bit harder about why *these* players have been chosen to front the game.

HE COMES FROM SENEGAL, HE PLAYS FOR OFFICIAL

Obviously, all three are total class – but they aren't the twinkle-toed magicians we've come to expect from *FIFA*'s marketing department, which under any normal circumstances would surely have splashed Cristiano Ronaldo's ravaged features over the box. Instead, Vieria and the others are proven performers; master craftsmen who give everything for the shirt. The underlying point being that this year *FIFA* isn't just about the flash.

Certainly, that's also the impression we get from the presentation. Instead of the usual ear-splitting montage of goals and glory, we're given an informal run through the new features by long-standing producer Danny Isaac – who doesn't even *bother* to mention that FIFA was the biggest seller on PS2 last year – and left to play the game.

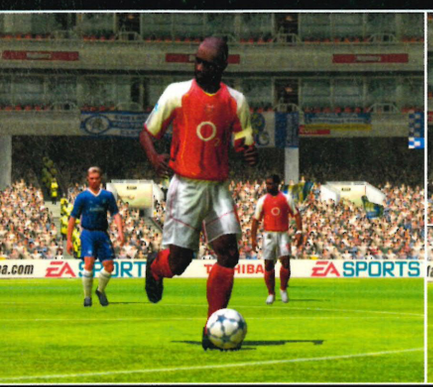
Shevchenko bravely ignores the alien craft hovering overhead

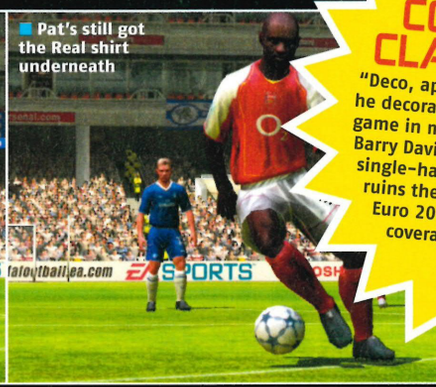
The heading system has been improved

'THE BOARD HAVE TOTAL CONFIDENCE IN ME...'

The career mode is smart like one of Mourniho's bespoke suits

Fancy managing Guadalajara in the Mexican league? Not really, no. But *FIFA*'s career mode is now so oceanic that it's entirely possible. You're given 15 years to tinker your way to glory using any side drawn from 18 different leagues. Cleverly, EA has increased the likelihood of your favourite club (determined at the beginning) making an offer. Other innovations include mock newspaper headlines – that was our idea, too! – and random acts of God. You'll also have to worry about hiring the right backroom staff to bring out the best in your young players, and juggling the expectations of the fans and the board to avoid the sack. Christ, sounds like an aneurysm waiting to happen. Y'know, but in a good way.



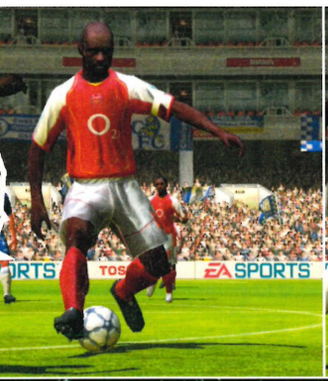


Pat's still got the Real shirt underneath

COMMENTARY CLANGER

"Deco, aptly named... he decorates the game in midfield." Barry Davies single-handedly ruins the BBC's Euro 2004 coverage.

ALLSTAR



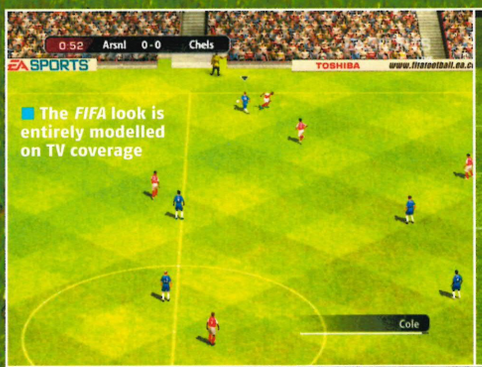
Soon after kicking off it's easy to see why EA is feeling so confident. The influence of *Pro Evo* is all over *FIFA 2005* like a hooky replica shirt. Which is a compliment, obviously. The biggest improvement is actually a subtle one. *FIFA*'s players now boast a vastly expanded repertoire of animations. But we're not talking infeasible overhead kicks. The emphasis is on stabbed shots, flicked passes, stretched tackles and everything else you'd expect from a real match. The impact on gameplay can't be overstated, because it means you can react instantly to situations rather than being forced to wait for a certain animation routine to kick in. *FIFA*'s newfound fluidity is also helped by the way players can take the ball in their stride at speed, and the significantly improved through-balls. In another nod to *PES*, as well as slicing open defences, the through-ball can also be used horizontally to spread the play out to an overlapping winger. Overall then, the core gameplay is significantly more enjoyable and intuitive, with notably more responsive players. Just as well really, because this time last year we were grizzling like newborn babies about how fat and slow everything felt.

Fortunately, Isaac and his team were listening. After *FIFA 2004* was complete they went away, studied endless footage of the top stars in action (tough job, lads) and came to the conclusion that the biggest fault lay with *FIFA*'s first touch. Instant control of the ball is the big innovation this year, and the thing that the glitzy TV adverts are going to be banging on about. But unlike last year's convoluted 'Off The Ball' mode, the 'First Touch' control system is a strong addition. The idea is that you look for space as the ball's played to you, and then flick it in that direction using the right analogue stick as you receive the pass – theoretically turning the defender inside out. We say theoretically because, as is only right, this isn't some kind of 'sliver bullet' move that will enable you to beat your man every time. Instead, it's a case of getting the timing and positioning right – but when it comes off you feel properly cool. Think Bergkamp murdering the Geordie defence with one flick.

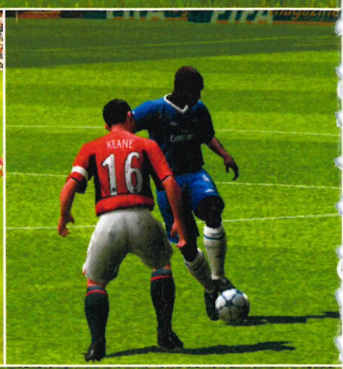
Player models still have slightly over-sized heads

CRUYFF TURNS AND DOUBLE LOLLIPOPS

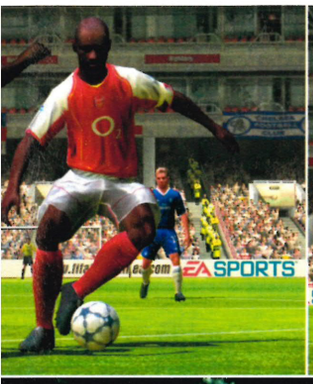
Not convinced? Can't say we blame you. Our initial reaction was that using the right stick whenever you wanted to control the ball would be annoying like an eight-year-old sidekick. But with practice it becomes second nature.



The *FIFA* look is entirely modelled on TV coverage



Chelsea new boy Drogba receives the ball



Time the first touch right to strand your marker

You don't use the move all the time (your players are more than capable of controlling the ball without the right stick) but it's incredibly handy when you're trying to shake a marker. Dribbling also feels like a genuine option this time, thanks to the revamped trick system. Last year the step-overs and shimmies were the videogaming equivalent of Tara Reid. Lovely looks but no practical use. That's all changed now. Brush the right stick while in possession and – assuming your man's skilful enough – you'll cut inside your opponent with both feet flashing like a northern girl's knickers. It works in much the same way as the R2 shuffle from *Pro Evo* – swinging the balance of power away from the defence, which was unreasonably tough to break down last year.

Ever the traditionalists, we've saved the best bit for last. And it's a feature that's so good we reckon *FIFA might* have beaten *PES* to the ball for the first time. Oh, and we should also mention that it was actually *our* idea. Seriously. Over tea and biscuits at a hotel with Isaac earlier this year we were banging on about how you should be able to force teammates to run into space using a button whenever you wanted. In the version we played you simply press L1 and the nearest player points into space and makes a run. Slide the ball through and the defence is in ribbons. The move works brilliantly, but without unbalancing the game, because timing is once again everything. Go too early and the pass will be snuffed out. Leave it too late and you're offside. But get it just right and the onion bag beckons.

'I WOULD LOVE IT IF WE BEAT THEM'

Here's what *FIFA*'s gaffer Danny Isaac really thinks of *Pro Evolution Soccer*

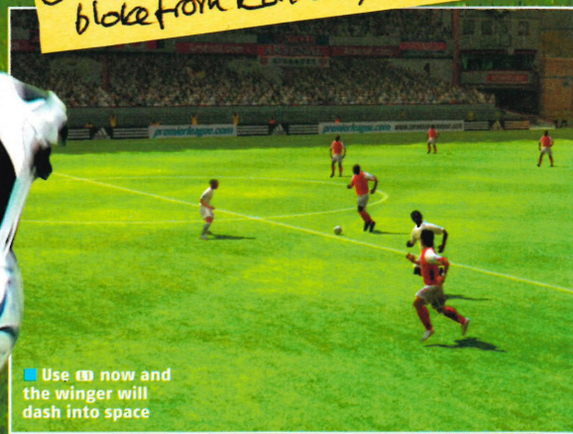
"When you play *Pro Evo*, it seems like such a strong simulation because they control what the players are doing so well. Now we're giving that control to you and we have to be very careful to balance it right, which has been a challenge. But for this generation of consoles **I don't think that *FIFA* is going to kill *PES*. And to be brutally honest I wouldn't want it to either.** Having the two games competing has doubled the number of people buying football games. Which is great, and both products have got better because of it."

ALLSTAR

FIFA 2005 TO DO LIST

Things to remember to fix before knock off...

1. Sort out the big holes in midfield
2. Make the players run a bit faster
3. Get rid of the wrestling at corners NOW!
4. Tap up that Seabass bloke from Konami, he's good



Use L1 now and the winger will dash into space

FIFA 2005

Scoring is also the biggest proof of just how much *FIFA* has come on. This year it really means something when you stick one away. You'll actually *want* to see the replay, just to savour how beautifully Rooney brought the ball down before smashing it home with the outside of his boot. Clearly, the game isn't perfect. The midfield seems to retreat like England with a 1-0 lead, leaving way too much space in the middle of the park, and we remain convinced that the default running speed is slightly too slow – but these problems should be relatively simple to fix.

More than anything else, *FIFA* really does *feel* like football this year. New additions like the L1 runs, combined with EA's typically vertiginous production standards, mean that for the first time there may be little to separate the review scores of the two games.

Hands on hearts, though, we don't think *FIFA 2005* will outplay *PES4* this year. But bear in mind that *PES* is the greatest videogame series *ever* as far as several of us are concerned. What's beyond doubt is that EA has made up real ground and, with online play and full licensing a given, this year's clash promises to be a cracker. The real season kicks off in October. ■

ALLSTAR

This is how good it will look!

FIFA ALREADY EXISTS ON PS3!

...and according to EA it's going to look so incredible, you'll actually be able to see Fatty Viduka's sweat

That's right: in a secret room, miles underground, serious-looking men are **grafting on the next generation of EA's football franchise right now.** And according to our man on the inside, the visuals are going to be staggering. Kits will be so realistic that you'll be able to make out the embroidery on the badges and notice the way light reflects off different types of fabric. Nice. And the players sound lovely too, with beautiful flyaway hair and skin that actually sweats. Plus, their thigh muscles will ripple like... Christ, that's enough, eh? More relevantly, the gameplay will be fully grounded in reality – with **utterly authentic ball physics and player interactions.** Like running past and sneakily gobbing in Christian Poulson's ear. Okay, that's a lie.

BALLS UP
Bergy whips the ball in and then stands there, hand on hip, like he's modelling for *Attitude*

GETTING SHIRTY
'Watch the shirt-pulling, ref!' Corners still involve an annoying amount of jostling between players

DIRTY ARSE
Unless we're mistaken, little Freddie Ljungberg is lamping one of the Chelsea lads

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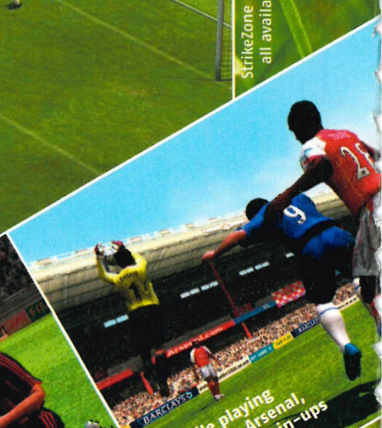

While playing in goal for Arsenal, Gulliver did chin-ups on the East Stand

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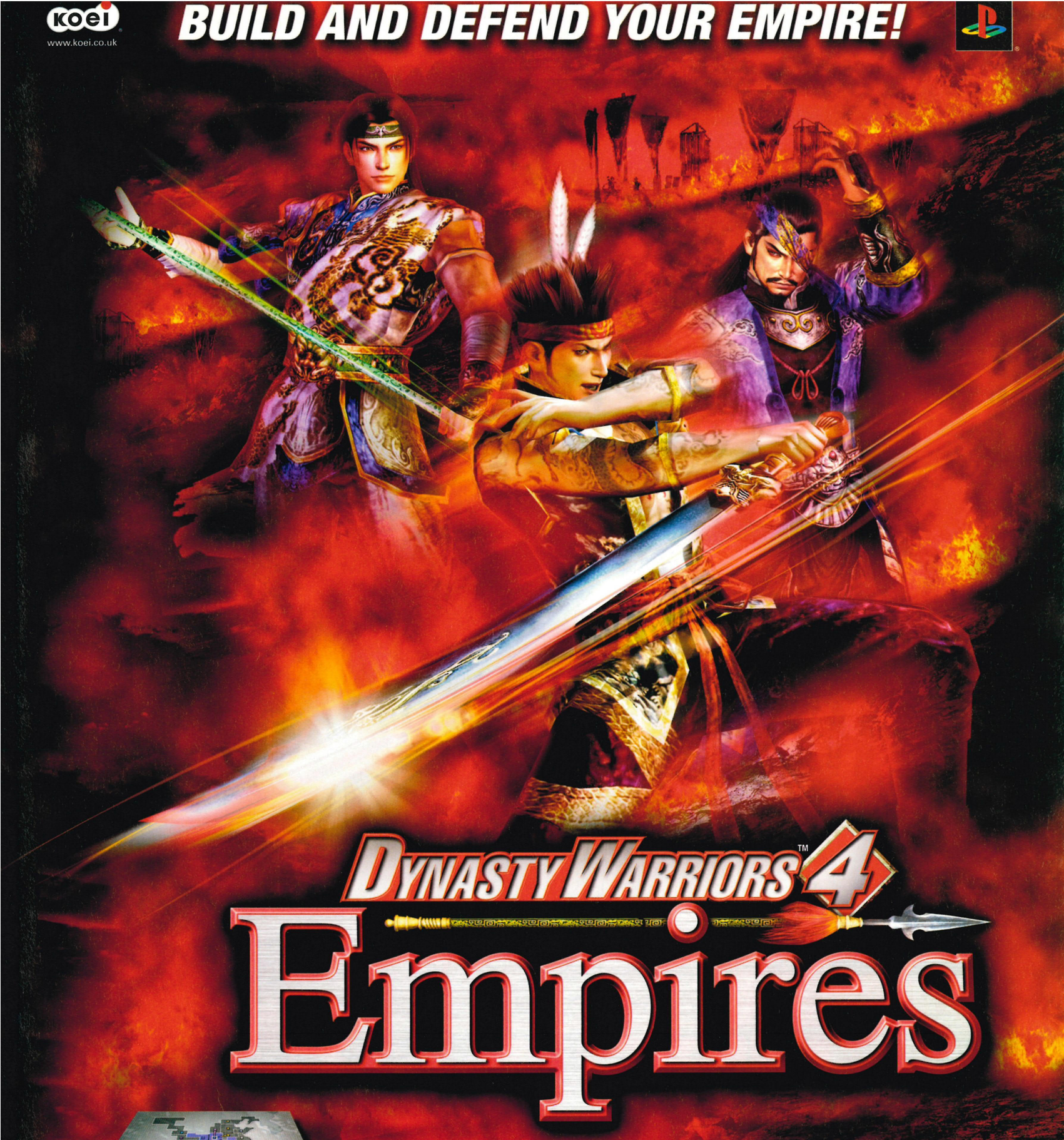

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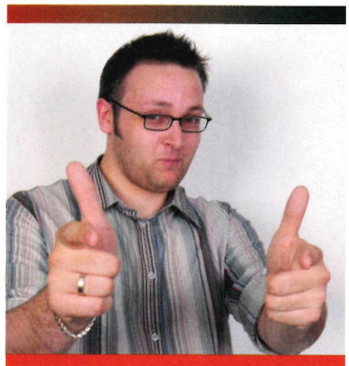
review

OTHER SCORES DON'T COUNT – ONLY WE OFFER THE OFFICIAL VERDICT

WELCOME TO REVIEWS

Michael does this for you – remember that while you laugh at his photo



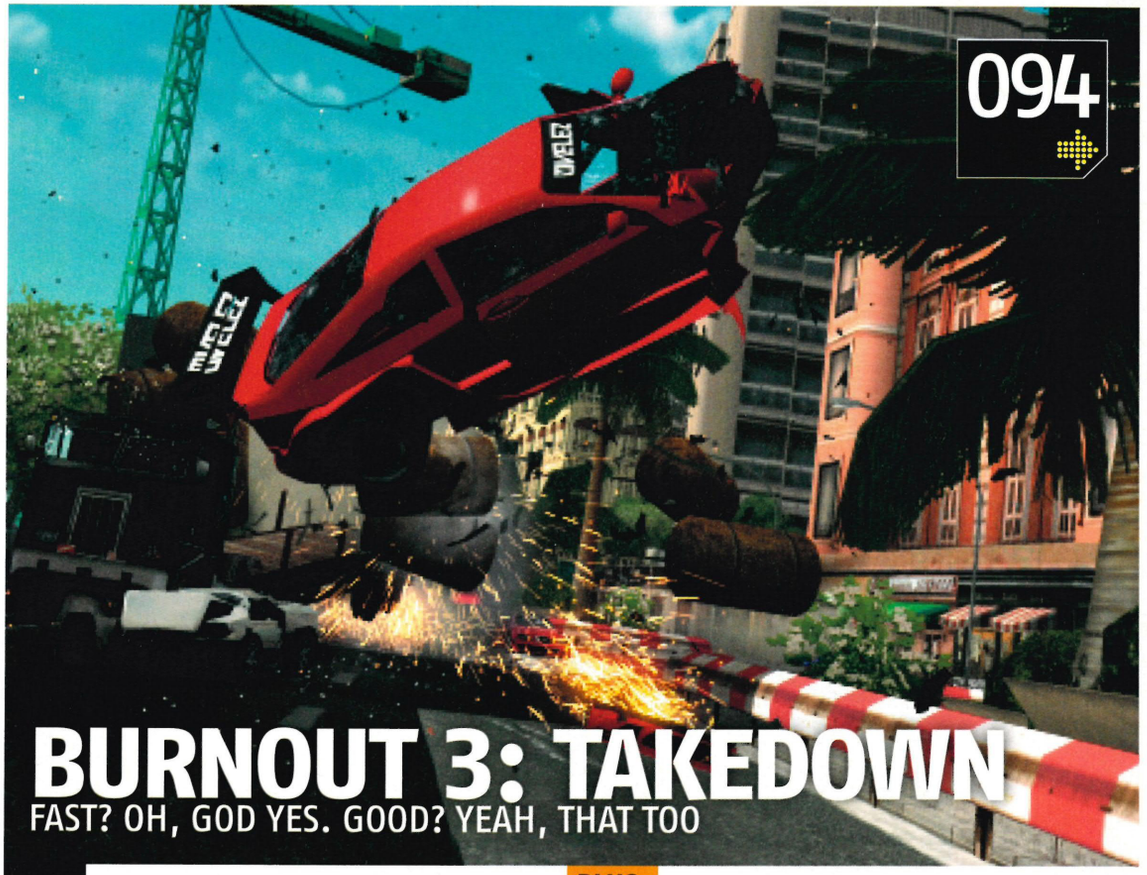
Like the *Killzone* review? You have to admit, that was special. Which was the point, because the game is more than a bit smart itself. But with the *'Zone* not actually out for a couple of months you need some games you can actually *play*.

Treats this month include the latest outing for *Colin McRae*, a mix of action games, plus music suite *DJ: Decks & FX* – which turns out to be not-quite-a-game-but-still-a-whole-loada-fun. But to get you started, turn the page for our verdict on *Burnout 3*. It is, undeniably, the best game we've played so far this year, having grabbed the attention of everyone at *OPS2* – it also happens to be brilliant both off and online.

Speaking of online, *Star Wars: Battlefront* has escaped our review radar this month as the behind-the-scenes boffins are still hard at work finishing its network mode. But don't worry, it'll be part of next month's payload of opinion.

Michael

Michael French,
Reviews editor



094

BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN

FAST? OH, GOD YES. GOOD? YEAH, THAT TOO

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Another sequel returns to PS2, but has time been kind to Jack Wade?

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Colin may have slipped from the top of the rally world, but is his game still number one?

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Officially more terrifying than having your eyes replaced by vinegar-soaked ping pong balls

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All the fun of the mix, without the embarrassment of having to do it in front of anyone

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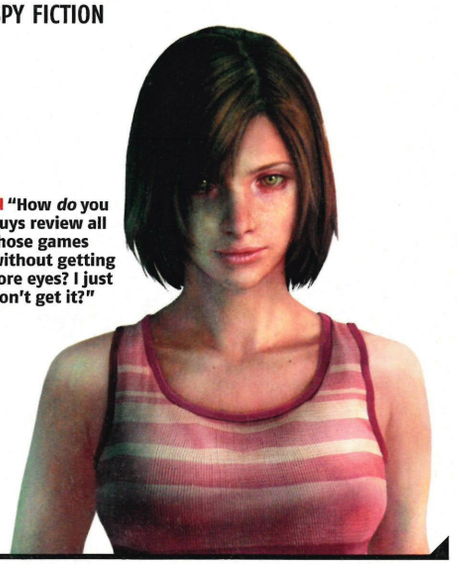


■ **"How *do* you guys review all those games without getting sore eyes? I just don't get it?"**

BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN

gold
PlayStation 2 official magazine-uk

ONLINE

Fast? Furious? Hell, this gives new meaning to the words 'auto erotic'

PlayStation 2

DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA
DEVELOPER CRITERION
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-2 (1-6 ONLINE)
OUT 10 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.BURNOUT.EA.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES
PERIPHERALS NETWORK ADAPTOR

AT A GLANCE

Faster, shinier and more crash-obsessed than ever, it's the first instalment of *Burnout* to be released under EA's corporate umbrella. Feeling the need for speed? This is your game...

For *Gran Turismo* top cat, Kazunori Yamauchi, playing *Burnout 3* must be like watching a snuff movie. Actually, scratch that and shift it into reverse for a second... it must be like watching a snuff movie full of incredibly gorgeous models. Cars – beautiful cars; cars every inch the equal of his gleaming *GT* babies – race at breathtaking speed around tracks designed by Michelangelo and lit by Buddha. Then they crash. Horribly. And it's *brilliant*.

There's always been a contradiction at the heart of the *Burnout* series. The crashes are undeniably The Best Bit, huge cacophonies of screaming metal and squealing tyres followed by eerie stillness that makes you think – just for a second – that you're *actually dead*. The problem is, of course, that the whole point of *Burnout* is to see them as little as possible. How do you resolve that little paradox? Easy.

Later cash multipliers tend to conceal Heartbreakers

HEAVY METAL

Crashes are the *whole point* of *Burnout 3*. It's almost impossible to win races without them. You might run the racing line flawlessly, pile up the near misses and drift turns that provide extra boost and spend entire laps playing chicken with oncoming traffic, but if that's all you do, the opposition's going to breeze past. Though it's now possible to activate boost at any time – instead of waiting for the bar to fill up – the start of each race sees you only able to store enough for a piffling couple of seconds of eye-watering speed. The only way to make the bar bigger is by scoring Takedowns – deliberately making other cars crash. How you do this is up to you. Nudge them into stanchions, slam them from behind, bully them into oncoming traffic, but merciless AI means they'll be doing the same right back. In the hands of lesser developers this could've gone horribly wrong. From developer Criterion, it's fantastic stuff, as the other cars are aggressive enough to make winning a protracted battle a joy. Once upon a time, veering safely through a pile-up was a rare treat – now it's a regular occurrence, your skill at avoiding the carnage rewarded with bonus points and extra boost.

The *SSX* influence is clear – points are awarded for scraping other cars against barriers, for driving underneath airborne wrecks, even for how long you slide on your sunroof after risking it once too often. Most glaringly, getting a six-Takedown rampage in a chain activates infinite boost mode, where you never have to slow down. It's a feeling like no other – even when you're roaring through the pack, crushing rivals left and right, you're acutely aware that you're only a nanosecond's lapse in concentration away from disaster. Not many games can match that blood-chilling realisation that there's a car transporter coming the other way and *there's nothing you can do to avoid it*. And no other driving games give you the feeling that even though you're in the zone, maybe you really *should* just slow down. Just a bit. It'd be almost

SMASH TEST DUMMIES

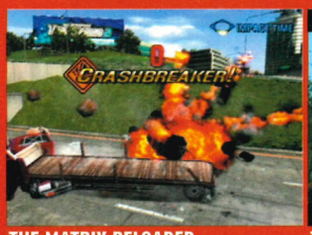
Forget *Police Stop*, if Roseanna Arquette turns up at your house demanding some leg-brace-assisted rumpo, *Burnout* 3's undoubtedly what you'd stick on to heighten the mood. Just look at the crash-recreation possibilities...

THE BLUES BROTHERS

Lots to choose from, but a lack of cop cars means the Nazi Pinto-plummet's easiest – stack it off a flyover, squeak 'I've always loved you!' then hurtle into the road below.

THE FRENCH CONNECTION

The USA's Downtown stage is the perfect place to recreate Popeye Doyle's under-the-elevated-train whizz between concrete poles. Perfect for signature Takedowns.



THE MATRIX RELOADED

With $100,000,000 in the crash-bank, just select the Big Rig as your motor, then plough it grill-first into another one to recreate the second movie's best set-piece.

THE MARC BOLAN

Crash into a tree. Make lots of tasteless jokes about your last hit being a sycamore. Defend yourself from outraged T-Rex fans. It's all in here, folks!

Taking time out to destroy driver number five is always worth it

Zen, if it wasn't so profoundly insane.

And the crashes – oh, those crashes. *Burnout 2* had the best collisions on PS2. *Burnout 3* makes them look tame. They're Hollywood-ized versions of the real thing, catapulting cars through the air and covering the Tarmac in sparks and glass. No two are the same – sometimes a lorry sheds its payload across the road, another time a car might hurtle 20ft in the air and land on the beach, or simply stack it into a stanchion and explode. Amid the carnage, Takedowns are like little pools of tranquillity, letting you blink for a second and enjoy the sight of an adversaries' bumper crumpling like a Twix wrapper. Even the gratuitous slow-mo serves a purpose – after a crash, it's possible to steer your own flaming chassis onto a pursuer's bonnet for an Aftertouch Takedown, which ensures a restart with at least a whiff of boost. To show how much Criterion understands the power of the Takedown it's not only added it as a sub-title, there's a whole new mode built around it. Road Rage has already reached legendary status as the mark of a man of games in the *OPS2* office. It pits you against a respawning slew of computer cars, with the object of destroying as many as possible before your own motor's irrevocably trashed. Though driving at top speed is still suicidal, it also makes you less vulnerable and more able to bully other cars off the road. At times, when you're ricocheting through the middle of the pack at 200mph, you truly can't believe this is the same console that was running *Driv3r* a scant couple of months ago.

AFTER A CRASH, IT'S POSSIBLE TO STEER YOUR FLAMING CHASSIS ONTO A PURSUER'S BONNET

CORPORATE WHIFF

Despite all the tweaking and fuel-injecting that Criterion has obviously done, there's also a heady whiff of EA's special brand of corporate turtle-wax around *Burnout 3*. The music's now fully licensed, with a 40-strong playlist that's pleasingly customisable. So you can have Franz Ferdinand's *This Fire* blasting out every time the crash slow-mo kicks in. It's a bit heavy on the spring-break tunes, but at least it's a distraction from the Tiger Woods billboards that litter every bend – ah, sweet corporatism. On the plus side, EA knows how to make things gamer-friendly, and it's done so here with a tournament system that's much less frustrating than *Burnout 2*'s linear progression. Crash junctions and races are separate entities, and every bronze unlocks a new event or two, with golds only necessary for super-sexed custom models from each car series. Even if you lose, every event is rewarded with more crash cash or Global Tour points, ensuring you'll never run a wasted race. Road Rages, Burning Laps (Time Attack with full boost) and GPs are evenly spread, ensuring that weekend-ruining one-more-go appeal, and there's always the Crash mode to spice things up.

Crash mode? Yep. What was a throwaway diversion in *Burnout 2* is a fully-fledged game in *Burnout 3*, leaving you in charge almost until the last tyre putters to a stop. Again, the key is in the Aftertouch – though the physics are never ridiculous, once airborne you're given significant leeway to steer your wheeled missile where it'll cause the most carnage, brushing trucks and nudging buses *just* enough to bring whole intersections to a squealing, smoking halt. After a certain number of cars smash – ten, say – the Crashbreaker kicks in, letting you detonate your motor to get a few more seconds of vital airtime or throw other cars about like aluminium confetti. Later crashes might involve two or three Crashbreakers – bonus ones are scattered across the track – so cars can skim across whole flyovers in one super-destructive arc. Others include a dummy intersection that

Escaping a pile-up's almost as satisfying as causing one...

FEELING THE NEED FOR SPEED

It's crucial to have the edge in the *OPS2* winner-stays-on competition. For Rich, this might mean threatening to sack anyone who beats him, but for your reviewer it was testing various (legal) stimulants to determine what, if anything, gives the ultimate *Burnout* rush...

PREPARATION

To test the effects, we did a Burning Lap on Coastal Dream with the US Circuit Racer and – because we'd clearly be getting better every day anyway – checked if we could beat Tim on Road Rage.

EXPERIMENTATION

Day One: Coffee

Since most days at *OPS2* start with a sweltering caffeine injection anyway, this clearly needed to be a bit heavier than an extra-froth latte. We opted for an entire cafetiere of Sainsburys' Hot Lava Java, taken black. Which tastes a bit like hot mud when you get to the bottom.

Test Results: Sweaty

The jittery, irritable, slightly out-of-body feeling that'll be familiar to most coffee users might have helped our performance – it's difficult to tell, because the coffee-sweats made the pad almost impossible to grip. An inconclusive result.

Time: 2:59
Crashes: 7
Beat Tim? No

Day Two: Sugar

There's a warning on packets of Pop Tarts that after you put them in a toaster the filling 'may be hot'. And as patronising as that sounds, they still haven't included anything to the effect that you shouldn't eat six in one go and then wash them down with three spoonfuls of pure cane sugar.

Test Results: Crazed

Not that different to coffee, but we probably should have stuck to pure, refined sugar, because the Pop Tart bloatedness made us lean back rather than forward – a schoolboy error for the pro *Burnout* player.

Time: 3:04
Crashes: 8
Beat Tim? No

Day Three: Energy Drinks

Unable to decide between Red Bull, Red Devil and Guarana Extract, we downed a can of each. In hindsight, this probably wasn't a good idea.

Test Results: Angry

Apart from swearing noticeably louder than usual, our cocktail of mad juice seemed to have the effect of making us press the ⊗ button so hard that our thumbs went temporarily numb – something we only noticed when trying to text someone.

Time: 2:35
Crashes: 4
Beat Tim? Yes

Day Four: Herbal Speed Kick Maniacs claim to be 'specially formulated ultra high-powered party pills' containing Paulina Cupana, Kola Vera extract and Chromium. Being quite tired after three days of testing, we took three in one go and gave them half an hour to kick in good and proper...

Test Results: Shakily clammy

The best day yet. Although considering that we'd had three days practice and Kick Maniacs' side effects seem to include goose-pimples, heart palpitations, shivers and constant sweating, it probably wasn't worth it.

Time: 2:25
Crashes: 2
Beat Tim? Yes

CONCLUSION:

The only drug we need is practice. Also, caning a bag of sugar before you go clubbing is cheaper than taking herbal speed, and has largely the same results.

WHEN I SLAP THE DASHBOARD...

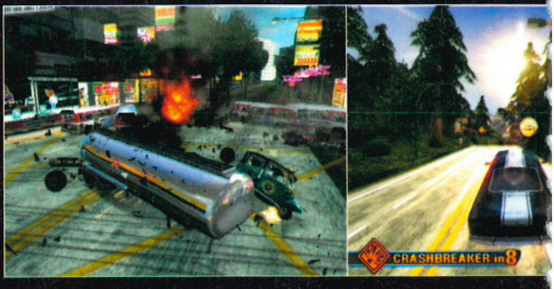
Like any other aspect of driving, crashing is a fine art that takes an eye for detail and a steady nerve. To rule on Crash mode remember: mirror, signal, stack it into a busy T-junction at 200 miles an hour...

STEP ONE: Watch the fly-through, gritting your teeth through the DJ's one-liners. Note important multipliers and boost icons.

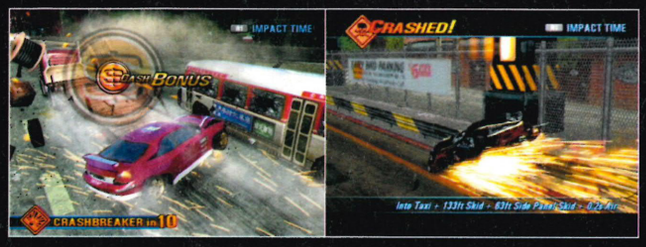
STEP TWO: Hit the boost icon, then blast into bonus cash icons and whichever lane's most packed with traffic. Use aftertouch to hit bonuses.

STEP THREE: When the Crashbreaker prompt goes off, catapult your flaming chassis into any undented traffic with the secondary explosion.

STEP FOUR: Revel in the chaos as the CPU tots up the damage – unless you've hit the score-halving Heartbreaker icon. Only 99 to go...



■ Eeeeeeeee! Things get hairy in Silver Lake's straights



has to be successfully navigated to get to the score multipliers – at least, until you play Team Crash and leave player two to ruin some more families' days at the beach. Hey, Mr DJ, stick The Vines on and let's see that again.

ONLY JOYLESS RACING PURISTS AND TUTTING MORAL DO-GOODERS WON'T LOVE *BURNOUT 3*

MULTIPLE PILE-UP

The crowning touch for *Burnout 3*, though, has to be the multiplayer possibilities. With a mate, it practically demands the biggest telly you can muster, to be played in blinding widescreen with the volume ramped up. Jostling the Road Rage pack is intense enough while playing solo, but it's twice as fun with a human enemy in the mix, waiting for one of you to be left behind in a mangle of glass and twisted metal. Crash mode offers several ways to play, including head-to-head competition (Double Impact), co-operative carnage (Team Crash) and one-at-a-time destruction (Party Crash). Best of all, though, getting online offers a whole swathe of new options, enabling six human players to go at it in Team Road Rage, where the object is simply to be the last crew standing. There's no time to faff about with cool one-liners – to be honest, you'll need every inch of brain-space to cope with steering.

Does *Burnout* have problems? Sure. The computer cheats like crazy, leaving you behind at the back of the pack the instant you crash, but catches up easily however many times you take out the other cars. Typically, it also 'fixes' the GP results, so that one car always does best, and it wouldn't hurt to have some sort of distance-o-meter, rather than the not-very-helpful 'You are two seconds behind' occasionally splashed across the screen. Still, that's nothing that most driving games don't do, and at least the AI cars fight among themselves rather than exclusively picking on you. Similarly, it's arguable that the handling's a bit *too* arcadey, buffeting cars off chevroned corners in a slightly forgiving manner.

The bottom line is, only joyless racing purists and tutting moral do-gooders aren't going to love *Burnout 3*. It's a beautiful game that'll appeal to speed freaks and casual gamers alike. *Gran Turismo* diehards might not like it. Mr Kazunori Yamauchi probably hates it. But it's the best driving game on PS2. ■ **Joel Snape**

■ Slow-mo crops up in races – only if you take each other out

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK	VERDICT
Graphics	10 Heart-breakingly gorgeous and silly fast
Sound	09 A wee bit too much skate-rock
Gameplay	10 Road Rage, the ruiner of lunchtimes
Lifespan	10 It'll take months to get all the golds

Frantic alone and insane with friends, **Burnout 3** *is a game that'll make you fall in love with your PS2 all over again*

10/10

IN THE GARAGE

Though *Burnout* hasn't got any officially licensed cars, it's quickly obvious to the aficionado that the various wheels in the games are Porsches and Ferraris in all but name. For nailing gold medals in each series you're rewarded with customised, hyper-slick editions of each model, but stacking up the damage dollars in Crash mode's really where it's at – every ten million or so gives you a new super-heavyweight vehicle. Spot on for causing some serious mayhem...

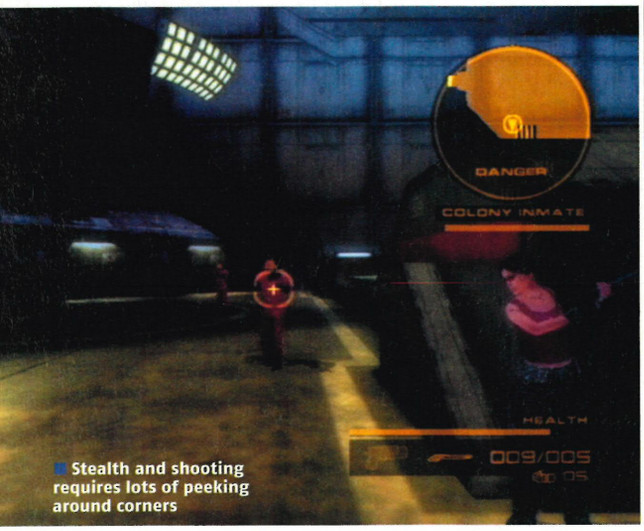
Unless the roads are *very* straight, it's inadvisable to use the US Circuit Racer. It's fast like a hummingbird, but delicate like a flower – not a good combination.

Ain't goin' in no plane! Perhaps not, but the B-Team van still flies fairly well when you hit a ramp.

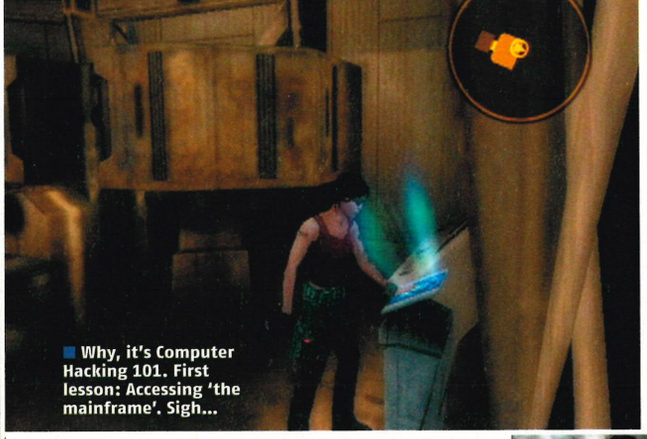
Yours for a cool 30 mil, though the trailer's an optional $70 million extra. That's a lot of dinged-up Pintos...

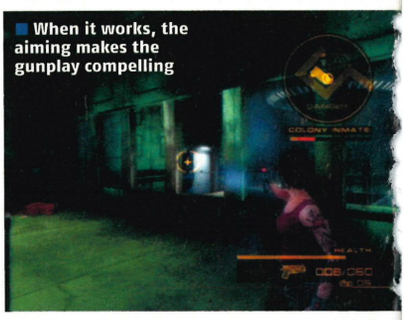
But the Trash Truck's the king of the destructo-motors, as it's weighty and surprisingly manoeuvrable.

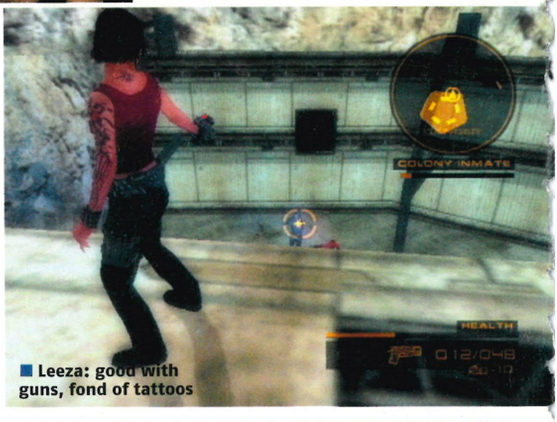
■ Bosh! Another bad day for the CHiPs



Stealth and shooting requires lots of peeking around corners


Why, it's Computer Hacking 101. First lesson: Accessing 'the mainframe'. Sigh...


When it works, the aiming makes the gunplay compelling



Leeza: good with guns, fond of tattoos

HEADHUNTER: REDEMPTION

So, why *do* trained assassins all wear sunglasses? Hmm?

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SEGA
DEVELOPER AMUZE
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.HUNT-THE-TRUTH.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

Metal Gear-esque stealth, shooting and puzzle solving in a utopic future city that hides a seedy underworld full of gun-toting criminals to hunt down and, eventually, catch.

Picture, if you will, a bicycle. It has the best Shimano parts and the coolest paint job, but the frame is from a Victorian penny-farthing and the handlebars are made from barbed wire and the seat coated with sandpaper. That's what playing *Headhunter: Redemption* feels like. It ticks along, has high-quality components, but is uncomfortable to play and seems incredibly old-fashioned.

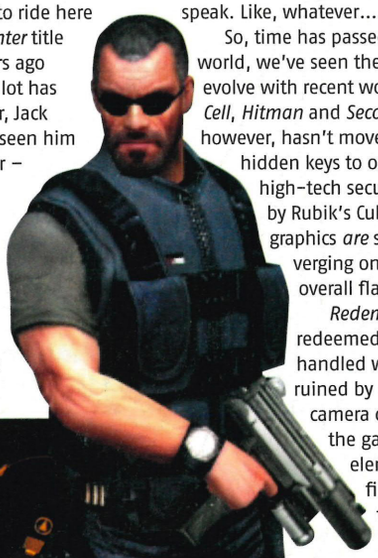
What you'll be paying £40 to ride here is a sequel to the first *Headhunter* title that appeared about three years ago but, in the intervening time, a lot has changed. For the lead character, Jack Wade, the passing of time has seen him become a hardcore headhunter – that's a cop for hire, willing to take on missions with a high probability of death. Although somehow, of course, he always scrapes through.

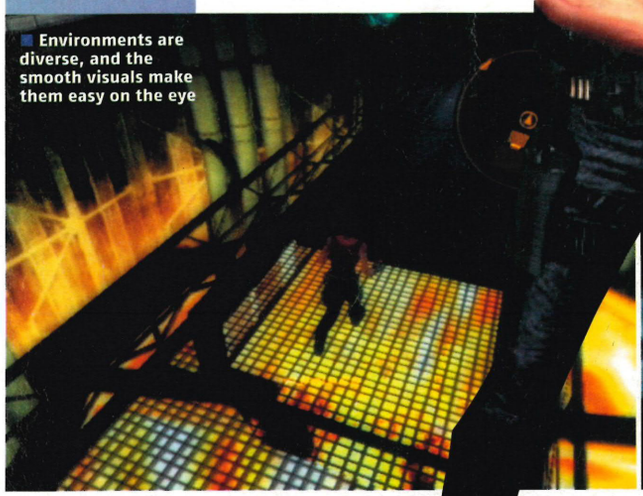
In the first game, headhunting duties involved working the beat in a futuristic city, using a motorbike to get from mission to mission, but for *Redemption* the biking has been dropped (perhaps not such a bad thing... cough... *Driv3r*... cough), leaving this as a straight-up stealth and action game. The void left by the two-wheeled vehicles has been filled with a new sidekick, an annoying lady headhunter-in-training called Leeza. You play as her for much of the first half of the game and it doesn't help that she spouts horrid LA-speak. Like, whatever...

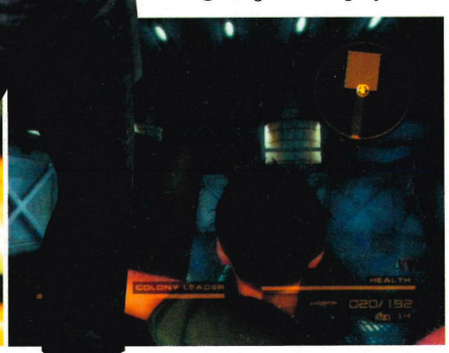
So, time has passed – back here in the real world, we've seen the stealth/action genre evolve with recent wonders such as *Splinter Cell*, *Hitman* and *Second Sight*. *Redemption*, however, hasn't moved anywhere – find hidden keys to open doors, crack into high-tech security systems controlled by Rubik's Cube-like puzzles. True, the graphics *are* slick and the music verging on the great, but the overall flavour is bland.

Redemption could've perhaps redeemed itself a little if it handled well, but the gameplay is ruined by erratic shooting and camera controls – made worse by the game's one interesting element: a slowly swaying firing sight that gets closer to a bull's eye on the target the longer you hold on to the lock button. Which *sounds* like a great idea, but multiple enemies and the cramped spaces in which some shootouts take place mean the targeting slows things down. It ends up being more of a hindrance than help.

Shame. *Redemption* had so much promise, but it's trapped behind a glass wall of frustration and uninspiring design. We've all moved on. If you really want a *Headhunter* fix, you'd be better off hunting down the original for a replay than wasting your time with its dim-witted brother of a sequel. ■ **Michael French**




Environments are diverse, and the smooth visuals make them easy on the eye



OUR FAVOURITE MEN ON A MISSION

Headhunters are all well and good, but we love rogue coppers, hitmen and bounty hunters, too...

ALLSTAR

DIRTY HARRY
You don't get much gruffer or tougher than Clint Eastwood's near-maniacal renegade cop. In fact, his gruff voice and exaggerated sneer was a clear inspiration for Wade himself.

AGENT 47
We love *Hitman*'s ice-cool deadly assassin. It's a platonic love, but you've gotta appreciate that he's bald and still looks great.

BOBA FETT
He might be scum but - despite minmal screen time - this bounty hunter is hugely popular. Devious, talented and carrying a mighty Jedi-shaped chip on his shoulder (well, Obi-Wan did chop off his dad's head).

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

Graphics	08	Nice and smooth, but uninspired
Sound	09	Wonderfully done orchestral stuff
Gameplay	05	Frustrating, dull and old fashioned
Lifespan	04	It feels like too much of a slog

Despite its glorious looks and stunning music* Redemption's *creaky old gameplay means this is a game out of place in 2004

6/10

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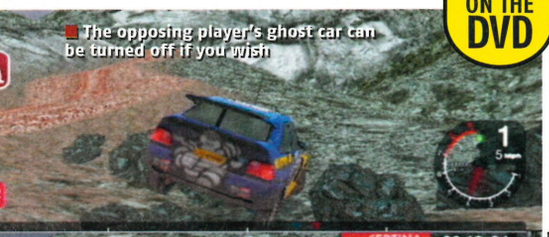
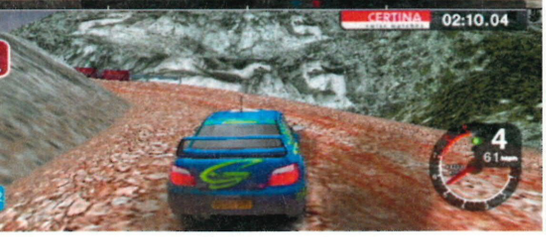
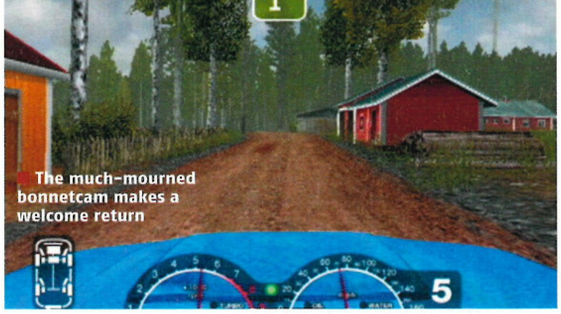
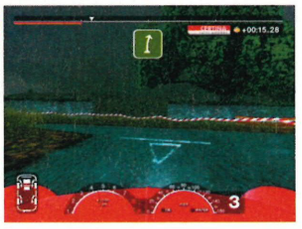
ON THE DVD

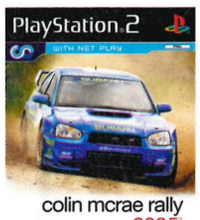

The opposing player's ghost car can be turned off if you wish




The much-mourned bonnetcam makes a welcome return



The noise from the crowd turns a lonely drive into a stadium-like scramble



COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005

Same bodywork, but a whole new machine

3+

DETAILS

PUBLISHER CODEMASTERS
DEVELOPER CODEMASTERS
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-8
OUT 24 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.CODEMASTERS.CO.UK/COLINMCRAE2005
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

AT A GLANCE

The buck-toothed Celt gets his third PlayStation 2 outing, complete with slick online play, a completely revamped multiplayer option and a brand new career mode.

They call this dead man's tunnel

"Sorry, I was looking for the steering stick..."

Forget what your 206-abusing, boy-racer mate Darren says, driving really fast along gravel-washed country roads is hard and is likely to give you a nasty case of whiplash and a bruised arse. But (and we hope you've worked this one out already) games aren't real life – the success of the *Colin McRae* series has always been down to its knack of turning something painfully difficult into a fiendishly enjoyable experience.

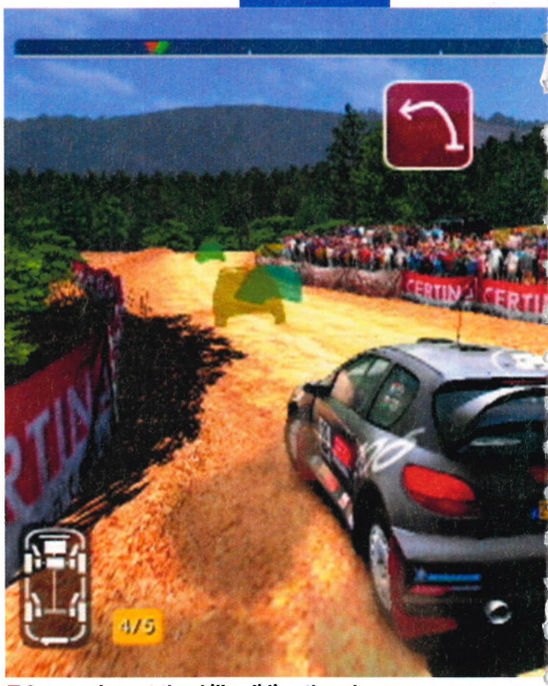
And so for a little bad news. If you were expecting a significant technical leap in the looks department, you're going to be a wee bit disappointed. The only major graphical difference between *CMR2005* and its predecessor is that Japan looks more defined and colourful, but unless you've already laid down more than your fair share of rubber, you won't notice. In its defence though, the game boasts a new location, Germany – with its own look and special scenery – but a quick trip to the land of bier, lederhosen and bratwurst hardly qualifies as an advance in visual flair.

The lack of a spruce-up means that Colin devotees will experience an odd feeling of déjà vu, but it's not the end of the world as *Colin McRae Rally 2005* is still prettier than a polished Porsche. The globe-straddling stages take in some fine visuals, with huge draw distances and a sensational feeling of speed. The new weather effects (particularly the UK's predictable heavy downpours) are especially good. It's lovely, but just doesn't look much better than before.

CLASS ACTION

And the good news? Well, spend too long complaining about the visuals and you'll miss what's really important – this is without doubt the best, most enjoyable rally game money can buy. Focusing on the nuts and bolts of the game, developer Codemasters has been able to pack *CMR2005* full of enough new features to sink a small battleship. Firstly, as well as the new German courses, there are now another two stages for each of the existing locations. There's a wider variety of cars too, with eight different classes of vehicle – including regulars like the 4WD Subaru Impreza or Group B (read 'Insane Class') Peugeot 205, as well as new cars such as McRae's Nissan 4x4 Pickup from the Paris-Dakar rally.

Getting into a race is now a matter of choosing from championship, challenge, career or online modes. Championship straps you in McRae's bucket seat, competing in the 4WD World Rally across the nine countries, whereas challenge invites you to race single stages or an individual rally. But it's the final two modes that contain the most innovation.


Once you've got the skills, sliding though corners and nailing it out is a beautiful thing

SIDEWAYS GLANCE

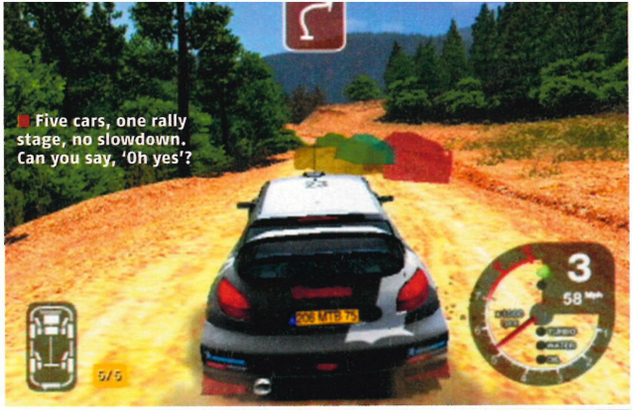
To win at *Colin McRae* you've got to master these moves, most of which involve rocketing sideways through tight bends. Remember – only scream when no one is listening

HANDBRAKE TURN
A move best done in second gear, this is most useful for hairpins, right-angle turns and the mini-roundabout down Tesco's car park. And yes, that is a very old Escort.

SCANDINAVIAN FLICK
No, not a dodgy grumble movie reference – this is a method of unbalancing the car on purpose by turning away from the corner and then sharply back into it.

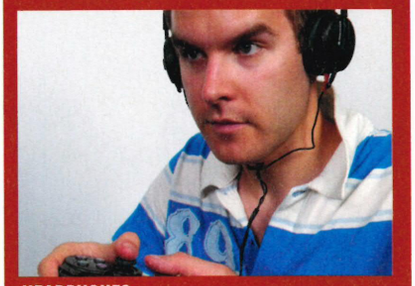
HARD STEER
New to *CMR2005*, this move enables you to put immediate full lock on the steering and swing into corners faster. Your mum's aquamarine 206 is unlikely to come with this feature.

Using the service area and car setup efficiently is key to gaining those podium finishes



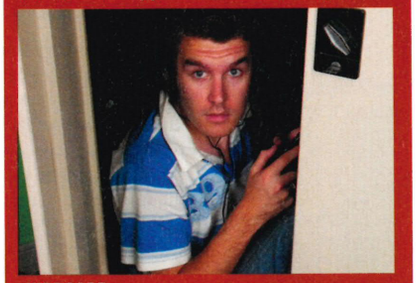
ON PACE

Intense concentration is needed to take in your co-driver's pace notes, so here are a few ideas to prevent interference

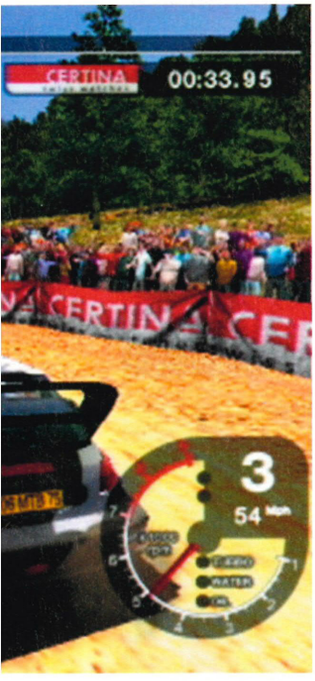


HEADPHONES
Simple. Cuts out background noise and any questions shouted at you by your boss about why you've been playing for so long.

BLINKERS
Sometimes your attention can be drawn from the screen – like when the office sandwich girl appears or small fires break out. This way you'll never be distracted again.



CUPBOARD
Perfect – a dark, silent and deserted place to dedicate yourself completely to Robert Reid's drawn-out monotone. Actually, can I come out of here now?



The career mode is made up of 23 separate events, a shapely transformation over the waif-like championship mode of previous games. Instead of entering a single season competition for each car class, each of the new events are car, course or class specific and your success is measured in Driver Points – the more you have, the more races are available. The game's vital statistics are eye popping alone – 330 stages, 34 vehicles, 1,100 miles of track – and the career mode rounds off the package beautifully.

SPLIT THE DIFFERENCE

Meanwhile, the multiplayer mode has received a facelift – for the first time in a *McRae* game you can race simultaneously against a friend in split-screen, with the opposing car appearing as a coloured ghost in your view. It makes for far more exciting races, and although purists might complain (don't worry, the turn-taking multiplayer is still used in championships), it's a change for the better. It also means that the online mode is a hotter prospect than you might have first thought, and although racing against up to eight other players can get messy with all those semi-translucent cars drifting around the track, it's an exhilarating ride all the same.

The precise and responsive handling, painless to pick up but agonising to master, makes every race – and certainly those you cream – a revitalising experience. To rip up the really fast times you'll have to be driving with full concentration on the pace notes but at the same time hitting breakneck speeds and cornering without fear. The speed has been noticeably juiced up and a new Hard Steer button has been added to help out with faster corners. Unfortunately there's no option to customise your controls, so analogue stick drivers might feel a little ham-fisted at first, what with the handbrake over on ◎ and Hard Steer adrift on △. But the cars consistently react so accurately to your control that when everything goes to plan – when you handbrake your way through a hairpin in a split second and screech off at high speed – it feels just right .

Which is exactly how the game feels as a whole – just right. So the visuals aren't much more crispy than last year's game and little things like the podium animations or button mapping are a bit disappointing, but where pure gameplay is concerned, *Colin McRae Rally 2005* is full of gas and firing on all pistons. Simple touches like the cheers of spectators as you pass or developments like the excellent multiplayer mode achieve more than any overblown visual overhaul could ever hope to. *Colin McRae* is back – buckle up tight, won't you. ■ **Ben Richardson**

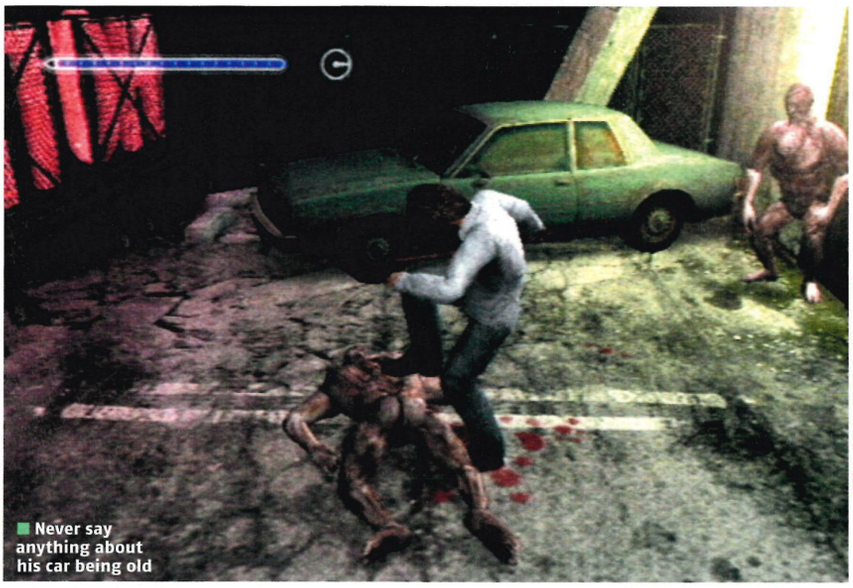
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A *COLIN MCRAE* GAME YOU CAN RACE AGAINST A FRIEND IN SPLIT-SCREEN

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	08	No great leap, but not much to improve
Sound	08	Monotone co-driver but excitable crowds
Gameplay	09	Compelling to master, but not too difficult
Lifespan	09	So many reasons to hit the dirt again

It might not look like much has changed but the improvements – although subtle – power through to make all the difference

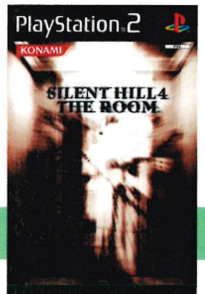
9/10

■ **No: they're the ghost cars, here showing off the excellent online mode**


Never say anything about his car being old

The new monkey men are tough but not really scary

"Christ, I really like your shoes"



SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM

It's gaming Marmite: Pitch black and the work of the Devil...

DETAILS

PUBLISHER KONAMI
DEVELOPER KONAMI JAPAN
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT 24 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE HTTP://UK.KONAMI-EUROPE.COM/GAME.DO?IDGAME=61
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

Relax alone in your flat, reading, washing-up and then smashing the forces of hell as they amass to destroy the lives of all around you, using the back of a spade. That sound good to you?

If the undersigned, do twitchily vouch the following statements are true: 1. Building a death chamber next to a kitchen is not a health and safety issue. 2. Hellish apparitions are best dispatched with the nine iron or, failing that, a putter. 3. It is entirely rational to say to a tenant, "There are a lot of strange things in this world. Like the umbilical cord I keep in a box in my room... lately it's started to *really* smell." 4. And when my golf clubs are all bent, I'll kill you with a spade.

Signed... a *Silent Hill* fan.

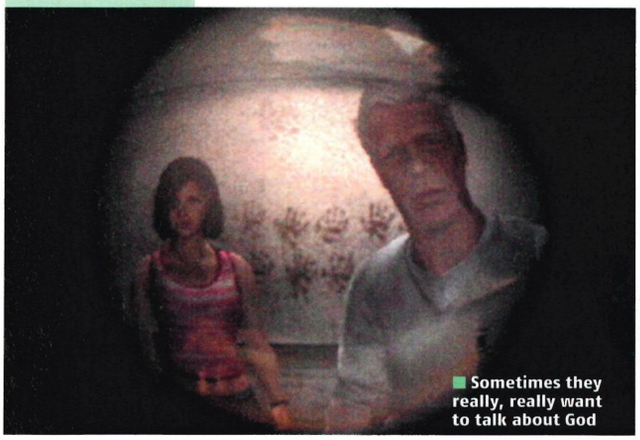
Now read the small print: *Silent Hill* does not act in any way to stop you running aimlessly for hours, watching too many loading screens or pinwheeling at ghosts that won't die. Even those familiar with the first three games should not expect total plot clarity. But do expect what you just signed for.

The Room is tweaked to keep the faithful happy, but the less patient will remain unconvinced. It's hardly a comedy festival, but has many darkly amusing flourishes and a slew of game and film references. New locations are gorgeously unwelcoming, especially the forest – though Lord knows we've done subways and hospitals already – and the hub structure makes it more immediate. Just head through the holes in your flat and there you are. It cuts out much traipsing, but there's still plenty of loading time to deal with.

MALICE IN UNDERLAND

Sometimes this is because your new inventory is full and you must traipse home to use the chest – you can't just drop stuff. Annoying. And sometimes it's because you don't know what you've missed or where to look for it. That's just bad design. And on one occasion, a very large and otherwise brilliant puzzle turns out to contain a red herring – very Hitchcock, but films move on regardless of what the viewer believes. Games don't. So we spent just over an hour randomly re-searching and re-re-searching three floors of rooms, before randomly finding the random answer. Not everybody will bother.

But so what? This is cult stuff. The story's got claws, and its weirdness is grounded in Nowheresville normality; the visuals are stunning and somehow more twisted than ever – you actually have to figure out clues – and the atmosphere lolls from spaced out, dreamy weirdness to the shrieking you'd find in-between Hades FM and Radio Torment. There's still nothing else quite like *Silent Hill*. So, you have found a Flawed Gem. Will you take it? Hint: choose yes. **Steven Williams**


Sometimes they really, really want to talk about God

Ghosts: they just won't die. Spooky but a bit annoying

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	09	Gorgeously detailed, sensational effects
Sound	09	Highly unsettling, mostly great voices
Gameplay	07	Story grips; more walking than golf, though
Lifespan	07	Savour the hours when you're not stuck...

Feels different – faster paced, stronger in story – without solving old problems or really offering anything else new

7/10

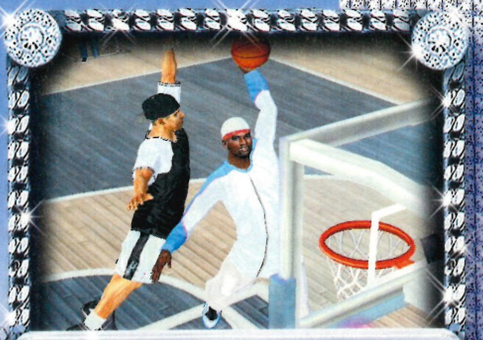
"OF COURSE, I PREFER THE ORIGINAL..."

What have *Psycho*, *Get Carter*, *The Italian Job* and *13 Ghosts* all got in common?

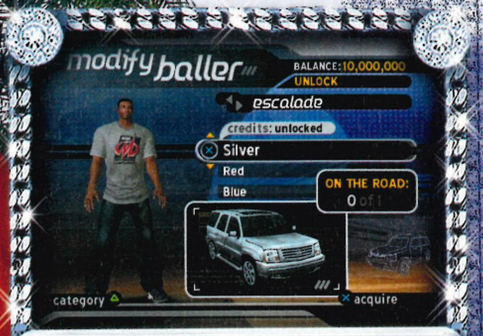
REX FEATURES

The *Silent Hill* story is convoluted to say the least, and though each episode has a new character, the original protagonists are still key. The history is vital to enjoying – even understanding – the things that happen here. Yet the first *Hill* was a PSone title, meaning many won't have played it. It'll run on PS2, of course, but to be kind it now looks like it was drawn in baby sick with the wet end of a rusk. Technology, eh? You can never go back. So how about a PS2 remake of the original, Konami? *Psycho*, *Get Carter*, *The Italian Job* and *13 Ghosts* all got that treatment from Hollywood and they were, er, utter nob. But *Silent Hill* needs remaking. It's like *The Godfather* only being available on Betamax. So... please?

Before you can have the cribs, cars and crew...
...you gotta have the Moves.



RAGS TO RICHES STORY MODE



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PlayStation 2

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MIDWAY SPORTS

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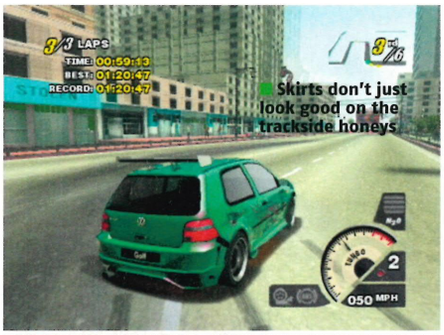
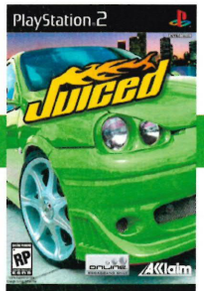
Wonder if gran will like what you've done with her car?



Skirts don't just look good on the trackside honeys

Forget about the outside, it's what's inside that counts



JUICED

Try and remember to race a little, won't you...

DETAILS

PUBLISHER ACCLAIM
DEVELOPER JUICE GAMES
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-2 (OFFLINE) 1-8 (ONLINE)
OUT 24 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.JUICEDTHEGAME.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
PERIPHERALS NETWORK ADAPTOR, BASS BINS THE SIZE OF SKIPS

AT A GLANCE
Entering a packed racing field, *Juiced* is positioned as the *Gran Turismo* of mod-happy street racing, with loads to tweak in the pursuit of respect and the ultimate ride.

Just like the vanilla hatchbacks and school run shunted right-offs that provide the starting point for *Juiced*'s blinging customisations, the street racer itself isn't what it first appears to be. On the pearlescent surface, *Juiced* looks to be slipstreaming the arcade overdrive of games like *Need For Speed Underground*, *Midnight Club* and, to a lesser extent, *Burnout 3*. But flip beyond the Shystie intro video and body kits and you're looking at a righteous street racer with enough tech-tweakery and exacting handling to position its soul somewhere between *TOCA* and the granddaddy of driving sims, *Gran Turismo*. Unexpected? For sure. Engrossing? Read on.

So a few basics first. The cars (some 50 licensed models) are real. The game's location is not. Angel City is a smoggy American sprawl that's a racer-familiar blend of LA scale and San Francisco bay with a shot of San Diego 'scraper warren. As a result, you get eight districts and a decent number of tracks for each, but no free-roaming metropolis. In *Juiced*, freedom is something you express through customisation. It's also where the game earns serious props.

MOD ALMIGHTY

You start the game by creating a crew identity and getting to work on your debut custom car. There are eight power classes for rides, ranging from 100-199 bhp to 800+ and prototypes. But pick your first car carefully, spend some serious currency overhauling everything from your sound system to brake callipers and you can instantly take an entry level wasp and turn it into a class two banshee before you even leave the garage (see 'Tweak At The Knees'). If *Juiced* doesn't hook you with this early glimpse at the potential power of mods then God help your cold, dark soul.

Meanwhile, on the mean streets of Angel City there are crews just waiting to humiliate you. It's your mission to force them to respect you. Depending on the crew, you can do this in three ways. First up, bet big on any event and swell your mod fund. Secondly, gain crew respect with your car's look. Last, but definitely not least, there are the events themselves.

Essentially you get four basic types: Sprint, Circuit, Point To Point and Show Off. Gain enough respect (something you can lose too, via bad driving and rubbish tricks) and you can also begin to contact crews directly on your mobile and challenge for pink slips.

As mentioned above, handling is surprisingly sim-like, and this partly explains why, despite the presence of a decent arcade mode, *Juiced* reveals itself to be a racer that delivers best over the long haul. Get a couple of seasons under your belt, open up new components, perfect your Sprint gear changes and ride height adjustments before events, and you're looking at a deeply rewarding, but hellishly curious thing. A NOS-belching, bling-bling, street-racing sim. Kind of like *Gran Turismo*, but for chavs, and all the better for it. That said, if what you're really after is an instant smack of chassis-fixated, arcade über porn then perhaps you should turn to page 94 and take *Burnout 3* for a test ride first. **Paul Fitzpatrick**

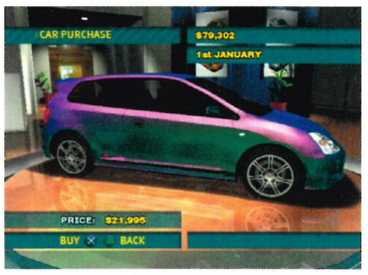
PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK		VERDICT
Graphics	07	Crisp, but the sense of speed isn't amazing
Sound	07	Licensed garage tracks and whining turbos
Gameplay	08	Better rides equal respect. It's addictive
Lifespan	08	A big game offline and meaty online, too

Arcade racer types may find the technical approach a tad brittle, but as a breezier sim alternative to GT4, this won't disappoint

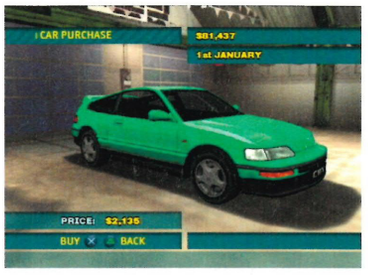
7/10

TWEAK AT THE KNEES

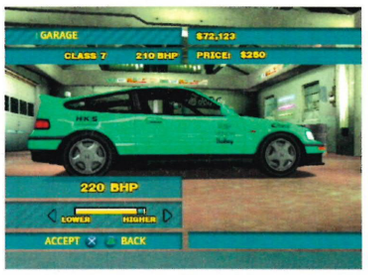
If you're going to make a big impression on the street-racing scene, it pays to see the potential in the forecourt frumps



1. Want to create your first monster ride? Here's a tip from the *OPS2* crew direct to you. Ignore the pricey new 'chav'-backs like the Civic R and go for long-term potential instead.

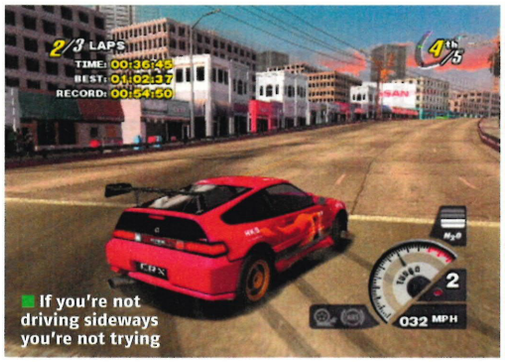


2. Take this totally off-ramp Honda CRX. It's older than your mum, but it's mechanically sound, has decent starting bhp and is a good 12 grand cheaper.



3. Once you've got your OE (Original Equipment) at a knockdown price, it's time to mod. Lower the height, fit NOS, engine management chips, a big bore HKS pipe and a turbo charger. She's a monster now.

4. But she still ain't pretty. No worries. Three grand's worth of pearlescent paint, a full Street-Tweaks body kit, gold König rims and an AeroDrive spoiler later, and you have a sweet ride that will shame cars half the age and twice the price.



If you're not driving sideways you're not trying

Broadband from BT, 512kbps from £19.99 a month.

How to improve something that's pretty great already:

drop the price.

Broadband from BT is now at its lowest ever prices. Packages start from only £19.99 a month to £29.99 a month for 1Mb Broadband, so not only is it pretty great, it's now pretty cheap, too. To get connected, call us on 0800 328 9041 or visit us at bt.com/getbroadband

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BT

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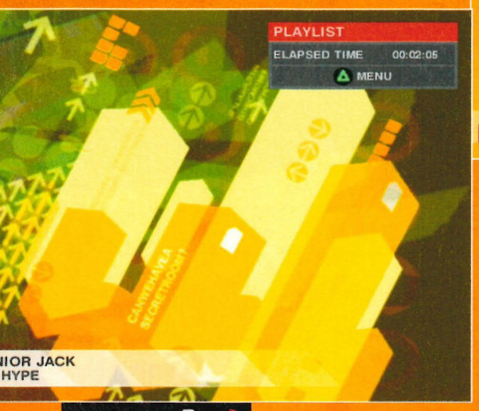
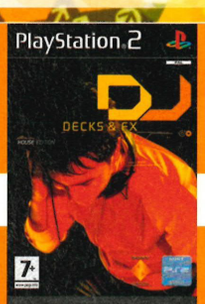
BT Broadband Basic £19.99 per month by Direct Debit. New customers only. Available online only. Broadband from BT is subject to compatibility, availability and survey. Usage allowances apply. BT or similar line required. 12 month term. Conditions apply.



■ Those trippy animated shapes add some visual flourish



DJ: DECKS & FX

Turn yourself from spod to turntable god

bronze
PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER RELENTLESS SOFTWARE
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.RELENTLESSSOFTWARE.CO.UK
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

Does what it says on the record box – a fun DJ sim, complete with turntables, sampler, mixer and a fistful of floor-fillers. You'll have to supply the Breezer-swigging groupies, though.

It's the power, isn't it? That's what turns people on. A good club DJ is able, with one deft vinyl selection, to bring a room full of people to the point of eyes-shut, head-thrown-back euphoria, whether it's summer in Ibiza or winter in Ilkley, West Yorkshire. And unless you fancy forking out 500 quid on a rudimentary setup of decks and mixer, this clever, comprehensive and idiot-proof DJ sim will get you as close as possible to replicating that exquisite rush in the (relative) safety of your own home.

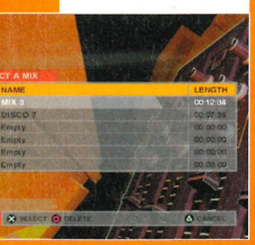
With *Decks & FX*, what you get is a complete setup of essential DJ equipment and around 70 tracks to test it all out on. Navigating your booth couldn't be easier – the D-pad guides you around, while pressing ⊗ over a specific unit enables you to zoom in and start fiddling. The effortlessly straightforward tutorial is the best way to learn the ropes, introducing each piece of kit in turn and letting you create your own mix as you grasp the basics. As with *Music*, what happens next is up to your own twisted imagination and creativity.

HEY, MR DJ!

And what you learn very quickly is that this isn't just about picking two banging tunes then slamming the cross-fader between them when one comes to a close. The extensive track list is split into four categories – acappella, instrumental, percussion and vocal – so like a real DJ you're building your own individual version of each track on the fly, taking, say, a vocal stab from Blaze's *Breathe* and mixing it in with *Lola's Theme*. Plus, the excellent sampler and loop facilities enable you to extend your personalisation even further, introducing and retaining funky drum hooks and soaring vocal riffs throughout your

WITH A SUITABLE AMOUNT OF PRACTICE, THE PERMUTATIONS ARE ALMOST LIMITLESS

■ Fiddling with the effects box will keep you amused for hours



■ Save your mixes to memory card then play them to pals

■ This is the 'sticky' crossfade button. It stays where you put it

A GRAND DON'T COME FOR FREE...

...but you can get it for about £40. The kit in *DJ: Decks* would cost you over £1,000 in the shops, so here's what you (virtually) get for your money...

LOOPS
You can choose from a huge selection of drum, vocal and special effects loops, then hit Play to feed them into your mix. Don't worry about timing, as the computer lines them up automatically. You can also select between 'repeat' (which keeps the loop running continuously) or 'tap' (which takes it out after the first play).

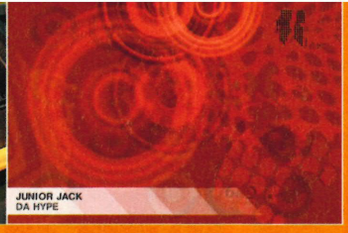
SAMPLER
Just press Record at the right time to sample four bars from either channel, then hit Play to run it. This is a great way of creating a bridge between two tracks, or simply building your own themes into the mix.

FX UNIT
Select your source (loop, channel one, channel two, sample or mix) then apply one of six weird sound effects to it by moving a cursor around the FX screen with the left analogue stick. Effects include phaser, flanger, delay and autopan. You'll recognise 'em when you hear 'em!

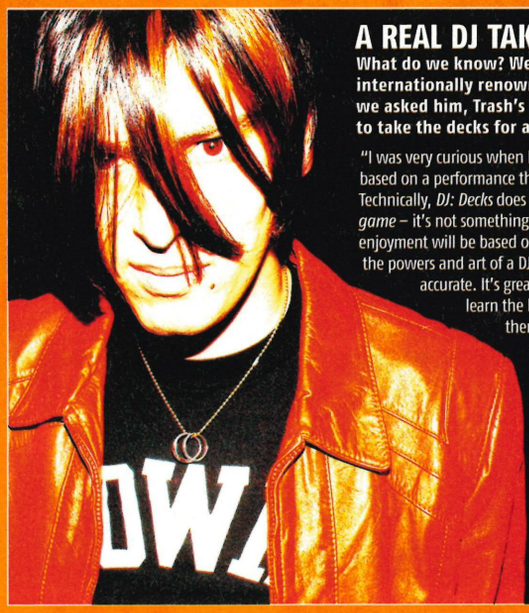
EQ UNIT
The technical bit, where you adjust the bass, mid and treble levels of each channel. Once again, you use the left analogue stick to twiddle with the buttons. You can also choose to automatically line up all the volumes on a channel to suit your new setting.

CROSSFADE
Simply hit ⊗ to switch between a sticky or springy crossfader, then manipulate it using the left analogue stick. Sticky stays where you push it, while springy returns to the centre when you take your finger of the analogue stick.

DECKS
Here's where you access your tracks, then spin 'em to your heart's content. More advanced controls enable you to alter the BPM (beats per minute) or choose to loop the track to play a section continuously. There's also a spinback function, which spins back Deck A if you're leading in a track on Deck B...



■ No, granddad, there's no 78 setting, sorry



A REAL DJ TAKES A LOOK...

What do we know? Well, quite a lot but we're clearly not internationally renown DJs, but we know a man who is, so we asked him, Trash's Erol Alkan (www.trashclub.co.uk/erol), to take the decks for a spin and give us his professional opinion...

"I was very curious when I first started playing, as it's very peculiar to play something based on a performance that requires instinct, hands-on control and flexibility. Technically, *DJ: Decks* does everything you would think, but although it's not a music *game* – it's not something like *Rez*, for example – it's still quite unrealistic and your enjoyment will be based on whether or not you like house music. If you consider that the powers and art of a DJ are based on feeling and touching vinyl, it's not entirely accurate. It's great for those who've never touched a pair of decks, or want to learn the basics, but I'm not going to throw out my decks and replace them with this. As fun as *DJ: Decks & FX* undeniably is, it's only ever going to be more of a novelty than a serious tool.

It's a shame you can't upload new tracks for your own mixes and that it's tied to just house tracks. I was cringing at some of the choices – it's all a bit too Summer of '99 for me. I'd like to see rock stuff or other genres included and I'd really like to see more done with it in the future – maybe they could include DJ battles, or a score/arcade mode.

But don't get me wrong – although it's not a decent substitute for the real thing, it's fine as a replication. It *is* a lot of fun, and you can play around with things in an entertaining way. For £40 it's good value and a lot of fun for people who aren't familiar with DJing."

set. It's genuinely exciting and deeply satisfying to feel your own individual themes and techniques emerging from the first few days of audio chaos. And, with a suitable amount of practice, the permutations are almost limitless.

For added authenticity you can use a USB headset to line up your next record and get it beat-matched (a display running along the top of the screen provides a visual representation of each track so you can fulfil the task just as well). We also like the fact that, at any point, you can hand over to a computer-controlled 'Resident DJ', who seamlessly takes on the mix while you go off to get a drink or have a dance. And once you've mastered the basic Party mode – which automatically mixes in your next record and kindly resets your EQs and volumes if left idle – you might want to move on to Pro mode, where you're totally on your own. There's also a Studio mode where you can save your mix to memory card for prosperity.

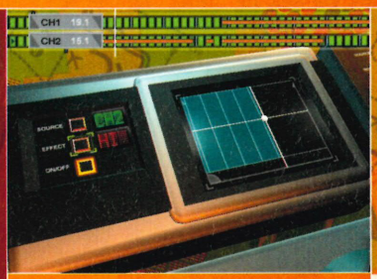
GROOVE IS IN THE HEART

Once you've spent a few days seamlessly mixing deep house grooves with frisky Latin workouts, the more ambitious user may start to feel hemmed in. Although you *can* store your mix to memory card, there's no official way to turn it into a mix CD. (We don't doubt that some of you are more than capable of wiring your PS2 in some clever way to create a CD. But this, of course, is almost definitely illegal.) However, just like real DJ-ing, *Decks & FX* is all about the live experience, the one-off, right-for-the-night mix that you and your mates create as the party rolls on in front of you.

Our one other concern is that, while the 70 tracks included are diverse and impressive (you'll find a broad range of house and techno), there's currently no way of adding new material, so you can forget about slipping the latest Filterheadz remix into your session. In some ways this limits the real-world usefulness of *Decks & FX*, but then, this is really just a toy – a very powerful, brilliantly constructed and creative toy, but a toy nonetheless.

Will it teach you to DJ? Well, it'll certainly introduce the tools of the trade and give you a good grounding in how they're employed. What it's missing of course is the tactile element – your fingers flicking the cross-fader, the process of flipping through your record box for the next track, dropping the needle onto spinning vinyl... But as a simulation, *Decks & FX* is an impressive achievement, obviously produced with care and attention to detail. It also fits in brilliantly with Sony's growing vision of PS2 as a complete entertainment system, rather than just a games machine. As such, *Decks & FX* belongs with *SingStar* and *Music 3000* in any creative PS2 owner's collection. ■ **Keith Stuart**

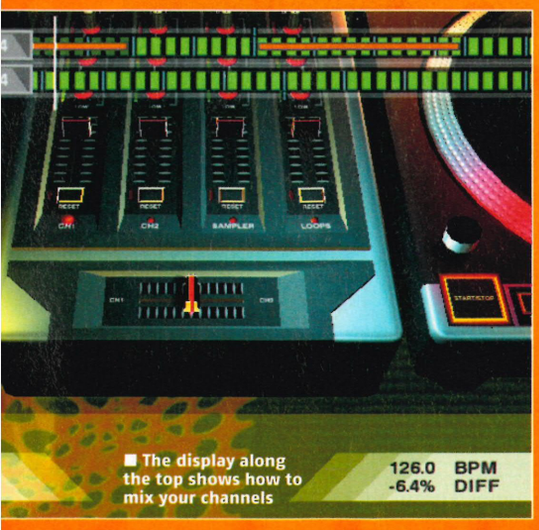
SHIK STYLKO FT. TYREE COOPER
GROOVE YOU OUT TONIGHT (SOUL CIT



■ The setup looks complex, but the tutorial explains every last button

JUNIOR JACK
DA HYPE

■ It'll take a while to figure out the loops unit, but it's worth the effort



■ The display along the top shows how to mix your channels

126.0 BPM
-6.4% DIFF

■ A touch of handbag, a pinch of euphoric trance...

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	06	Do the job with no fuss
Sound	08	Enough for a week's residency at Pasha
Gameplay	08	Masses of fun for dance music fanatics
Lifespan	07	You can't update new tracks

An interesting attempt to create a live mixing experience, though some may become frustrated once they've mastered the basics

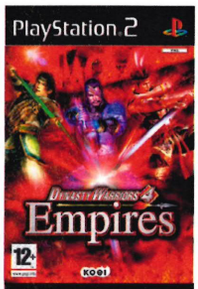
8/10

Flatten the drone infantry in one move

Your generals offer encouragement and support mid-battle...

...and also help by wading into the thick of it with you

Curiously, the rawk soundtrack sits well with the visual FX



DYNASTY WARRIORS 4 EMPIRES

It's back in time for a spot of the ol' chop suey

DETAILS

PUBLISHER KOEI
DEVELOPER OMEGA FORCE
PRICE £24.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT 17 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.KOEI.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND YES

AT A GLANCE

Hack, slash, maim, gallop and now you also get to *think* your way to victory and glory in Ancient China, as you indulge in a few rounds of what could be classed as glorified *Risk*.

In this age where even the most average of sequels will strive to add darkness or comedy or an urban twist to its original formula, there is something pure – not to say noble – about the way the *Dynasty Warriors* series continues to pursue the exact same Chinese-set hack and slashery as the previous year with little but the addition of the odd elephant. Sure, recent additions such as *DW4* and *DW4 Xtreme Legends* have continued the tradition of top class, historically accurate swordplay, but they've failed to add much – either in terms of new features or graphics – to the underrated set of games.

Well, get ready, because while 'Galore' might be overstating the number of fresh ideas here, *Empires* does prod the envelope on the strategy front. Simply wading into a huge troop of easily felled enemies is no longer enough, and this time they don't all end up on the end of your pike – or whatever you've upgraded it to. Now you need a brain to match the brawn, as you choose which part of Ancient China to invade via the map screen which pops up between levels.

MING BLING

Graphically, *Empires* is the same as *Xtreme Legends* and the 'proper' *DW4*, with lots of battlefield action. The soundtrack remains a curiously inappropriate combo of gee-tar rock and big-voiced warriors – who all sound like gay Brian Blesseds. And while the game's design boffins have busied themselves in creating the strategy part, they've forgotten to address the niggly camera, which hinders mid-battle because of the time it takes to orient itself when you turn around.

In the long run, it's through the successful use of officers and employment of hired help (such as magic men and negotiators) that the map of Ancient China will slowly bear your colours. Sure, it's a lark to lop people's heads off, but lurching from battle to battle with weapon a-swing may not always be the best option. It may be wise to form a coalition to help expand your empire – have someone on your side who can talk nicely to the right opposition leader and it's possible. And if you don't get on, you've got the option to call off the friendship.

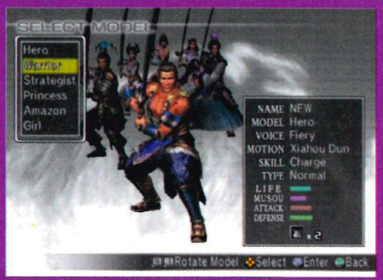
Actually, 'option' isn't quite right, because sooner or later the fighting comes into play and, whatever your tactics, it's these huge, engaging battles which determine success or failure; the frame rate remaining doggedly up tempo, even when dozens of warriors pack the screen. Swinging, lunging, swooping down off horseback and spearing someone's kidneys – this is still the meat of the game and, honestly, where the real fun lies. This is not a bad thing. It's just not entirely dissimilar to last time... or the time before that. **Paul Roundell**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK		VERDICT
Graphics	08	Great looking fighters and effects
Sound	06	Wailing guitars... very Chinese
Gameplay	07	Strategy is a bit of a white elephant
Lifespan	07	Lots of battles and good replay value

***Empires** is a worthy mix of strategy and action that adds to the Dynasty Warriors canon, but one more add-on will be one too many* **7/10**

CHIC AND DEPLOY

A new and improved character edit mode enables you to create a much broader selection of fighters. You can create an axe-wielding hulk... or pick a female and make her look *dead* sleazy. And where better to show off your sleek new style than in two-player mode, where shaking yo' ass in the face of adversaries is mandatory.

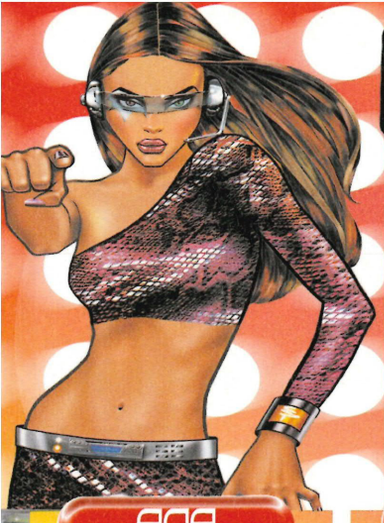


You'll do, matey. Yes, you there, cowering in the menu like a big mummy's boy.

No... no.. too small... too puny... A-ha! Now that will cause some serious giblet rupturage.

Now we'll see what you're made of. Hit him. Go on! Cave his bloody skull in!

Not enough room to perform those warrior-like moves? Hop into your opponent's screen and wreak havoc there.



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Polyphonics, Monophonics and True Tones

Polyphonics: Nokia, Samsung, Sharp, Siemens, Sendo, Motorola, Sagem, Panasonic, Sony Ericsson, LG, O2 Active
Monophonics: Nokia, Samsung, Siemens, Sendo, Motorola, Sagem
Truetones: Nokia, Sony Ericsson, Motorola, Sagem, Panasonic, Siemens

the hottest tones out there!!

OUTRAGEOUS - britney spears	114430	THE IRONY OF IT ALL - the streets	114351
DRY YOUR EYES - the streets	114176	REVOLUTION - blazin squad	114167
HOW COME - d12#	114169	CAUGHT IN A MOMENT - sugababes	113979
LOLA'S THEME - shapeshifters#	114192	NO PRESSURE - lemar	113984
SOME GIRLS - rachel stevens	114213	SEE YOU AT THE SHOW - nickelback	114364
DO YA THINK I'M SEXY - the girls of fhm	114179	WATCHA DOIN TONIGHT - liberty x	114235
SICK AND TIRED - anastacia#	114205	THE SUN IS SHINING - the dt8 project	114434
SHE WILL BE LOVED - maroon 5	114236	CALL ON ME - eric prydz	114436
JESUS WALKS - kanye west	114266	GIRLZ - prodigy	114450
HAPPY PEOPLE - r kelly	114184	HOW YOU DO - frankee	114398
I LOVE THEM HOES - eamon	114088	DON'T WALK AWAY - javine	114402
LEAVE (GET OUT) - jojo	114198	SOUTHSIDE - lloyd feat ashanti	114403
THESE WORDS ARE MY OWN - n. bedingfield	114346	NEVER REALLY WAS - marion winans	114405
BETTER THAN LIFE - ultrabeat	114377	NOTHING I WON'T DO - special d	114411
GUILTY - the rasmus	114347	BABYCAKES - 3 of a kind	114427

POP

LOOKING FOR A PLACE - mania	114404
EVERYTIME - britney spears	114022
LEFT OUTSIDE ALONE - anastacia	113616
TOXIC - britney spears	113435
SEE IT IN A BOY'S EYES - jamelia	113983
OBVIOUSLY - mcfly	114199
THE SHOW - girls aloud	114190
FLAWLESS - george michael	114197
CHOCOLATE - kylie minogue	113977
BUBBLIN' - blue	113980
PERFECT - simple plan	113847
SUPERSTAR - jamelia	113055
WHITE FLAG - dido	112837
NEVER FELT LIKE THIS.. - shaznay lewis	114214
WITH YOU - jessica simpson	113927
DRIVE - shannon noll	113934
WHAT ABOUT ME - shannon noll	113629
YOUR BODY IS A WONDERLAND - john mayer	112568
INSANIA - peter andre	113590
COME AS YOU ARE - beverly knight	114243
FRIDAYS CHILD - will young	114313
CALL YOU SEXY - vs	114161
ALL DAY LONG I DREAM ABOUT.. - jc chasez	114171
SUMMER SUNSHINE - the corrs	114023
JUMP - girls aloud	113163
LOVE AINT GONNA WAIT FOR YOU - s club	112484
SINGLE - natasha bedingfield	113888
SWAY - michael buble	114142
LADY BUMP - kath & kim	114138
NOT IN LOVE - enrique iglesias feat kelis	113600
ME AND MY MONKEY - robbie williams	113443
I'LL BE THERE - emma bunton	113416
BILLIE JEAN - michael jackson	111336
SO BEAUTIFUL - pete murray	113623
AIR HOSTESS - busted	113414

HIP HOP

TIPSY - j-kwon	113648
MY BAND - d12#	113795
SHE WANTS TO MOVE - n.e.r.d	113539
LETS GET IT STARTED - blk eyed peas	113232
SO SEXY - twista feat r kelly	114413
GANGSTERS PARADISE - coolio #	111128
WHERE IS THE LOVE - blk eyed peas #	112890
P.I.M.P - 50 cent#	112599
HEY YA - outkast#	113176
TRICK ME - kelis	113804
INTO YOU - fabolous	112916
SUNSHINE - twista	114310
THROUGH DA WIRE - kanye west	113622
FORGET ABOUT DRE - dr dre	111138
SHUT UP - the black eyed peas#	113123
MILKSHAKE - kelis#	112885
ON FIRE - lloyd banks	114245
ONE CALL AWAY - chingy	113563
HEY MAMA - the black eyed peas#	113460
8 MILE - eminem #	112376
SUGA SUGA - baby bash feat frankie j #	113106
NOSEBLEED SECTION - hilltop hoods	114090
X GONNA GIVE IT TO YA - dmx	112617
GET LOW - lil jon	112920
CALIFORNIA LOVE - dr dre & tupac#	111169
SUPERMAN - eminem#	112427

DANCE

COME WITH ME - special d	113678
SATELLITE OF LOVE - lou reed	114340
TAKE ME TO THE CLOUDS ABOVE - lmc vs u2	113456
FEELING FINE - ultrabeat	113288
PRETTY GREEN EYES - ultrabeat	112877
FLY ON THE WINGS OF LOVE - xtm	112705
RHYTHM IS A DANCER - snap vs cj stone	112485
DRAGOSTEA DIN TEI - o-zone	114098
IF I WERE YOU - candee jay	114168
PUSH UP - freestylers	114152
DISCOLAND - flip and fill	113930
INSOMNIA - faithless	111763
STUPIDISCO - junior jack	114257
SATURDAY NIGHT - ud project	113626
MASS DESTRUCTION - faithless	113959
IT CAN'T BE RIGHT - 2 play feat raghav	113973
SUNNY - boogie pimps	113830
SUMMER JAM - ud project vs sunclub	113104
CRY LITTLE SISTER - lost brothers	113321
JIGGA JIGGA - scooter	113891
I LIKE IT - narcotic thrust	113844
SHINING - styles and breeze	114367
LONELINESS - tomcraft	112576
STAR 69 - fatboy slim*	112100
CRUSH - paul van dyk	113866
TOUCH ME - angel city feat lara mcallen	113969
FASTEST CAR - dj sharon o'love	114217
IS IT A SIN - deepest blue	114033
GOOD LUCK - basement jaxx	113341
HEAR MY NAME - armand van helden	113827
SURRENDER - lasgo	113840
BOYS OF SUMMER - dj sammy	112387
HEART OF GOLD - kelly llorenna*	112283

BUMP N GRIND

BURN - usher	113800
I DON'T WANT TO KNOW - mario winans	113805
DIARY - alicia keys	114378
BABY BOY - beyonce knowles feat sean paul	112933
F*** IT (I DON'T WANT YOU BACK) - eamon	113519
F.U.R.B - frankee	113917
HOTEL - cassidy feat r kelly	113514
YEAH - usher feat ludacris & lil jon	113546
MOVE YA BODY - nina sky feat jabba	114218
DIP IT LOW - christina milian	113802
THANK YOU - jamelia	113455
IGNITION - r kelly	112588
NAUGHTY GIRL - beyonce knowles	113292
NO DIGGITY - blackstreet	111211
BREATHE - blu cantrell feat. sean paul	112521
I BELIEVE I CAN FLY - r kelly	113060
FRONTIN - pharrell williams feat jay z	112855
POP THAT BOOTY - marques houston	114343
BOUNCE - sarah connor	114025
ALL I HAVE - jennifer lopez feat ll cool j	112359
U GOT IT BAD - usher	113551
LUV YA - j-wess	114091
TOO HOT TO HANDLE - f.y.a	114244
IF I AIN'T GOT YOU - alicia keys	113809
WHAT CHU WANT - j-wess	113635
CALLING ALL GIRLS - atl	113943
THOIA THONG - r kelly	112948

FOOTBALL

WOO HOO - the 5 6 7 8's	114166
SOCCER AM CATWALK - jean knight	112559
THE GREAT ESCAPE - sheffield wednesday	111354
YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE - gerry &..	111351
3 LIONS - baddiel & skinner	111494
MATCH OF THE DAY	111126
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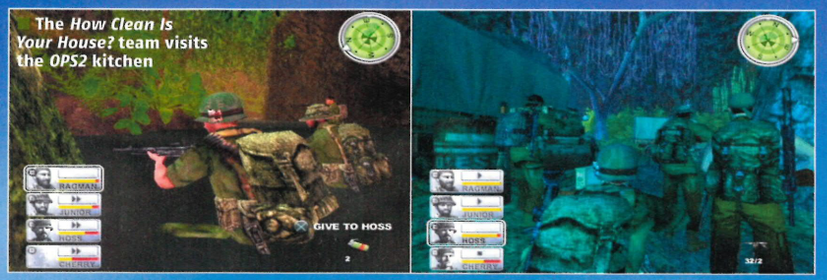
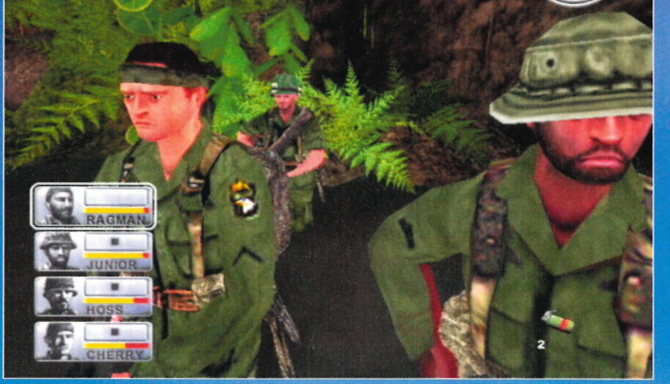


The *How Clean Is Your House?* team visits the *OPS2* kitchen



Smile! Come on, give us a smile... it's a lovely day

CONFLICT: VIETNAM

Experience the calamity and pain of real war. Right this way...

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SCI
DEVELOPER PIVOTAL GAMES
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.CONFLICT.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES

AT A GLANCE

Lead a squad of four American GIs through the Vietnamese jungles of 1968, several years before tourism *really* took off. Backpack through quaint villages and destroy them.

Under fire, face down in a world of dirt surrounded by Charlie – it sure is hard working for *OPS2*. By an incredible coincidence, it's hard being a 'grunt' in *Conflict: Vietnam*, too, for the very same reasons. Strange, but if you're actually sitting on a sofa, the things that made 'Nam a red veil of horror *should* make this game fun. Unfortunately, war really is hell, and *Conflict: Vietnam* manages to create an all-too-realistic mix of lengthy boredom punctuated by confused, panicky bloodshed. Aww, nuts.

Let's just tick a few things on the list. Newcomer immediately nicknamed Cherry? Check. Authentic sweary veterans who bang on about 'in-country' at the slightest opportunity? Check. Period soundtrack? Check. Big base that doubles as a training area? Check. Getting shot down in Hueys? Check... We've seen it all before, most recently in *Shellshock: Nam '67*, and before that in everything from *Apocalypse Now* to *Full Metal Jacket*. This is cliché masquerading as authenticity. Consequently, it's not all that interesting, and just throws your attention back to the gameplay. Bad move. As the game introduces itself, Cherry announces how he's landed up in 'a whole heap of someone else's s**t,' and as time goes on it's hard not to agree.

DOWN THE GARDEN PATH

Early shooters funnelled you down corridors because that's all the hardware could manage. Many still do: fortunately for war games such as *Medal Of Honor*, European settings – crumbling buildings, debris-clogged streets and trenches – all believably funnel you down corridors as well. Suspension of disbelief and consequently the atmosphere rarely suffer for it. *Conflict: Vietnam* sends you down tunnels because, well, because *Conflict: Desert Storm 1 & 2* did. These previous titles had all the urban features needed to make tactical squad deployments really work, but developer Pivotal Games was clearly unwilling to change its methods when it made for the jungle. So, it seems, the jungle had to change. Sorry.

Instead of stalking freely through the trees, you trot down what may well be the Ho Chi Min trail, but probably isn't, unless the Ho Chi Min trail was essentially a giant garden path. With booby traps. Almost the only time you can skirt off the trail is to avoid a trap, and even then it's only by about ten feet. Hmm, shall I walk through this incredibly obvious tripwire or go the other way round the tree? These guys really are the finest of enemies.

DULL METAL JACKET

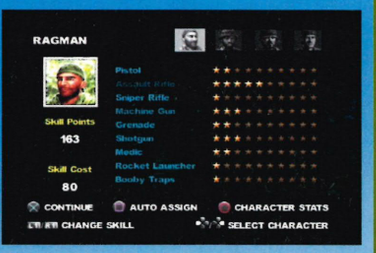
There's little to do with your squad here except a) tell them to follow you, b) tell them to stop following you or c) tell them to suck your boiling farts. This last is usually reserved for when they wander out of cover, get shot repeatedly without reacting and eventually die. It's not actually in the command menu – probably an oversight, we reckon.

But it is this sort of behaviour that leads to the game's most annoying and dreary scenario, because the poor fellas don't die straight away, they go 'Missing In Action' and writhe about, giving you time to revive them with a plaster. So one goes down and you send in the medic. Then the medic goes down. Then the revived man goes down again. Then the man you've sent to save them both goes down as he heals the first one. Then the first one goes down again... all because the hopeless idiots either kill Charlie with the first shot or miss a thousand times in a row. When under heavy fire it's like trying to bail out of an open-top

Defusing traps takes time – best train someone up

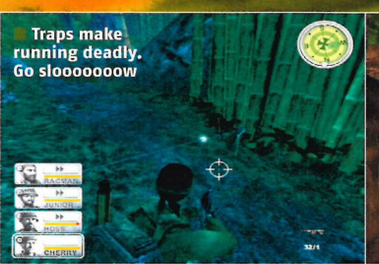
BORN ON THE FIFTH OF JULY

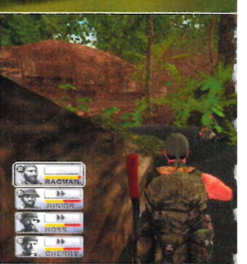
Like so many warmongers, these boys missed the boat when it comes to brilliance

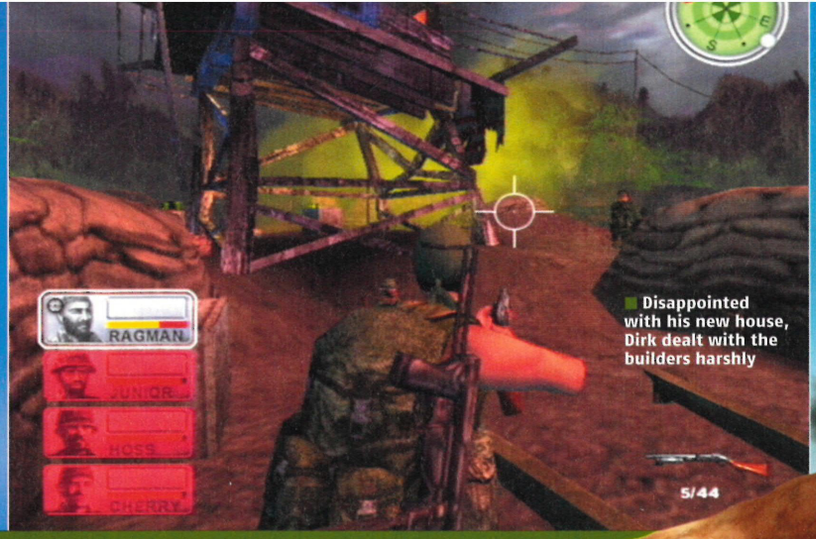


After a mission each soldier is assigned upgrade points, which can be spent on upgrading his abilities with weapons and booby traps. If you can't be bothered, there's an auto assign function, which is useful, but it's best to do it yourself – abilities increase by virtue of them being barely able to hit the side of a tree at first. Your soldiers are liabilities, so get to know what weapons they favour – Junior, for instance, has the inevitable sniper rifle – and start building them up. Or go and sit in the sun instead.

This is going well


Traps make running deadly. Go slooooooow





Disappointed with his new house, Dirk dealt with the builders harshly

submarine, which gives you plenty of time to curse the clumsy animations and time-consuming menu system. If all four go down, it's game over, and at this point all but Mystic Meg and perhaps David Icke will be searching vainly for the 'suck my boiling farts' command.

So you do the whole tiresome mission again, unless you've had the almost supernatural foresight to use one of the limited saves. But when should you save? How do you know if there's a colossal battle or a lengthy walk around the next corner? You don't. Checkpoints might've been nice...

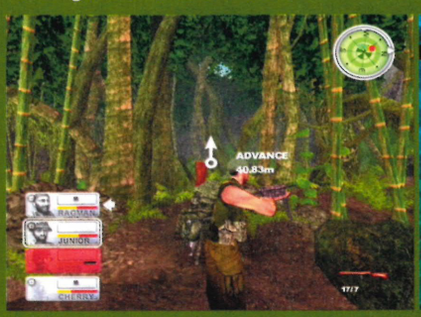
IT'S TOO MUCH LIKE THE REAL THING. STUPID, CONFUSING AND ULTIMATELY HOPELESS

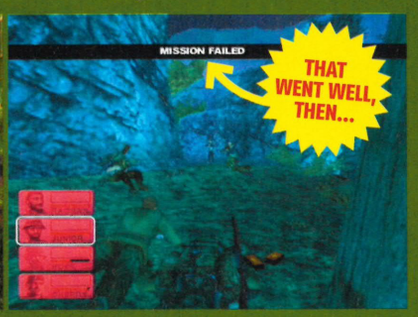
Meanwhile, snipers border on invisible and are catastrophically annoying, crouching is too slow to be really useful, reloading is almost absurdly over complicated, animations are scruffy, fights occur with tiny, distant people and the early Tet Offensive mission *is* actually offensive. We read a magazine during the initial bunker defence and it played itself, but had to do the second part five times as we were overrun by enemies our squad was too polite to shoot. Then in beating it – by hiding the squad behind sandbags and running about suicidally – we killed 153 people and a tank, earning 785 medals. Riiiight. At least if we pinned all those medals on we might be bulletproof... but no.

This is too much like the real thing. Stupid, confusing and ultimately hopeless. Hey, maybe we should be playing as the Viet Cong? They were the ones who won, after all... **Steven Williams**

"SIR, WHY BOTHER, SIR?"

You can give them all sorts of orders. But... oh... it don't mean a thing



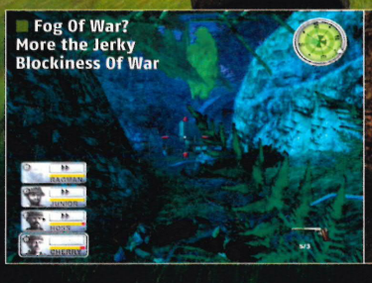


The order system works well once you've memorised the various button presses, but there's far less reason to use it than in previous *Conflict* games. And even the tutorial makes one major limitation obvious – when you send them to a point of your choosing, it's often impossible to see if you've got the right distance. Trying to send a grunt to the tutorial's flag, for instance, can result in you sending him to the wall behind it. You're too far away to tell, and nothing happens until you get it right. In the end, it would've been easier just to go there yourself.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK	VERDICT
Graphics	05 Scruffy, bitty and poorly animated
Sound	05 Repetitive and rather unremarkable
Gameplay	04 From dull chore to major annoyance
Lifespan	04 Grinds you down sooner rather than later

Has similar attributes as 'Nam 67, *but does pretty much everything worse. Either play that or wait for Snake's jungle adventures*

5/10

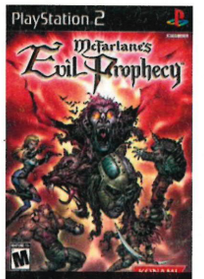


Fog Of War? More the Jerky Blockiness Of War

Always pack a picnic and spare pants

Losing... will... to... live... must... stop... playing...

A classic gaming trick: If the game looks crap, add loads of effects



MCFARLANE'S EVIL PROPHECY

Hell hath no fury like a half-baked piece of crapola

You want an evil prophecy? Try this. Some day, all games will be made like this plodding, ugly, joy-siphoning excuse for a slash-'em-up. But it's all okay, because when that day comes we'll all be gibbering idiots anyway, and quite up for spending hour after soul-screaming hour of hammering the same button, over and over and *over* again without any real fear of our on-screen self being damaged. We'll find the filthy palette of browns and other browns quite soothing and probably won't even notice that level music tends to cut out inexplicably long before the level itself staggers to a merciful (but never timely) end.

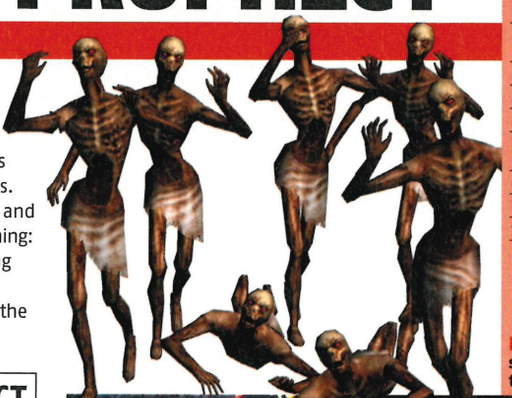
What's more, our dull, unblinking eyes won't notice the complete and utter lack of logic in how 'useful' items spawn slap bang in the middle of locations we've already explored. We'll be too busy flipping merrily between four playable characters whose pretty, light-show special attacks are marginally less powerful than the default fist in the mush. And we'll love these games because they demand nothing from us but precious time and the willingness to ignore the growing vacuum of imagination in the corner of the room that dims the lights and further dulls our once magnificent brains.

That, friends, is an evil prophecy indeed, and there's only one way to prevent it from happening: we need to stop buying bland, anaesthetising brain stodge like this and champion those games that quicken the pulse and stimulate the mind. It's your move... ■ **Paul Fitzpatrick**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK		VERDICT
Graphics	03	What? Haven't we finished this review yet?
Sound	02	Okay, okay. Boo to the repetitive sound
Gameplay	02	You might as well be screwing on jar lids
Lifespan	02	Negligible. There's game, but no incentive

Just be thankful we played this for you. McFarlane's figures may be works of art, but this boring, ugly game is anything but

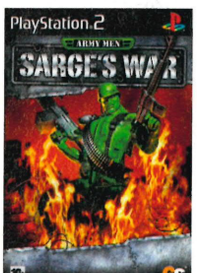
2/10



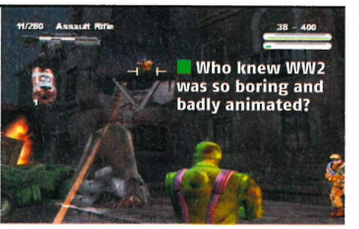
DETAILS

PUBLISHER KONAMI
DEVELOPER KONAMI HAWAII
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT 24 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.KONAMI-HWI.COM/EVILPROPHECY
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
PERIPHERALS FULL FRONTAL LOBOTOMY, PROZAC, HEAD TRAUMA

■ **This makes no sense, but little in this game does**



■ Cannons offer ten-second diversions



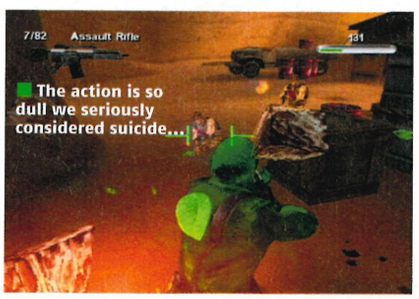
■ Who knew WW2 was so boring and badly animated?

ARMY MEN: SARGE'S WAR

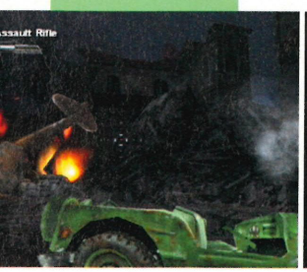
Forget the medic, what we need here is a plastic surgeon...

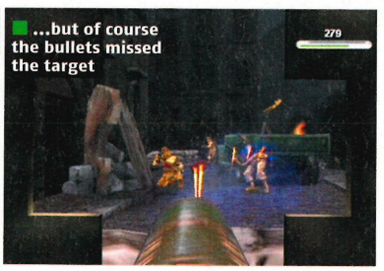
DETAILS

PUBLISHER GLOBAL STAR
DEVELOPER GLOBAL STAR
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.GLOBALSTARSOFTWARE.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO



■ The action is so dull we seriously considered suicide...





■ ...but of course the bullets missed the target

War isn't supposed to be fun. Battlefields are tough, unpleasant, hard going, emotionally crippling and soul-destroying experiences that shape men and break minds. How clever, then, that *Army Men: Sarge's War* manages to transfer all these elements to its gameplay, turning those who play it into gibbering, emasculated, shell-shocked wrecks after just one go.

We'll forgo repeating the mindless plot to you – this, what must be the billionth *Army Men* game, is just plastic toys fighting it out in blandly rendered repetitive environments. You move, you aim, you lock on, you shoot. Sounds pretty standard, yeah? Wrong. The firing and bullets are just plain broken – Sarge, who you control, misses half the time in what we can only assume is some half-arsed nod to 'realism' (although he's the least 'real' thing around, what with being a living kid's toy).

This redundant anti-logic makes up the design for the rest of the game: Sarge jumps like his spine is made of balloons, but is slow and clunky to control, as if his boots were coated in lead. Meanwhile, the camera often turns and looks the wrong way just when the action gets heated. Maybe it just can't bear to look at the poorly animated carnage – or maybe it just can't be bothered.

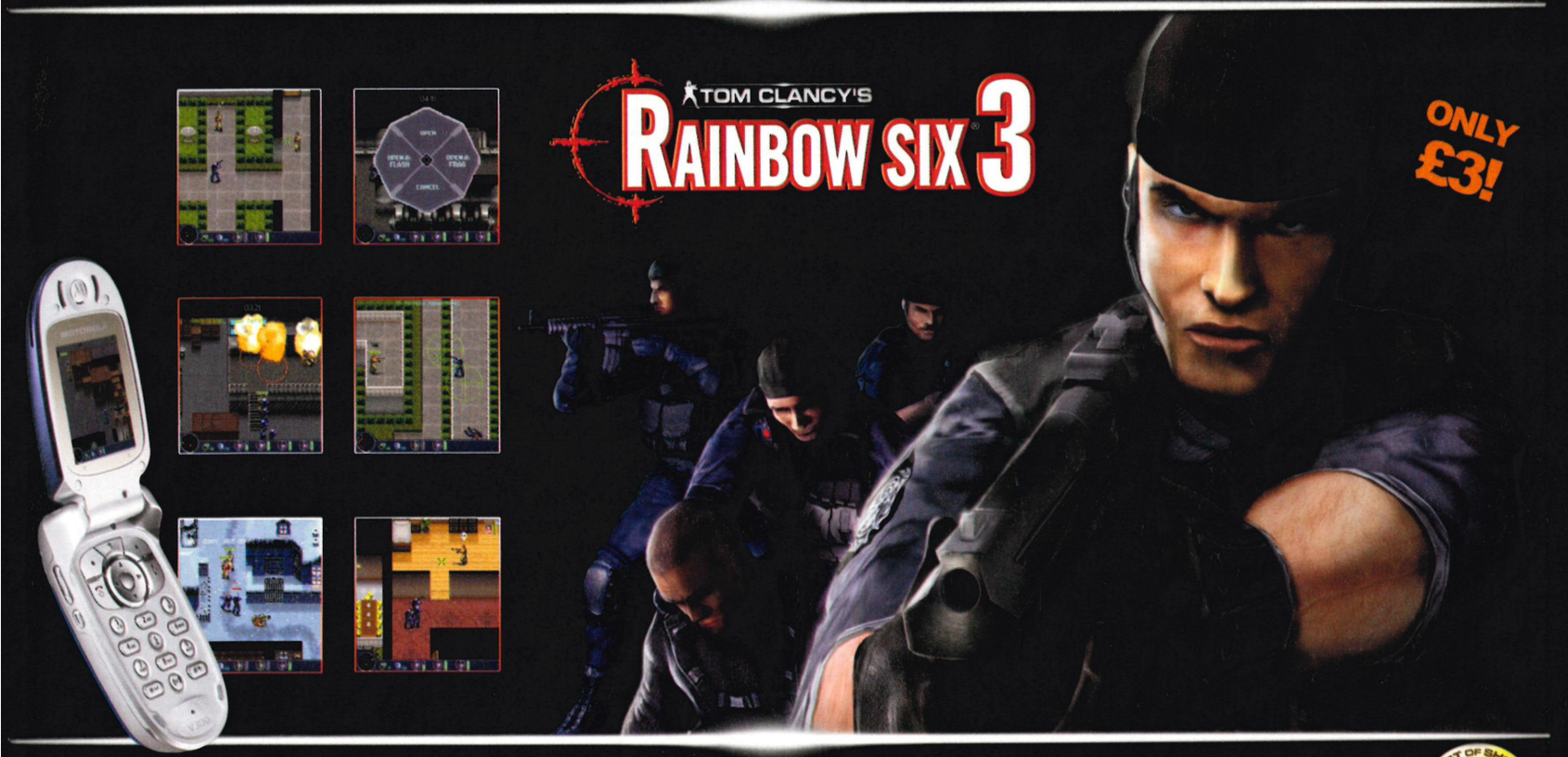
The end result is massively unsatisfying, and the overall feeling is that this is very poorly put together – fittingly, from cheap plastic parts. We recommend that this one is best left in the bargain bin or, better yet, shipped off back to boot camp once and for all. ■ **Michael French**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK		VERDICT
Graphics	03	Dull battlefields – *Medal Of Honor* it ain't
Sound	04	Bog-standard kerpows of basic warfare
Gameplay	03	Horridly clunky combat and camera
Lifespan	02	Depends how quickly you can bin it

So broken it's severely wounded. Not just firing blanks, but also malfunctioning and losing blood like a baby does dribble

3/10

DING'S BACK, AND HE'S GOING TO TAKE YOUR MOBILE HOSTAGE!



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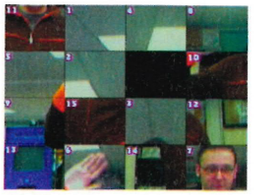


The sliding tile puzzle is both fun and disorientating

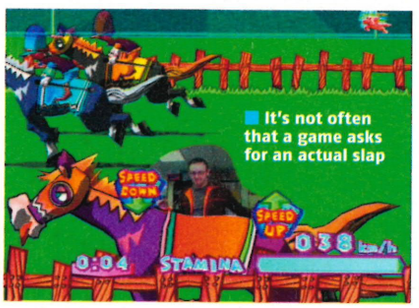
"No photos today, please. Just autographs"

U MOVE SUPER SPORTS

Fancy a little bit of slap and tickle for the camera?

DETAILS

PUBLISHER KONAMI
DEVELOPER KONAMI JAPAN
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT 24 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.KONAMI-EUROPE.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
PERIPHERALS EYETOY



It's not often that a game asks for an actual slap

Football meets pinball: whoopee...

It's like some kind of dirty dream come true. Finally someone has turned EyeToy into the kinky web cam it really wants to be – this is a game that advocates live action spanking! Okay, so it's not *actually* kinky – at least, directly – and if we're honest, there's not a trace of smut or rudeness to the whole thing. But there really is a whole lot of arse-slapping, stroking and shy waving going on.

U Move takes the mini-game template from *EyeToy: Play* and adds a sports theme – so games are based around football, rugby, golf, baseball and horse racing – and does the unlikely by bettering previous software for the camera and upping the EyeToy innovation bar even further. There are 15 games overall – most of them genuinely enjoyable – and our favourites were horse racing (slap your arse to make your on-screen pony go faster), baseball (swing your arms towards the screen to whack back the pitcher's ball) and the bicep-breaking game based on curling, everyone's favourite broom-based Winter Olympics event. There's also a clever puzzle mode which divides the screen into jumbled squares that you tickle and wave back into position, plus a handful of other graphics-based tricks that should keep you occupied for an hour or two.

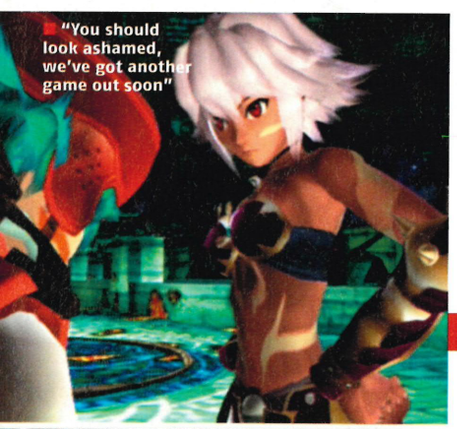
There's the odd duff game – including a pointless alien-based rip-off of *Play*'s Keepy Uppy and a frustrating football-pinball hybrid – but the overall result is fun. It's shallow fun, but fun all the same. ■ **Michael French**

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

Graphics	06	Simple, clear and very functional
Sound	06	Effects that just steer clear of irritation
Gameplay	07	New ideas, but they may get old sharpish
Lifespan	07	Enough to keep you coming back

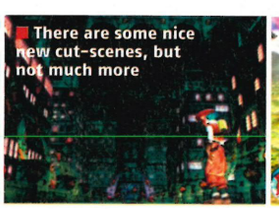
Takes the winning EyeToy formula and updates it more than enough to tide you over until the next mini-game disc rolls along

7/10



"You should look ashamed, we've got another game out soon"

To be honest, even we've heard better chat-up lines before



There are some nice new cut-scenes, but not much more

Shots like this don't exactly fire the enthusiasm

.HACK/OUTBREAK

Or as we like to call it, '.hack/repetition'

An epic RPG with a sprawling story, released over four instalments, each bundled with a tie-in anime cartoon DVD. Sounds cool, right? Of course it does, and, apart from the obvious ones, innovations such as this are extremely rare in the videogame world. Sadly, though, while the idea is both original and excellent, the reality is neither. After *.hack/infection* (part one) and *.hack/mutation* (part two), *.hack/outbreak* is the third instalment in this series – so, according to our maths, that's £120 wasted so far, with just another 40 quid to throw away.

Your character, Kite, is participating in online game 'The World' when best friend Orca falls into a coma while playing as well. The World holds the answer, but it's three games in and all the dungeon trawling and monster slaying hasn't got us any closer to waking this guy up.

No improvements have been made to the blurry, dark graphics, and the dungeons are monotonous. Minor changes include a big step up in dungeon difficulty, while your Grunties (disturbing, pig-like creatures raised in previous instalments) are now able to hunt out items for you. Unless you carry save data over from the last game, you'll spend a long time levelling up your character and raising Grunties, trapping you even further – were that actually possible – in the deathly grip of monotonous routine.

Since this game is almost identical to the previous two and they were both a .hack/ disappointment, we say leave the guy stuck in the coma and find yourself a more worthy way of spending £160. ■ **Kirsten Kearney**

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

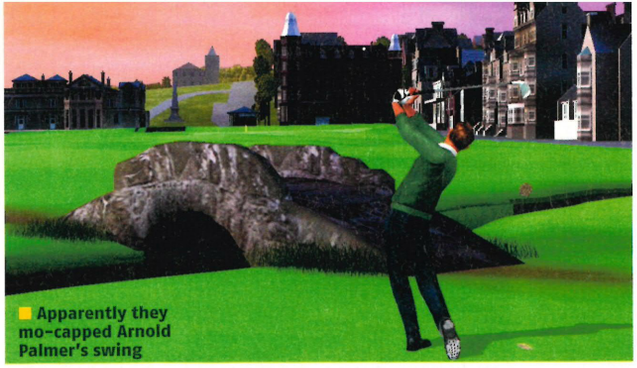
Graphics	05	Pretty characters, dull blurry backgrounds
Sound	05	Lazily, it's the music from the last game
Gameplay	03	Hard for newbies, too samey for veterans
Lifespan	05	Pointlessly lengthy and overstretched

A nice idea, but we've been strung along too much. The pace has gone up a notch, but it's just too little, too late

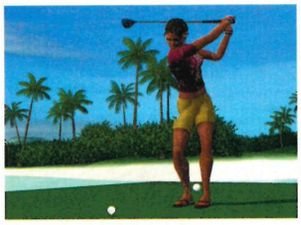
4/10

DETAILS

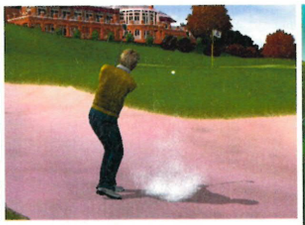
PUBLISHER ATARI
DEVELOPER BANDAI
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT 10 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.DOTHACK.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO



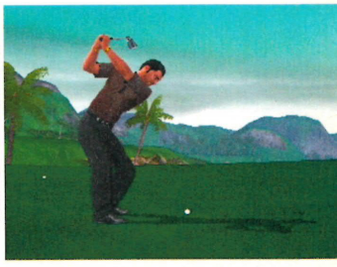
Apparently they mo-capped Arnold Palmer's swing



You get to play against some fantasy characters, as well as pros



The Bear eases himself out of the bunker

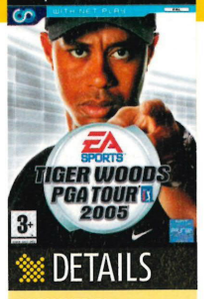


TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005

silver
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

We love the Tiger. Let's count the reasons why...

The fantasy characters have 'hilarious' outfits



DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA
DEVELOPER EA REDWOOD SHORES
PRICE £34.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT 24 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.UK.EA.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE
Golf sim using the now familiar analogue swing control, boosted this year with some legends and loads and loads and loads of customisable hoo-ha.

1. It looks real pretty. In fact, marginally more pretty than last year.

2. The new legends pursuit mode. There are five greats: Seve Ballesteros, Arnold Palmer, Ben Hogan, Gary Player and Jack Nicklaus and the idea is to beat them on their hand-picked courses. First, though, you have to take on a load of challenges (just play-off holes, shots from the rough etc) against AI players.

3. The character creation mode. Man, this is getting good. So good in fact that we spent the first three hours trying to recreate people using the now familiar sliding gauges (see Recognise This Lot?) for no other reason than it was fun.

4. Tiger Proofing. Finding the game too easy? (Many did last time out.) Then unlock stuff to make it harder, like no fairways or extra bunkers or less clubs. It never has to be too easy again.

5. If the Tiger Proofed course you create is good enough, Seve, Arnold and the boys will challenge you on it.

6. The 'swing the analogue stick like a club' control system. Okay, it's three versions in and no longer counts as an innovation. But it's still great. It still makes it feel like you're hitting the ball yourself. Well, as close as you're gonna get with a little plastic paddle anyway.

7. All the gear. Kit yourself out in something like 1,500 golfing togs and clubs and the like, from Nike, Adidas and the rest. As with the character creation mode, you can spend hours in the 'shop' pimping it up Samuel L Jackson style.

8. Betting cash money. We love the money matches. We always put the maximum bet down. Quite often we're broke. But it doesn't matter because you soon win it back.

9. You can take your golfer online. Now we haven't been able to do this (there will be an online review of *Tiger Woods* next month) but we're loving the idea. Our golfer – imaginatively monikered "ops2" – will be waiting for you.

10. The world's best courses. There are eight new ones, none of which we'd heard of – Fancourt Golf Club Estate anyone? – but, then again, we hadn't heard of Pebble Beach or Sawgrass before we started playing golf games.

11. It feels right. It's not just the analogue control, having the right kit, the right players, the right courses... well it is all that, but not *just* that. It's so well thought through this year, it's like they've thrown everything they ever thought into the mix. And we like it.

ON THE OTHER HAND

There are at least five reasons *not* to love the Tiger:

1. It's fundamentally the same game. Sorry, but it is. Same controls, same looks, same commentary, same tutorial mode. There are loads of new features, but they are just overlaid onto an existing game.

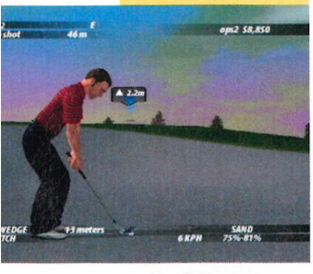
2. See 1.

3. See 1.

4. See 1.

5. See 1. **Richard Keith**

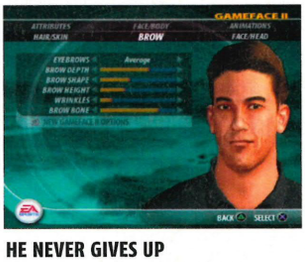
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK		VERDICT
Graphics	09	Stunning in every way
Sound	07	Inane commentary, nice effects, little else
Gameplay	09	Same as ever and great as ever
Lifespan	10	Almost infinite. The main improvement
At heart it's the same game as last year but with enough improved features and custom stuff that it's still a must-buy		9/10



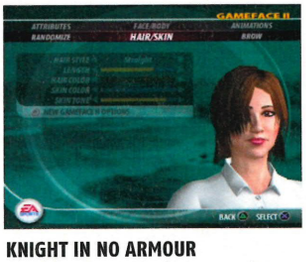
It's still all in the swing of your analogue stick

RECOGNISE THIS LOT?

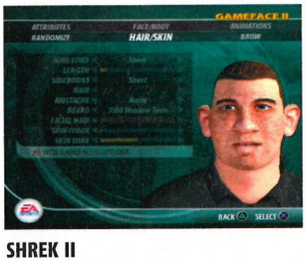
The create a character mode is so intricate you can reproduce anyone. Well, nearly. Guess this lot and win a prize...



HE NEVER GIVES UP
So who do you think this is? Think big, think robot and think sexual misdemeanour



KNIGHT IN NO ARMOUR
Lithe Brit actress on the rise, apparently quite good with a five iron...

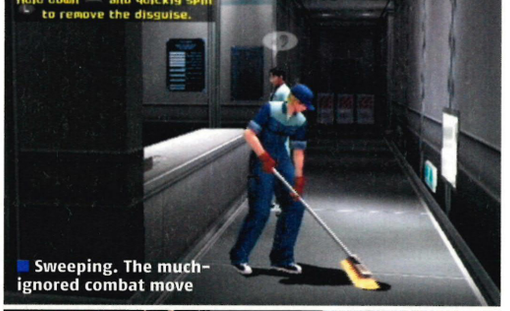


SHREK II
Not big, not clever and not very pretty but the boy can play a bit

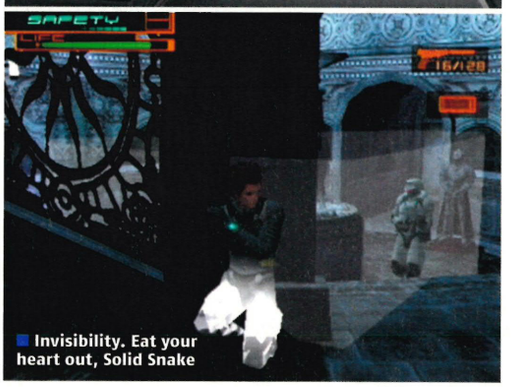
THE TIME TRAVELLER
The only physicist you can name. Hint: you can't see the wheelchair. Or the voice-box

Stealth – sometimes it's just standing in a corner...

... other times it's electrocuting innocent civilians



Sweeping. The much-ignored combat move



Invisibility. Eat your heart out, Solid Snake

SPY FICTION

"You hum it and we'll play it..."

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SAMMY
DEVELOPER ACCESS GAMES
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT 27 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.SPYFICTION.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO

AT A GLANCE

A stealth/actioner where you take on other character's appearances that takes on the appearance of every other stealth/actioner you could ever think of.

Spy Fiction doesn't have an original bone in its body. It's every stealth game you've ever played, shamelessly borrowing gimmicks, devices and smart ideas from titles already out there. But can something so derivative offer something new of its own? The answer is almost, but not quite.

Although it's billed as a stealth/action game, the main core of the gameplay's all about dressing up. Using a hi-tech bodysuit, you can take a picture of any other character and cloak yourself with an image of their appearance. It puts a clever new twist on stealth: there's no hiding in shadows here, you walk around in disguise pretending to be other people for much of the game. There's an array of gadgets at your disposal, too, including an invisibility shield, retinal scanners, listening devices, and rappelling cords so you can silently lower yourself into buildings.

Of course, not a single one of the gimmicks, levels or missions is new, having appeared in lots of other action adventures already available (see Sounds Familiar). But the combination of these tired parts makes the espionage that little bit more interesting. It's vastly different to the 'crouch in shadows/approach from behind/snap neck' template followed by *MGS*, *Headhunter*, then *Alias* and, most recently, *Splinter Cell*.

CAMERA OBSCURA

Yet the clever mix comes with a catch: even if you love action adventures, and despite the best of intentions, *Spy Fiction* just doesn't work. But it isn't the espionage mix that lets things down – it's the way everything looks and feels. Along with a hokey plotline, the graphics are like something from late PSone/early PS2 games and despite the odd flourish (there's a great looking level set in a casino, for instance) locations are forgettable. This would actually be bearable were it not for the abomination of a camera that sticks too close to you, or trails overhead, or just plain fails to show you what's going on unless you slowly move your character and angle the view at the same time. It undermines any sense of adventure to the extent that we were more worried about being able to walk around a box in a warehouse than how we were gonna infiltrate the scientific labs, incapacitate the guards and steal the secret documents.

Spy Fiction's big idea of shamelessly remixing other stealth and action games into something distinctive almost works – but it's all ruined by a faulty camera and death-dull looks. **Michael French**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT
Graphics	06 Bland but workable, nothing special
Sound	05 Dun dun dah! Drama, but no surprises
Gameplay	08 Cleverly mixes lots of old stealth ideas
Lifespan	07 If you tolerate the camera it has legs

What it lacks in originality it makes up for in variety. But all that good is thrown away by the cocked-up camera

6/10

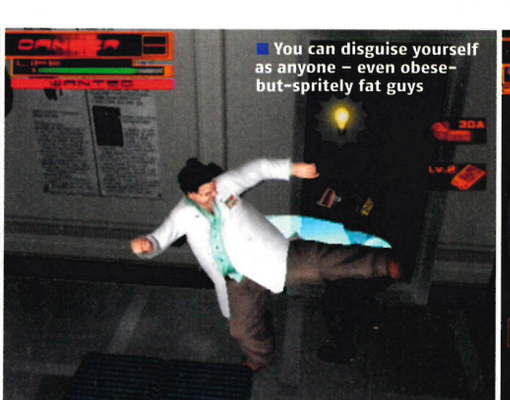
SOUNDS FAMILIAR

All your favourite moves, locations and gadgets in one place. It's the best compliation evah!

As you should've gathered, *Spy Fiction* nicks all the good bits from other stealth titles to make the kind of varied sneaking and shooting adventure that only Ian Fleming could concoct. Here we present its Greatest Hits...

1. **ARCTIC BASE OPENING LEVEL** Metal Gear Solid
2. **GRAPHICS REPRESENTING GUARD'S ATTENTION** Metal Gear Solid: Sons Of Liberty
3. **STEALTHY HIDING AROUND CORNERS** Splinter Cell
4. **PLAY AS DIFFERENT CHARACTERS** The X-Files: Resist Or Serve
5. **AGILITY: CLIMBING AND JUMPING MIX** Tomb Raider
6. **AGILITY: WALL-CLIMBING AND SPECIAL MOVES MIX** Prince Of Persia: Sands Of Time
7. **DRESSING UP WITH DISGUISES** Hitman 2
8. **TAKING PHOTOS** Beyond Good & Evil
9. **GOD AWFUL CAMERA** Countless Sub-par PSone Games
10. **SIMPLISTIC COMBAT** Grand Theft Auto 3
11. **WOBBLY LOCK-ON** Futurama
12. **BLAND JAPANESE CHARACTERS** Lifeline
13. **CASINO-BASED LEVEL** Alias
14. **REMOTE CONTROL CAMERAS** James Bond 007: Everything Or Nothing
15. **DRAMATIC MUSIC** Headhunter
16. **PARACHUTING** MDK
17. **CRAWLING ACROSS CEILINGS** Spider-Man
18. **RAPPELLING CORD** Mission Impossible

Air-drop in with all the aerodynamics of a crucifix



You can disguise yourself as anyone – even obese-but-spritely fat guys

Capture enemies on film to take on their appearance

next month

- You know what we think...
- It isn't out for another TWO months...
- Except on our cover DVD...

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PlayStation 2 XBOX NINTENDO GAMECUBE

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MORTAL KOMBAT
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WINNING ELEVEN 8
THE JAPANESE PES4 REVIEWED!

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grand theft auto
San Andreas

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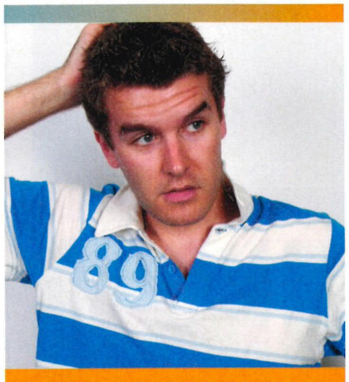
replay

BECAUSE THE GAME'S NOT OVER UNTIL YOU SAY IT IS...

WELCOME TO REPLAY

There's a reason Gentle looks like a Pims-sipping posh boy... He is

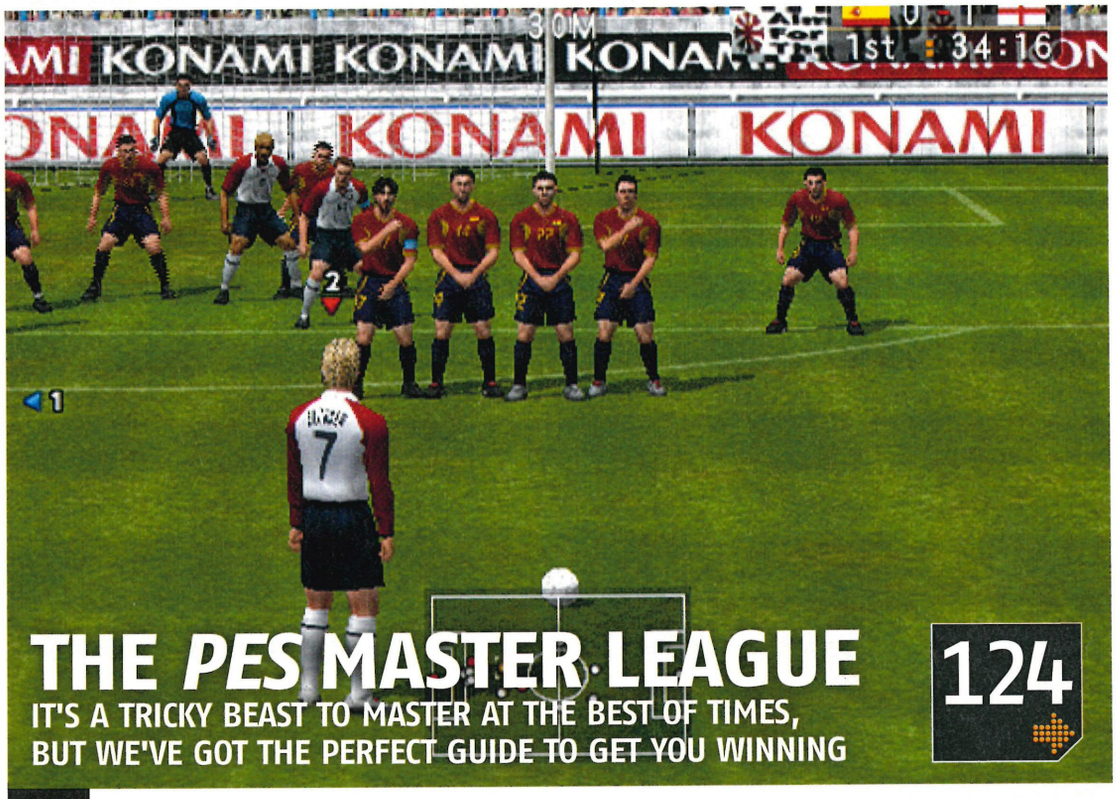


You know, being involved in Replay means a lot to me – it fills my every working moment with surprises. Sometimes these surprises are creepy, like the envelope full of hair I recently had the misfortune to open onto my lap. For the most part though, opening your deliveries is a pleasant experience. Especially now I've got my easy-on hazard suit.

But now you've made your way through the mag to this haven of back-catalogue love, it's time we talked about you. Found a nugget of youthful joy inside a previously retired game? Or perhaps you'd like to tell us what you think of our review of your fave game? Well, you know exactly where to direct your attention – our awaiting mailbag.

While you muse on your potential ramblings, stop by our challenges and see how you measure up to the rest of the mob. And if it's assistance you're after, take a peek at our cheats section. Remember – you are why we're here. But for the love of sweet baby Jesus: stop sending me your hair.

Ben Richardson,
Staff writer



THE *PES* MASTER LEAGUE

IT'S A TRICKY BEAST TO MASTER AT THE BEST OF TIMES, BUT WE'VE GOT THE PERFECT GUIDE TO GET YOU WINNING

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Finding the going a little tough? We unlock the pick of last month's games with the easy key

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You could win T-shirts and more, but only if you can beat the current best

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There's much more to the Internet than pictures of lady bits and pirated music, you know

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Win the original *Star Wars* trilogy on DVD. This is not an offer you should miss...

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The world's greatest gaming cartoon continues its pursuit of gaming wisdom

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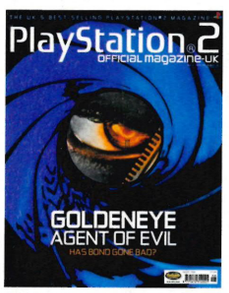
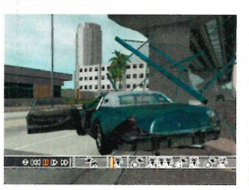
The best 100 PS2 games on the market, no question. Roll up, roll up... you can't go wrong

here's one we reviewed earlier...

SQUEEZING EVERY LAST DROP OF ENTERTAINMENT JUICE FROM THE RIPE GAME MANGO



ORIGINAL REVIEW: *OPS2#49*
SCORE: 06/10



DRIV3R

"We shoot you from the waist up Tanner, luvvie, 'cause you run like a crab..."

Bought *Driv3r*? Saw those slick TV ads, right? Urge to kill rising? We can help with our three-step *Driv3r* rehab program. It's worth a try. Just get yourself acquainted with the game's oddly brilliant director mode instead.

Step one: pop into the free ride and drive up a storm. Take jumps off motorway flyovers, ram pedestrians into the flowerbeds and smash the living crap out of your car. Please, though, don't get Tanner out of the car. You could set your recovery back weeks watching his stupid, *stupid* running.

Where were we? Ah yes. Step two: having selected your replay from options in the main menu, access the director mode. Here you'll find chase cams, first-person cams, wheel cams, and tripod cams that can be placed anywhere within the replay. Spend three hours turning your drive into a cinematic

You'll realise that from this angle, if from no other, *Driv3r* looks like the best game ever

masterpiece packed with motion blur, slo-mo shots, sexy low angles and – you get the idea.

Step three: dim lights and watch finished meisterwerk to the sound of awed reverence, realising that from this angle, if from no other, *Driv3r* looks like the best game ever. We did it, and you can see our homage to *that* chase in *The French Connection* on next month's disc. And while you're waiting for what is a very exciting couple of minutes, try some of your own and send them in to the usual adress, the best ones will get on the DVD. Fame and a call from Mr Spielberg awaits...

ONIMUSHA 3

The climax that blows away Tolkien's trilogy...

ORIGINAL REVIEW: *OPS2#48*
SCORE: 9/10

Eat your hairy Hobbit heart out, *Lord Of The Rings – Onimusha 3*'s battle scenes are better than yours. Trufax.

During the approach to Azuami Castle and the confrontation with Nobunaga at the close of the game, Jacques Blanc (Jean Reno, for those who haven't played it) is thrown into the midst of an epic battle outside the castle gates. Countless enemies attack from all sides, while off-screen foes fire a relentless barrage of flaming arrows.

It's a mammoth playing area, and one that's truly endless if you so wish – enemies never stop coming. And that makes it doubly handy 'cos you can keep levelling up for the final battle against arch-badass Nobunaga, throwing yourself into the thick of it and maxing out all your powers with the souls of the zombie foot soldiers and Oni Legions you smash with the chain-whip.

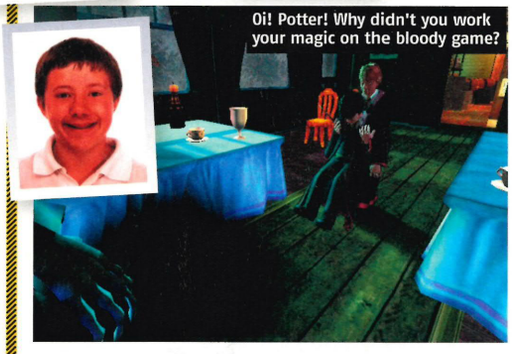
It makes *LOTR*'s battle for Helm's Deep look like a Sunday afternoon stroll.

...and your shout

PUT ON YOUR SHOUTING HAT AND TELL US WHAT YOU REALLY THINK

If you think we've hyped up a bad choice or underscored a blinder, there's only one thing to do – write your own review, take a nice picture of yourself and send it to the following address, and you might even get something for your troubles...

...AND MY SHOUT,
OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE,
FUTURE PUBLISHING LTD,
30 MONMOUTH ST,
BATH BA1 2BW
ps2postal@futurenet.co.uk



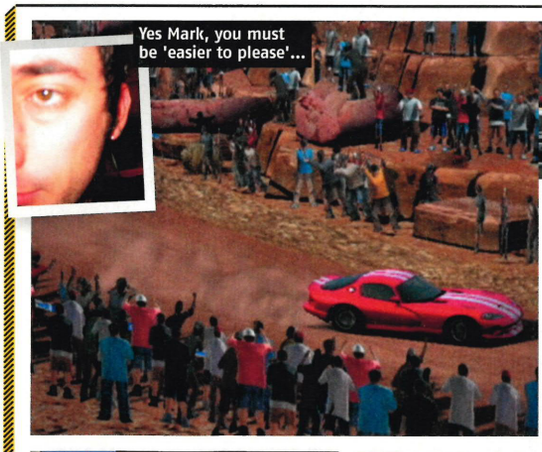
Hermione failed to cast a spell on Sam

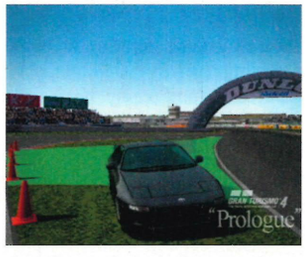
HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN

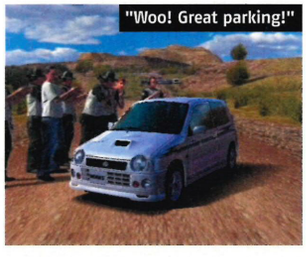
After watching the third *Harry Potter* movie, I was so keen to get the game. Having also seen the article in Monitor and then read your review I was convinced it was great and bought it. I am disgusted. You gave it 7/10, but I wouldn't have even given it 3/10. It's so poor that I bought it on a Saturday and had finished it by Tuesday. The sound is worse than my cat coughing up a hairball, and the mini-games are 20-second button-bashing rubbish. Granted, the graphics are okay, but the EyeToy games look terrible and none of them last longer than 30 seconds. This is a poor, poor game.

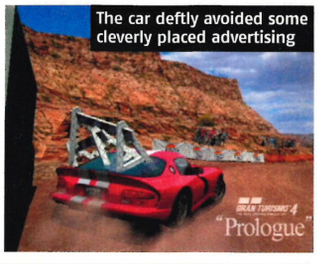
Sam Williams, Dorset

TO GET YOUR SHOUT IN THE MAG YOU MUST SEND A PASSPORT PIC OF YOURSELF









GRAN TURISMO 4: PROLOGUE

Maybe I'm just easier to please than you are. Maybe I actually enjoy racing games. Or maybe you woke up feeling crabby and decided to take it out on something. *GT4: Prologue*'s far better than 7/10 – surely the idea of a sequel is that it improves on previous offerings, while sticking to what made those offerings so good? *GT4* will definitely meet those requirements and *Prologue* gives us all a chance to see just how good it'll be. The improved handling and new circuits are great, but *Prologue* has more available cars than some 'full' racing games! I hope you see fit to judge *GT4* on its own merits, and perhaps give *Prologue* an extra point.

Mark Waring, Stuttgart

offcuts

The relevant bits of your otherwise mental ramblings about games

I've just bought *Driv3r* and I'd give it 9/10. This is because after the realistic explosions of your wrecked car, you can still sit in the charred husk! Brilliant!
Raymond Ramsay, Stevenston

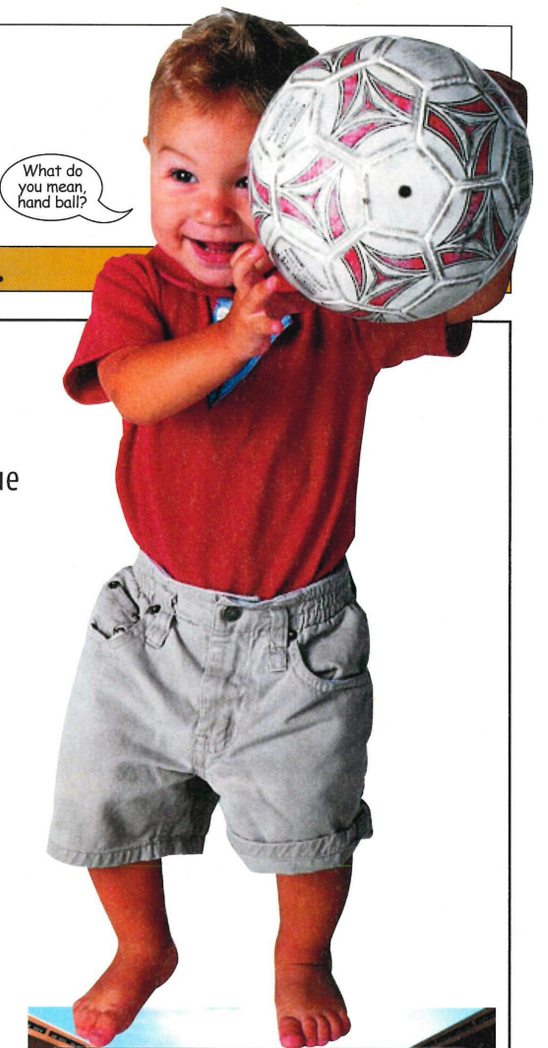
I recently saw the review for *007: Agent Under Fire*. How can you give this a better score than *NightFire*? *NightFire* has much better multiplayer, weapons and gadgets and really deserves a 9.
Rbots, via email

I think Square lost the way with *Final Fantasy X-2*. I can't agree that it's worthy of a 9, or even maybe an 8. Oh dear, hypocrisy raises its ugly head! Nurse, help!
Conrad Taylor, Bangor

In the review of *WWE: Here Comes The Pain* you gave it a 3 for sound. So how on earth did it get an 8/10 overall? Do your scores mean anything?
Bruce Can, via email

cheat

DON'T WORRY, NO ONE IS GOING TO TAKE YOUR URINE SAMPLE HERE...



HOW TO SIGN THE GREATEST *PRO EVO 3* PLAYER... EVER!

Can't win anything with kids? Hansen clearly doesn't play much Master League

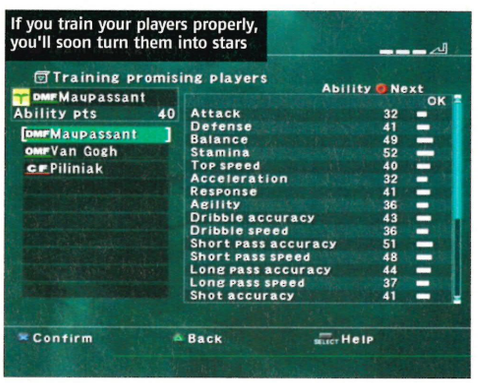
Your strikers make Diego Forlan look like Diego Maradonna, there's no money for new signings and, worse, anyone half-decent would rather join the Girl Guides than play for your no-mark club. Yes, the start of a new Master League season can be dispiriting. Trying to mould anything like a team out of the players you're given (particularly on the five-star difficulty setting we play) is tear-inducing stuff. But there *is* a way to get a world-beating striker in your first season, and the answer lies in the youth team. Here, then, are our five easy steps to creating the next Rooney.

1. TAP 'EM UP

Once the transfer negotiation window opens, take a look at the players in the 'growth' section. Okay, so at this stage they're all essentially arse – and that's being kind. But buy around three youngsters anyway – don't worry, they're filthy cheap – selected on the basis of which positions you need to strengthen and, if you're anything like us, who's got the coolest-sounding names.

2. PUT ME ON COACH, I CAN PLAY

Now you need to start giving the youngsters a run out (even five minutes helps) in the first team. Obviously, the best bet is to wait until you're winning before risking them, but likewise if you're losing badly it doesn't hurt either. Depending on how the game goes and how the new boys do, each player will be awarded a certain number of statistic points after the game. These can then be used to upgrade his existing abilities and buy special skills, which is found in the Train Promising Players option on the management screen. Right then, so far, so good...



If you train your players properly, you'll soon turn them into stars

3. STAR QUALITY

How you allocate the points is all-important, but before we get to that you might notice that one of the players seems to be accruing more points than the others. Good. Make sure you keep playing him, because chances are he's going to be the one who soaks up those stat points like a big football-shaped sponge. Crucially, each player will only continue to earn points for a limited amount of time, but there's no set period. Roughly just over a season seems about average, but again your top lad might keep developing for longer.

4. THE COMPLETE PLAYER

When you're deciding to allocate the points, think carefully about what sort of player you want the young star to become. If you're looking for a playmaker, concentrate on his dribbling and short passing. Likewise, a winger will need great long pass accuracy and plenty of pace.

Here's the line-up with our three new players. And, if you look over to the right, it would appear one's just scored...

When looking for new players, try to balance them out through the squad

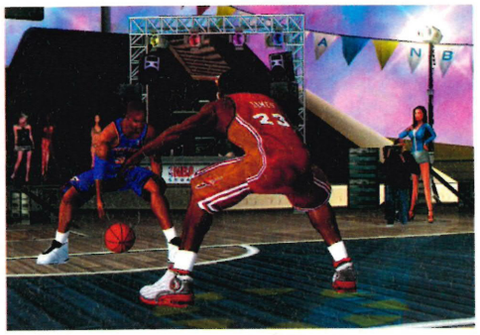
Concentrate on balance and heading for defenders, and strikers obviously require laser-accurate shooting skills. Don't go crazy and start giving people 99 acceleration straight away though, because you're likely to end up with an uneven player, and there's also the risk that it will end his training altogether.

5. HERE'S ONE WE MADE EARLIER

If you've chosen wisely, your top man will keep absorbing the points and, come the end of the season, he should be at almost Galactico levels of goodness – but still earning derisory low wages. Which should please the board. But what about the other two boys? Well, if you don't want to keep them, they can be sold to another club for a tidy profit. Don't shed any tears, though. That's life in the big leagues. Just ask Jordi Cruyff.

NBA BALLERS

Some wiseass arcade-style cheats for this fun b-ball smasher



These codes look a bit strange. As with lots of Midway sports games, three icons appear on the loading screen and you can change them using specific D-pad buttons. Different combinations of icons unlock secret stuff – the numbers refer to the amount of times you need to press a button to get the right combo. Hit ▢ for the first number, △ for the second and ○ for the third.

Alternative Gear: 1-2-3
Baby Baller Mode: 4-2-3
Big Head Mode: 1-3-4
Enable Fire: 7-2-2
Enable Super Blocks: 1-2-4
Enable Super Push: 3-1-5
Expanded Moves: 5-1-2
Great Handles: 3-3-2
Paper Baller Mode: 5-3-7 or 5-2-7
Kid Baller Mode: 4-3-3
Play As Agent: 5-5-7
Play As Businessman: 3-0-0
Play As Coach: 5-6-7
Play As Secretary: 5-4-7
Pygmy Mode: 4-2-5
Random Moves: 3-0-0
Tournament Mode: 0-1-1
View Shot Percentage: 0-1-2
Young Baller Mode: 4-4-3

SPIDER-MAN 2

BEN'S TIP

LEVEL SELECT
This is a tough one. You need to complete the game 100% to get this cheat going. Once you've done that, start a new game and enter FLUWDEAR as your name. Now a level select will be available.

CHEAT OF THE MONTH

PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY

Do you need some cheats? It's all in the mind...

CHEAT MODE
Go to the main menu, highlight the Extra Content option and hit ▢. Now you're on the password screen you can bash in one of these passwords. Then go to the Extra Content menu, choose Mission Select and start that mission using the cheats.

ALL PSI POWERS
537893

CO-OP MODE
07041979

INFINITE AMMUNITION
978945

SURVIVAL MODE
7734206

BULLETPROOF
548975

DARK MODE
465486

SUPER PSI
456456

PANIC ROOM MISSION
76635766

UN SOLDIER COSTUME
365498

NO HEAD
987978

BIKINI PYRO COSTUME
135454

BOUNCY BOUNCY MISSION
568789

ARCADE MODE
05051979

SCORPION COSTUME
546546

SUICIDE SARA COSTUME
678999

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A = 01
Ace Combat: Distant Thund.
Age of Empires 2
Agent Under Fire
Alias
Alone in the Dark 4
Alter Echo
America's 10 Most Wanted
Angel of Darkness
Arc the Lad:Twilight of Spirit
Armoured Core 2
Armoured Core 3
Army Men RTS
B = 02
Backyard Wrestling 2*
Bad Boys 2
Baldur's Gate: D. Alliance 2
Batman Vengeance
Beyond Good and Evil
BloodRayne
BMX XXX
Bond 007: Nightfire
Broken Sword: S. Dragon
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Burnout 2 Point of Impact
C = 03
Castlevania: L.of Innocence
Catwoman
Champions of Norrath
Clock Tower 3
Code Veronica X
Colin McRae Rally 4
Conflict Zone
Conflict: Desert Storm
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Cricket 2002
D = 04
Dark Cloud 2
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2
Dead or Alive 2
Dead to Rights
Def Jam Vendetta
Defiance: Legacy of Kain
Desert Storm
Deus-Ex
Devil May Cry 2
Die Hard: Vendetta
Disagaea: Hour of Darkness
Disney's Dinosaur
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 2
Draken: Ancient Gates
Drakengard
DRIV3R
Dynasty Warriors 2
Dynasty Warriors 3
Dynasty Warriors 4
E = 05
England Int. Football
Enter the Matrix
Escape from Monkey Island
Euro 2004
Everything or Nothing: 007
Evil Dead: Fist. of Boomstick
F = 06
F1 2002
FIFA 2003
FIFA 2004
Fight Night 2004
Final Fantasy X
Final Fantasy X-2
Fire Warrior
Formula 1 2002
Formula 1 2004*
Freedom Fighters
Futurama
G = 07
Getaway
Ghost Hunter
Ghost Master
Ghost Recon
Ghost Recon: Jungle Storm
Gladius
Gran Turismo 3
Gran Turismo 4 Pro.Edition
Grand Theft Auto 3
Grand Theft Auto: V. City
Great Escape
H = 08
Hack (Dot)
Harry Potter: Chamber of S.
Harry Potter: P. of Azkaban
Harry Potter: Philosophers S.
Haunted Mansion
Haven: Call of the King
Headhunter
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hitman 3: Contracts
Hulk
I = 09
Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb
Indycar Series
J = 10
Jade Cocoon 2
Jak 2: Renegade
Jak 3*
James Bond 007: Nightfire
James Bond: Agent Under F.
James Bond: E. or Nothing
James Cameron Dark Angel
Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death
Jurassic Park: Op. Genesis
K = 11
Karaoke Stage
Kessen 2
Kill.switch
Kingdom Hearts
Knight Rider
L = 12
Lara Croft: Ang.of Darkness
Legacy of Kain: Defiance
Legends of Wrestling 3
Lethal Skies 2
LMA Manager 2003
LMA Manager 2004
Looney Tunes:Back in Action
Lord of the Rings: F. of Ring
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers
M = 13
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter
Mafia
Manhunt
Marvel vs Capcom 2
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2
Max Payne
Max Payne 2
Maximo
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Metal Gear Solid 2
Midnight Club
Midnight Club 2
Mission Impossible:O.Surma
Monkey Island, Escape from
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
Mortal Kombat: Deception*
Moto GP 3
MTX Mototrax
MX Superfly
MX Unleashed
N = 14
Naval Ops:Warship Gunner
Need for Speed Undergr'nd
Need for Speed: H.Pursuit 2
No One Lives Forever
O = 15
Onimusha: Demon Siege
Onimusha: Warlords
P = 16
Pandora Tomorrow
Premier Manager 2002
Premier Manager 2003
Primal
Prince of Persia: S. of Time
Pro Evolution Soccer 3
Project Eden
Project Zero
R = 18
Rainbow Six 3
Ratchet and Clank
Ratchet and Clank 2
Ratchet and Clank 3*
Real Robot Regiment
Red Dead Revolver
Red Faction
Red Faction 2
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Riding Spirits
Rise to Honor
Risk: Global Domination
Robot Wars
Rocky
Rocky Legends*
Rogue Ops
R-Type Final
Run Like Hell
S = 19
Scooby Doo: Night of 100 F.
Secret W. Over Normandy
Seek and Destroy
Serious Sam Next Encounter
Shadowman 2
Showdown: L. of Wrestling
Shrek 2
Silent Hill 2
Silent Hill 3
Silent Hill 4: The Room*
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Sims
Sims: Bustin' Out
Smackdown! 4: S.Y.Mouth
Smackdown! 5: H.C.T.Pain
Smash Court Tennis Pro 2
SOCOM 2: US Navy Seals
SOCOM: US Navy Seals
Sonic Heroes
Soul Reaver 2
Sphinx & Cursed Mummy
Spider-Man: The Movie
Spider-Man: The Movie 2
Splashdown 2: Rides G.Wild
Splinter Cell
Splinter Cell 2: Pandora T.
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly
SSX 3
Star Trek: Shattered Univ.
Star Wars: Battlefront*
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter
Stuntman
Suffering
Summoner
SWAT: Global Strike Team
Syphon Filter: Omega St.
T = 20
Teenage Mut. Ninja Turtles
Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven
Terminator 3 R.of Machines
Terminator: Dawn of Fate
The Getaway
The Scorpion King
The Simpsons: Hit & Run
The Sims
The Sims: Bustin Out
The Suffering
The Thing
Theme Park World
Thirteen (XIII)
This is Football 2004
Thunderhawk: Op. Phoenix
Tiger Woods Golf 2004
Time Splitters 2
TOCA Race Driver
Tom Clancy's Jungle Storm
Tom Clancy's: P. Tomorrow
Tomb Raider: Angel of Dark.
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Tony Hawk's Underground
Top Gun: Combat Zones
Total Club Manager 2004
Transformers
True Crime: Streets of LA
Turok, Evolution
U = 21
UFC: Sudden Impact
V = 22
Van Helsing
Vice City, Grand Theft Auto
W = 23
Wangan Midnight
Warhammer: Fire Warrior
Way of the Samurai 2
Wild Arms 3
Wolfenstein,Return to Castle
World Champ. Snooker '04
World Rally Championship 3
Worms 3D
WWE Smackdown! 4: S.Y.M.
WWE Smackdown! 5: HCTP
X = 24
X-Files: Resist or Serve
XIII (Thirteen)
X-Men 2: Wolverine's Rev.
Y = 25
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duellists of Roses
0-9 = 27
007 Everything or Nothing
13 (XIII)

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24hr Customer Service: (Freephone) 0800 081 6000

challenges

THE MEASURING STICK YOUR GAMING PROWESS HAS BEEN LOOKING FOR...

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005

ON THE DVD

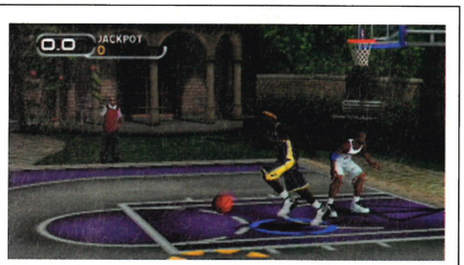
A chance to challenge Colin! Well, kind of...

We were recently given the chance to play Colin at his own game over a network. Despite him muttering something about being, "not very good" he proceeded to tan our hide and then ask in a jovial Scottish accent, "Fancy another go then?" Of course we accepted, and got whipped, again. Thankfully, on the third go victory was attained, even if it was because Colin was distracted by a plate of corporate sandwiches

Well we can't offer you a race against Colin (he's too busy today) but we *can* offer you a challenge against every other reader in the *OPS2* universe. Here's the deal: show us your best times using the Peugeot 206 on the German rally stage. Do this by completing the stage and then sending us a photograph of the screen with your score clearly visible. It's that simple.

The car's *still* the star...

CHALLENGE
WHAT: We want you to show us your best times on the German rally stage using the Peugeot 206
HOW: Take a picture of the screen that shows your time
WHEN: By 6 October
WIN: An *OPS2* T-shirt goes to person with the best time



NBA BALLERS

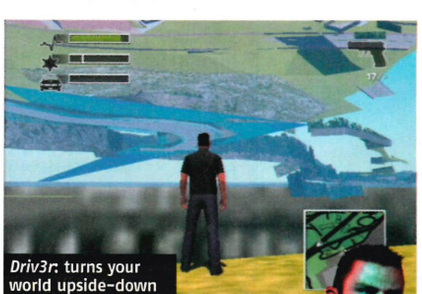
Have you got game, or are you just lame?

Alright, so you've got skills. You've got those three-pointers down to a fine art. But what about your style, dog? You've got one single round to win against an opponent on the highest difficulty, gathering as many style points along the way as you can. We managed 26,500. Can you step up and take the challenge?

CHALLENGE
WHAT: Win on hardest difficulty and rank up the style points
HOW: Take a picture of the screen at the end of the round
WHEN: By 6 October
WIN: An *OPS2* T-shirt

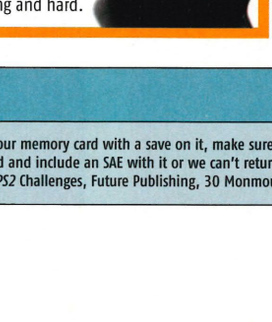
SNITCH THE GLITCH

Spotted a glaring gaff? Let the world know...



Driv3r: turns your world upside-down

Ever felt like the world's getting on top of you? Sam French certainly did while playing *Driv3r*. A game that never fails to surprise and delight, Sam was driving around near the airport in Nice and accidentally drove into a bush. Whoops! But instead of scratching the paintwork the car carried on through a hole in the *Driv3r* floor to an alternate upside-down world with Tanner stranded underneath. Bonus! Cheers for that one Sam, we laughed long and hard.



THE FINISHER
SECOND SIGHT
If you can complete this psych-tastic title without using a single weapon except your supernatural powers, you deserve to be called 'The Finisher'

OPS2 TEAM CHALLENGES

Resident Evil Outbreak
Our new lackey-boy Nathan managed to blast through this zombie-fest in just under a week. After some brain-aching effort he even managed a B rating on the hard-as-nails final episode. Can you do any better?

Hardware: Online Arena
Now we're getting pretty good at this, but we know that some of you out there are even better still. Our highest place has, so far, been third – have you ever won a match with massive kills?

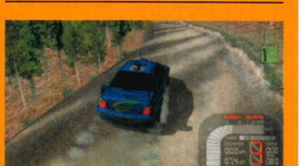
Crimson Sea
We just love kill rampages. So much so that we went out of our way on this futuristic beast-blaster to see just how many kills we could get on The Original Menace level. We managed to get an A rank for kills and a C rank for time. Think you can beat us?

THE LIST

Your name here? It should be...

HITMAN: CONTRACTS
Soundless Killers

1 Matt Bywater	15m 04s
2 Martin Smith	15m 34s
3 Joe Barker	16m 22s
4 Nathan Formoy	16m 48s
5 Martin Williams	17m 10s



RICHARD BURNS RALLY
Fastest Times

1 Gerard Harns	11:12:81
2 Joe Brewster	11:14:55
3 Rupert Nowles	11:15:02
4 Chris Reese	11:15:21
5 Brian Pirrill	11:30:63

GOAL OF THE MONTH

WATCH THEM ON THE DVD!

1 Josh Martin, Creekfen
A bit of a mystery this one, but a stunning goal we're sure you'll agree. Wales are responsible but who the hell is the scorer 'Alexander'?

2 George Taggart, Glasgow
3 Adam King, Bury St Edmunds
4 Nic Ruffles, Lincoln
5 Kane Fowler, Colchester

Keep your goals coming. There's a monthly winner who bags a highly-desirable *OPS2* T-shirt and a Goal Of The Season competition for a proper big prize. *Pro Evolution Soccer* goals only please.

technical stuff

To video your goal, race or anything else, you'll need to set up your VHS between your PS2 and the telly, and then tune the video into the PS2's channel. Also, make sure your goal is at the start of the tape. And please note that we can't return your VHS tapes. Sorry.

If you send in your memory card with a save on it, make sure you put your name on the memory card and include an SAE with it or we can't return it.
All entries to: *OPS2* Challenges, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, BATH BA1 2BW

AS SEEN ON TV

CLUB 8181

Get Value, Get Choice Get Downloading

FROM **25p*** *per download in package

CLUB 57777 Republic Of Ireland readers, text your request to 57777

What is Club 8181?

YOU MUST BE 16+ TO JOIN

Club8181 is an exclusive club that offers the best downloads at amazing prices. Think of it as your pre-paid mobile download account. Every month we will deduct £4.50 from your mobile bill or top-up card. You can then use this to buy ANY of our products at the special discounted prices shown.

For example your money will buy you 15 monotones or 9 polys or 9 images every month - or you can mix n' match and buy ANY combination of products. **(You must be 16+ to subscribe.)**

How do I join?

Text **PS2 JOIN** to **8181**. You only have to do this once. You will then receive confirmation of your membership.

How do I download products?

Once you are a member just text the product name followed by the keyword. eg **TONE YEAH** or **IMAGE KITTEN** and send your order to **8181**.

Please ask whoever pays your bills for permission to join the club.

IMAGES

ONLY 50p

First text PS2 JOIN to 8181: Then to order text IMAGE and KEYWORD to 8181

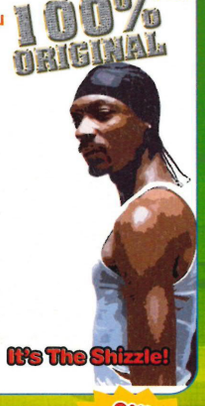
VOICE TONES

ONLY £1.00

The next level of ringtones. Have your favourite rapper speak to you when you receive a call!

First text PS2 JOIN to 8181: Then to order text VOICE and KEYWORD to 8181

	KEYWORD
50Cent - **G Unit!**	50cent
50Cent - **Your Killin' Me**	50cent1
50Cent - **Do Me A Favour**	50cent2
D12 - **D12 In Da House**	d12
Bizzare (D12) - **It's The Fat Girl**	d121
jurassic5 - **Akil Pocket**	jurassic
jurassic5 - **Marc7 So Answer**	jurassic1
Michelle Branch - **Are You Happy**	branch
Michelle Branch - **In Your Pocket**	branch1
Snoop Dogg - **Get Off A****	snoop
Snoop Dogg - **Crack A Lackin**	snoop1
Snoop Dogg - **Need To Shout**	snoop2
Snoop Dogg - **U Wanna Answer**	snoop3



SOUND ALERTS

ONLY 50p

Replace boring text beeps with a funky sound!

First text PS2 JOIN to 8181: Then to order text SOUND and KEYWORD to 8181

Burp KEYWORD: **burp**	Elephant KEYWORD: **elephant**
Boxing Bell KEYWORD: **boxing**	Fart KEYWORD: **fart**
Crowd Cheer KEYWORD: **cheer**	Shotgun KEYWORD: **shotgun**

JAVA GAMES

ONLY £2.00

First text PS2 JOIN to 8181: Then to order text PGAME and KEYWORD to 8181

Keyword: AIKIA Control Aikia in this fantasy RPG. To protect herself from the wrath of Xlamoti, Aikia needs to be agile and use her spells wisely.

Keyword: BOARD Grab your board and fly down a wide range of courses, hit the jumps and pull off trick combos.

Keyword: BOWLING Play in the fast lane. All the fun of real bowling without the silly shoes. Choose from players with varying abilities.

Keyword: DEALER Blackjack with great graphics, simple controls, and extensive options for house rules. There is even a 'hint' mode.

Keyword: ELECTION Manage your campaign to become President. Place ads, recruit volunteers, avoid scandals and bribe if you have to!

Keyword: HOTDOG Choose whether you are sheriff or gangster as you shoot the enemies that appear in front of you. It's kill or be killed.

Keyword: KUNGFU Prepare to kick ass over several levels with some great looking moves.

Keyword: LETHAL Infiltrate the enemy base! Eliminate enemies, picking up grenades, dynamites and bullets to extend your fire power!

Keyword: MANAGER Start in Division 4 with a squad of 17 players and manage your way to the top!

Keyword: MINI Negotiate a variety of ramps, pipes and water hazards in three beautifully landscaped 3D courses.

Keyword: NIGHT Control the crazed air traffic control night shifts in over 100 challenging night levels and breathtakingly detailed graphics.

Keyword: OUTROAD One of the most breathtaking racing games ever, featuring exhilirating gameplay and fluid fast graphics.

Keyword: QUEST An amazing RPG full of great weapons, spells and evil enemies.

Keyword: RACER2 Fire up your nitros to lose the cops, buy serious upgrades. Pick up hitchhikers for new cars and special bonus missions.

Keyword: RACK This has it all- tricky shot challenges, a fast arcade mode and fantastic multiplayer 8-Ball.

Keyword: REAL Challenging gameplay, intelligent opponents, amazing 3-d graphics and replay features make this one of the best football games around.

Keyword: SPY As Penny Peril, the UK's sexiest secret agent, assasinate the bad guys in enemy offices and secret locations.

Keyword: SUMMER Ten intense events to battle thru. Play against the computer or multi-player with your friends!

Keyword: SWORD Choose the sword or magic to destroy the enemy in this slice 'em 'n dice 'em classic.

Keyword: TRIX Don't go off the rails. Stay on them with this gnarly skateboarding game.

BUDGET GAMES

ONLY £1.00

First text PS2 JOIN to 8181: Then to order text GAME and KEYWORD to 8181

Keyword: JETSKI Pit your skills against other jetskiers. Power slide around corners, ride over buoys and avoid the rocks.

Keyword: POKER Be entertained for hours as you pit your wits and skill in this classic card game.

Keyword: STRIKER As the match finishes in a draw, have you have got what it takes to become "A Super Striker"?

Keyword: MONKEY Your objective is to score against the mobile controlled monkey by making him drop the ball in this exciting volleyball game.

TONES & POLYS

POLYS ONLY 50p

TONES ONLY 30p

First text PS2 JOIN to 8181. Then to order text TONE or POLY and KEYWORD to 8181

HOTTEST NEW RELEASES	KEYWORD
Black Eyed Peas - **Let's Get It Started**	started
Cassidy ft R Kelly - **Hotel**	hotel
D12 - **How Come**	howcome
D12 - **My Band**	myband
Dizzee Rascal -**Stand Up Tall**	uptall
DJ Casper - **Cha Cha Slide**	cha
Eamon - **Don't Want You Back**	eamon
Franz Ferdinand - **Michael**	michael
J Kwon - **Tipsy**	tipsy
Jamelia - **See It In A Boy's Eyes**	seeit
Kanye West - **Jesus Walks**	jesus
Kelis - **Trick Me**	trick
The Libertines - **Can't Stand Me Now**	cantstand
Lostprophets - **Last Summer**	lastsummer
Mario Winans - **I Don't Wanna Know**	wanna
Maroon 5 - **She Will Be Loved**	shewill
Maroon 5 - **This Love**	thislove
Nina Skye - **Move Ya Body**	moveya
Outkast - **Roses**	roses
The Rasmus - **Guilty**	guilty
Scent - **Up And Down**	anddown
Shapeshifters - **Lola's Theme**	lolas
Stonebridge - **Put 'Em High**	putem
The Streets - **Dry Your Eyes**	dryyour
Three Of A Kind - **Baby Cakes**	babycakes
Twista - **Sunshine**	sunshine
Usher - **Burn**	burn

8181 GREATEST TONES	KEYWORD
50 Cent - **In Da Club**	club
50 Cent - **PIMP**	pimp
Beyonce - **Crazy In Love**	inlove
Black Eyed Peas - **Shut Up**	shutup
Eminem - **Lose Yourself**	lose
Kelis - **Milkshake**	milkshake
Outkast - **Hey Ya**	heyya
Red Hot Chilli Peppers - **Californication**	californication
Special D - **Come With Me**	comewith
The Rasmus - **Into The Shadows**	shadows
Usher - **Yeah**	yeah
XTM ft DJ Chucky - **Fly On The Wings Of Love**	flyon

8181 FILM & TV THEMES	KEYWORD
Buffy - **TV Theme**	buffy
Eastenders - **TV Theme**	eastenders
Grandstand - **TV Theme**	grandstand
Harry Potter - **Film Theme**	potter
Itchy & Scratchy - **TV Theme**	itchy
Knight Rider - **TV Theme**	knight
Looney Tunes - **TV Theme**	looney
The Muppets - **TV Theme**	muppets

CLUB SAVINGS

Downloads	Club8181 Cost	8181 RRP (non Members)	Saving for club members
Mono Tones	**£0.30**	£3.00	**£2.70**
Poly Tones	**£0.50**	£3.00	**£2.50**
Image	**£0.50**	£3.00	**£2.50**
Poems	**£0.25**	£1.50	**£1.25**
Games	**£1.00**	£3.00	**£2.00**

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playstation.co.uk

TAKING A BIG DIVE INTO THE STICKY WEB OF NETWORKING GAMING GOODNESS

ONLINE DIARY

DRAW YOUR NETWORK PISTOL AND TAKE AIM... THE *OPS2* FRAG-MACHINE IS ONLINE AND AWAITING YOUR ASS. COME AND HAVE A GO IF YOU DARE

Rainbow Six 3

4pm: Barefaced cheek leaves us starting our first game on the bad side of a four-on-one massacre.

4.25pm: Our first kill at last! Ducking through a hole in a wall brings us to the flak-jacketed back of Frosstes. Easy.

4.30pm: A few tightly fought kills later, we find Inca_God camping in a corner. One shot to the midriff and he's gone.

4.40pm: Inca_God returns to the same spot twice. We remind him why camping is such a bad thing to do.

5.30pm: FrankWhite brings our run of good form to an end. And TheStreets prevents anyone getting near his team.

5.55pm: With five minutes to go and all our grenades gone, we pull out all the stops and cap Onyx, TheStreets and FrankWhite to win the round. Quit while we're ahead, yeh?

***OPS2* Gutted like a fish:** Onyx, G4G.AT_Freddy, Frosstes

Diced *OPS2* into sushi: FrankWhite, TheStreets

FrankWhite gets his comeuppance. But not from us...

Splinter Cell 2: Pandora Tomorrow

4pm–4.25pm: Rushing straight into a match as a Shadownet spy brought us face to face with two players – OwnzYou and murderDEATHkill. Names like these are only ever used by newbies with no taste, or veterans.

4.28pm: We join in another game on the Mercenary side. We're fighting alongside our merc buddy H1H4t and doing pretty well until our punchbag from earlier, OwnzYou, joins in.

4.35pm: Killed again! It turns out OwnzYou has a nifty set of feet, as he runs rings around us to sabotage the targets.

5pm–5.30pm: We seem to be stuck in a pattern. Zonespy47 throttles us unconscious and leaves us for dead. Repeat...

5.40pm: Switching from cautious to all-guns-blazing wins us a round, before the strangling starts again. Time for bed.

***OPS2* Eviscerated:** OwnzYou, murderDEATHkill

Strangulated *OPS2*: Zonespy47, H1H4t, Lance_e_lot

COME SEE US ONLINE

OUTSIDE, NOW!

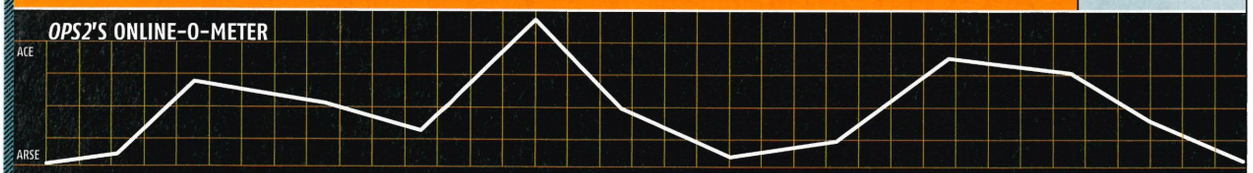
SOCOM II: US Navy SEALs - 10 September - 4.00-6.00pm

Burnout 3: Takedown - 17 September - 4.00-6.00pm

Burnout 3: Takedown - 24 September - 4.00-6.00pm

Colin McRae Rally 2005 - 1 October - 4.00-6.00pm

OPS2'S ONLINE-O-METER



While breezing through a number of websites we find an obscure forum riddled with nasty posts about our online prowess. Time to make a change, wethinks!

Ben's on holiday – maybe now we can get to the top of some of those online deathmatch tables. Or at least be spared the Gentle man's incessant posh swearing.

Yes! We're playing *Hardware: Online Arena* and we're in the lead! Who's this joining? KillAllPlayers168? Another lamb to the slaughter...

Nope. KillAllPlayers168 is a wolf in a lamb outfit. After bludgeoning his way to the top, he singles us out for punishment. Lots of punishment.

Ben returns and suggests a change in name to throw our opponents off the scent. Unfortunately 'NotOPS2Crew' is a supermodel-thin disguise...

...And results in constant harassment from other players – sending us unprintable messages, bellowing obscenities down the headset and ganging up on us.

forum frolix

This month: Magazine sabotage and George's hairy boyfriend

KonamiRepTM: Tim, how long does it take to do those funny photo shoots?

OPS2Tim: The shoots often take an ungodly amount of time. You wouldn't believe how much shouting went on trying to get all the clothes for the car feature.

DemonicDante: Do you know when George will be putting *GTA: San Andreas* footage on the cover disc?

OPS2Tim: George is away in the south of France with his equally hairy boyfriend. I'll ask him to come on next week and let you know about footage.

JohnnieP: George is gay?!

codebreaker: Do you ever try to sneak into other magazine's offices, or sabotage their production?

OPS2Tim: We all play *PES* at lunch. Sabotage? Not so much.

We're on the forum every Wednesday between 5 and 6pm. See you there!

playstation.co.uk

cool sites GOOGLING THE BEST OF THE WEB – SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO

ANCHORMAN

Brilliantly Python-esque Flash site for Will Ferrell's new film about a butch, be-moustached newsreader. Worth visiting just to click on 'Balls Of Brass'.

www.anchorman-themovie.com

GAME STARS LIVE

Official site for 'the biggest and most unique gaming event the UK has ever seen'. It'll sure be a lot of fun – especially since we'll have our very own challenges.

www.gamestarslive.co.uk

NEW STAR SOCCER

Having problems with *PES*? Can't get that Zidane spin to work? This is the site for you – its *PES* Video Masterclass is the driving force behind plenty of office wins.

www.newstarsoccer.com/proevo.htm

SHOW-OFF CORNER

Big up yourself

Name: Dinesh Dave

Online Handle: YOURDEADMEAT

Location: Sunbury, Middlesex

Favourite Network Game: *SOCOM: US Navy SEALs*

Likes: Friendly chats online

Dislikes: Being nagged to clean

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FANTASTIC GAMES STRAIGHT TO YOUR MOBILE PHONE

PRINCE OF PERSIA: SANDS OF TIME

ORDER CODE: **MGU282 SANDS**
For Mobile Phones: **BDEFIJKL UVWXY**

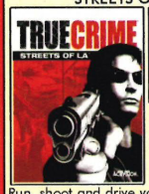
Control the movement of time and save the day in this classic platform adventure.

VAN HELSING™

ORDER CODE: **MGU282 VAN**
For Mobile Phones: **BDEI UWX**

Van Helsing is sent on what could be the mission in which he discovers the truth about himself, his past, and his fate.!

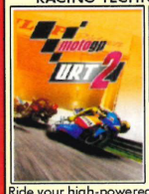
TRUE CRIME™ STREETS OF LA



ORDER CODE: **MGU282 CRIME**
For Mobile Phones: **BDEF IJKT**

Run, shoot and drive your way through the mean streets, as you prove that crime doesn't pay.

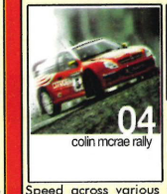
MOTOGP™ ULTIMATE RACING TECHNOLOGY 2



ORDER CODE: **MGU282 MGP2**
For Mobile Phones: **BDEFIJKL PUWXY**

Ride your high-powered racing machine to the top of the podium on a number of realistic circuits.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 04™



ORDER CODE: **MGU282 COLIN**
For Mobile Phones: **BDEF JKLU**

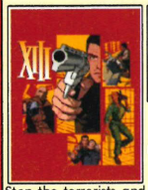
Speed across various terrains in your high-powered rally car. Have you got what it takes to be Colin McRae?

DRIV3R™

ORDER CODE: **MGU282 DRIVER**
For Mobile Phones: **BDEFIJ KLPRUY**

DRIV3R on your mobile! Go undercover as cop Tanner in your car and on-foot on the city streets of Miami, Istanbul & Nice.

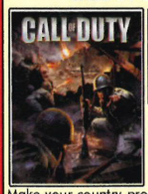
XIII



ORDER CODE: **MGU282 XIII**
For Mobile Phones: **BDEFIJKL UVWXY**

Stop the terrorists and solve your own personal identity crisis, in this high action shooter.

CALL OF DUTY



ORDER CODE: **MGU282 COD**
For Mobile Phones: **BDEFI JKSUY**

Make your country proud by killing the enemy menace, in this exciting World War II game.

TOM CLANCY'S® SPLINTER CELL

ORDER CODE: **MGU282 SCELL**
For Mobile Phones: **ABDEFJK LPRTUY**

As Sam Fisher, you'll have to use all your skill to take down the terrorists, just don't get caught.

SIBERIAN STRIKE™

ORDER CODE: **MGU282 SIB**
For Mobile Phones: **ABDEFJO TUVWXY**

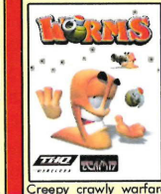
Get in the cockpit and place your hand firmly on the joystick, as you aim to rule the skies.

ALIENS™ UNLEASHED

ORDER CODE: **MGU282 ALIENS**
For Mobile Phones: **BDEIJ PTWY**

While training against synthetic ALIENS, the synths malfunction, and your fight to stay alive begins!

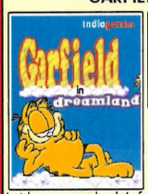
WORMS



ORDER CODE: **MGU282 WORMS**
For Mobile Phones: **BDEJKP**

Creepy crawly warfare comes to your mobile. Can you lead your squad of armed annelids to victory.

GARFIELD



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For Mobile Phones: **BDEFIJ KUWX**

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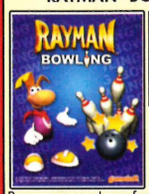

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Rayman swaps Lums for Pins, as he looks to make a strike. Can you 'spare' him a hand?

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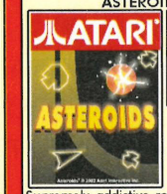

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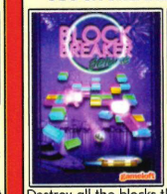

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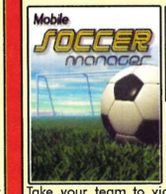

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For Mobile Phones: **BDEF JKWX**

Take your team to victory. Train your team, control your budget, seek sponsorship and much more.

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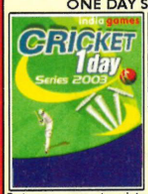

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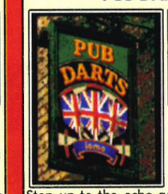

ORDER CODE: **MGU282 180**
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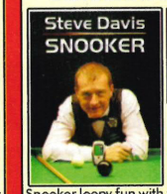
STEVE DAVIS SNOOKER



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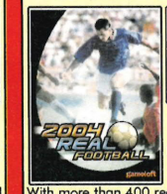

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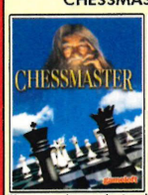

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For Mobile Phones: **ABCDEFJK NOPSTWY**

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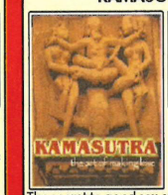
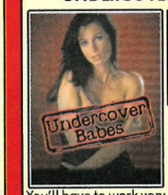
KAMASUTRA



ORDER CODE: **MGU282 KAMA**
For Mobile Phones: **BDE UWX**

The secret to good sex can now be found in your pocket. Press the buttons a few times, and find out how to press hers.

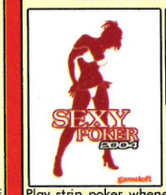
UNDERCOVER BABES



ORDER CODE: **MGU282 UNDER**
For Mobile Phones: **DEJKLMP QRUWX**

You'll have to work very hard to see all of these lovely ladies. Uncover the screen and avoid the evil energy to advance.

SEXY POKER 2004



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THE ITALIAN JOB

For Mobile Phones: **DEFIJKPSTUY**
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3650	E		Z105	H	V500 U
3650	E		**SHARP**		V525 U
5100	D		GX10	J	V600 U
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charts

A MUST-WIN PRIZE AND SOME GAMES THAT SELL WELL

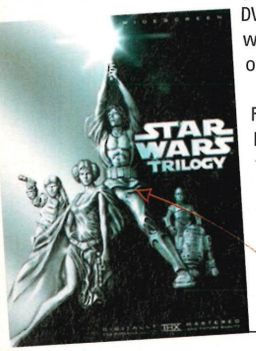
READ THE SPINE NOW!

EVIL TWINS?

Stormtroopers and *Killzone*'s Helghast soldiers. Separated at birth? Could've been...

So what *do* these guys have in common? How can the worlds of *Killzone* and *Star Wars* cross without an explosion of evil wiping out the entire galaxy? Well, that's for you to answer. We want to know what links the two. Think about it, then tell us your thoughts.

Obviously they're both partial to fancy uniforms but we're looking for more than that. Give it some quality mind-scraping because the best five will get the ultimate prize – a copy of the original *Star Wars Trilogy* DVD boxset. For our money this is the DVD event of the year but remember you will only win if it is your destiny. Only one way to find out...



Entries to: 'Hail Helghast', *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW. Or ps2compos@futurenet.co.uk. Full terms and conditions on page 141. *Star Wars Trilogy* is out on DVD on 20 September, available from 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment.

A MÉNAGE À TROIS OF *WARS*!

WEBBED WONDER

Spider-Man 2 is still the top of the charts this month, not that we're complaining but we'd have liked to have seen *Onimusha 3* do a bit better. Still, with the shops about to fill with releases as the big Christmas rush starts to wind up, Spidey has probably fired his last web on the *OPS2* chart.

THE WINNING FORMULA

In a typically quiet summer season, the highest new entry this month is *Formula One 04*. Obviously there are plenty of F1 fans out there – how else do you account for Jenson Button's bank balance – because there's little in *04* for the more casual driving enthusiast.

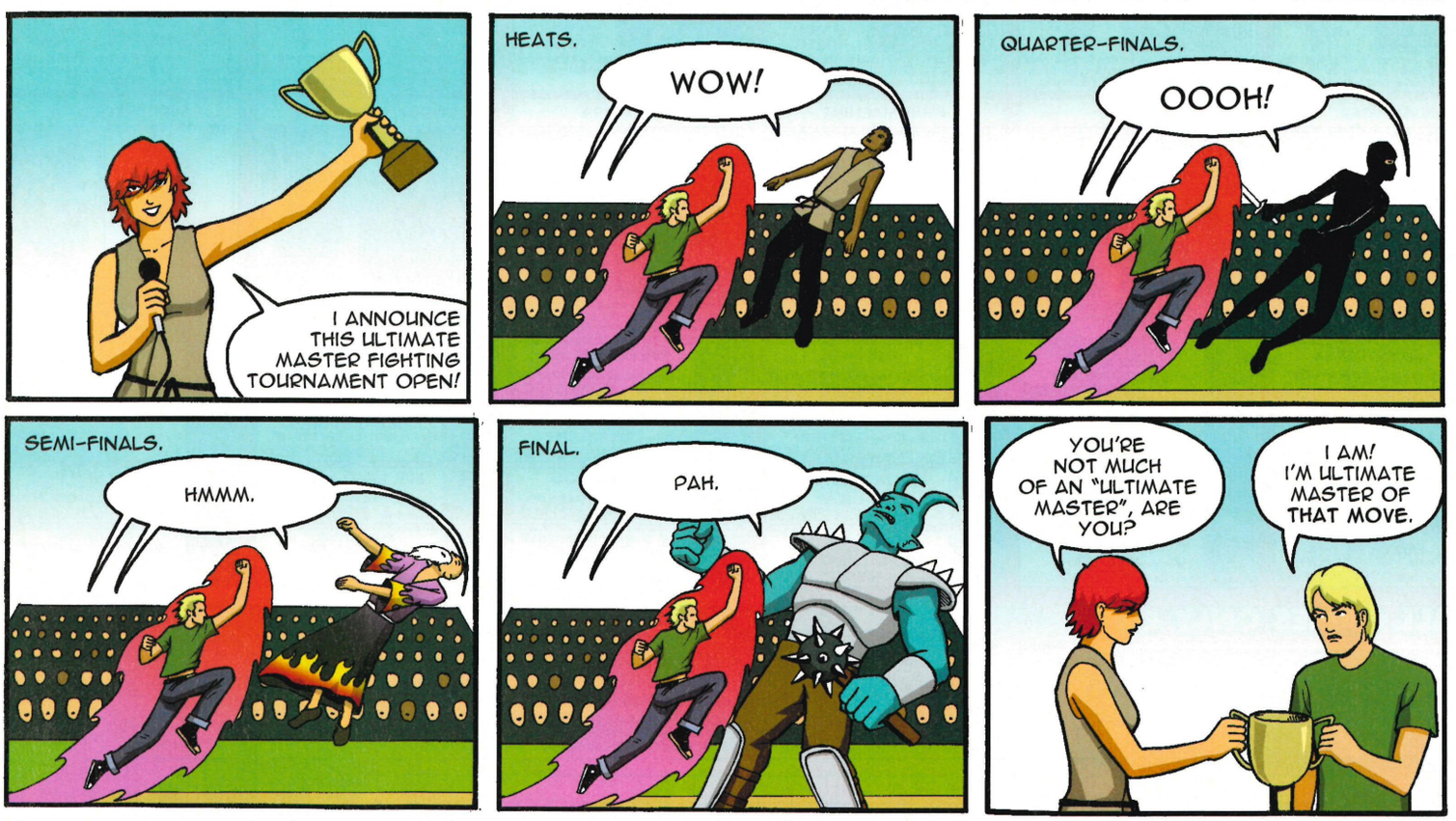
THE TOP 20

ChartTrack | ELSPA Entertainment and Leisure Software Publishers Association

	Game Name	Publisher	Score
1	SPIDER-MAN 2	ACTIVISION	8/10
2	DRIV3R	ATARI	6/10
3	ATHENS 2004	SONY	5/10
4	SHREK 2	ACTIVISION	6/10
5	FORMULA ONE 04	SONY	8/10
6	SONIC HEROES	SEGA	8/10
7	SPLINTER CELL 2: PANDORA TOMORROW	UBISOFT	8/10
8	SINGSTAR	SONY	9/10
9	AMERICA'S 10 MOST WANTED	PLAY IT	–
10	HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN	EA	7/10
11	ONIMUSHA 3: DEMON SIEGE	CAPCOM	9/10
12	THE SIMPSONS HIT & RUN	VIVENDI	5/10
13	TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004	EA	8/10
14	CRICKET 2004	EA	7/10
15	FIGHT NIGHT 2004	EA	8/10
16	RED DEAD REVOLVER	TAKE 2	9/10
17	HITMAN: CONTRACTS	EIDOS	8/10
18	MANHUNT	TAKE 2	9/10
19	JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING	EA	9/10
20	LMA MANAGER 2004	CODEMASTERS	8/10

SAVE POINT TAKING THE LESS TRAVELLED ROUTE TO GAMING WISDOM

WORDS: KIERON GILLEN ART: JAMIE MCKELVIE



No. 1 for grand theft auto San Andreas

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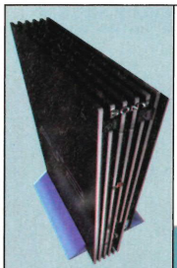


the hot 100

NO IFS. NO BUTS. JUST THE 100 BEST GAMES ON PS2

THIS MONTH

There's no getting round the dimensions of the Hot 100. It ain't called the Hot 99 and so what if you're the 101st best PS2 game out of 600+, you aren't making it in. Sorry, but them's the rules. Deal with it. However, even when games do make 'the list', they face eviction each month as a fresh batch of applicants make the case for inclusion. This month, *NBA Street 2* has been slam-dunked by fresh playa *NBA Ballers* and *The Great Escape* takes a one-way trip to the cooler. Moving into the vacated lot, the beautifully crafted psychic shocker, *Second Sight*.

YOUR KEY TO THE TOP 100

GOLD
Reserved exclusively for games that scored the elusive 10/10

SILVER
Only awarded to games that scored a mighty 9/10

BRONZE
Lovingly given to games that scored an impressive 8/10

DVD#50
Want to try before you buy? Here's the issue where we ran a playable demo

ARMORED CORE 3
Mech madness that's bigger and better than previous outings.
REVIEWED *OPS2#36* / **OVERALL** 07

BEYOND GOOD & EVIL BRONZE
Not quite *Jak II* but still an engaging platformer.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#39**

BROKEN SWORD: THE SLEEPING DRAGON BRONZE
The classic point 'n' click adventure series gets a classy makeover.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT BRONZE
Four-wheel frenzy that actually encourages dangerous driving.
REVIEWED *OPS2#26* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#26/#34**

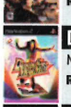
CAPCOM VS SNK 2 BRONZE
Sublime 2D beat-'em-up from two arcade masters of yore.
REVIEWED *OPS2#15* / **OVERALL** 08

CHAOS LEGION
Intensive but repetitive *DMC* clone that drips Manga Gothness.
REVIEWED *OPS2#36* / **OVERALL** 07

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 04 SILVER
The king of field and fence-post racing returns triumphant.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#38**

COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE BRONZE
WW2 real-time strategy, with sublime attention to detail.
REVIEWED *OPS2#21* / **OVERALL** 08

CONFLICT: DESERT STORM II BRONZE
The sequel to the team tactics shooter, still battling in the '90s.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#39**



DANCING STAGE MEGAMIX
Much like Michael Flatly, this is truly the lord of the dance(mats).
REVIEWED *OPS2#34* / **OVERALL** 07

DARK CHRONICLE SILVER
Gorgeous and engrossing role-player. A ray of PS2 sunshine.
REVIEWED *OPS2#35* / **OVERALL** 09

DEAD OR ALIVE 2
Blistering, buxom 3D beat-'em-up with an emphasis on tactics.
REVIEWED *OPS2#02* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#06**

DEUS EX SILVER
Multi-genre hybrid FPS that can still hold its head up high.
REVIEWED *OPS2#20* / **OVERALL** 09

DEVIL MAY CRY SILVER
Ultra-cool survival horror romp from master arcadester Capcom.
REVIEWED *OPS2#14* / **OVERALL** 09

DYNASTY WARRIORS 4 XTREME LEGENDS
Samurai strategy gaming, with the greatest depth and detail yet.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 07

EVERQUEST ONLINE ADVENTURES BRONZE
Beardy? Maybe. But beards are definitely 'in' this season.
REVIEWED *OPS2#39* / **OVERALL** 08

EYETOY: PLAY BRONZE
The future of PS2 gameplay? Like nothing you've ever seen.
REVIEWED *OPS2#36* / **OVERALL** 08

FIFA FOOTBALL 2004 BRONZE
Takes on *PES* and keeps it on the run for most of the 90 minutes.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#42**

FINAL FANTASY X-2 SILVER
FF meets *Charlie's Angels* for a narcotic dose of the familiar RPG.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 09

FORBIDDEN SIREN SILVER
Hard as nails, scary as hell, stealth-based horror adventure.
REVIEWED *OPS2#44* / **OVERALL** 09

FREEDOM FIGHTERS SILVER
Tactical battling in Russkie New York. Insanely addictive.
REVIEWED *OPS2#37* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#38**

FREQUENCY BRONZE
Hypnotic rhythm-action game for gamers and clubbers alike.
REVIEWED *OPS2#21* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#21**

GITAROO MAN BRONZE
PaRappa meets Van Halen in this guitar-playing adventure.
REVIEWED *OPS2#21* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#22**

GRAND THEFT AUTO DOUBLE PACK GOLD
Two superb games in the same box for just £40!
REVIEWED *OPS2#41* / **OVERALL** 10

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC SILVER
GT3 is the greatest driving game in the world. You need this.
REVIEWED *OPS2#09* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#05**

HALF-LIFE SILVER
The superb PC FPS arrives on PS2 in majestic form.
REVIEWED *OPS2#14* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#18**

HEADHUNTER
Dirty Harry vs *Metal Gear Solid* in this stealth adventure.
REVIEWED *OPS2#16* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#16/#36**

HERDY GERDY BRONZE
Ultra-inventive and rewarding cartoon-herding 3D adventure.
REVIEWED *OPS2#18* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#18/#33**

HITMAN: CONTRACTS BRONZE
Deeper, darker and bigger than its predecessor.
REVIEWED *OPS2#46* / **OVERALL** 08

ICO SILVER
Beautiful, inventive... *Ico* is an adventure unlike any other.
REVIEWED *OPS2#18* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#19/#35**

I-NINJA BRONZE
Fun and frisky comedy cartoon kill-fest for kids and adults alike.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#43**

JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY SILVER
Great free-roaming platformer from the makers of *Crash*.
REVIEWED *OPS2#15* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#15/#35**

JAK II: RENEGADE SILVER
Jak returns; older, wiser and – crucially – better.
REVIEWED *OPS2#39* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#39**

JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING SILVER
Bond finally gets the game he deserves. SPECTRE-tacular stuff.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#40/#44**

KILL.SWITCH BRONZE
Superior shooter with relentless gunplay and neat use of cover.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#44**

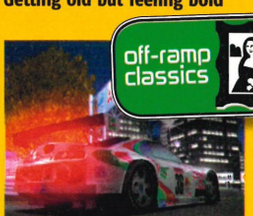
KINGDOM HEARTS BRONZE
Disney partners with Square for the ultra-cute RPG crossover.
REVIEWED *OPS2#27* / **OVERALL** 08

LEGACY OF KAIN: DEFIANCE BRONZE
The best instalment yet of this vampiric blood feast.
REVIEWED *OPS2#41* / **OVERALL** 08

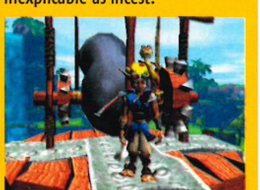
MADDEN NFL 2004 SILVER
The yank sports' guru updates his game for another touchdown.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 09

GENRELY SPEAKING

Getting old but feeling bold



Best for... Delicious driving
GT3 A-SPEC
It's a testament to the staggeringly rich and meticulous *GT3*, that even after two subsequent stopgap titles and with a true sequel just around the corner, this obsessive and obsessing driving sim is still one of the finest titles on PS2. If you haven't already got it, not owning a cheap copy now is as inexplicable as incest.



Best for... Peerless platforming
JAK AND DAXTER: THE PRECURSOR LEGACY
If you've devoured *Jak II* and are salivating like 'a mental' at the prospect of *Jak III*, you may reckon it's way too late to visit the original. Not so fast. It may not have the 'GTA: Disney' dynamic of *II*, but *Jak And Daxter* is far from a traditional platformer and remains a stand-alone gem.

Best for... Harrowing horror
RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X
Disappointed by *Outbreak*'s lack of online mode in the UK? Us too. It's like buying a house with a floor you can't access. May we recommend you revisit the chilling *Code: Veronica X*? It's classic *Resi*, offline and meant to be. Best of all, it's now cheaper than life in Raccoon City.

NEED A BACK ISSUE OF *OPS2* TO CHECK OUT THE FULL REVIEW? THEN CALL:
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MANHUNT — SILVER
A dirty, grisly, filthy but *brilliant* game experience.
REVIEWED *OPS2#42* / **OVERALL** 09

MASHED — SILVER
Got friends? Get the brilliant party racer *Mashed*. No excuses.
REVIEWED *OPS2#48* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#48 / DVD#49**

MAXIMO VS ARMY OF ZIN — BRONZE
A welcome second helping of sword-wielding platform antics.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#43**

MAX PAYNE
Noirish third-person shooter, boasting *Matrix*-style bullet time.
REVIEWED *OPS2#18* / **OVERALL** 07

MEDAL OF HONOR: FRONTLINE — SILVER
War at its rawest in this brilliantly executed first-person shooter.
REVIEWED *OPS2#21* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#21**

MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN — SILVER
Since when was war allowed to be this much fun?
REVIEWED *OPS2#39* / **OVERALL** 09

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY — GOLD
A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage stealth-a-thon.
REVIEWED *OPS2#17* / **OVERALL** 10 / **DVD#17/#37**

MIDNIGHT CLUB II — BRONZE
Gorgeous street racer gets a turbo boost from online gameplay.
REVIEWED *OPS2#34* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#29**

MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE — BRONZE
Brutal and bloody martial arts action with a stylish edge.
REVIEWED *OPS2#29* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#30**

MOTO GP3 — BRONZE
Quality racer with plenty of depth. On yer bike, my son.
REVIEWED *OPS2#33* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#33**

MUSIC 3000 — SILVER
A virtual recording studio for £30? Can anyone say no to that?
REVIEWED *OPS2#33* / **OVERALL** 09

NBA BALLERS — BRONZE
At last, a b-ball game that combines playing and bein' a playa.
REVIEWED *OPS2#50* / **OVERALL** 08

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND — SILVER
The new 'fastest' racer on PS2 claims its crown.
REVIEWED *OPS2#41* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#40**

NHL 2004 — BRONZE
Men who skate and wear thigh pads. Decent game though.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 08

ONIMUSHA 3 — SILVER
Saving the best till last, this is near faultless adventure gaming.
REVIEWED *OPS2#48* / **OVERALL** 09

PARAPPA THE RAPPER 2
Top rhythm action that's become a bit of a cult hit.
REVIEWED *OPS2#17* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#17**

PRIMAL — BRONZE
Deep, dark, fantasy adventure with one girl and her gargoyle.
REVIEWED *OPS2#30* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#30/#33**

PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME — BRONZE
Glittering, exotic and superbly acrobatic. Pity about the camera.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#39**

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 3 — GOLD
The messiah of PS2 footie. *PES2* was good. This is God.
REVIEWED *OPS2#39* / **OVERALL** 10 / **DVD#41**

PROJECT ZERO — BRONZE
Genuinely disturbing survival horror, dripping with menace.
REVIEWED *OPS2#24* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#23**

RAINBOW SIX 3 — BRONZE
Squad-based shooter with a realistic edge and online missions.
REVIEWED *OPS2#45* / **OVERALL** 08

RATCHET & CLANK: LOCKED AND LOADED — BRONZE
Lacking the surprise of the original, this is still huge and witty.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#40**

RED DEAD REVOLVER — SILVER
Wild West shooter that's like a cool breeze in Death Valley. Yeehaw!
REVIEWED *OPS2#47* / **OVERALL** 09

RED FACTION II — BRONZE
More anti-authority action but this time it's set on Earth.
REVIEWED *OPS2#27* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#26**

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X — SILVER
Curious about all this survival horror lark? Then play this classic.
REVIEWED *OPS2#10* / **OVERALL** 09

REZ — SILVER
Sega's psychedelic gem boasts superb visuals and gameplay.
REVIEWED *OPS2#16* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#17**

ROCKY — BRONZE
Boxing sim, faithfully based on the Italian Stallion's career.
REVIEWED *OPS2#27* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#29**

SECOND SIGHT — BRONZE
Slick thriller touched with psychic powers from the *'Splitters* boys.
REVIEWED *OPS2#50* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#50**

SHELLSHOCK: NAM '67
Loud, lethal and brutally vivid shooter offering brilliant action.
REVIEWED *OPS2#49* / **OVERALL** 07

SILENT HILL 3 — SILVER
Wet-the-bed scary survival horror. We dare you to play it.
REVIEWED *OPS2#33* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#34**

SINGSTAR — SILVER
Addictive singing party game that's as accessible as it is fun.
REVIEWED *OPS2#46* / **OVERALL** 09

SMASH COURT PRO TENNIS TOURNAMENT 2 — BRONZE
A new career mode makes the top tennis seed even better.
REVIEWED *OPS2#47* / **OVERALL** 08

SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS — BRONZE
Move in for the commander-in-chief of online tactical shooters.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 08

SONIC HEROES — BRONZE
Old skool platforming, but blistering fast and beautifully done.
REVIEWED *OPS2#44* / **OVERALL** 08

SOUL CALIBUR II — GOLD
A tale of swords and souls. Officially the best fighting game. Ever.
REVIEWED *OPS2#37* / **OVERALL** 10 / **DVD#38/42**

SPIDER-MAN 2 — BRONZE
Free-roaming, superhero adventure fun with loads to see and do.
REVIEWED *OPS2#49* / **OVERALL** 08

SPLINTER CELL — SILVER
Superior stealth action. Could possibly even smoke out Snake.
REVIEWED *OPS2#32* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#37**

SSX 3 — SILVER
Super-long, fast races make this an essential PS2 purchase.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#43**

STARSKY & HUTCH
One shoots. One drives. Grab a mate and bust baddies '70s style.
REVIEWED *OPS2#36* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#36/42**

STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER — BRONZE
Sequel to the LucasArts 3D shooter with a few new tricks.
REVIEWED *OPS2#19* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#21**

STUNTMAN — BRONZE
Car-flipping, bus-skidding, bike-crashing addictive mayhem.
REVIEWED *OPS2#23* / **OVERALL** 08/ **DVD#23**

SWAT: GLOBAL STRIKE TEAM — BRONZE
Rock-hard, noisy FPS that dispenses justice the American way.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08

SYPHON FILTER: THE OMEGA STRAIN — BRONZE
Supremely playable tactical shooter both off and online.
REVIEWED *OPS2#47* / **OVERALL** 08

TEKKEN 4
A great but ambitious addition to the beat-'em-up series.
REVIEWED *OPS2#25* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#26/#36**

TENCHU: WRATH OF HEAVEN — BRONZE
Fine ninja-flavoured stealth-'em-up set in ye olde Japan.
REVIEWED *OPS2#31* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#32**

THE GETAWAY — SILVER
Mockney mayhem that manages to live up to the hype. Geezer.
REVIEWED *OPS2#28* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#28**

TLOTR: THE RETURN OF THE KING — BRONZE
Well-crafted version of the film, huge battles and great extras.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08

THE MARK OF KRI
Fantasy adventure with a big barbarian and his raven sidekick.
REVIEWED *OPS2#31* / **OVERALL** 07 / **DVD#31**

THE SIMS BUSTIN' OUT — BRONZE
The sims grow up and learn how to party.
REVIEWED *OPS2#41* / **OVERALL** 08

THE THING — SILVER
Top-class survival horror meets John Carpenter's ET nasty. Ace.
REVIEWED *OPS2#25* / **OVERALL** 09

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2004 — BRONZE
A hole-in-one for the world's least temperamental sportsman.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#40**

TIME CRISIS II — BRONZE
Namco's arcade lightgun game gets a graphical polish for PS2.
REVIEWED *OPS2#13* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#13**

TIMESPLITTERS 2 — GOLD
As vital to PS2 as your central nervous system is to your brain.
REVIEWED *OPS2#25* / **OVERALL** 10 / **DVD#25/#31**

TOCA RACE DRIVER — BRONZE
Ultra-realistic racer, bolstered by a smart storyline and top visuals.
REVIEWED *OPS2#24* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#24**

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND — SILVER
Taking skating seriously skyward. Brilliant and addictive.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 09

VIRTUA FIGHTER 4 — BRONZE
Complex yet fast-moving beat-'em-up that rewards the patient.
REVIEWED *OPS2#19* / **OVERALL** 08

VIRTUA TENNIS 2 — BRONZE
Smooth, slick and the best tennis sim for your PS2.
REVIEWED *OPS2#28* / **OVERALL** 08

WAR OF THE MONSTERS — BRONZE
Monster-themed homage to '50s B-movies.
REVIEWED *OPS2#32* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#31**

WRC 3 — SILVER
Mud-crusted thrills and spills challenge *Colin* again.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#42**

WWE SMACKDOWN! HERE COMES THE PAIN — BRONZE
Adds in panties and titillation to devastating effect.
REVIEWED *OPS2#41* / **OVERALL** 08

XIII — BRONZE
Gorgeous PS2 version of the comic-book hero. Play this now.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#42**

ZONE OF THE ENDERS: THE 2ND RUNNER — BRONZE
The strikingly impressive robo scrapper returns. Awesome.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#38** □

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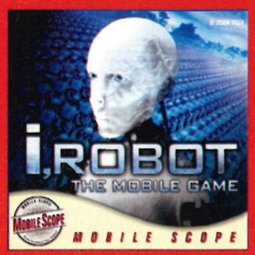

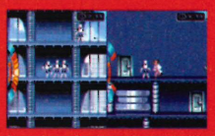

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9120 Black Eyed Peas Hey Mama
7470 Blink 182 Feeling This
9152 Blink 182 I Miss You
1959 Brian McFadden Real to Me
1974 Cassidy & Mashonda Get No Better
1962 Darren Hayes Popular ★
8568 Dido White Flag
7582 Eamon I Love Them Hoes ★
1631 Easyworld How Did It Ever..
1965 Eric Prydz Call on Me ★
1637 Faithless I Want More
9271 Frankee How You Do
7062 Girls Aloud The Show
1630 Houston ft. Chingy I Like That
8711 Jamelia Superstar
7105 Jamelia See It In A Boys Eyes
1624 Jamie Scott Just ★
1966 Joss Stone You Had Me
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1421 Natasha Bedingfield Single
1172 Nelly Flap Your Wings
1627 Nelly My Place ★
9255 Nina Sky Move Ya Body
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8808 Shapeshifters Lolas Theme
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6785 The Streets Fit But You Know It
1177 Twista Sunshine
1179 Ultrabeat Better Than Life
1629 V Can You Feel It ? ★

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0339 Fragma Tocas Miracle
7059 Junior Senior Move Your Feet
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5872 Scooter The Logical Song
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4334 Blink 182 Down
1444 Buck 65 4-6-3
9278 Darkness Love Is Only A Feeling
9150 Fountains Of Wayne Stacys Mom
1530 Fountains Of Wayne Mexican..
1344 Franz Ferdinand Matinee
9283 Jet Look What You've Done
7909 Jet Are you Gonna Be My girl
1082 Keane Everything Is Changing
5533 Maroon 5 This Love
6597 Ryan Adams This Is It
8894 Snow Patrol Run
5526 Snow Patrol Chocolate
6828 The Charlatans Up At The Lake
9915 The Killers Mr Brightside
9931 The Rasmus Guilty
6668 The Rasmus In the Shadows
9937 The Stills Still in Love Song

CLASSICS

8800 AC/DC You Shook Me
0598 Aerosmith & Run Dmc Walk This..
8799 Alice Cooper School's Out
8791 Beastie Boys You Gotta Fight
8807 Blur Song 2
7760 Blur Out of Time
0098 Bob Marley Get Up Stand Up
8716 Bruce Springsteen Born To Run
8789 Def Leopard Pour Some Sugar..
7181 Electric Six Gay Bar
1275 Guns N' Roses Sweet Child..
9417 Guns N' Roses November Rain
1275 Guns N' Roses Sweet Child..
8432 Happy Mondays 24 Hour Party..
4137 Iron Maiden Run To The Hills
8788 Queen & Bowie Under Pressure

Tv & Film Themes

0819 TV & Film Matrix
0029 TV & Film Beverly Hills Cop
8488 TV & Film Starksy and Hutch
5150 TV & Film Phoenix Nights
0022 TV & Film Benny Hill
1575 TV & Film Only Fools and Horses
4064 TV & Film Harry Potter
8559 TV & Film Kill Bill
0076 TV & Film The Muppets
1483 TV & Film James Bond
8561 TV & Film Lord Of The Rings
0091 TV & Film The Simpsons
1486 TV & Film Knight Rider
1286 TV & Film Mission Impossible

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1146 Jordan
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1067 Michael Jackson
1159 Ozzy Osbourne
1147 Richard and Judy
1164 Simon Cowell
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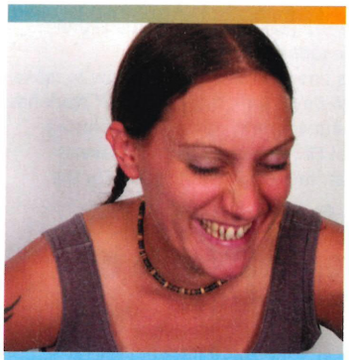
comedown

BECAUSE THERE'S MORE THAN ONE TRICK UP YOUR PS2'S SLEEVE

WELCOME TO COMEDOWN

A cocktail of tasty treats poured over some otherwise blank pages

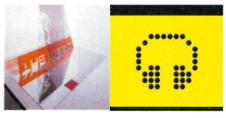


Goodness me. Seems like no time at all has passed since we were last here together. And yet here you are again. Still looking fresh, eager and with the same, single thing on your mind. That's right: games.

But there's so much more to life than just playing games. Like, um, reading about games, and looking at pictures of games... *and*, of course, there's Comedown. It's where I live. Look up there. See how happy I am? These pages are like a big house made of cake and their contents is made up of a multitude of sugary good bits that have all been dipped in the fondue of PS2 love. Which, clearly, is why I'm so happy. And a little tingly.

Have yourself a little taste of the following pages. They're good. Might I recommend a good licking of *Star Wars* on page 136, and perhaps a little chew on Dizzee Rascal (page 138)? You might also like a nibble on page 140 to digest all the latest gaming treats on the horizon. Let's just hope they don't get too sticky on the way in, eh...

Helen Prior,
Production editor



This *is* the four-disk, extras-rammed, event-of-the-decade DVD boxset you're looking for

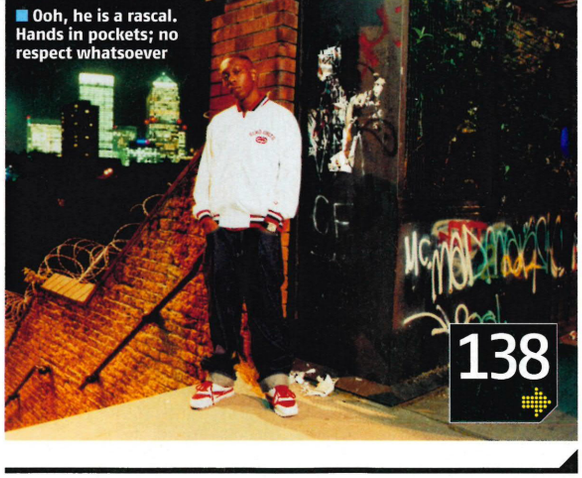
136 **DVD REVIEWS**
The *Star Wars* trilogy, *The Godfather*, *Shaun Of The Dead*, *The Eye*... oh, loads. Go look for yourself

138 **MUSIC REVIEWS**
What's on our stereo, what's coming out, what we think about it all and a nice picture of Dizzee Rascal

140 **INCOMING**
Like old ladies at a jumble sale, these games are frantically elbowing each other to get into the shops

141 **WIN A DATE WITH A DIVA!**
Last month's WWE diva blowout was missing just one thing – so here it is in all its glory!

142 ***OPS2* INVESTIGATES**
Game covers. Most are good. Some are bad. May we present some of the worst known to man...

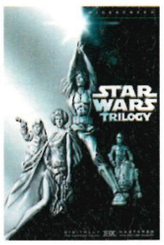


Ooh, he is a rascal. Hands in pockets; no respect whatsoever

Darth flips Luke the bird shortly before he attempts to smoke those three giant cigarettes

STAR WARS TRILOGY

YOU WANTED IT. WE *NEEDED* IT. NOW IT'S HERE. LET'S ENJOY...



DIRECTORS
George Lucas, Irvin Kershner, Richard Marquand
STARRING
Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Alec Guinness, Anthony Daniels, Peter Mayhew, Peter Cushing, James Earl Jones, David Prowse, Billy Dee Williams
DISTRIBUTOR
Twentieth Century Fox
OUT
20 September
PRICE
£44.99
EXTRAS
Cast and crew audio commentaries, 2.5-hour documentary, three featurettes, galleries and videogame trailers and demo

FILM: The most anticipated DVD launch in history, *Star Wars Trilogy* (that's *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return Of The Jedi*) pieces together Lucas' three landmark achievements into a four-disc bonanza. The casting and script shouldn't have worked, but does. Harrison Ford is loveably roguish as smuggler Hans Solo, Princess Leia (Fisher) proves that absurd hairstyling can be sexy and C-3PO (Daniels) and R2-D2 (Baker) dazzle as the Laurel and Hardy of the robotic generation.

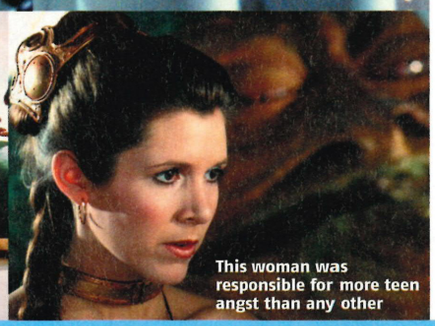
While there's enough campness on show to make an episode of *Hi-De-Hi* look straight, Lucas' work has lost little of its immediate magic. Revolutionising cinematic special FX was one of the filmmaker's accomplishments, introducing grittiness into the genre was another. Who could have envisaged a 'future' (or past?) with bars, garages and buildings as sleazy as the ones frequented by Lucas' protagonists. With all this elegantly revitalised courtesy of an astonishing restoration job, scenes have never looked so spectacular. Well, not since their debuts way back in 1977, 1980 and 1983 respectively, that is. **10/10**

There's enough campness on show to make an episode of *Hi-De-Hi* look straight

EXTRAS: Audio commentaries starring Lucas, Fisher, sound designer Ben Burtt and FX guy Dennis Muren. A bonus disc contains *Empire Of Dreams: The Story Of The Star Wars Trilogy* documentary, three featurettes, a Making Of preview for *Episode III*, plus film trailers, TV spots, galleries and DVD-ROM material. **9/10**

VERDICT: Ardent *Star Wars* purists will bemoan the decision to release the 'tinkered' 1997 versions, rather than the original cinema releases, but there's little else to find fault with here. ■ **SD**

WIN IT! Go to page 130 now!



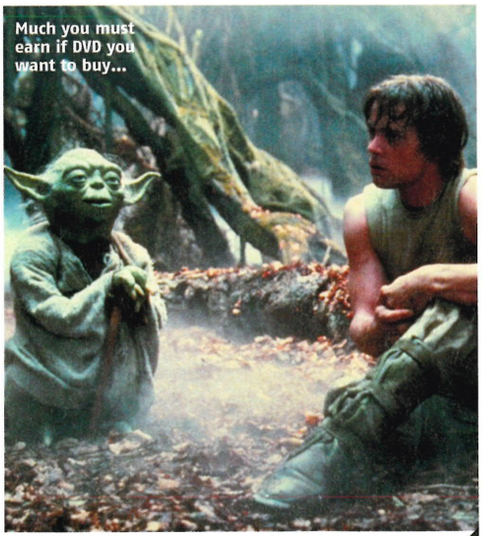
This woman was responsible for more teen angst than any other

IT'S THE CAST-OFFS

Hopeful acting talent fluff their lines...

Kurt Russell as Han Solo? Luke Skywalker as a midget? While *Star Wars* obsessives will boast of complete knowledge of the franchise, the *Empire Of Dreams* documentary's backstage footage should still educate. Original screen tests – a young Kurt Russell vying for Han Solo, and Terri Nunn making a mockery of Princess Leia – conspires with botched movie takes (mics in shot, for example) to make this rewarding viewing. Switch to the lightsaber featurette and you get Mark Hamill attacking man-in-the-Vader-costume David Prowse with a wooden stick. Interesting.

And to think, that could've been Kurt Russell sat there, or Christopher Walken, or Al Pacino, or...



Much you must earn if DVD you want to buy...

Hey, there's a free rotting limb with every DVD! No, that's a lie. Sorry

SHAUN OF THE DEAD

COMEDY *RESIDENT EVIL* ROMP THROUGH LONDON

DIRECTOR
Edgar Wright
STARRING
Simon Pegg, Kate Ashfield, Nick Frost, Lucy Davis, Dylan Moran
DISTRIBUTOR
Universal/UIP
OUT
Now
PRICE
£19.99

FILM: Living in England's capital city isn't easy at the best of times. It's pricey, it's packed, and the pressure to 'make it big' can lead to some strange behaviour. Which is why you can forgive the 29-year-old Shaun for not noticing the zombie invasion sooner.

Stuck in a dead-end job, his girlfriend Liz needling him for giving up on his DJ-ing dream and needled in turn by the omnipresence of Ed – Shaun's drinking buddie – he must have had a lot on his mind. But when it becomes clear that the undead are proliferating in the city of the heartless, Shaun breaks out the bats and swaps slacking for smacking as he races to save the lovely Liz.

Shaun Of The Dead plays like a more accessible version of the cult series *Spaced* – also by Pegg. The laughs are a similar blend of clued up and gross out, and although the film's pace drags a little after an all-guns-blazing opening, it's the most fun you'll have had with a homegrown comedy for a long time. **8/10**

EXTRAS: Four audio commentaries, Missing Bits, Plotholes (very post-modern) and a host of others, including a Making Of... and extended edits of TV shows that feature in the film. **8/10**

VERDICT: Let's be honest, this is fanboy heaven, packed as it is with comic-book, videogame and film references. Go on, treat yourself. ■ **JD**

Can you spot the cameo from the raver from *Spaced*? We can

DO WHAT YOU LIKE

Taking advantage of the situation

One of the best things about *Shaun* is that Pegg *et al* get up to the kind of shenanigans that – given the chance – anyone would give their back teeth for. And so to the Missing Bits elements of the DVD – Pegg and Frost impersonating Sean Connery and Michael Caine; and 'Funky Pete', the film's protracted swearing scene hilariously redubbed for pre-watershed audiences.

ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND

Director *Michel Gondry* / Starring *Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet* / Distributor *Universal Studios Home Video* / Out *4 October* / Price *£19.99*

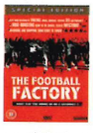
FILM: In the future you'll not have to remember your break-ups. Memory surgeons can remove them – and the resultant 'baggage' – at a stroke. That's what Clementine did when her relationship with Joel hit the rocks, and that's what he intended to do in retaliation. But the doctors bodged the job, he fought to hold on to his thoughts of her, they've met again and – yes – are in love all over again. But the doc needs to finish what he started or risk exposure, and so the fight is on for Joel's loaf. **7/10**

EXTRAS: Deleted scenes, Carrey and Gondry talk and commentary from Charlie Kaufman, which warrants purchase alone. **8/10**

VERDICT: With a script from Kaufman, this was never going to be easy watching. But the concept of the film is seductive, Winslet and Carrey excel and Gondry delivers some neat touches. ■ **JD**

THE FOOTBALL FACTORY

Director *Nick Love* / Starring *Danny Dyer, Frank Harper, Tamer Hassan* / Distributor *Vertigo Film* / Out *27 September* / Price *£17.99*



FILM: Tommy Johnson's a football hooligan. Observing that "the next best thing after violence is sex", he ushers in 90 minutes filled with both – and curiously devoid of football – culminating with a clash with the Millwall Bushwackers (the sister of whose leader he's been slipping a length). Now, all sensible boys know that fighting is wrong, but director Nick Love knows that you don't want to be a sensible boy. You want to be a well-dressed loon, like these psychopathic jokers – don't you? **6/10**

EXTRAS: Are you looking for trouble, son? You want more than a Making Of documentary? What do you think this is... etc. **4/10**

VERDICT: Nick Love has the word 'Millwall' tattooed inside his lower lip. While this indicates he may know what he's talking about, it doesn't mean you should listen to what he's saying. ■ **JD**

THE STATION AGENT

Director *Thomas McCarthy* / Starring *Peter Dinklage, Bobby Cannavale, Patricia Clarkson* / Distributor *Buena Vista* / Out *Now* / Price *£15.99*

FILM: You probably haven't heard of *The Station Agent* before, which is perfectly forgivable. But with a tight script and cast-iron performances – it picked up three awards at this year's Sundance Film Festival – it's better than you might think. Not a huge amount happens, but there's a stunning degree of detail going on in the peripheries and a real depth to the releationships fleshed out. The plot is flimsy, revolving around three vastly different characters thrown together against their will, but it's the interaction between Fin (the loner), Joe (the coffee seller) and Olivia (the divorcee) that makes the film shine. **7/10**

EXTRAS: Commentary with writer/director Thomas McCarthy, five deleted scenes. **4/10**

VERDICT: A slow-burner you can enjoy with the missus. ■ **DM**

coming soon REGIONS 1+2

Denzel Washington gets brutal from 19 September in ***MAN ON FIRE***, a film savaged by the critics for its tacit approval of vigilante justice, but which contributes an interesting spin to American attitudes post-9/11... *Another fresh take on the global situation arrives in the form of* ***THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW*** *on 5 October. The Greenhouse Effect has finally kicked in and the only safe place is the New York Central Library? Why weren't we told sooner?...* Presumably because, like the protagonists of ***MEAN GIRLS***, attentions were too focused on superficial matters – such as where people fit into the high-school hierarchy (21 September)... *Which brings us neatly to* ***THE LADYKILLERS***, the Coen Brothers' latest bid to undermine a spectacular career. A remake of the '50s Ealing comedy, the critics found themselves unusually united in their condemnation. Judge for yourself from 14 September...

Likeable Hollywood schmaltz for those autumnal evenings

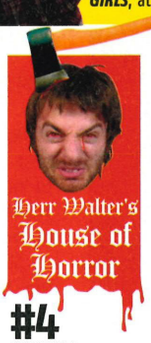
50 FIRST DATES

Director *Peter Segal* / Starring *Adam Sandler, Drew Barrymore, Sean Astin* / Distributor *Columbia Pictures* / Out *Now* / Price *£19.99*

FILM: Adam Sandler is in danger of becoming the king of the off-kilter romantic comedy. After the massively misunderstood *Punch-Drunk Love*, *50 First Dates* casts him as a Hawaii-based babe-hound vet who busts a move on Lucy (Barrymore). All goes according to plan, but when he approaches her the following morning she has no recollection of meeting him. Why? Because she has memory loss, dude. And so he has to start over, until his feelings for her grow and he must find a way to break the cycle. **7/10**

EXTRAS: Commentary from Drew Barrymore and director Peter Segal, deleted scenes, bloopers, trailer, making of documentary, three music videos and a pretty natty scene deconstruction. **6/10**

VERDICT: It may be *Groundhog Day* all over again, but we like *Groundhog Day*. Fun, lightweight entertainment. ■ **JD**



#4 SCREAM

You know you're in for a treat when Hollywood A-lister Drew Barymore gets eviscerated *before* the opening credits. Wes '*Nightmare On Elm St*' Craven makes a horror film *about* horror films and launches the self-reflexive slasher genre that warns: never say, "I'll be right back..." Sequel count: Two. Both are worth a look.

You've got something in your eye (etc)

THE EYE

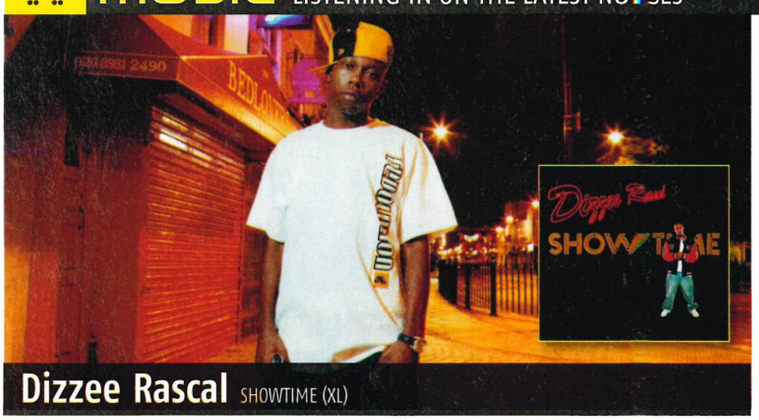
Directors *Oxide and Danny Pang* / Starring *Lee Sin-Je, Lawrence Chow, Ko Yin Ping* / Distributor *Tartan Films* / Out *Now* / Price *£19.99*

FILM: Mun, blind since the age of two, opts to undergo a risky cornea transplant in a bid to restore her sight. While the operation is a success, it soon becomes apparent that she has ended up with more than she bargained for. The 20-year-old can now see dead people and is able to foresee death around her. And so the Pang Brothers' blend of psychological thriller and ghost story kicks into gear. Mun must now deal with the donor's unresolved issues and is finally forced into travelling to the young woman's village in a bid to see her rest in peace – but as the film glides towards its conclusion, the Pangs have a trick or two. **8/10**

EXTRAS: Trailer for *The Eye 2* and that's your lot. **2/10**

VERDICT: The Pang brothers are like a Thai version of the Wachowskis and this baby is a masterclass in suspense. ■ **JD**

music LISTENING IN ON THE LATEST NOISES



Dizzee Rascal SHOWTIME (XL)

WHO? Hackney-born UK Garage prodigy and self-proclaimed member of 'the PlayStation generation' who scooped the Mercury Music Prize last year with the genre-busting Boy In Da Corner. A little bit too squeaky-voiced to be a gangsta, but that's okay.

HIGHLIGHTS: "I'm 5'10, chocolate skin/ I'll punch you in your nostril/I'll punch you in your shin," goes *Everywhere*, proving Dizzee still hasn't lost his talent for a laugh-out-loud line.

LOWLIGHTS: You might be initially baffled by *Dreams*, which samples heavily from punk pensioner Captain Sensible's '80s novelty hit *Happy Talk* – but it's a grower.

VERDICT: An urgent mix of rap villainy, disarming life-on-the-streets honesty, and sublime weirdness makes Showtime every bit the equal of Boy In Da Corner. This kid is going to be huge. **8/10**

GOLDIE LOOKIN' CHAIN

GREATEST HITS
(East/West)

WHO? 24-carat members of the chav generation, the GLC are an eight-strong crew of Newport ruffians.

HIGHLIGHTS: We're afraid it has to be, um, *Your Mother's Got A Penis*.

LOWLIGHTS: *Rollerdisco* is far from their funniest moment.

VERDICT: Packed to the gills with did-they-just-say-that lines, the GLC's major label debut offers up comedy as gold as their signet rings. **8/10**

INTERPOL

ANTICS
(Matador)

WHO? Gloomy, sharp-suited New York songsmiths, back with a fresh suite of songs to style your hair to.

HIGHLIGHTS: Dark-disco epic *Slow Hands*. Or *Evil*, which broods and crashes like a suave Nirvana.

LOWLIGHTS: *A Time To Be Small*, a real damp squib of a closer.

VERDICT: If The Strokes are the Kings Of New York rock 'n' roll, Interpol must surely be its dark princes. **8/10**

THE MUSIC

WELCOME TO THE NORTH
(Virgin)

WHO? Cocky young Kippax upstarts, back with a second album of earnest, boogie-flavoured dad-rock.

HIGHLIGHTS: *Breakin* puts Rob Harvey's caterwauling lungs, to frankly astonishing effect.

LOWLIGHTS: Everywhere you look, there's a cliché. I Need Love? Fight The Feeling? Lay off the weed, boys.

VERDICT: An album that can't always transcend its stodgy ordinariness. **6/10**

ALSO RELEASED THIS MONTH

Ian Brown Solarized (Fiction)/**Papa Roach** Getting Away With Murder (Polydor)/**Har Mar Superstar** The Handler (Record Collection/Warners)/**The Living End** Modern ARTillery (Reprise)

ON THE *OPS2* STEREO

Killers Hot Fuss (Island)/**Super Furry Animals** Radiator (Creation)/**The Beta Band** The 3 EPs (Astralwerks)/**The Thrills** So Much For The City (Virgin)/**The Bees** Free The Bees (Virgin)

Psi Ops: The Mindgate Conspiracy
PlayStation 2
~~RRP £39.99~~ £27.99

Juiced
PlayStation 2
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PlayStation 2
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PlayStation 2
~~RRP £39.99~~ £29.99

Burnout 3: Takedown
PlayStation 2
~~RRP £39.99~~ £31.99

Star Ocean: Till the End of Time
PlayStation 2
~~RRP £39.99~~ £29.99

PLAY.COM
MOVIES MUSIC GAMES
Prices are correct at time of going to press. Play.com reserve the right to change prices.
FREE DELIVERY
FREE DELIVERY
FREE DELIVERY

incoming

Start making your Christmas list now...

OCTOBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Area 51	FPS	Midway
Blood Will Tell	Action	Sega
Colin McRae Rally 2005	Driving	Codemasters
Crash 'N' Burn	Driving	Eidos
Dance UK: XL	Dancing	Bigben
Dancing Stage Fusion	Dancing	Konami
EyeToy Chat	EyeToy	Sony
FIFA Football 2005	Football	EA
FlatOut	Driving	Empire
Future Tactics	Strategy	Koch
Gametrak: Dark Wind	Action	In2Games
Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas	Adventure	Rockstar
Jackie Chan Adventures	Fighting	Sony
King Arthur	Adventure	Konami
Knight Rider 2	Driving	Davilex
LMA Manager 2005	Simulation	Codemasters
Nightmare Before Christmas	Action	Capcom
Pool Shark 2	Sport	Zoo Digital
Pro Evolution Soccer 4	Football	Konami
SAS: Against All Odds	Action	Oxygen
Sega Superstars	EyeToy	Sega
Star Ocean 3: Till The End Of Time	RPG	Ubisoft
Starsky & Hutch 2	Action	Empire
The Bard's Tale	RPG	Acclaim
TOCA Race Driver 2	Driving	Codemasters
Ty The Tasmanian Tiger 2	Adventure	EA
Under The Skin	Action	Capcom
Viewtiful Joe	Action	Capcom
Obscure	Survival Horror	Ubisoft
X-Men: Legends	Action RPG	Activision

NOVEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
100 Bullets	Action	Acclaim
ATV Offroad Fury 3	Driving	Sony
Backyard Wrestling 2	Wrestling	Eidos
Call Of Duty: Finest Hour	FPS	Activision
Club Football	Football	Codemasters
Dead To Rights 2	Action	Namco
Def Jam: Fight For New York	Wrestling	EA
DJ: Decks & FX	Music	Sony
Dukes Of Hazzard	Racing	Ubisoft
EyeToy AntiGrav	EyeToy	Sony
Fahrenheit	Adventure	Vivendi Universal
Ghost Recon 2	FPS	Ubisoft
GoldenEye: Rogue Agent	FPS	EA
Gradius V	Shoot-'em-up	Konami
Gran Turismo 4	Driving	Sony
Guilty Gear Isuka	Action	Sega
Hot Wheels Stunt Track Challenge	Racing	Eidos
Killzone	FPS	Sony
Kingdom Hearts II	RPG	Square Enix
Lemony Snicket's A Series Of Unfortunate Events	Adventure	Activision
Miami Vice	Action	Koch
Midnight Club: DUB Edition	Driving	Rockstar
Mortal Kombat: Deception	Fighting	Midway
Need For Speed Underground 2	Driving	EA
Neighbours From Hell	Puzzle	Koch
Playboy: The Mansion	Strategy	Ubisoft
Power Rangers Dino Thunder	Action	THQ
Premier Manager 2004-2005	Simulation	Zoo Digital
Prince Of Persia 2	Adventure	Ubisoft
Ratchet & Clank 3	Adventure	Sony

RADAR

Keeping track of the hottest stuff on the horizon

OUT NOW

BURNOUT 3

The best game we've seen this year (see our review on page 94 for proof)

OUT SOON

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

We're sure we don't have to remind you how brilliant it's going to be

MILES OFF

BROTHERS IN ARMS

Intense action in the D-Day trenches – pop it on your list of things to watch out for in 2005

Michael hearts...

Fahrenheit

"This thriller-chiller is shaping up to be the kind of adventure that will warm my mind in the coming cold winter months."

Red Ninja: End Of Honour	Adventure	Vivendi Universal
Rocky Legends	Boxing	Ubisoft
Shark Tale	Adventure	Activision
Snowblind	FPS	Eidos
Spooks	Action	BBC
Spyro: A Hero's Tail	Adventure	Vivendi Universal
The Incredibles	Adventure	THQ
The Lord Of The Rings: The Third Age	RPG	EA
The Polar Express	Action	THQ
The Red Star	Action	Acclaim
THUG 2: World Destruction Tour	Skating	Activision
WRC4	Racing	Sony
WWE SmackDown! Vs Raw	Wrestling	THQ

DECEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Astro Boy	Adventure	Sega
Deadlands	Action	Headfirst
Fight Club	Fighting	Vivendi Universal
Jak 3	Adventure	Sony
Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude	Party	Vivendi Universal
Megaman X Command Mission	RPG	Capcom
Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater	Adventure	Konami
Sly 2: Band Of Thieves	Adventure	Sony
The Getaway: Black Monday	Adventure	Sony
The Urbz	Simulation	EA

2005	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
25 To Life	Adventure	Eidos
Battlefield: Modern Combat	Action	EA
Black	FPS	TBC
Brothers In Arms	FPS	Ubisoft
Campfire	Horror	Sony
Championship Manager 5	Simulation	Eidos
Cold Winter	FPS	Vivendi Universal
Conflict: Desert Storm III	FPS	SCi
Death By Degrees	Action	Sony
Destroy All Humans!	Action	THQ
Devil May Cry 3	Action	Capcom
Enthusia	Driving	Konami
Fantastic Four	Action	Activision
Far Cry: Instincts	FPS	Ubisoft
Gametrak: Real World Golf	Action	In2Games
Garfield	Adventure	Hip Interactive
Get On Da Mic	Music	Eidos
God Of War	Adventure	Sony
Hitman 3	Action	Eidos
Interview With A Made Man	Action	Acclaim
Johnny Whatever	Music	TBC
Karaoke Revolution 2	Music	Konami
Killer 7	Action	Capcom
Mark Ecko's Getting Up: Contents Under Pressure	Adventure	Atari
Mercenaries	Action	Activision
Midway	Action	SCi
Monster Hunter	Online	Capcom
Nanobreaker	Action	Konami
NARC	Action	Midway
Neo Contra	Action	Konami
Nico	Adventure	Sony
Notorious Die To Drive	Driving	Ubisoft
Oddworld: Stranger	Action	EA
Okami	Adventure	Capcom
Resident Evil Outbreak: File #2	Horror	Capcom
Rise Of The Kesai	Adventure	Sony
Rumble Roses	Wrestling	Konami
Scarface	Action	Vivendi Universal
Shadow Hearts: Covenant	Action	Midway
Shadow Of Rome	Adventure	Capcom
Ultimate Spider-Man	Adventure	Activision
StarCraft: Ghost	Adventure	Vivendi Universal
Star Wars Episode III	Adventure	Activision
Stolen	Adventure	Hip Interactive
Super Monkey Ball Deluxe	Action	Sega

KEY

BUY ME!

TRY ME!

AVOID ME!

Ben hearts...

Rocky Legends

"In the office I'm loud and prone to outbursts – this should be just the ticket to feed my aggression."

Nathan hearts...

ODDWORLD: STRANGER

"I've missed the *Oddworld* games, as despite running off to the Xbox, they've always felt more at home on the PlayStation. My hunch is that we'll be welcoming it back in style."

competition

WIN A DATE! WITH A DIVA!

PRESS FLESH WITH THE WWE LADIES. GENTLY... THEY COULD CRUSH YOU IN AN INSTANT

The ladies of sports entertainment are pretty choosy types. Normally you'd need to be either massively rich, brilliantly funny or, at the very least, look as good as they do (with or without the musculature richness) if you wanted them to take you seriously as a romantic prospect.

If the thought of all that grooming is too much for you to bear, let us help. In a competition of unprecedented generosity and magnificence (although the quick witted among you will have spotted it on last month's bag) we're offering you the chance to meet a WWE lady – and a gent or two – by giving away a pair of VIP tickets to one of the UK shows in October. The impossibly lucky winners will meet the wrestlers, blag a free dinner, play the new *SmackDown! Vs RAW* game weeks before release and watch the ass-kicking, pyrotechnic-laden slobberknocker that is the show itself. Five runners-up will receive a copies of the game.

Do you really deserve our breath-taking generosity? Probably not, but we can't help ourselves. Just answer the question below, send it to us on a postcard (see terms and conditions below) and pray you get lucky.

FIRST PRIZE

1 x Pair Of VIP WWE tickets
1 x *SmackDown! Vs RAW* game

RUNNERS-UP

5 x copies of
SmackDown! Vs RAW

THE QUESTION

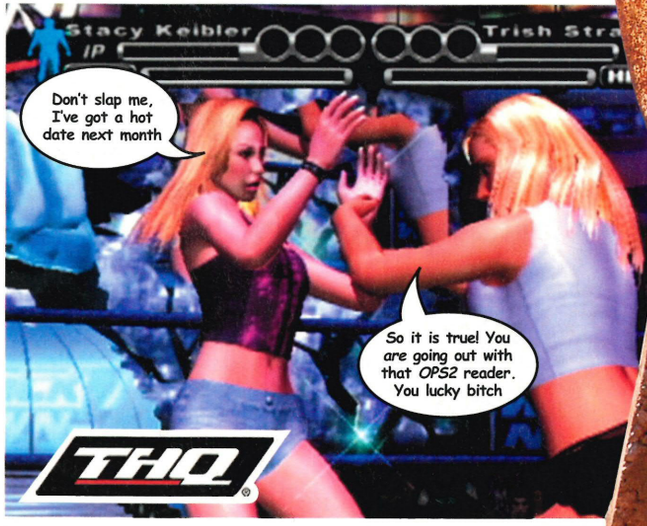
What does the "E" in WWE stand for?

A) ENTERTAINMENT
B) ENTROPY
C) ELEPHANTIASIS

Terms and conditions

Send entries to 'Diva's Dig Me', *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Entries to reach us by 6 October 2004. If the winner is under 16, he/she must be accompanied to the event by a parent or guardian (over 18) who must use the second ticket.

No purchase necessary. Competition only open to UK residents. No correspondence will be entered into. No employees of Future Publishing, THQ or any affiliated company may enter. No cash alternative is offered to this prize. If prize becomes unavailable, we reserve the right to replace it with another of equal value. Multiple entries will be disregarded. We will not advise non-winners of the result. Normal competition rules apply. We will accept no responsibility for entries lost in the post. The editor's decision is final.



BOX ART FROM... HELL!

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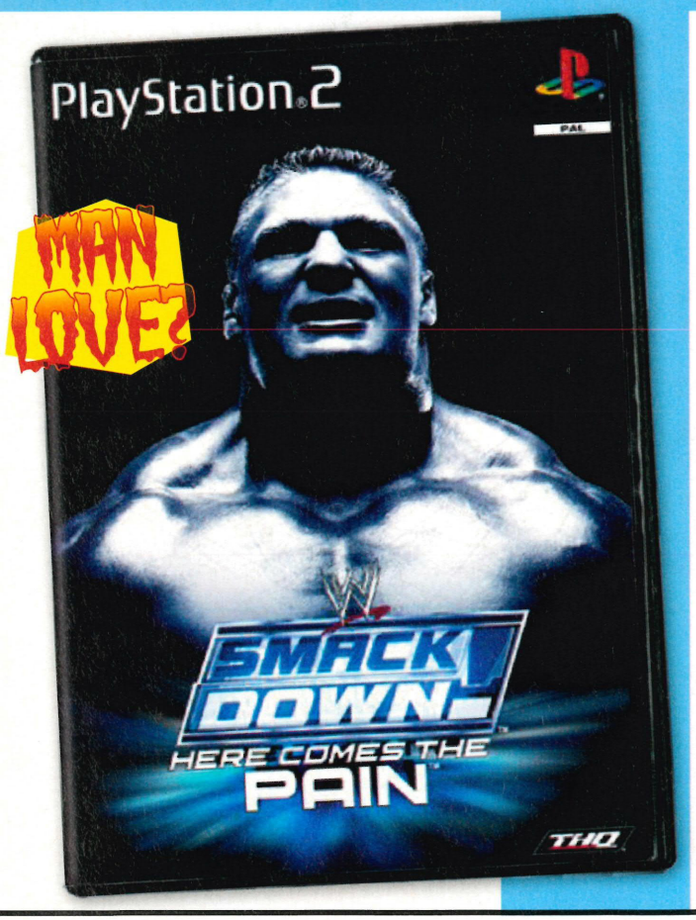
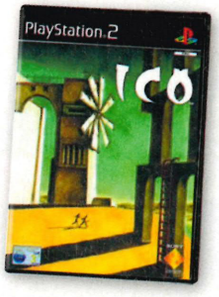


WWE SMACKDOWN! HERE COMES THE PAIN

Oh the pain. Yes, here it comes. But hang on a minute. Would you just look at *him*! The bulging muscles in his neck are performing a pincer movement to oust his brain and exile it through his nostrils while we're sitting here! Forget hurting other people, it's clear this fella's been punishing himself relentlessly in the gym for decades. And what's more, from the expression on his face, he was probably punishing himself vigorously while the photo was being taken, too. Can't see his hands? Are they *intentionally* hidden? Do we really *want* to know where they are? Hmm... And so, to sum up: this is the visual equivalent of having your mouth taped up and 15 sweaty unitards tied around your nose in big, homoerotic bows.

ICO

Somewhere out there, rocking gently back and forth in his chair, with crisped dribble glistening on his chin, is the resident of a secure psychiatric unit who wants his favourite art therapy drawing back. Okay, so the orderlies never liked it much, but they simply couldn't accept that it was a sword the leading figure was gripping.



FREQUENCY

Picture this: An awful crash. At night. Catapulted through the windscreen at 80mph, you're now 30ft clear of your car. Riding a tidal wave of pain, your body briefly thrusts you into consciousness. As the emergency services thread hopelessly through rubbernecking drivers, you open your eyes one last time. In an instant of clarity, you notice how pretty the lights from passing cars are just as you make out a solitary word uttered by a horrified bystander. What? It's a music game?

GIFT

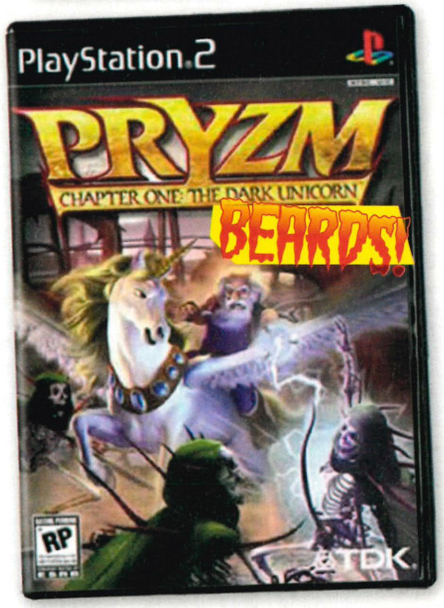
Like a turd in your Margarita, this is the kind of gift that gives generosity a bad name. What the hell *is* that badly rendered, hateful red thing with eyes like bulging catheter bags? Look, he's trying to be your friend but you just want to stove his gurning mug right through his brain pan. And that goes for the circus freaks in the background and that inexplicable, poisonous gnome, with their lobotomized 1,000-yard stares. On second thoughts, pass the Margarita.

JURASSIC PARK: OPERATION GENESIS

Oh, this is wrong on so many levels. The desperate corner tear *boasting* the third dimension. You might as well talk up the fact it's not in black and white. Oh, wait a minute, looking at that soul witheringly dull background image, it might well be. And where did they get those mangy craposaurs from? If they don't cark it before the intro movie's over we'd be amazed. As for the tag line, here's an idea...

KESSEN II

'*Kessen II*' is based on a 600-year-old Chinese novel called *The Romance Of The Three Kingdoms*. The epic covers a tumultuous period of the Han dynasty that spans the second and third centuries – a time when the soul of China as a nation was forged on the anvil of war with bravery, honour and ruthless vision. Which kind of begs the question, "How come the trio on the game cover look like the tail end of the Berlin Love Parade?" Looks like it wasn't just the catapults that were flaming.

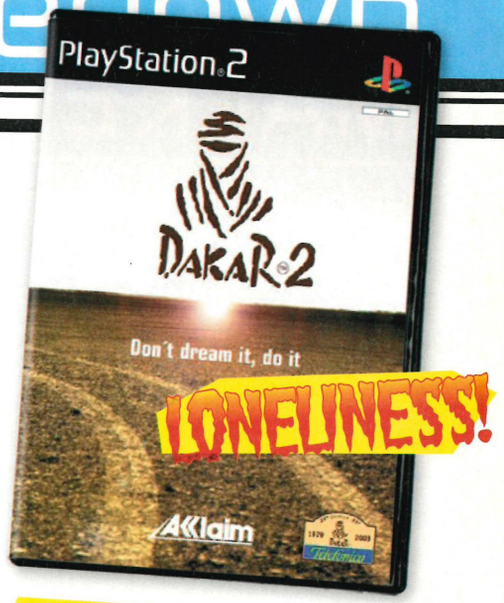


PRYZM CHAPTER ONE: THE DARK UNICORN

Let's put aside the towering but fatally crippled self-belief at work in calling a game with a fugly, balding dwarf riding a stroppy mythical beast on the cover 'chapter one' for a moment. Actually, no. Let's not. Let's *really* think about it. You too TDK. After that, not even a glimpse of Gwyneth Paltrow in the bottom right can salvage this shocker.

MTV MUSIC GENERATOR 2

Never before in the history of videogames has box art so spectacularly failed to convey the excitement and funutainment potential within as it does with *MTV Music Generator 2*. "Aha," you say, "but music isn't a visual medium, nimrod." True. But that doesn't fully explain the Death Star schematic and a grey image of David Morales totting up the noughts on his cheque. Art budget slashed, you say?



DAKAR 2

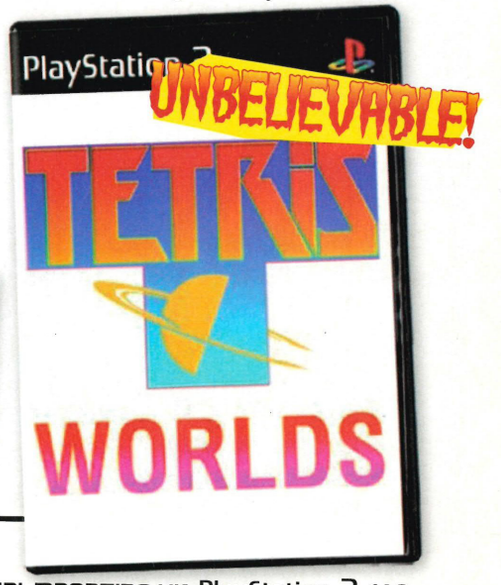
Do *what* exactly? Turn left? Get yourself mummified? Head towards the light? How long should we put aside to 'do it?' Whatever *it* is, it's been going on since 1979 and there doesn't seem to be any end in sight. Frankly, we wouldn't be surprised if it's way too late to get started now in any event. Well, that's a relief. Saved ourselves 40 quid.

SIR ALEX FERGUSON'S PLAYER MANAGER 2001

Because nothing says good times like the cold dead eyes of a cantankerous pensioner staring deep into your soul, as if to whisper, "Everything you know is wrong. Now give me £39.99 and I might go away." Come on 3DO. He must have smiled at least *once* in his life. Oh. Really? Never?

TETRIS WORLDS

Come on. You're not even trying now. The inspiration? The whole sodding universe. Untold millions of fragile moments thrilled and replete with unfathomable beauty and life. The execution? Sweet Jesus in a hatchback! Find the designers right now and brick them up in their office with their iPods. With odd shaped blocks. Now *there's* an image of beauty...



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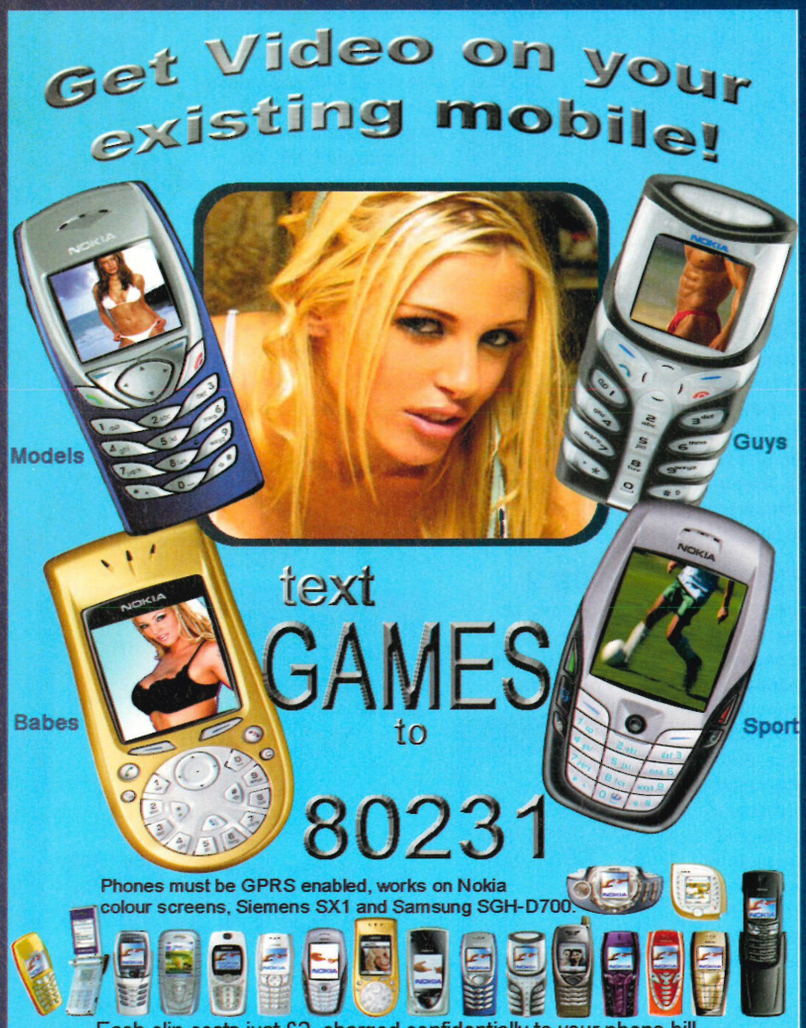

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10 REASONS

WHY PLAYING GAMES MAKES YOU IRRESISTIBLE TO WOMEN

ILLUSTRATION: SIMON MIDDLEWEEK

01 You're All For Independent Women
Their natural grace, their strength and beauty, love and honesty. The modern woman. A creature that inspires wonderment and adoration in equal measure. Put simply, you love the human female. As vital as she is glorious, as devoted as she is perfect. The fact that your chosen hobby portrays lasses as gymnastic, whale titted man-killers with the upper body strength of a stone mason and the arse of a school boy is of course merely artisic licence.

02 You're Charming
It's scientifically impossible to play a James Bond game without absorbing *some* of the great man's charm and sophistication, right? Just remember. In the real world you can't wear a safari suit with dignity, while doing the sex with a variety of international ladies will likely result in nob rot. Seriously though, have you got the balls to order a Dry Martini down Wetherspoons? Oh, and post-coitally skewering your girl with a flaming shish-kebab because 'she looked like she was reaching for a gun' is unlikely to secure you a second date.

03 You're Intelligent
Playing games 14 hours a day doesn't just give you crippling curvature of the spine and thumbs like Ginsters buffet bars, there's a lot of latent brain-knowing to be picked up from serious time spent on your PS2. And what flesh and blood woman could possibly resist a man who knows the stopping distance of a 1967 Camaro at 87mph in the wet, or the Japanese for "throw concussion grenades on my mark"?

04 You'll Never Play Around
Playing around is completely impossible for a committed romantic like you. Besides, you would actually have to leave the house first, and that ain't happening this side of *Killzone*, *Star Wars: Battlefront*, *Burnout 3*, *Area 51*... Mind you, there is an outside chance you might find another lover on the gaming forums. Just be prepared for the extremely high likelihood that when you do eventually meet under the clock at Waterloo station, HotChick_34 (who you've been swapping cooing emails with for the past four and a half weeks and claims to be a beautician from Romford, lacking in any moral fibre whatsoever) turns out to be a strapping welder from Cardiff called Owen. Or your mate Dave.

05 You'll Protect Her Honour
Your angel has been dissed. Are you going to stand for that? Are you hell. Providing you can find a convenient time for all parties involved to meet round your place for a game of '*Splitters* or *PES*, you'll be happy to protect her honour till the early hours of the morning if need be. Who said chivalry was dead? Three rounds on 'Foxy Boxer 2' says they're wrong.

06 You're Completely In Touch With Your Feminine Side
Naturally, you wouldn't tell just anyone, but if it's a matter of demonstrating that you're not actually surgically removed from your emotions like most guys... Okay, there wasn't *really* grit in your eye at the end of *Jak And Daxter*, and just maybe the bawling coming from your room during the latter stages of *Pandora Tomorrow* wasn't down to the terrorists begging for mercy. Oh, and when Jade's uncle got kidnapped in *Beyond Good & Evil*? Sobbed like a baby we did. Impressed? Come back...

07 You're A Good Listener
Simply by having experienced *Metal Gear Solid 2* with its sudden, crashing changes in direction and terminally long-winded cut-scenes, you will, no doubt, have already developed a near-Olympian tolerance for baffling dialogue ripe with hidden meanings and potential pitfalls. After sitting through Snake discussing identity on a genetic level for the best part of day, surviving 30 minutes on why "Mel is an utter cow" topped off with the loaded question, "Do you think I'm overreacting? Be honest..." won't faze you for an instant.

08 You've Got Nimble Fingers
Perfect for giving back rubs, knitting jumpers and undertaking other (ahem) entertainment procedures.

09 When You Find Her, You'll Worship Her
Not having seen daylight for a month will do that to a man, and nothing says 'keeper' to a member of the opposite sex like a prospective partner who worships the ground she walks on. And by 'worship' we mean love and cherish. Not the kind that involves an altar in the basement decorated with stolen thongs, dead baby birds and blurry, surveillance-style photos taped onto Barbie dolls' heads.

10 She Loves Playing Games Even More Than You Do
Ha. Ha. Ha. Sorry, couldn't resist. Utter nonsense, of course.

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P.I.M.P · 50 cent #	112599
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LOSE YOURSELF · eminem #	112289
THE LOGICAL SONG · scooter #	111965
BECAUSE I GOT HIGH · afroman #	111454

R & B

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BABY BOY · beyonce knowles ft. sean paul #	112933
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DIARY · alicia keys	114378
YOU SHOULD'VE KNOWN BETTER · monica	114406
F.U.R.B · frankee	113917
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MOVE YA BODY · nina sky feat jabba	114218
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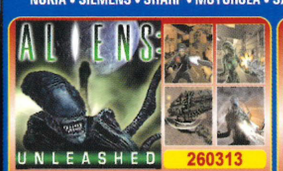

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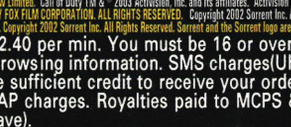

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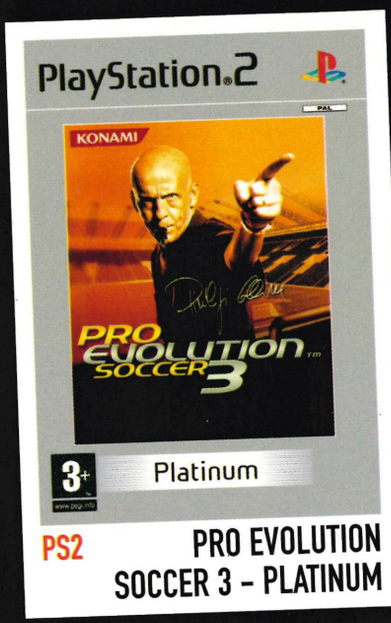

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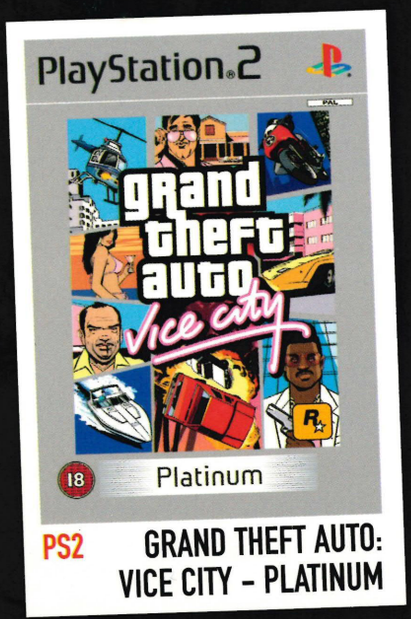

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