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ISSUE 096 MARCH 2008
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"SOMETHING WICK-ED THIS WAY COMES"

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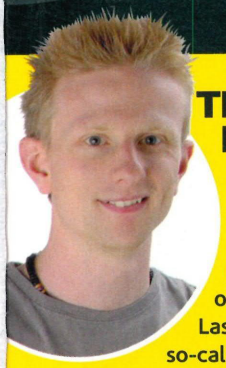
WELCOME

REVIEWS PREVIEWS FEATURES ALWAYS FIRST FOR PS2



THE ONLY UK MAG THAT'S DEVOTED TO PS2

Is it just me or did Hollywood take a bit of a nose-dive in 2007? Last summer's crop of so-called blockbusters was average at best, and depressingly, their gaming spin-offs were even worse (Pirates of the Caribbean, anyone? Spider-Man 3?).

So, for me, 2008 can only be an improvement. And with that in mind, let's talk Spiderwick…

Sprite on

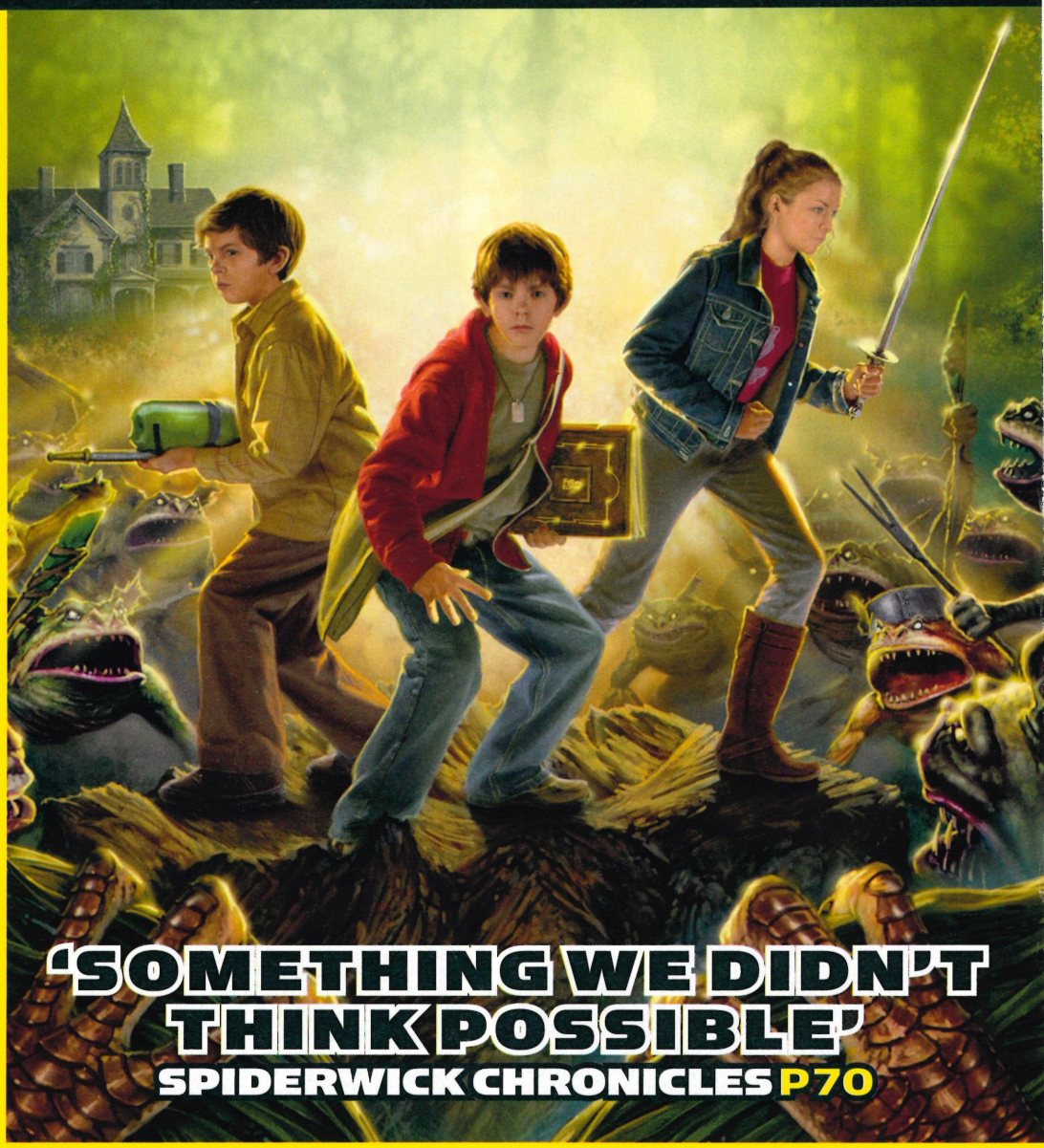
On the surface, *The Spiderwick Chronicles* books and film look like yet more tiresome *Harry Potter* clones.

But look a little deeper and you'll find its actually a deep, well-crafted fantasy with serious stuff to say about the break-down the of modern family.

It's the perfect antitode to the dreadful recent adaptation of *The Northern*… sorry, *The Golden Compass*. And the Spiderwick game, which you can find reviewed on p70, is a similarly massive improvement on the spin-off Compass game.

To top off the good news, Lego Indy and Lego Batman both look damn fine. Roll on the summer!

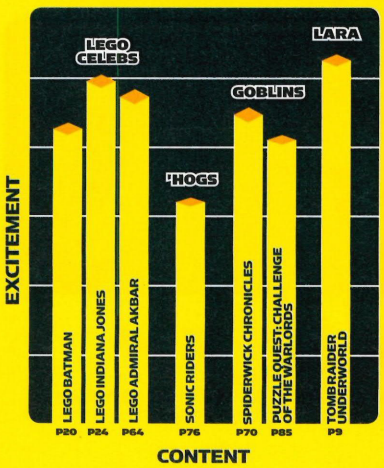
ANDY HARTUP
ACTING EDITOR
ahartup@futurenet.co.uk



'SOMETHING WE DIDN'T THINK POSSIBLE'

SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES P70

THIS MAG CONTAINS



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P22 LEGO BATMAN Holy PS2, readers! We've got the scoop on the Dark Knight's latest

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P50 BLAST FROM THE PAST Find the lost PS1 classics that could be lurking in your loft

P70 SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES The film's getting rave reviews, so how does the game fare?

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MEET THE TEAM

ANDY HARTUP
ACTING EDITOR
New York: the Statue of Liberty, Central Park, the Empire State… but for Andy, the highlight of his recent trip there was buying Harvey Birdman for his PSP.
PLAYING NOW Sonic Riders
CAN'T WAIT FOR Rock Band

SOPHIE MASON
PRODUCTION EDITOR
With Andy away, Sophie ran the office with a rod of iron, forcing everyone else to make the tea and threatening to sack anyone who beat her at Guitar Hero.
PLAYING NOW Puzzle Quest
CAN'T WAIT FOR Lego Indiana Jones

MIKE STERRY
STAFF WRITER
Poor Mike's been in agony lately with an impacted molar. It hurts. A lot. All the time. But it hasn't stopped him drinking Dr Pepper… or eating souls.
PLAYING NOW Legacy of Kain: Defiance
CAN'T WAIT FOR Mercenaries 2

KIM RICHARDS
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Kim is flat-hunting, so if you know of anywhere in the South-west big enough for her collection of Final Fantasy and/or Matt Bellamy memorabilia, please get in touch.
PLAYING NOW Wild Arms 5
CAN'T WAIT FOR Lego Batman

MARK MITCHELL
ART EDITOR
This issue's PS1 feature was a trip down memory lane for Mark: not a day went by without him telling us how young people nowadays don't listen… or something (we weren't listening).
PLAYING NOW Metal Gear Solid on PS1
CAN'T WAIT FOR Ferrari Challenge

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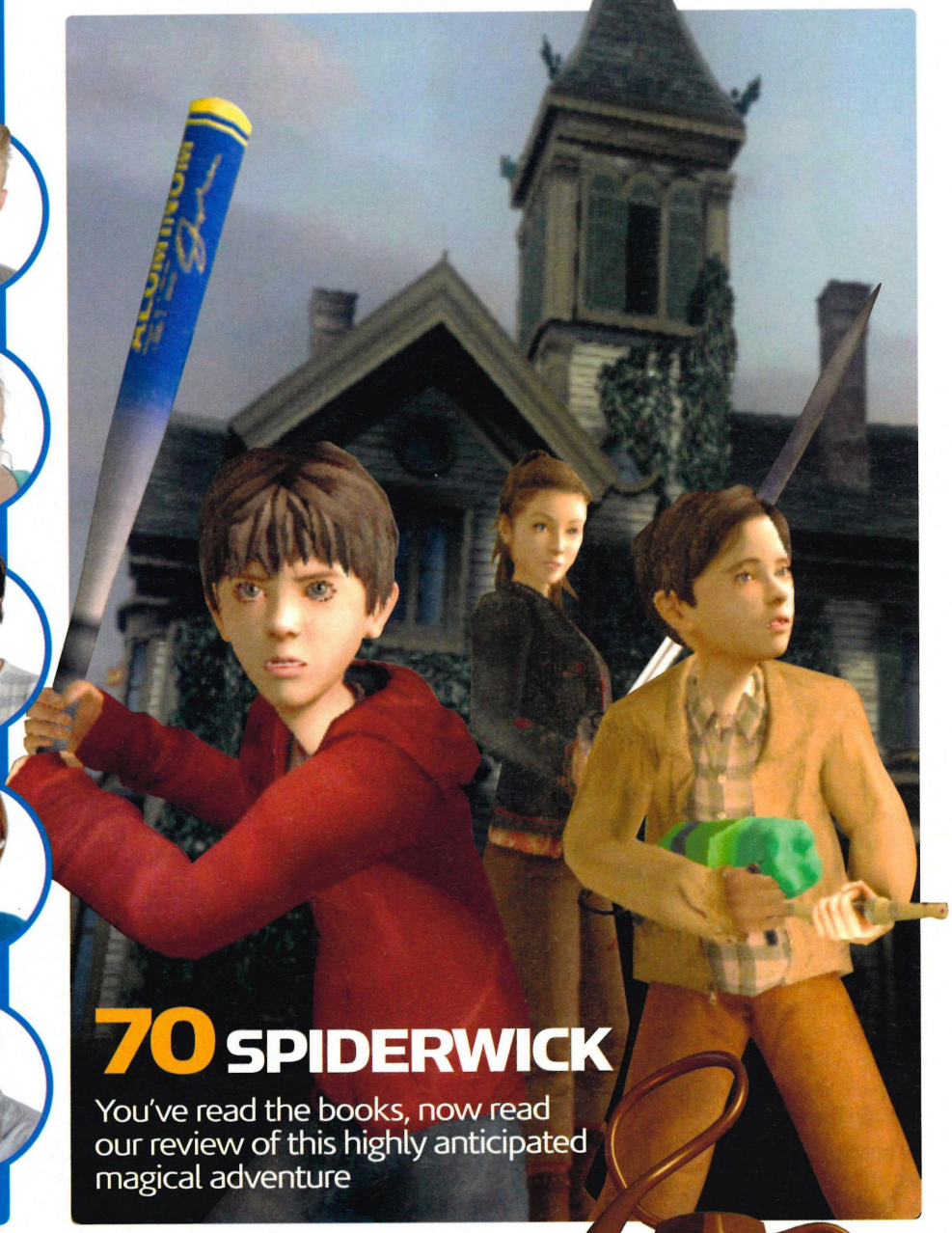

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You've read the books, now read our review of this highly anticipated magical adventure

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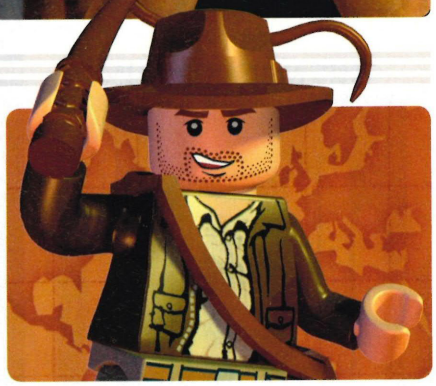
Find out which PS1 games are worth digging out and which should you leave to rest in peace



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One man, one whip, three great big adventures in one awesome-looking Lego game!

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Holy building bricks! We're mega-excited about this game – find out why in this extensive preview

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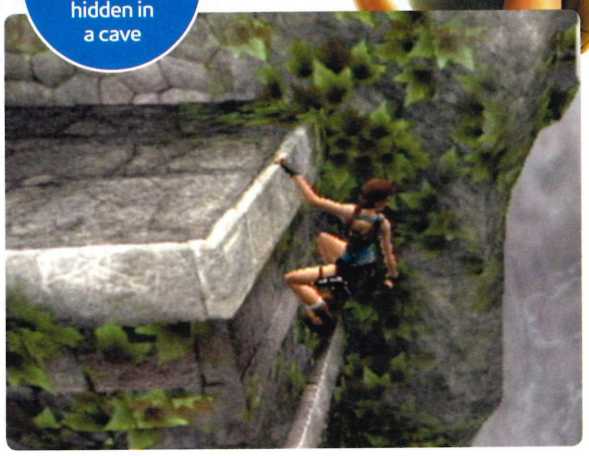
This month's exclusive demos in detail plus how you can win PS2 goodies by playing them!

TOMB RAIDER ANNIVERSARY

PUB Eidos **Dev** Crystal Dynamics **ETA** Out Now **WEB** tombraider.com/anniversary



CAN YOU DO THIS? Find the small medpack that's hidden in a cave

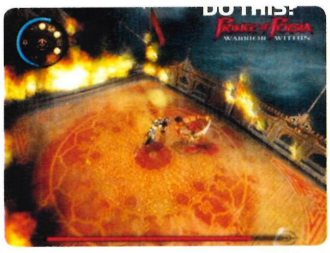
WHAT IS IT? Lara Croft, the First Lady of PlayStation, returns to her roots in this remake of her very first adventure – polished up to celebrate its 10th anniversary. In this demo you can explore the tombs of the Lost Valley in Peru, fight wolves and solve the infamous cog puzzle.

PERFORMANCE TIPS
If Lara's moving too slowly for your liking, tap △ to make her speed up, whether she's climbing, running or swimming.

CONTROLS
□ Grapple
△ Interact
○ Crouch/Dodge
× Jump
L1 Aim
R1 Fire weapon
Left thumbstick: Move
Right thumbstick: Move camera/Change auto-aim target

PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE WARRIOR WITHIN

PUB Ubisoft **OPS2 SCORE** 9/10 **WEB** tinyurl.com/28ept5



WHAT IS IT? The opening level of this epic tale. Defend your ship from mysterious sand beasts, then battle the ultimate dominatrix, Shahdee.

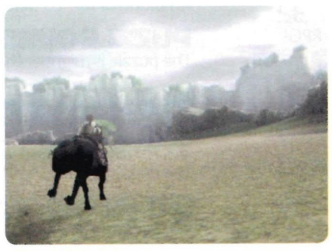
PERFORMANCE TIPS
Make the most of the combos that the tutorial teaches you. You'll need 'em.

CONTROLS
× Roll/Jump
□ Attack
△ Grab
○ Pick up/Throw
L1 Rewind/Slow down
R1 Wall-run/Block
L2 and R2 Change camera
Right thumbstick: Camera

SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

CAN YOU DO THIS? Kill the colossus without falling off once

PUB Sony **OPS2 SCORE** 9/10 **WEB** shadowofthecolossus.

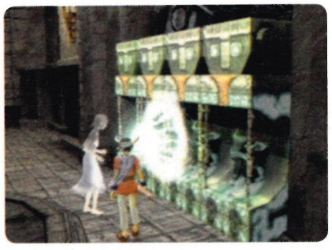


WHAT IS IT? Seek and destroy the first gargantuan monster in this beautiful game. Ride across the magnificent landscape, scale rock walls, then finally fight the beast by climbing, clinging on and stabbing his weak points.

PERFORMANCE TIPS
Use ○ to find where you have to go next and discover the colossus' weakpoints

CONTROLS
L1 Look
R1 Cling
× Call horse
△ Jump
□ Attack
Right thumstick: Camera

ICO



WHAT IS IT? A mind-melting puzzle game. You're in a huge, mysterious castle – can you help Princess Yorda and escape?

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

WHAT IS IT? Get your Bond on in the first level of this shooter, rescuing the PM's daughter from kidnappers.

ROCKY LEGENDS

WHAT IS IT? Your chance to fight three rounds as Rocky, George Fullmer or Clubber Lang at the docks or Odessa stadium.

THE INCREDIBLE HULK

WHAT IS IT? Time to get angry as you punch, kick and manhandle your way through the US army in the game's first level.

ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES

WHAT IS IT? Help Arthur defend the Minimoys' village, race around in a tiny toy car, or fly a bombing mosquito.

SONIC RIDERS

WHAT IS IT? Ride like the wind through Metal City as Sonic, Tails, Dr Eggman, Knuckles, Amy, Jet, Storm or Wave.

ALSO ON THE DISC

THE INCREDIBLES

WHAT IS IT? Suit up as Mr Incredible and face the challenges of the Robot Arena.

BIONICLE HEROES

WHAT IS IT? Blast your way through the Jungle level of this Lego shooter, taking on hordes of Lego beasties.

FAQ

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

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

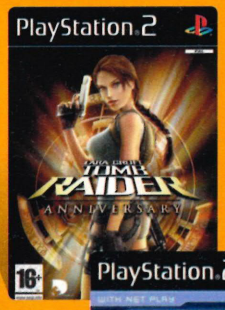
DISC CHALLENGE

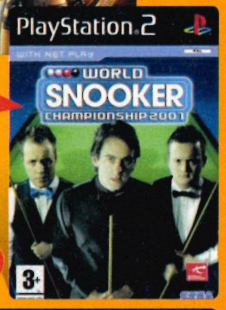
Boot up the demo disc, beat the standard we set, and you could win!

THE CHALLENGE

SONIC RIDERS: FASTEST TIME

Sonic the Hedgehog is quick, but just how quick? That's up to you to decide! This month's challenge requires you to boot up the Sonic Riders demo and take on the Metal City race. Choose any racer you wish, just make sure you beat our time of 02.54.92. If anyone gets the same time, the winner will be the one with the fastest Third Lap.





WIN THESE 2 GREAT PS2 GAMES!

HOW TO ENTER

1. BY TEXT
Snap a pic on your phone, attach it to an MMS and text CHALLENGEDISC (then a space) followed by your name and where you live to 07738647177.

2. BY EMAIL
Email a pic of your score to psnation@futurenet.co.uk with 'Disc Challenge' and your score in the subject line. Don't forget to give us your name and address too!

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

Closing date: 26 March 2008
For competition rules and full terms and conditions, see p111.

ISSUE 94'S WINNERS

THE CHALLENGE: SINGSTAR ROCKS: HIGHEST SCORE

NAME	SCORE
1 Sean Reagan, Ireland	9430
2 Matthew Griffith, North Wales	9280
3 Lee Jackson, Watford	9010
4 Stephan Elliot, Lizburn	8700
5 Katie Walker, via email	8120

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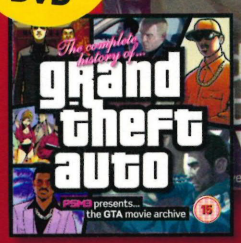

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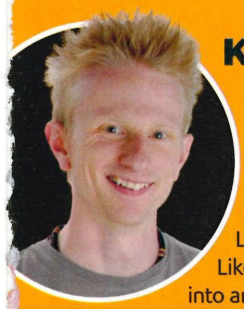

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE

Mmmm, it's great to see LaraCroft back in OPS2. Like randomly bumping into an old flame and finding out she's still sexy and single, it's the kind of news that really brightens your day and puts a spring in your step.

And thank heavens we found out about Ms Croft's latest outing, because it just about tempers the announcement that THQ has decided to scrap the release of Destroy All Humans! Big Willy Unleashed for PS2.

We were all ready to review the game this issue, but it seems Crypto the alien has failed to perform at the crucial moment.

Willy or won't he?

Personally, I'm a big DAH! fan, so the loss of a fresh human-frying adventure is tough to bear.

But I'm sure I'll get over it. Lego Batman and Lego Indiana Jones both look like a tasty prospects, and there's always last month's 10/10 game, Persona 3 to play through. That should keep me busy until, say, summer…

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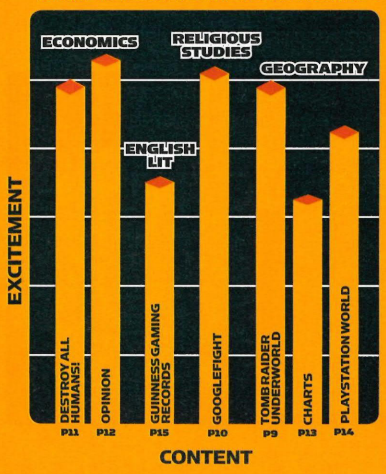
THIS SECTION CONTAINS



Tomb Raider is back on PS2!

The First Lady of PlayStation remembers her roots

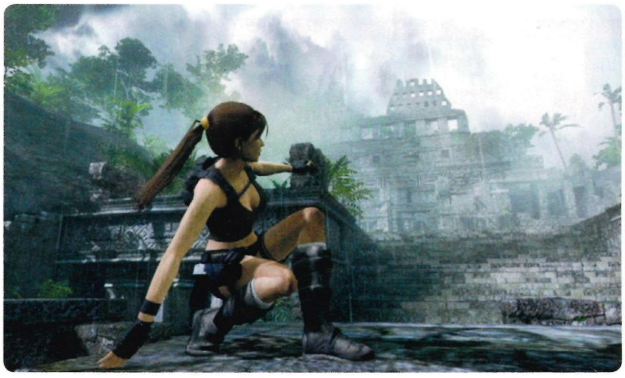
Tomb Raider: Underworld is coming to the PS2 – and that's official!

It was originally planned as a PS3 exclusive, but Lara Croft will now share her newest adventure, Tomb Raider: Underworld, with her PS2 fans.

Lara's eighth outing is in the hands of developer Crystal Dynamics, also responsible for Ms Croft's sterling return to form in Tomb Raider Legend and Tomb Raider Anniversary.

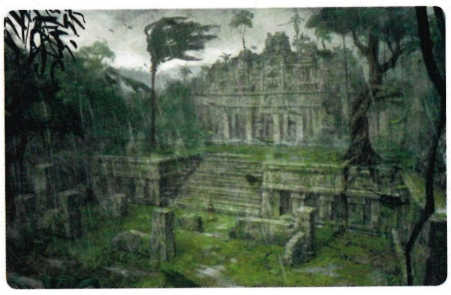
Continuing where Legend left off, Underworld sees Lara on top tomb-raiding form.

This time around, she's focusing her attention on ancient Mayan temples found deep in the South American rain forest.



Under where?

The title refers to Xibalba, the Mayan underworld. It seems the Mayans have predicted that the world is going to end in 2012 and our leading lady ▶



Underworld is set to be a classic Tomb Raider experience filled with complex puzzles to solve

In Underworld Lara Croft is more athletic than ever

has handily found the entrance to the demonic realm at the heart of the prophesy.

The world of Xibalba sounds like the perfect place for artefact hunter Lara. According to legend, it's ruled by 12 demon lords who live to torment humans.

Aside from demanding human sacrifices, they lure people into their court to face a series of deadly trials.

Demon days

Forced through six ominously themed rooms (the Dark House, the Cold House, the Jaguar House, the Bat House, the Razor House and the Hot House), the victim must survive these ordeals before being challenged to a ball game.

Ball games were an important and symbolic part of Mayan culture. Yes, really. Problem is, being wicked demons, the Xibalbans use a ball filled with blades.

It's a classic Tomb Raider set-up and Crystal Dynamics is using the Xibalban setting to its fullest potential. Lara will still need to defend herself against the odd gun-toting guerrilla, but most of her enemies won't be humanoid. After all, she's travelling to places from where no one has ever previously returned.

Project leader Rob Pavey says the team is "focused on puzzles and elegant movement". If forced to fight, however, Lara's armed not only with her trusty pistols, but the environment itself – she can use bits of it to her advantage.

For example, she can grab wooden staves to fend off foes, then jam the staves into walls and use them to vault to safer heights.

Indeed, Lara's world will have a much larger impact on her adventuring than ever before. When a ledge is wet, for example, it'll be slippery, so our gal has more chance of losing her grip if she, ahem, hangs about.

So far it seems the new Lara has far greater athletic and acrobatic skills than before. She can cartwheel, wall-kick and cross hair-thin balance beams. And she can do all of this wherever and whenever she likes, because her route through the game isn't going to be as proscribed as it was in earlier games.

The lobby of the Mayan Welcome Break had definitely seen better days, thought Lara...

It looks pretty, but a gateway to the Mayan underworld is close by

Bike it like that

Lara's trusty motorcycle will also make a return, but if you hated the rather linear and dull vehicular sections in Legend, don't despair.

Rather than heavily restricting its use, Lara's bike is going to function a bit like Agro, the horse from Shadow of the Colossus.

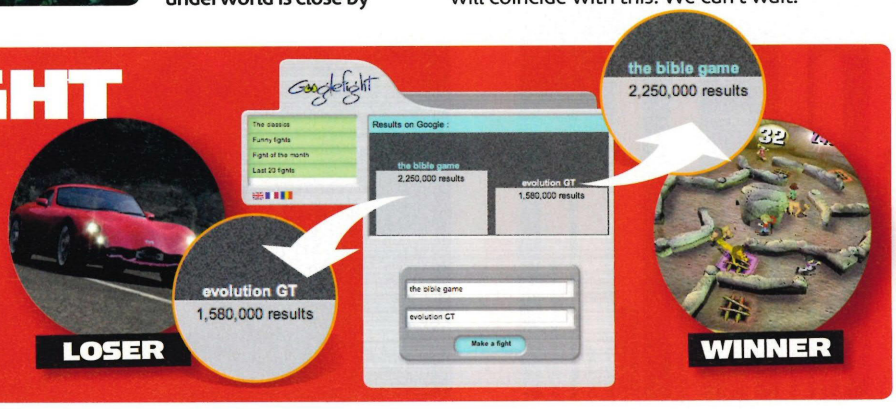
In other words, you'll be able to prop it up in a handy alcove, go off to do some raiding, then return to zoom away to the next area. The bike is even crucial to solving some of the puzzles.

After Crystal Dynamics' success with Legend and Anniversary, we're looking forward to Underworld very much. It's set to hit PS3 at the end of 2008 and we predict the PS2 release will coincide with this. We can't wait.

GOOGLEFIGHT

This Month: The Bible Game vs Evolution GT

So how *did* life come into being? Did an omnipotent being create us or are we simply mutated fish-frog-monkey offspring? That's right, this month The Bible Game takes on Evolution GT. But it's Darwin on the ropes, as the Bible Game wins with a massive 2,250,000 hits, while Evolution GT gets 1,580,000. Of course, it doesn't help that EGT is a *racing* game.



Destroy All Humans! deserts PS2

Plus Juiced and Stuntman series are cancelled

Hotly anticipated game Destroy All Humans! Big Willy Unleashed will not be released on PS2.

And there will never be any more Juiced or Stuntman games on any format.

In a shocking statement following its 2007 financial report, publisher THQ said it was cancelling the planned PS2 version of Big Willy Unleashed because some of the firm's other titles underperformed last year.

Big Willy Unleashed was to have been the third PS2 game in the DAH! series. It will be released on PSP and Nintendo Wii, however, and its sister game Path of the Furon will go ahead on next-gen consoles.

THQ has also decided to drop the Stuntman and Juiced racing series entirely because they haven't been selling well enough.

Natural selection

Although THQ titles such as WWE SmackDown vs Raw 2008 and MX vs ATV sold a high volume of units last year, others including Conan, Stuntman Ignition and Ratatouille fared less well.

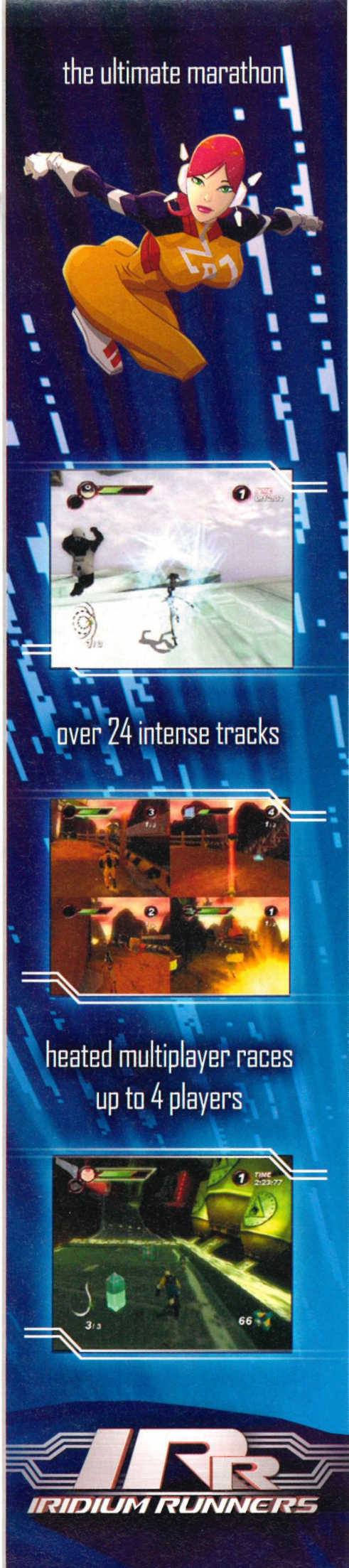
That's forced THQ to look at its current and future catalogue. As a result, it has decided 'not to pursue its Juiced and Stuntman intellectual properties'.

In a statement on the publisher's product development plans, THQ president and chief executive officer Brian Farrell said: "Consistent with these initiatives, we have taken actions to strengthen our pipeline and position ourselves to compete aggressively with compelling, high quality games."

Juiced was originally bought from now-bankrupt Acclaim's catalogue, while Stuntman was acquired from Atari's brood.

Hopefully these drastic measures will sharpen THQ's focus on its future projects.

THQ is best known for its WWE and Nickelodeon games, so we can expect plenty more from those strongly performing franchises this year.



MOUTH PIECE

'Games are too expensive' says OPS2's Andy Hartup

Gaming is an expensive hobby. Sure, you can do it on the cheap by fishing around in bargain bins, renting, and borrowing from mates. But when most new titles are still weighing in at around £30, your bank account will inevitably lag behind your thirst for fresh thrills.

The problem is, games can be too expensive. Admittedly, the mighty shadow cast by the arrival of the PS3 (seriously, that thing is big) has meant a cool-down in last-gen game prices. You can pick up most new titles for around £30. But some – notably high-profile games such as The Simpsons and Need For Speed ProStreet – are still clocking in at £40.

Port stuff

Considering these games are somewhat watered-down ports of their next-gen cousins, it doesn't seem right that PS2 owners are expected to pay such a high price for them.

Meanwhile, yearly updates such as Smackdown Vs Raw 2008 and Madden NFL 08 are still full price, despite offering little new content.

It's not all doom and gloom, though. Quality games such as Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories can be snapped up for a tenner, new, and there are more great secondhand PS2 games floating around than ever before.

So, if you're savvy, you can avoid the financial sting – but you might have to wait a while for some of the newer stuff.

@EMAIL US
Send your comments to psnation@futurenet.co.uk

Win! Guinness World Records: Gamer's Edition 2008

Because knowledge is power, after all

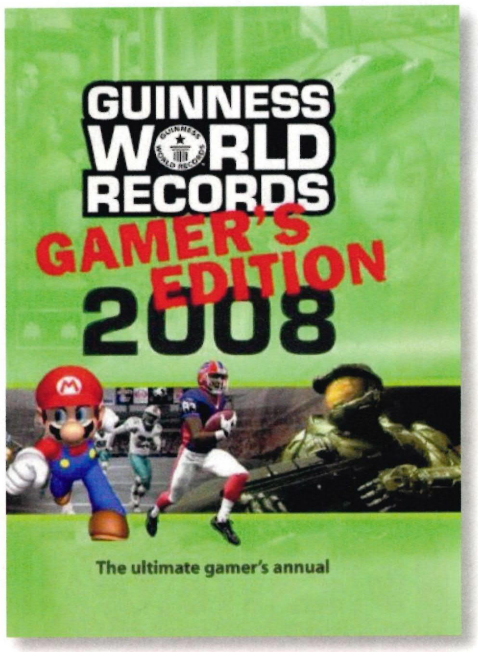
Videogames. We love them. You love them. And some people love them so much, they get sent to prison for refusing to turn off Tetris during a flight.

Didn't know that fact? How about the Highest Ranking Game of All Time? Or the Highest Grossing Game in One Day?

If you love trivia like this, the Guinness World Records Gamers Edition is for you. It's the ultimate guide to gaming feats.

And for a few lucky readers, we've got 10 copies to give away for the record-breaking price of absolutely nothing!

Just answer the question below to be in with a chance of becoming a trivia overlord.



QUESTION

Which of these is a PlayStation 2 game?

A Halo 3
B Super Mario Galaxy
C Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater
D Uncharted: Drake's Fortune

HOW TO ENTER

By post
Write your answer, followed by your full name and address, on a postcard and send it to the address on p3. Mark it clearly 'Gamer Records Comp'.

By email
Email your answer with your full name and address to psnation@futurenet.co.uk, with 'Gamer Records Comp' in the subject line.

By text
Text OPS2RECORD followed by a space, then your answer to 87103. Texts cost 25p plus your standard network rate.

Closing date: 26 March.
For full terms and conditions see p111.

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

PS2 UK CHARTS

1 GUITAR HERO III LEGENDS OF ROCK

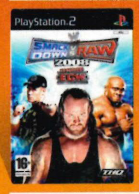
Finally! The videogame king of rock gets the recognition it deserves and becomes top of the pops. GH III, we salute you...

Activision 9/10 ▲ Last month: 6

2 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2008

The war of the footie games rages on as PES 2008 claws its way back up through the league, showing FIFA 08 a clean pair of heels.

Konami 9/10 ▲ Last month: 4



3 WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008

Speaking of comebacks, the men and women of WWE keep bouncing back, faster than The Rock can lay the smack down.

THQ 8/10 ▲ Last month: 5

4 THE SIMPSONS GAME

The world's best-loved dysfunctional family is still keeping us massively entertained with its genuinely funny and inventive videogame romp.

EA 8/10 ▼ Last month: 3

5 NEED FOR SPEED PROSTREET

The poorest instalment in the usually sterling NFS series, ProStreet is slowly slipping back in the race this month.

EA 6/10 ▼ Last month: 2

6 FIFA 08

The nation seems undecided as to which footie game to back, meaning FIFA has dropped back down after fumbling a pass.

EA 9/10 ▼ Last month: 1

7 PDC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DARTS 08

Big sweaty men in the pub, throwing things at the wall turns out to be a decent draw for gamers.

Oxygen 6/10 New Entry

8 TRANSFORMERS THE GAME

The XXL toasters are still exercising a powerful pull on game buyers, it seems. Perhaps they've taken over the nation's PS2s...

Activis'n 5/10 ▲ Last month: 10

9 SIMS 2 CASTAWAY

We hope these stranded Sims have packed their desert island discs, because it looks like they're not going home for a good while yet.

EA 8/10 ▼ Last month: 8

10 BUZZ! THE HOLLYWOOD QUIZ

Britain is a nation of quiz lovers, and this is certainly reflected in Buzz's continuous appearance in the charts.

Sony 8/10 ▼ Last month: 9

PS2 UK SALES TO DATE 9.9 MILLION

PS2 AMERICA CHARTS

POSITION		GAME	POSITION		GAME
1	▶	Guitar Hero III	6	▲	Phantasy Star Universe AOTI
2	▲	Madden NFL 08	7	▼	The Simpsons Game
3	▼	WWE Smackdown vs Raw 08	8	▼	Need For Speed ProStreet
4	NE	Rock Band	9	▼	Final Fantasy XI: Wings Of The Goddess
5	▶	Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi	10	▼	College Hoops 2K8

PS2 JAPAN CHARTS

POSITION		GAME	POSITION		GAME
1	NE	School Days LxH	6	NE	Naruto: Shippuuden N-Ultimate Accelerator 2
2	▲	World Soccer Winning Eleven 2008	7	NE	SD Gundam G Generation Spirits
3	NE	Super Robot Taisen OG: Original Generations Side Story	8	▲	Sengoku Basara 2 Eiyu Gaiden
4	▲	Ryu ga Gotoku 2	9	NE	Juiced 2: Hot Import Nights
5	▼	Powerful Pro Baseball 14: Final Edition	10	NE	Dragonball Z Sparking! Meteor

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO PLAYSTATION

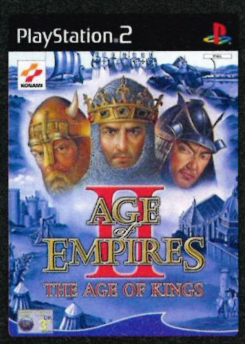
Fight these famous battles on your PS2 and see the sites where history was written without getting off your sofa!

1 KING ARTHUR
Hadrian's Wall, England

According to this game's version of events, before Arthur was a king, he was a Roman centurion, sent to defend Hadrian's Wall from rebellious Saxons. In between rescuing the pope's Roman grandson and saving Princess Guinevere, he discovers he is himself of Celtic descent. Arthur promptly renounces Roman citizenship, in favour of helping a Celtic tribe against the Saxons, and becomes their King. We prefer the Disney version, frankly.

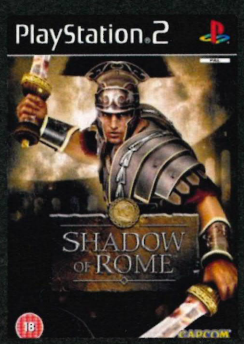
2 AGE OF EMPIRES 2: THE AGE OF KINGS
Orleans, France

In the 1300s, there was a war of epic proportions. It lasted for no less than 100 years, and is in fact known as the Hundred Years war. Basically, the French didn't want to accept that the English were their rightful masters. There was no end to the bloodshed until, in 1429, a young girl called Jeanne D'Arc drew together the French troops and drove the English out of Orleans. Well, we didn't really want it anyway.



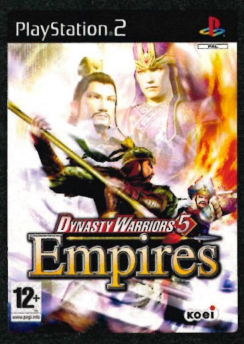
3 SHADOW OF ROME
Rome

Ancient Rome! Land of wealth and victory, feasting and drinking, blood sports and general mirth! But things quickly turned sour after the death-slash-murder of figurehead Julius Caesar. At least, they did for General Agrippa, whose father was accused of doing the deed. Cue an age of deceit, lies and assassination as Agrippa battles to uncover the truth behind the slain ruler and clear his family name.



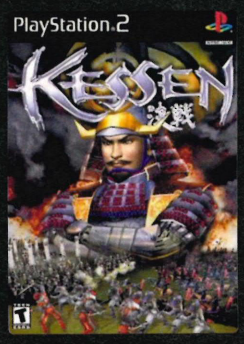
4 DYNASTY WARRIORS 5: EMPIRES
China

Back in 220BC, China was having a rough time, the continent split into three kingdoms. Esteemed author Luo Guanzhong chronicled the struggle between the three in a book called 'The Romance of the Three Kingdoms'. This game also tells the story of how one warlord overcame all the odds and managed to unite this mammoth, war-torn land under one hand.



5 KESSEN
Sekigahara, Japan

Cast your minds back to feudal Japan, and surely you'll remember the monumental struggle between the Tokugawa clan and the Toyotomi clan for leadership of this normally civil nation? The eventual outcome of the rivalry was Japan abandoning the feudal system and ending a century of civil war. The Battle of Sekigahara was the most famous event in this war, because Tokugawa was victorious, allowing him to become ruler of Japan.



All new and online

Our sister website, Games Radar, has had a facelift!

No one loves PS2 as much as we do. No one. However, if passion for PlayStation was an Olympic event, we reckon the guys at Gamesradar.com would be next to us on the winner's podium, silver medal in hand.

So it's great news that their site has been given a mahoosive overhaul, making it more than ever the number-one place to go for all things PS2, PS3 and PSP on the 'net.

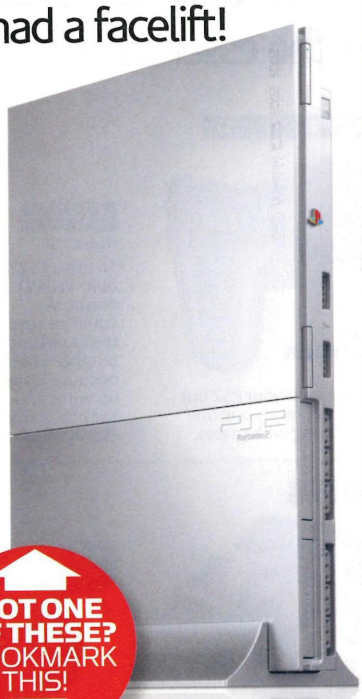
Radar love

There's the latest news on every gaming format, plus all sorts of features from in-depth pieces on your favourite series to hilarious sideways glances at some of the more ridiculous moments in gaming.

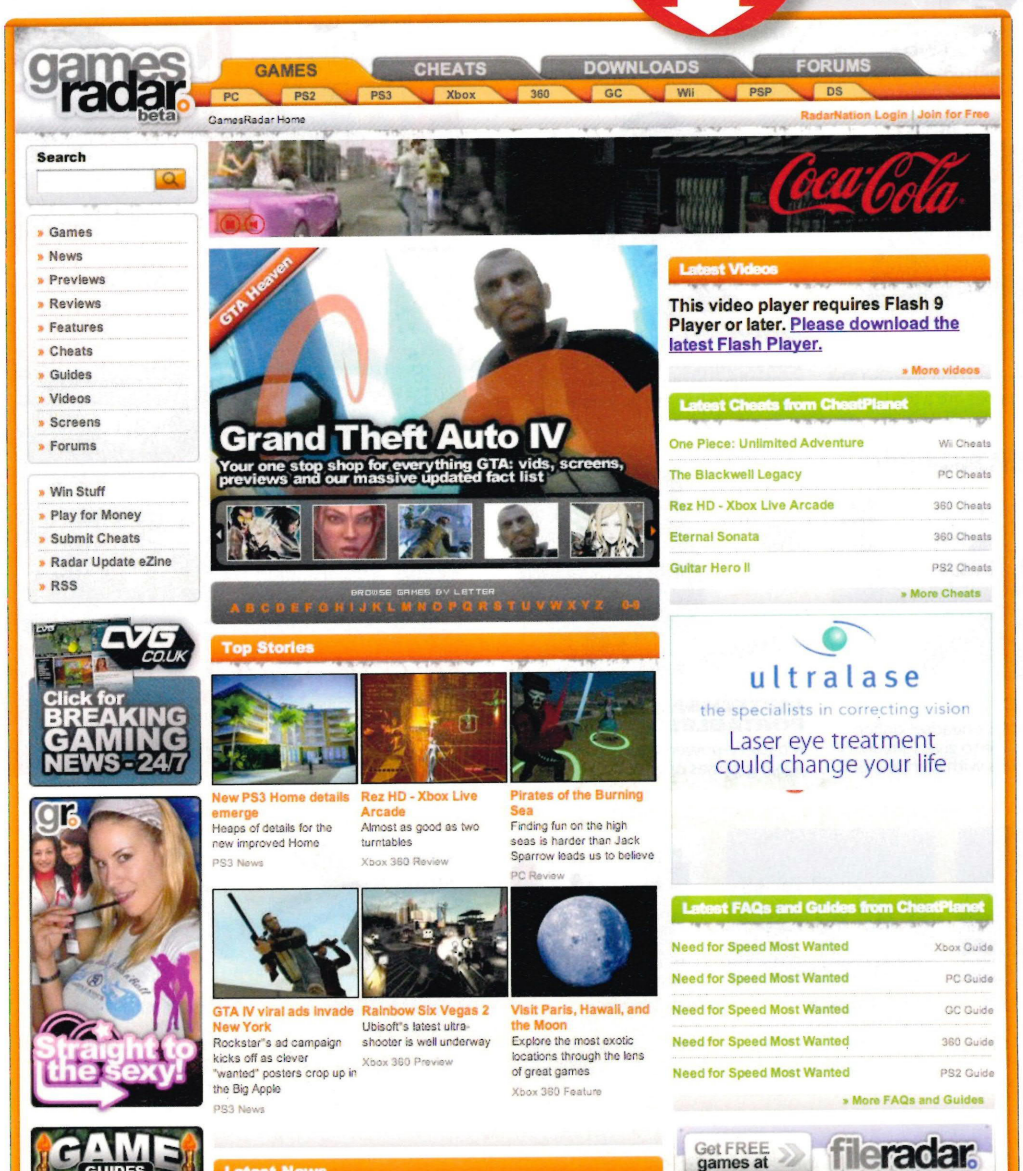
Each game featured on Gamesradar.com/uk has its own dedicated page, featuring every preview, review, video, set of screenshots and scrap of news written about it, all in one handy place.

So, from legendary games such as Metal Gear Solid 4, through to more obscure classics such as Shin Megami Tensei: Persona 3, you can find out everything you need to know in just a few clicks.

Add in competitions, forums and community features to take part in, and if you're into games (you *are*, right?), the new-look Games Radar is clearly the only gaming site you need on your bookmarks bar.



GOT ONE OF THESE? BOOKMARK THIS!



PS2 SYSTEMS CHECK

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

ESSENTIAL ACCESSORIES

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

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

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

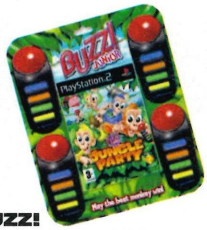
PARTY ACCESSORIES

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

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

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

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

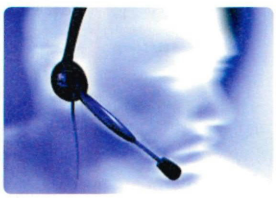


BUZZ!
With game £24.99 to £34.99
Buzz if you know the answer! The Buzz quiz games are a top laugh.

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

HARDCORE ACCESSORIES

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

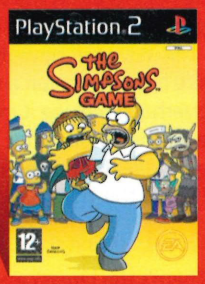


HEADSET £24.99
Use SOCOM 3's headset online to chat, offline to give squaddies orders. Works with Rainbow Six.

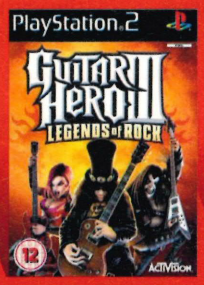
JOYTECH 8INCH LCD PORTABLE SCREEN £109.99
A battery-powered screen for playing games or watching DVDs.

OPS2'S LATEST RECOMMENDED GAMES

FIFA 08
Sport
There's plenty of life left in this fantastic footie fest.
OPS2 Score: 9/10

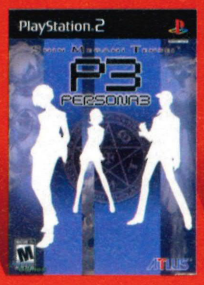


THE SIMPSONS
Adventure
A funny adventure game that fits in well with the Simpsons' legacy.
OPS2 Score: 8/10

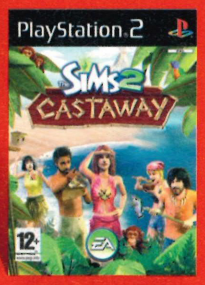


GUITAR HERO III
Rhythm
Be a rock god with the guitar-shaped peripheral and top tunes.
OPS2 Score: 9/10

BUZZ! JUNIOR MONSTER RUMBLE
Kids
Great for younglings, with minigames aplenty!
OPS2 Score: 7/10



SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI: PERSONA 3
RPG
Fight demons in this enthralling roleplayer.
OPS2 Score: 10/10



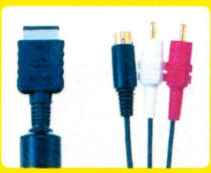
SIMS 2 CASTAWAY
Strategy
Face the trials of being marooned on an island.
OPS2 Score: 8/10

PLUG INS

Get the right PS2 cable for your TV

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

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



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

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

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

HIGH SCORE HEROES Month 3

MONTH THREE OF OUR GUITAR HERO READER COMPETITION!

This Month's Challenge

Send your best score on Medium, Hard or Expert for 'Trogdor' from Guitar Hero II or from 'Holiday in Cambodia' from GH III

THE COMPETITION

HOW IT WORKS Each month we give you a choice of two songs to play for the highest score you can get, on Medium, Hard or Expert. We name a winner each month for each difficulty.

You can only enter a score for one difficulty, and prizes are tailored to each, so if you are a GH god, don't lower yourself to an easier difficulty just to increase your chance of winning.

We know some songs are harder than others, so we use a complex series of equations based on how close each person came to the song's maximum score to determine the winners.

THE PRIZE A specialised, framed OPS2 cover proclaiming your Guitar Hero prowess to the world (just like in the game)!

HOW TO ENTER

BY POST
Send in photo evidence of your score, followed by your full name, address and email address if possible to the usual address (p37).

BY EMAIL
Email your score with your full name and address to psnation@futurenet.co.uk, subject line 'High Score Heroes'.

BY MMS
Snap a photo of your high score (make sure your capture your score, song title and difficulty) on your phone, attach it to an MMS and text OPS2HEROES (then a space) followed by your name and address to 07738 647177. Cost: 50p plus your standard network tariff rate.

Closing date: 26 March 2008
For full competition rules and text terms and conditions, see p111.

ISSUE 94 WINNERS!

ALLAN SCOTT
121,076 FOR
MISS MURDER
ON MEDIUM

ANTHONY PURKISS
319,025 FOR
MISS MURDER
ON EXPERT

THERE WERE NO SUBMISSIONS FOR HARD! C'MON YOU LOT, YOU CAN DO IT!

IRR IRIDIUM RUNNERS

available starting 22/02/08

PlayStation 2

3+ www.pegi.info

SOUTHPEAK GAMES

PLAYSTOS ENTERTAINMENT

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PlayStation®
Official Magazine - UK

The only magazine with a playable PS3 Blu-ray disc

On sale now

PS3 Blu-ray disc 10 games to play including Burnout Paradise, FIFA Street 3, Kane & Lynch: Dead Men, The Club, Conan, Pro Evo 2008, Ratchet & Clank and Sega Rally.

First for PS3, PSP and PS2
This month: exclusive 14-page Resistance 2 feature, reviews of Condemned 2 and DMC4, plus hot new info on The Agency and GTA IV.

WIN A FREE SUBSCRIPTION NOW!

To enter the draw for a free subscription to PlayStation. Official Magazine - UK magazine simply text 87103 within the time specified below with OPMFREE2 followed by your date of birth. Alternatively send your name, address, mobile number, date of birth and the magazine name with issue number to Subs Draw, Future Publishing, Beauford Court, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Entries must be received between 31 January 2008 and 12 March 2008. The winner will be selected at random from all entries received between the relevant dates. The ten winners will be notified within 28 days of the closing date and will need to supply their full address including a UK postcode. Texts will be charged at 25p plus your normal network tariff. Lines are open 24 hours a day, and you can enter as many times as you like. By entering this competition, you consent to us using your personal details to send you information about products and services of Future Publishing Limited which may be of interest to you. If you do not want to receive this information, please include the word "NO" at the end of your text message or in your postal entry.

By taking part in a Competition, you agree to be bound by the Competition Rules which are summarised below but can be viewed in full at www.futuretcs.com. Late or incomplete entries will be disqualified. Proof of posting (if relevant) shall not be deemed proof of delivery. Entries must be submitted by an individual (not via any agency or similar) and, unless otherwise stated, are limited to one per household. The Company reserves the right in its sole discretion to substitute any prize with cash or a prize of comparable value. Unless otherwise stated, the Competition is open to all GB residents of 18 years and over, except employees of Future Publishing and any party involved in the competition or their households. By entering a Competition you give permission to use your name, likeness and personal information in connection with the Competition and for promotional purposes. All entries will become the property of the Company upon receipt and will not be returned. You warrant that the Competition entry is entirely your own work and not copied or adapted from any other source. If you are a winner, you may have to provide additional information. Details of winners will be available on request within three months of the closing date. If you are a winner, receipt by you of any prize is conditional upon you complying with (amongst other things) the Competition Rules. You acknowledge and agree that neither the Company nor any associated third parties [illegible]

PREVIEWS

EXCLUSIVES · FIRST LOOKS · HANDS-ON PLAY · LATEST INFO

BLOCKIN' HELL, I CAN'T BLOCKIN' WAIT...

Oh my God, could I *be* more excited about Lego Indiana Jones and Lego Batman?

Just putting together our previews of them has had me going 'ooh so cute so cute!' every five minutes. Which everyone else in the office didn't get bored with at all.

It has totally made up for the disappointment of finding out that Destroy All Humans! 3 isn't coming to PS2.

Childish things

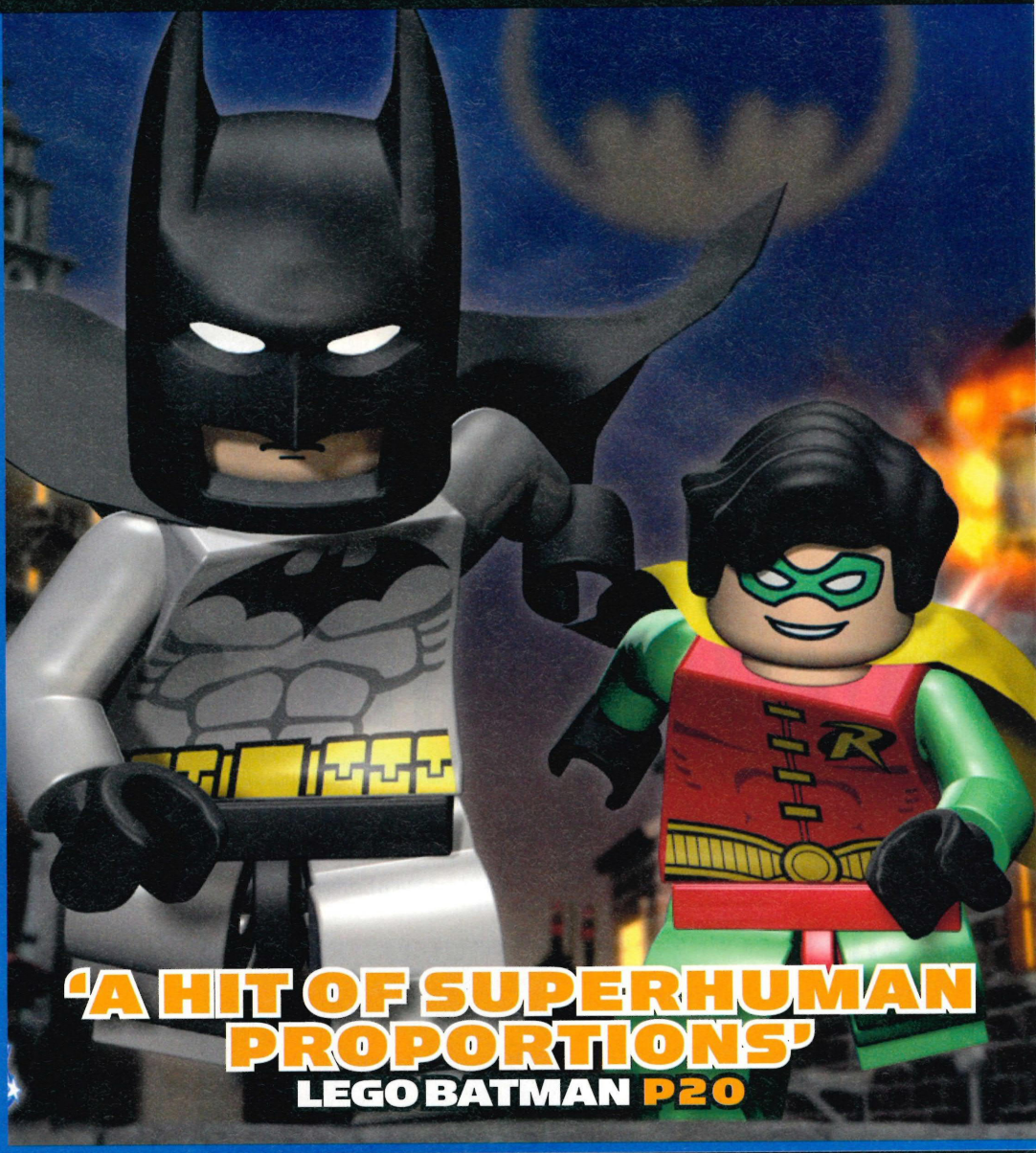
Perhaps the Powers That Be think that if they keep popular franchises like DAH! off PS2, people who want to play them will suddenly find £300 in their back pocket and pop out to buy a PS3. As you do.

Well, not in Casa Mason. You can stuff your willy jokes and farting burger-boys. It didn't look as funny as the last two anyway.

I'll be busy whipping Nazi butt and double-jumping around Gotham City yelling: 'Holy current-gen, Batman!'

By the way, don't you think Lego Robin looks more like Lego Liberace? Yes? No? Okay, just me then...

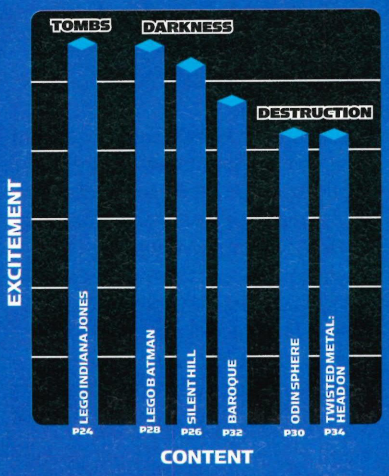
SOPHIE MASON
PRODUCTION EDITOR
smason@futurenet.co.uk



'A HIT OF SUPERHUMAN PROPORTIONS'

LEGO BATMAN P20

THIS SECTION CONTAINS



IS IT NEARLY READY YET?

THE KEY STAGES OF GAME DEVELOPMENT

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

PRE-ALPHA Early test levels provide proof of concept

BETA A second playable version ready for final testing

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

RELEASE The current release date but liable to change

COMING SOON!

SEGA SUPERSTARS TENNIS	MAR
BUZZ! THE POP QUIZ	MAR
JUMPER	MAR
ROCK BAND	APRIL
GHOSTBUSTERS	MAY
STAR WARS: THE FORCE UNLEASHED	MAY
IRON MAN	MAY
TOMB RAIDER UNDERWORLD	2008
WORLD HEROES ANTHOLOGY	2008

BLOCK PARTY 1

THE TOY WONDER

Gotham's criminals are bricking it in **Lego Batman**

PUB Warner Bros Interactive **DEV** Traveller's Tales **ETA** Autumn **WEB** batman.lego.com

Ever had a 'who'd win in a fight' conversation about superheroes? It's an argument that has to be had, and there's one character who's often victorious: Batman.

Sure, he'd struggle against Thor and the Silver Surfer. Who wouldn't? But this is a man who kept a file on the weaknesses of his Justice League colleagues just in case he needed to defeat them: plans that included freezing Plastic Man and shattering him with a hammer, and rendering Aquaman hydrophobic with a fear toxin. He even defeated Superman with a kryptonite-tipped arrow!

Yet Batman isn't a mutant, god or extra-terrestrial. He's just a regular guy who channelled the pain of losing his parents into disciplining himself to be the ultimate vigilante.

He may lack Spider-Man's wit or Superman's powers, but he's one hero who only generates love and respect. And that's why the new game Lego Batman, due in the autumn, is going to be a hit of superhuman proportions.

↑ He's only 2in high but Lego Batman is a mighty fighter

THE GAME WILL BE BURSTING WITH ALL OUR BAT-FAVOURITES

Block stock

Lego Batman was first announced in late 2006 but few details have been released since. Now, though, we've had the chance to quiz the developer, Traveller's Tales, on its vision.

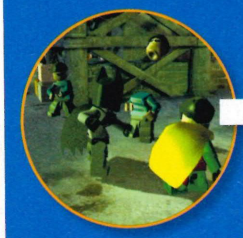
The most pressing question we had was in which Bat-universe the game will be located. The Caped Crusader has been reimagined many times: the 1960s TV show gave us camp, the graphic novels and films gave us dark and twisted, the cartoons offered clean-cut heroicism. So there's a Batman to suit all tastes.

The game uses all these influences, says Jonathan Smith, vice-president of

↑ The argy-bargy focuses on fisticuffs but each character has their own moves and abilities

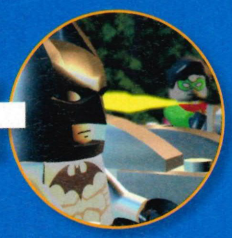
WHAT'S IN A GAME?

The bricks that built Lego Batman...



FIGHTING
Batman's an expert in numerous martial arts, while circus boy Robin's speed and athleticism gives an advantage over larger adversaries.

CLIMBING
With a utility belt crammed with metres of grappling line (and hopefully a double jump) there's nowhere Batman can't climb.



DRIVING
Where would the dynamic duo be without the Batmobile? Well, stuck in the Batcave waiting for a taxi, at a guess.

← Robin's circus training comes in handy at times

↑ Classic villains abound including The Scarecrow

← Lego Catwoman: nearly as confusing as Lego Bikini Leia

Traveller's Tales. "The Lego Batman universe is a kind of distillation, based on the essentials to any treatment of Batman," he explains.

"Whether he's in a Golden Age comic, the animated TV series or some modern version, Batman's always Batman and it's those core foundations we draw upon."

To create the right blend of references, action and characters, Traveller's Tales worked with veteran Batman writer Bob Kane on an original story for the game, central to which is a mass breakout from Arkham Asylum.

Asylum freakers

The Asylum has featured in many Batman adventures because it's Gotham City's home for the criminally insane (the criminally *sane* just go to Blackgate Penitentiary) and so nearly every Batman baddie has passed through its gothic gates.

The Joker, The Penguin and The Riddler have all been incarcerated within its padded walls. Even Mr Freeze spent time there, despite not being strictly insane (it was the only place that could provide a cell frosty enough to keep him alive).

So when the Asylum's gates open it'll be a busy day for Batman and the ensuing game will be bursting with all our Bat-favourites.

The Scarecrow, The Penguin, the Joker and Catwoman are already confirmed. But the actual Lego toy range includes a whole host of ▶

EVOLUTION OF BATMAN

Games past, games present and games that are yet to come

BATMAN VENGEANCE	BATMAN: RISE OF SIN TZU	BATMAN BEGINS	LEGO BATMAN
2001 6/10	2003 3/10	2005 5/10	2008

We haven't seen a mobile phone that big since 1987

THERE WILL BE GADGETS UNIQUE TO THE GAME

Look, Batman's using a jetpack! How cool is that?

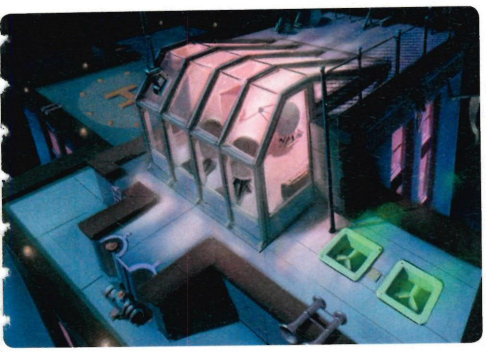
plastic super-criminals prepared to swing into action: Mr Freeze, Poison Ivy, Two-Face and Bane among them.

These won't be merely cameo appearances, either: as in Lego Star Wars, also made by Traveller's Tales, the plan is to make all characters playable at some point. Story mode will only let you play as Batman and Robin, obviously, but the others will be unlockable.

Multiplayer is another key aspect of Lego Star Wars that fits snugly into the Batman universe. Where would the Dark Knight be, after all, without Robin the Boy Wonder at his side?

Then there are other allies that Batman can call upon such as Alfred, Commissioner Gordon and other DC heroes. This gives plenty of scope for the same drop-in, drop-out type of character-swapping that we loved in Lego Star Wars.

And what about the Bat-gadgets, Batty's tools that vary in scale from the hand-sized Batarangs to the



Batmobile and hulking Bat-tank? Jonathan and his team are keen to make the most of these and it seems there will even be gizmos that are unique to the game.

"The use of cool gadgets is a crucial part of Batman's unique crime-fighting style and we've worked to make them an important part of the gameplay," says Jonathan. "Some will be familiar to Batman fans, but others will be more surprising."

Men in tights

Finally, there's another vital factor that must be included in a Lego game, one that might not be immediately associated with the Dark Knight – and that's humour.

There haven't been many laughs associated with Batman since the 1960s TV series. After all, we are talking about a mentally scarred, near-fascist vigilante in a skin-tight rubber suit battling against similarly troubled criminals.

Jonathan sees the edgier subject matter as an advantage, though. "It's totally not a problem, in fact the darker a world gets, the easier we find it to be funny in a Lego version."

Certainly, the developer's respectful treatment of Star Wars makes us confident it can pull this off.

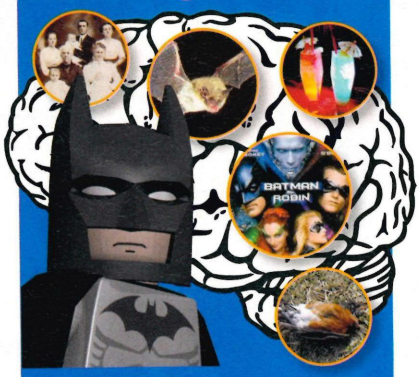
In fact, the only disappointing aspect of Lego Batman is the release date because we're going to have to wait until autumn to play it.

Traveller's Tales has a good enough excuse, though: it's got a busy year with a Lego version of Indiana Jones to get out by the summer (turn the page for more info), further proving that the greatest heroes are in Lego – and on PS2. **Dave Harrison**

↑ 'Put your cape over the puddle.' 'No, *you* put *your* cape over the puddle…' etc

IN THE BRAIN OF… BATMAN

The Dark Knight



1. Shame about mum and dad, they were dead nice. If only I could have a cuddle.
2. Why do people think bats are scarry? They're just short-sighted flying mice.
3. Must go out for a drink and hit on some hot chicks to keep up Bruce Wayne's playboy image.
4. I'm so glad Joel Schumacher isn't making Batman films any more.
5. Should I cut Robin loose? He's kind of irritating.

HOW COMPLETE?

LEGO BATMAN

CONCEPT | ALPHA | RELEASE

PRE-ALPHA | BETA | AUTUMN

↓ 'Can I drive the Batmobile today?' 'No.' 'Please?' 'No.' 'Tomorrow?' 'No.'

LEGO INDIANA JONES THE VIDEO GAME

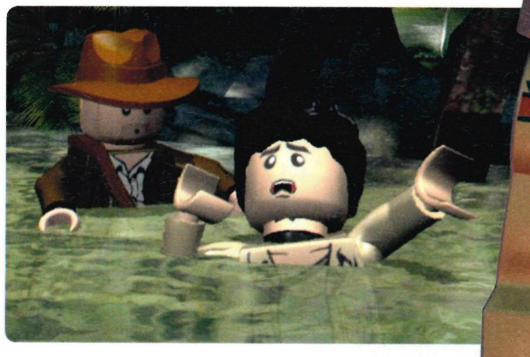
WHIPPING YARNS

Indy mood for adventure? Then has **Lego** got a treat for you...

PUB Activision **DEV** Traveller's Tales **ETA** May **WEB** lucasarts.com/games/legoindianajones

Jungles. Tombs. Impossibly exotic locations. Ruined temples to explore. Archaeological mysteries to solve. Strangely powerful, ancient treasures to discover, and age-old evil to fight. No, we're not talking about the new Tomb Raider game. This is the original: this is Indiana Jones.

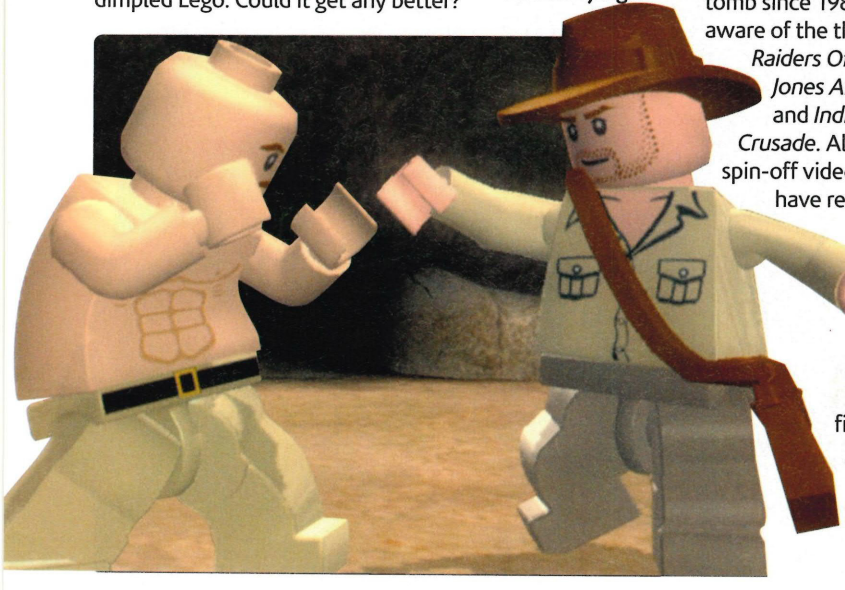
He's the man who taught Lara everything she knows, the guy who was swinging from a rope above a pit of snakes when Nathan Drake's *dad* was still wetting the bed. And he's got a new game; and it's in glorious, dimpled Lego. Could it get any better?



↑ The game opens with Indy in the Peruvian jungle

Unless you've been locked in Tutankhamen's tomb since 1980, you will surely be aware of the three adventure films, *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*, *Indiana Jones And The Temple of Doom* and *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade*. All of them had their own spin-off videogames, although none have really stood the test of time – unlike the films, which are undisputed classics.

But now Traveller's Tales, developer of the very fine Lego Star Wars games, is working on a Lego game based on Indy's adventures, and it's set to be the first outing ever to do real justice to the Jones family name.



← Where's the deadly propeller of a Nazi plane when you need one?

'Bagsy Short Round!'

Lego Indy will include elements of the stories from all three films, although the screenshots and information released so far tend to concentrate on locations and characters from *Raiders*.

You'll notice that each shot has at least two characters in, so it's a safe bet that the game will follow the tried-and-tested formula of drop-in, drop-out co-op used in both Lego Star Wars games. It also means that in singleplayer, you'll be able to switch between characters and use their specific abilities to deal with particular obstacles.

Apart from Indy himself, the people we've identified so far are snake-in-

the-grass Satipo (Indy's guide for *Raiders*' Peruvian prologue), Rene Belloq (Indy's rival in *Raiders*), Marion Ravenwood (Indy's love interest in *Raiders*) and Elsa Schneider (the hot Nazi from *The Last Crusade*).

Lego Star Wars let you unlock and play virtually any character from the films, so we anticipate these and many other Indy mainstays to be playable at some point.

The Lego range of Indiana Jones toys, for example, includes Indy's dad Henry and Jock the Pilot, so expect them to appear too.

Whip-smart

If you've seen the films, you'll know that Indy's pretty handy with a bullwhip and a pistol, and both of these feature heavily in the game.

The whip's not just a weapon, either, offering plenty of scope for interaction with the environment: swinging, climbing, sliding, and breaking scenery to reveal the collectible studs that are the hallmark of any Lego title.

It may even be used to recreate the famous scene where Indy wraps up Marion in his whip to pull her in for a snog. But we hope not, because Lego kissing makes us feel a bit confused.

However, the pistol/whip combo is unlikely to be the only kit at Indy's disposal: the toy range includes a net, and vehicles like trucks, motorbikes and a plane, so if there aren't driving and flying sections we'll eat our brown leather fedoras.

In fact, the Indiana Jones franchise lends itself so well to Lego game conversion that it's a wonder it hasn't been done before.

First of all, you've got the all-action adventure. Indy's stories are clearly prime gaming material, with a rugged hero swashbuckling his way through trap-infested tunnels in exotic, peril-strewn locations.

Previous Indy games haven't done justice to this, suffering from the technical limitations of being made in the 1980s and 1990s. In 2008, though, the boy Jones can finally have a proper, 3D world to climb up, down and around.

Expect plenty of complicated, multi-room puzzles to solve and tons of hidden stuff to find, not to mention fancy gun and whip combos.

BONUS INFO

Indiana Jones was named after director and producer George Lucas' dog, and his surname was originally Smith. Director Steven Spielberg suggested the change to Jones because he thought Smith was too 'hokey'.

↑ Sadistic Nazi Major Toht abseiling from the roof of Marion's bar? Seems Lego Indy takes a few liberties with the films…

Wisecracks

But the most important reason that Indy's going to work so well in Lego is that he's always had his tongue firmly in his cheek.

From the ever-so-slightly over-the-top fight scenes to the incredulous look on Indy actor Harrison Ford's face as he narrowly escapes from a rolling boulder that's quite obviously made of polystyrene, the films never take themselves seriously. ▶

BRIEF HISTORY

As well as the film tie-ins, Indy's had some original videogame adventures

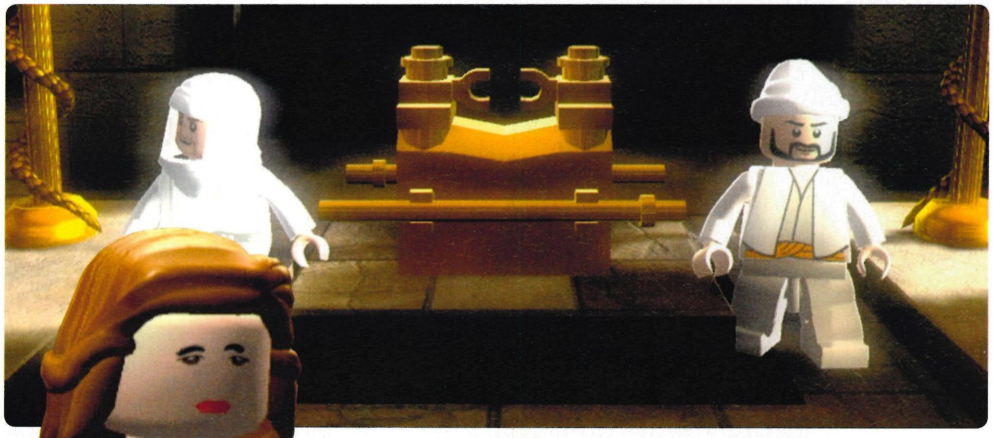
1992
INDIANA JONES & THE FATE OF ATLANTIS
With loads of puzzles, an action-packed story and a choice of three ways to tackle it ('fists', 'wits' or 'team') this is considered by many to be the best early Indy game.

1996
INDIANA JONES & HIS DESKTOP ADVENTURES
Set in 1930s Mexico, this randomly generated Windows/Mac game took only 30 minutes to play per session but won a cult following.

1999
INDIANA JONES & THE INFERNAL MACHINE
Indy visits Iraq, Kazakhstan, Mexico and the Philippines on the hunt for a machine that enables the owner to converse with a Babylonian god.

2003
INDIANA JONES & THE EMPEROR'S TOMB
Indy's first outing on PS2, this fills in details of the story between the second and third films but couldn't compete with Tomb Raider.

'Half a bag of the single-dimple blocks should do it...'



Marion in her Egyptian outfit. Stop looking at her plastic cleavage, sicko!

The classic 'rolling boulder' moment is faithfully recreated

MISSION GUIDE

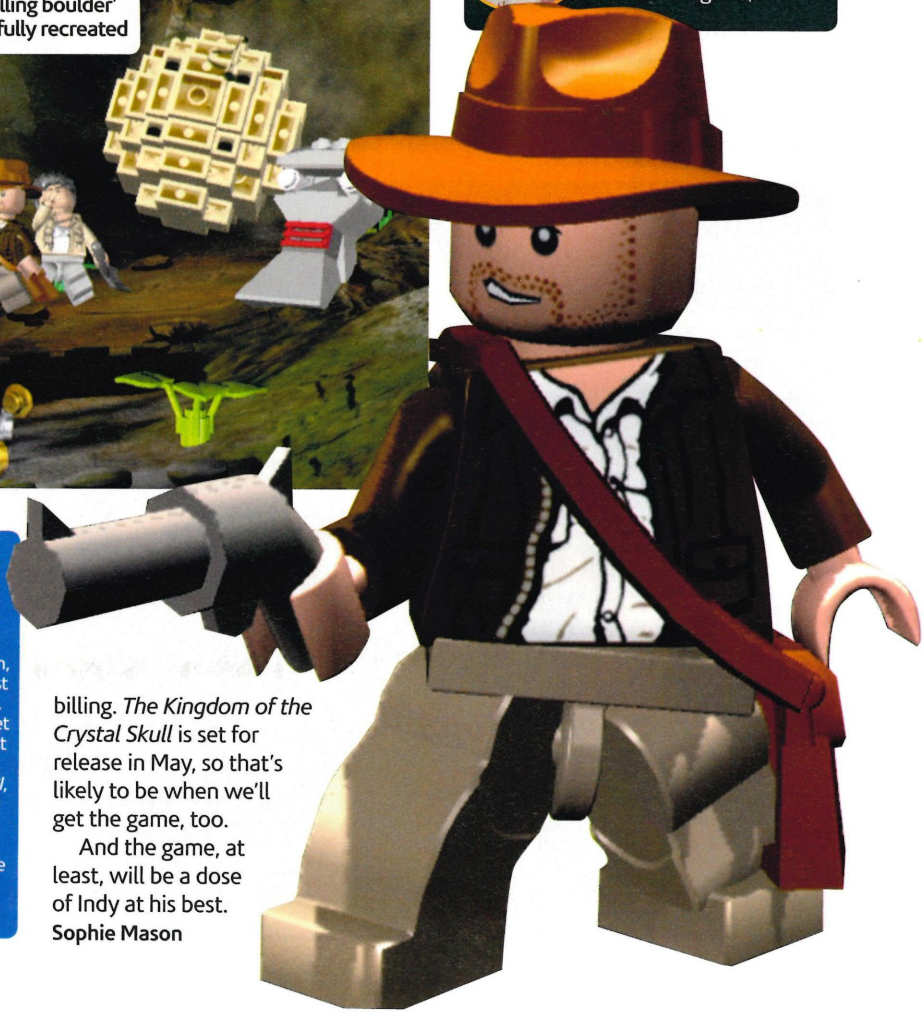
Around the world in Lego Indiana Jones

01. PERU
Indy starts his adventure in the jungles of Peru, retrieving a golden idol from the booby-trapped Hovitos temple.

02. NEPAL
Indy is soon off to Nepal, racing Nazis to an artefact that will reveal the location of the lost Ark of the Covenant.

03. EGYPT
Hooking up with old flame Marion, the pair head to Egypt, locate, lose and finally rescue the Ark from the Nazis.

04. INDIA
And that's just the first film's locations. *Temple Of Doom* is mostly set in India, so expect to see that in the game, too.



And that suits the cute, comical style of Lego games right down to the rubber-snake-covered ground.

Whereas some super-serious Star Wars fans didn't like to see Darth Vader transformed into a bouncing cartoon character, Indy is much more acceptable as a comedy turn.

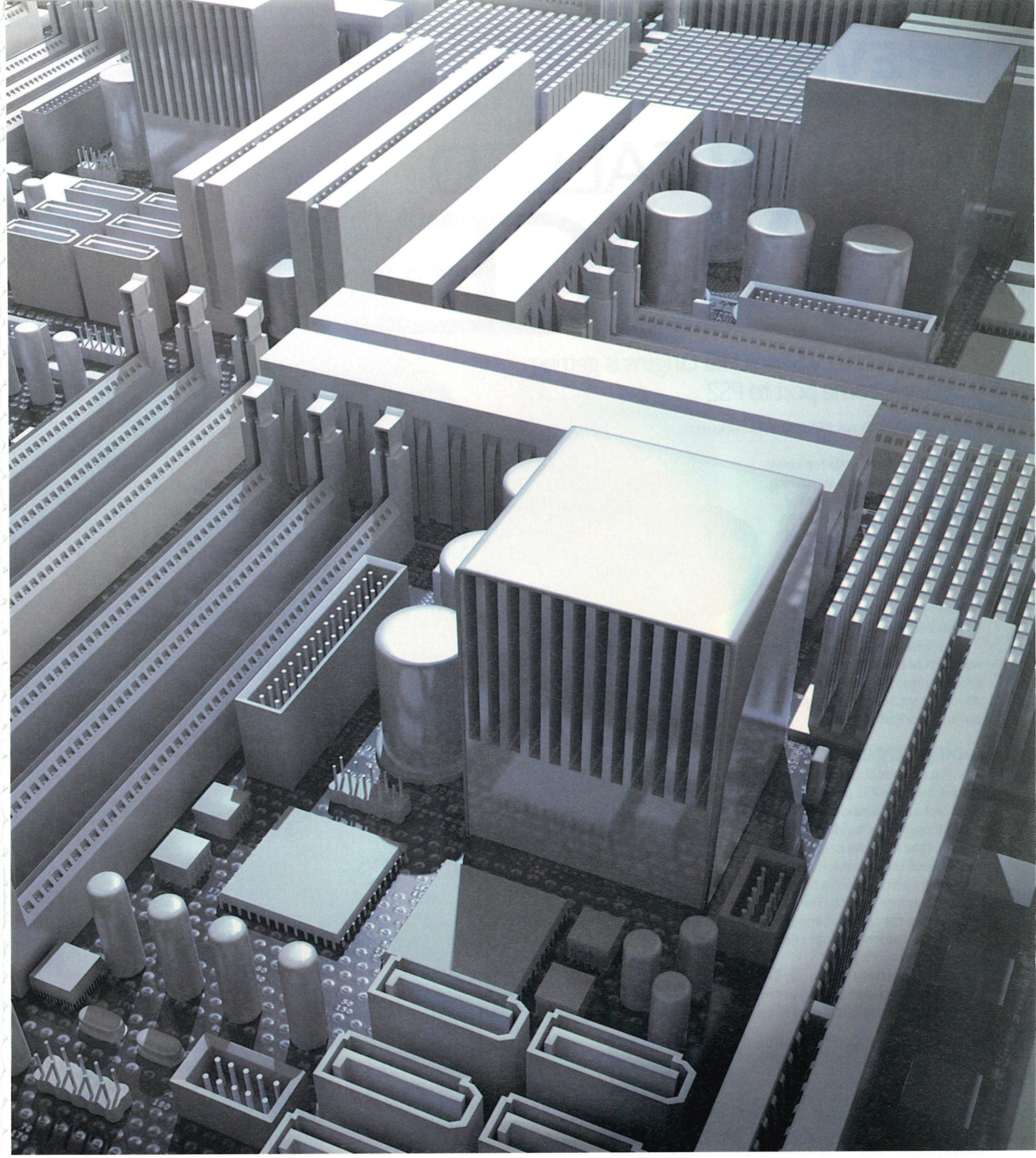
Less acceptable, however, may be this year's brand new Indiana Jones film. Bizarrely, the now 66-year-old Harrison will star again as Indiana; we can only hope that he'll hand the action bits over to Shia 'Transformers' LeBoeuf, who is also high on the billing. *The Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* is set for release in May, so that's likely to be when we'll get the game, too.

And the game, at least, will be a dose of Indy at his best.

Sophie Mason

BONUS INFO

Tom 'the 'tache' Selleck, then a relative unknown, was originally cast as Indiana Jones. But he couldn't get out of his contract to do action TV series *Magnum PI*, so Harrison Ford was brought in, having already impressed George Lucas on *Star Wars*.



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A TOWN CALLED MALICE

PSP success story **Silent Hill Origins** is getting a very welcome port to PS2

PUB Konami **DEV** Climax **ETA** May **WEB** snipurl.com/1z12e

Few feelings top being right about something. Remember how we predicted in issue 95 that Silent Hill Origins would be coming to PS2? Well, move over Mystic Meg and naff off Nostradamus – OPS2 is the new pharaoh of prophecy. Silent Hill Origins will come to PS2 in May.

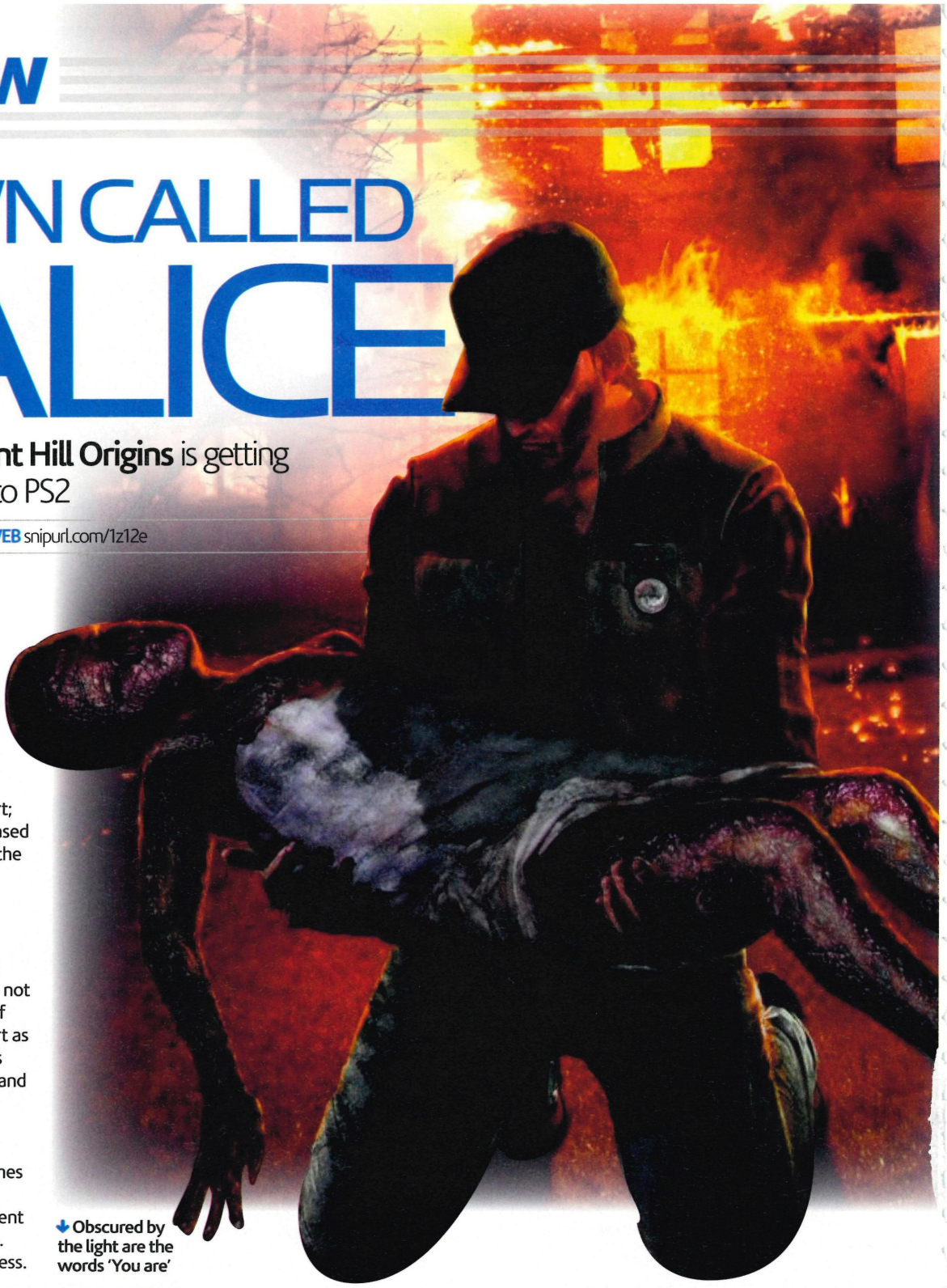
It's a wise move on Konami's part; now fans of the original console-based series can get their bony hands on the all-important Silent Hill prequel, previously a PSP exclusive.

Going large?

So what additional content can we expect from the PS2 port? Well, er, not much actually. Climax, developer of the PSP original, is handling the port as well, but the most we can expect is that it'll pull out a chamois leather and give the graphics engine a buffing.

Not to worry, though. The PSP original was chock full of enough weird and wonderful secret costumes and weaponry to uncover.

Besides, you don't venture to Silent Hill for an unlockable dog costume. No, you go there to get scared witless.



Obscured by the light are the words 'You are'

As the title suggests, Origins is a prequel to the whole series. It starts with trucker Travis Grady driving his big-rig down a rain-slick country road, when suddenly he's involved in a near-miss with a little girl.

As he pulls over, the girl runs off into the mist, leading Travis to follow. Soon he comes upon a burning building, from where he rescues her charred, barely-conscious body.

Tricky trucker

If you're a fan of the 'Hill, you'll immediately ping to the significance of this scene – this is the exact moment things in Silent Hill started to turn ugly.

From this point on, it's up to Travis to solve the mystery behind the girl,

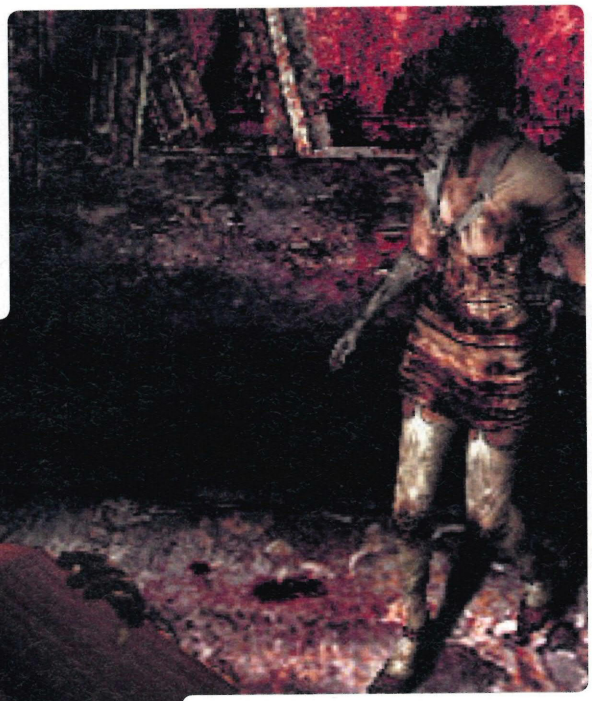
CHARACTER PROFILE

Just who the heck is Origins' protagonist Travis Grady?

HE DRIVES A TRUCK
And we all know what goes on at truck stops.

HE HAD PARENT PROBLEMS
To tell you what and why would ruin the surprise.

HE LIKES TO IMPROVISE
A toaster can kill a mutant abomination as easily as a gun.



FIX THIS!

HOARY VOICE ACTING

We know we shouldn't expect the greatest voice work from a Silent Hill game, but come on, it's 2008 – terrible voice acting was banished to the bin of history thanks to Resident Evil 4, wasn't it?

CAN THEY FIX IT?

☐ YES ☑ NO ☐ MAYBE

↓ By touching mirrors, hero Travis can enter Silent Hill's horrific Otherworld

↑ 'What's on TV? In a second, your ugly, melted face'

while reconciling his past with the cursed town. Of course, this being Silent Hill, Travis' past isn't filled with memories of balmy summer mornings and drinking lemonade under the family yew tree.

No, it's darker than a black hole in the shade, filled with forgotten horrors and locked-away traumas, all of which Travis will be forced to relive as he explores the diabolical town.

Origins takes place only a few years before the events of the first Silent Hill game, so Travis encounters most of the original's twisted cast.

Although Silent Hill hasn't been wholly corrupted yet, the dark forces that will eventually possess it are already encroaching.

That means Travis can enter the hellish unreality known as the Otherworld at will by touching mirrors around the town, usually for a spot of multi-dimensional puzzle solving.

The puzzles themselves are what you've come to expect from the series, although the makers have outdone themselves this time in the freaky stakes. You'll never feel clean again after completing the twisted doll's head puzzle…

'Hill street bruise

Combat has been freshened up by doing away with the unwieldy, tank-turning character controls of yesteryear. Instead it follows a more logical scheme à la Metal Gear Solid 3.

Developer Climax has even thrown in a few quick-time events in the form of occasional grapples with enemies should they try to get too friendly. Not entirely original, perhaps, but still a welcome addition to the series.

Also notable is Travis' massive arsenal of potential weapons. In essence: if you see it – shovels, intravenous drip stands, bits of broken doorframe – you can likely pick it up and wield like a cudgel. And, being 100% pure American beefcake, Travis can make with his trusty redneck knuckles if he finds himself without any makeshift weaponry to hand.

This is very unlike previous Silent Hill protagonists, who had to run away like cowardly commies when their baseball bats broke.

But the best thing about Origins? It's the perfect place for series newbies to get up to speed with Konami's premiere hard-horror series. Hell is just around the corner, kids… **Mike Sterry**

HOW COMPLETE?

SILENT HILL ORIGINS

CONCEPT · PRE-ALPHA · ALPHA · BETA · RELEASE

MAY

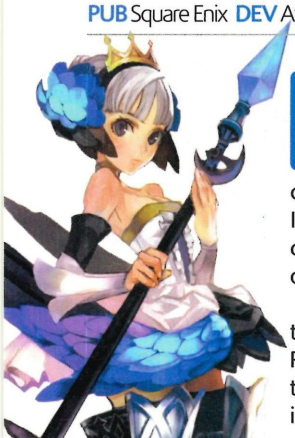
You play as five colourful and ass-kicking characters

The action is side-scrolling and fought in real time

THE ARMED NORSES

Nordic-flavoured RPG **Odin Sphere** is on its way to the UK

PUB Square Enix **DEV** Atlus **ETA** Spring 2008 **WEB** www.atlus.com/odinsphere



Back in the summer of 2007, we wrote of a roleplaying game that was so visually stunning, it could have been framed in the Louvre. It was based on Nordic myths, it was called Odin Sphere and it…dropped off the radar like a stealth bomber.

But just when we'd given up hope that a UK version would ever spawn, RPG specialist Square Enix announced that it will be publishing Odin Sphere in Britain after all. We rejoiced!

The amazing thing about Odin Sphere is that each bit of in-game artwork is painstakingly hand drawn. That's right, hand drawn.

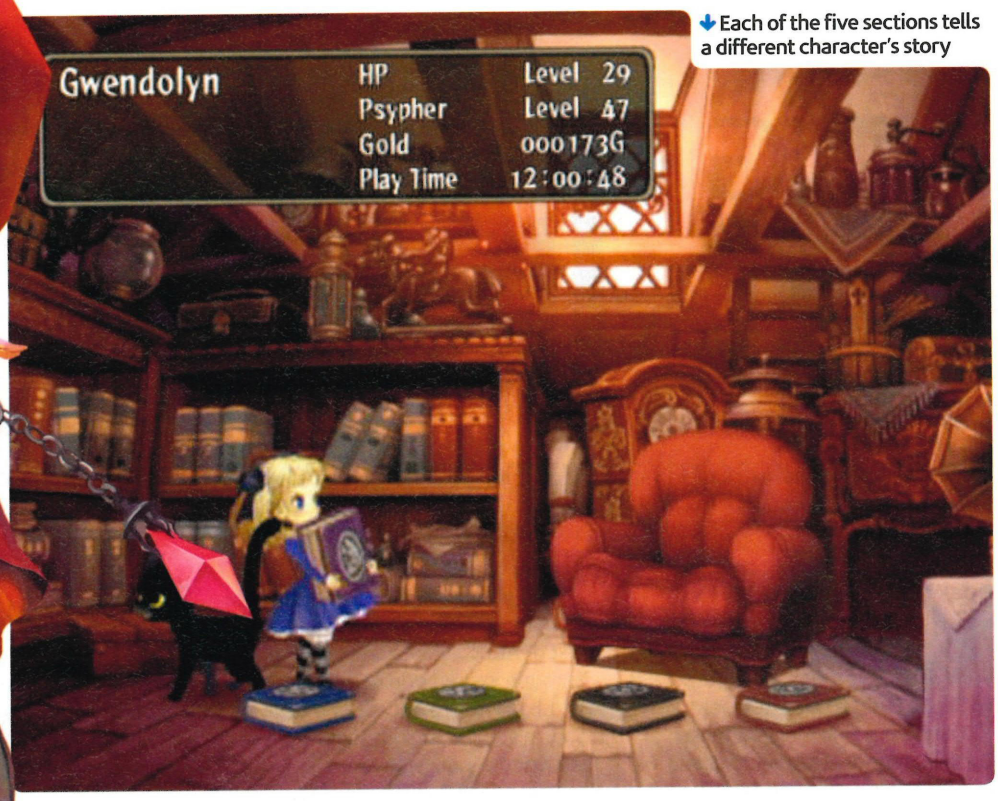
It means every moment is a feast for the eyes, And as for the bosses – they're so large and lavish, some of them barely even fit onto the screen.

Big is beautiful

The bosses are absolutely ginormous and gratifyingly detailed. Even when Belial the mighty dragon is merrily stomping a claw the size of a tree on your head, you'll sigh happily, knowing that aesthetic enlightenment is being achieved at that very moment.

And Odin Sphere has an epic tale to match its epic looks. It's all based in a magical, war-torn universe, which you see through the eyes of five tragedy-tinged characters: Valkyrie princess Gwendolyn, dark knight Ozwald, Mercedes the queen of the fairies, Princess Velvet and Cornelius, a prince-turned-monster.

Hand-drawn graphics make each scene a joy to watch



Each of the five sections tells a different character's story

Each has their own tale to tell but their paths intermingle as they try to stop King Odin unleashing unintentional Armageddon.

It's a 2D side scroller and the stages are circular. You can complete them in whichever direction you like: right to left or left to right.

Battles are in real time, so you must master combo fighting and nimble magic management in order to plough through the waves of enemies thrown at you. And the fighting is tough. Button-bashing is not an option: enemies are sharp-witted and will soon exploit any weakness you show.

Hit ▢ to launch a basic attack; chain several hits to trigger a powerful finishing move. Punch Ⓐ for a special attack that'll decimate your enemy's ranks or use a destructive item to shoot wreaths of fire into the fray.

Throw in the facts that everything has been credibly voiceacted and that developer Atlus is also responsible for the sumptuously satisfying Shin Megami Tensei: Persona 3, which scored 10/10 last issue, and you just know Odin Sphere is going to be a work of art in every way. **Kim Richards**

ODIN SPHERE HAS AN EPIC TALE TO MATCH ITS EPIC LOOKS

Ozmund here is rumored to have sold his soul to Death for power

HOW COMPLETE?
ODIN SPHERE
CONCEPT ALPHA RELEASE
PRE-ALPHA BETA MAR

WING WHEN YOU'RE SINNING

Bad angels, tarot cards and cannibalism: can you smell what **Baroque** is cooking?

PUB Atlus **DEV** Sting **ETA** TBC 2008 **WEB** atlus.com/baroque

It's a pattern we've noticed in the past few years: Atlus' line of J-RPGs get more and more bizarre with each subsequent release.

Last year's Shin Megami Tensei: Devil Summoner featured a detective and his talking cat hunting down a reincarnated Rasputin. The recent Persona 3 saw teenagers putting guns to their heads in order to blast out their inner demons and harness their power in combat.

And now, here comes Baroque, the strangest of them all. But, unlike the rest of Atlus' roleplaying titles, Baroque isn't an original story.

It hails from a decade-old Sega Saturn game that subsequently spawned a manga series.

Baroque PS2 is effectively a remake of that game, and hence shares its affinity for old-school dungeon hack. But to give it that simple label would be to ignore the game's story.

False Angel delight

It draws heavily from Tarot cards, Christian tradition and the mystic offshoot of Judaism known as Kabbalah. Set in a world of dark fantasy, it sees the silent protagonist (literally – he's mute) awaken to find he has no memory of his past, but instead has been left with titanic feelings of guilt.

After meeting the leader of a group of 'False Angels' called the Order of Malkuth, he is told that in order to repent for the grave sin that has cost

THE STORY DRAWS HEAVILY FROM TAROT AND KABBALAH

← Complex stat and ability customisation is done with wings that you equip to your character

The False Angels are at the centre of Baroque's dark, twisted storyline

FAQ

Q. WHAT DOES 'BAROQUE' MEAN?

A. The word was first used to refer to a 17th-century artistic movement, but now means something that is elaborate or ornate.

him his memory and his speech, he must go to the corrupt Neuro Tower and purge the mutated humans there. So far, so utterly bonkers.

The tower itself, with its shifting levels, has more than a shade of the fantastic Persona 3 about it. But when you're not murderising/purifying the various Tarot card-inspired monsters encountered there, you'll be talking to the less-corrupted denizens of Baroque's world.

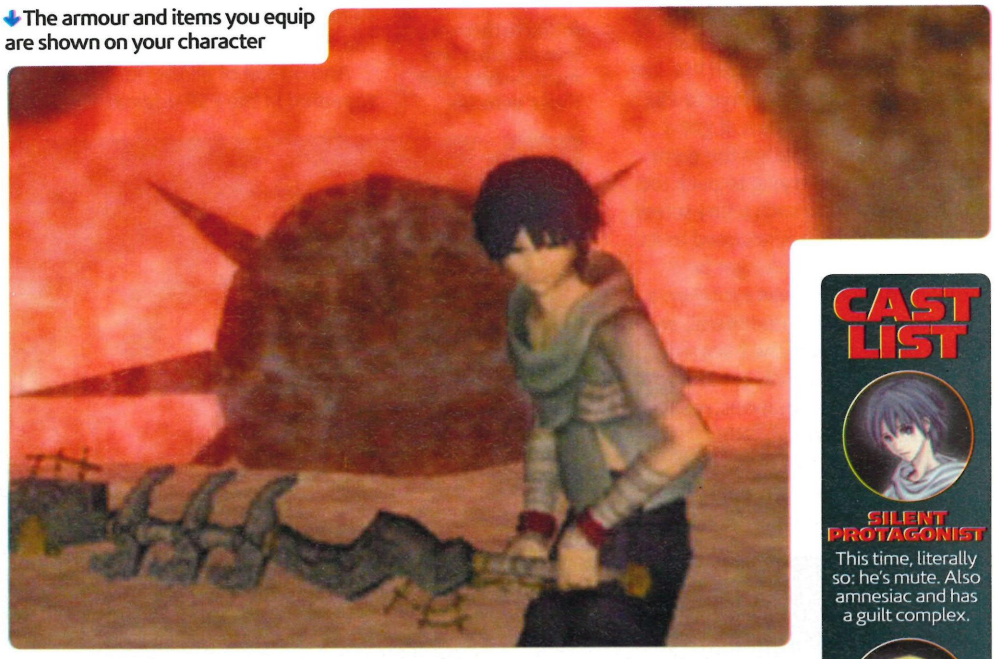
There's a girl with antlers who can only speak other people's thoughts, and a peculiar gent with elongated fingers who won't let anyone near the box he's holding. And those are just the normal ones.

Tarot to nowhere

Baroque won't be winning any awards for its visuals, but there are some nice touches, such as the way whatever equipment we decide to swaddle our lead guy in actually appears on his person – a rarity in PS2 RPGs.

Hi! Welcome to Neuro Tower! Have you visited a hellish mutant den before?

The armour and items you equip are shown on your character



One particularly odd fashion in the world of Baroque is the practice of strapping imitation angel wings to your back. The bigger they are, the better your social standing.

In game terms, these translate into stat boosts and special abilities – the complex customisation and creation options that are typical of Altus titles.

Mind you, we can't help but think it makes our hero look like a particularly down-on-his-luck rave kid.

Oh, and did we mention how our fair-faced protagonist can nosh on the flesh, hearts and bones of his fallen foes? And if that's not grim enough for you, there are facehugger-like parasites throughout the Neuro Tower which you can fuse to your person to increase your combat prowess.

Yup, Baroque is an queer fruit, but it remains to be seen whether its fusion of classic dungeon hacking and *Hellraiser*-style horror can live up to Atlus' recent successes Persona 3 and Odin Sphere. **Mike Sterry**

HOW COMPLETE?

BAROQUE

CONCEPT | PRE-ALPHA | ALPHA | BETA | RELEASE | TBC

CAST LIST

SILENT PROTAGONIST
This time, literally so: he's mute. Also amnesiac and has a guilt complex.

ARCHANGEL
Bewinged cult leader with mysterious motivations.

LONGNECK
Messed-up dude with a really long, spikey neck.

CAR WARS

The scraps game kicks off again with **Twisted Metal: Head On: Extra Twisted Edition**

The Extra Twisted Edition includes four extra levels and this new game mode

PUB Sony **DEV** Eat Sleep Play **ETA** April **WEB** us.playstation.com

Cars and guns. Most of today's hottest games feature one or the other, so bringing the two together seems logical, right?

And if anyone can successfully meld the worlds of driving and murderising, it's God Of War creator David Jaffe. His newly formed studio, Eat Sleep Play, is behind this Extra Twisted Edition of Twisted Metal.

Head On first appeared on PSP last year as a portable alternative to PS2's own Twisted Metal: Black. It got a warm welcome, although the game was hamstrung by trying to pack too much content onto such a tiny screen.

Now the series has returned to its PS2 roots, this will no longer be a problem. Action has always taken a front row seat in Twisted Metal, and on the bigger screen, the frenzied clashes between heavily armoured cars, bristling with weapons, really come into their own.

The game packs in 14 bizarre vehicles to choose from, each with its own equally mad driver.

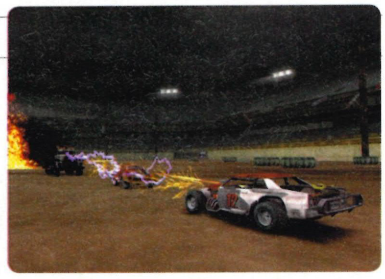
Once you've picked a four-wheeler that takes your fancy, you are then unleashed inside the game's impressively packed arenas.

Scarred cars

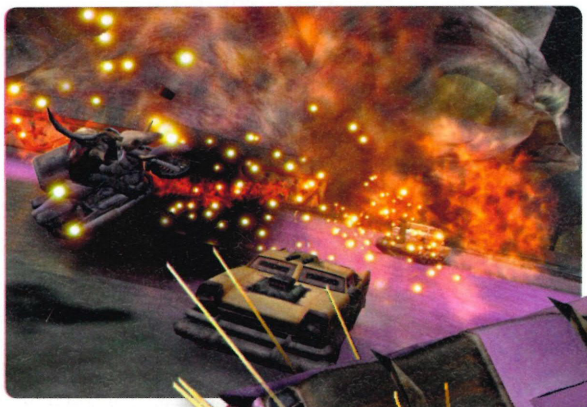
Your sole purpose there is to destroy your opposition with guns, missiles, mines and anything else you can find. Think Destruction Derby meets Unreal Tournament and you've got it.

And on top of all the stuff that appeared in the PSP original, the Extra Twisted Edition introduces four extra levels and a new game mode where you play as Sweet Tooth, the insane, ice-cream-van driving clown.

Expect to lock, load and rev up with Twisted Metal around April. And if you're a fan of Twisted Metal's unique graphical style, you'll love the limited edition art book that'll be included with the game. **Andy Hartup**



You're thrown into an arena and must destroy your rivals' vehicles



HOW COMPLETE?
TWISTED METAL: HEAD ON: EXTRA TWISTED
CONCEPT ALPHA RELEASE
APR
PRE-ALPHA BETA

Sweet Tooth here drives a run-down ice cream van and is utterly insane

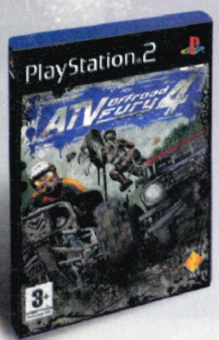
PlayStation 2

PIMPS
BURN RUBBER
GIMPS
EAT DIRT

ATV OFFROAD FURY

THE DIRTIER THE BETTER

It is not the winning that counts, it's the taking part.
Break the rules, break some bones. Damage, destroy and demolish.
What ever it takes to be the last man standing.



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gamesradar presents

top 7 sexiest cheats

the most dangerous people in the games industry

and one of them is your girlfriend

The 10 worst game characters ever!

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PLAYSTATION NATION

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

ONE MORE WAFER-THIN FORTUNE COOKIE?

So that was Chinese New Year, and I don't know about you, dear readers, but I may not need to eat for at least six months. I am stuffed.

But then, a three-day feast will do that to you. My flat still smells faintly of firecrackers and my SingStar mics will never be the same again.

Now, I look forward to the next set of celebrations; roll on Easter and its delightful bounty of chocolate and, yes, more chocolate!

Ladies and gentlemen

Thanks to our Quit or Retry article back in issue 94, lots of people have written in to tell us what you think about sexism in videogames.

Many of you agreed with me that yes, games are sexist and portray females in an unrealistic fashion. And plenty complained about how woman are presented in minimalist outfits with pathetic personalities.

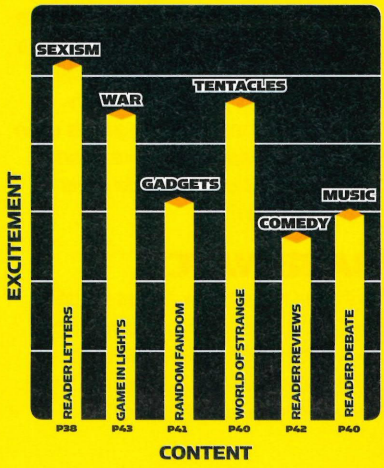
With more and more females joining the gaming scene, it's about time we demanded stronger lead female characters: fewer Ashleys, please, and more Laras!

KIM RICHARDS
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
psnation@futurenet.co.uk

WHAT'S GOT YOU TALKING THIS MONTH

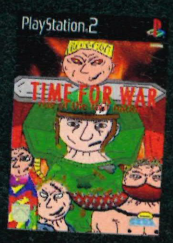
'I SHUT THE MAG IN FURY'
KATIE H P38

THIS SECTION CONTAINS



SEND US STUFF LIKE THIS!

↑VIDEOGAME WEIRDNESS
Spotted something kooky on the internet? Tell us about it!



↑YOUR GAME IN LIGHTS
Got a great idea for a game? We want to hear from you!

↑TO CHEAT OR NOT TO CHEAT
Big guns, big cars, big heads: we love cheats. Send in your favourites!

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OBJECT MISERY

STAR LETTER

I was impressed to see female objectification being discussed within your mag, since it's so blatantly obvious within games ('Are Games Sexist?' OPS2 #94).

While there are some strong female characters within games, they seem to be subject to the same objectification, such as Lara Croft or Yuna from Final Fantasy X-2. And don't get me started on how they've slut-resized Lady in Devil May Cry 4.

This may not be the fault of gamers, seeing as how the game developers make them ridiculously out of proportion in the first place.

But surely it says a lot about the male gamer psychographic if developers have to degrade these poor heroines just so the game will be bought. It's a shame that even intelligent people like game designers can't realise the sort of unpleasant inequality they are causing – or maybe they do and just aren't brave enough to do anything about it.

Wimpy women such as Ashley from Resident Evil 4 are not only unrealistic but infuriating. Was it really necessary to make her as useless as she was?

However, it wouldn't pander to the male gamer ego enough if a little teenage girl was actually shooting things alongside big, tough Leon.

Harsh words, maybe, but this is what I've experienced from the guys I play games with. There is no mention of how cool or tough or skilful a female character is, just how big her chest is or how you can look up her skirt. We girls have enough stereotyping and objectification in real life; surely we should be able to get away from it in games, seeing as they are meant to be a fantasy world?

And why does it always have to be the male fantasy world that's portrayed in games?

Developers need to have the balls to stop relying on the female form to draw people to a game. Look at Elder Scrolls: Oblivion or Shadow of the Colossus: wonderful games in proper fantasy worlds without boobage.

I'd also like to point out that after you finished your wonderful, intellectual debate you shot yourselves in the foot.

Over the page you have a 'Babe-o-Meter' devoted to perving over the breasts of various female characters. The many female gamers across Britain cringed and I shut the mag in fury.

KATIE H, VIA EMAIL

Thank you for this thought-provoking response, Katie. We concur! As for the Babe-o-Meter, well, we think there's a difference between 'sexy' and 'sexist', so we don't have a problem with appreciating hot bodies in games even as we wish there were more strong female characters. What do other readers reckon?

Did we go too far with the Babe-o-Meter? Katie H and Liam O'Brien think so

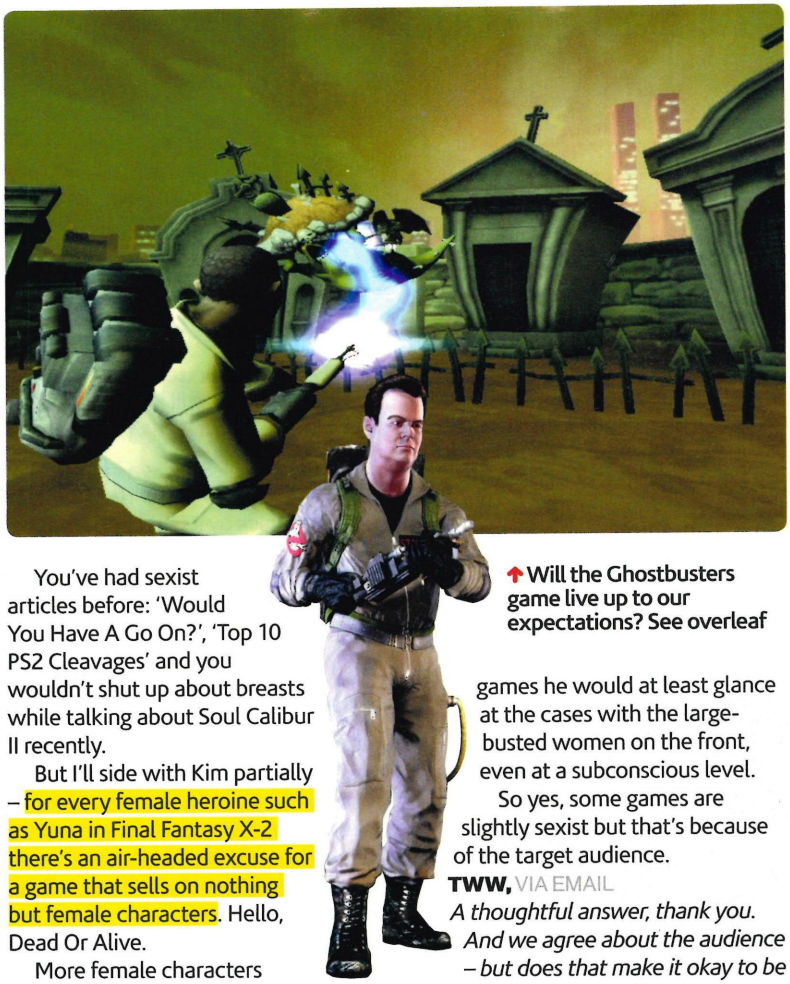
WIN THIS!

STAR LETTER

This month, all letters published in the main body of this section will receive a PS2 game. The writer of the Star Letter gets three games! So what are you waiting for? Get scribbling!

BABE WATCH

With the recent 'Are games sexist?' argument you shot yourselves in the foot with the 'Babe-o-Meter'. I'm as straight as the next guy but can't you focus on gameplay for once?



↑ Will the Ghostbusters game live up to our expectations? See overleaf

You've had sexist articles before: 'Would You Have A Go On?', 'Top 10 PS2 Cleavages' and you wouldn't shut up about breasts while talking about Soul Calibur II recently.

But I'll side with Kim partially – for every female heroine such as Yuna in Final Fantasy X-2 there's an air-headed excuse for a game that sells on nothing but female characters. Hello, Dead Or Alive.

More female characters need to kick ass more than look good. Lady from Devil May Cry 3 is a good example.

LIAM O' BRIEN, IRELAND.

As it happens, Kim wrote the Babe-o-Meter (as well as the Hunk-o-Meter in issue 95). And she specifically chose the featured characters as being ones who are tough and interesting as well as nice to look at.

ON TARGET?

Although some games, yes, do try to use the female characters as eye candy, at least some make those characters enduring and quite strong.

There are a lot of male characters who aren't strong, such as Otacon from Metal Gear Solid 1. He was incredibly cowardly. There are also games where the male character's physique depends on you, such as Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas.

Finally I think that most gamers are male so videogames are designed for male minds. If a man was in a game store and he was facing a row of games he would at least glance at the cases with the large-busted women on the front, even at a subconscious level.

So yes, some games are slightly sexist but that's because of the target audience.

TWW, VIA EMAIL

A thoughtful answer, thank you. And we agree about the audience – but does that make it okay to be sexist? We're not sure. If most gamers were white, would that make it okay to be racist? Anyway. Here's a letter from someone who hasn't thought quite as hard as TWW has…

IT'S HISTORY

Its simple videogames are not just games… its a culture, it has importance, its truth, its more than a game. Its the next best thing to living… History has it, name male leaders, heroes, villains?? Anyone one can name them here are thousands, now same for female?? Well i bet U(KIM)…U can only manage five max ten...how many did u get??? Thats it game is part reality so what u see in real life is blended in game…so stop fussing and enjoy the best games on offer…By the way non the warriors were female(maybe one) so how do expect to have equal lead character of male and female…That would be insult to the mankind it self…Games deserve to ▶

THE SHORT ANSWER

When is Rock Band coming out?

MARK VALE
HULL

March.

RANDOM FANDOM

The good, the bad and the just plain ugly in the world of PS2

AIR GUITAR

This Guitar Hero-branded belt from Jada Toys produces notes when you 'pluck' the air in front of the buckle. Tracks include songs by Deep Purple and Black Sabbath. Rock on!

REAL ROCK

This SoundTech peripheral enables you to use your real guitar to play Guitar Hero and Rockband.

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

We all get the gamer frustration every now and again. But this artist took it to the next level, and titled the result 'Videogame Violence'. Most apt.

J WRAITH
DEVIANTART.COM

GOD OF AWE

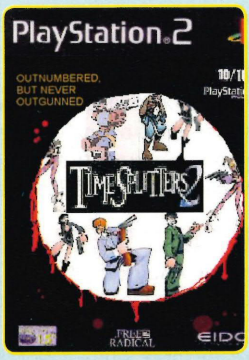
Taking pride of place on his TV, God of War's Kratos watches over reader Ronnie's gaming.

RONNIE MCCULLAGH, SCOTLAND

ROCK GOD

Rock enthusiast Richard Dodds has created his own version of Guitar Hero, based on the rock'n'roll era and featuring the likes of Buddy Holly and Elvis.

RICHARD DODDS, CAMBRIDGESHIRE



SPLITTING IMAGE

A big fan of TimeSplitters 2 sent us his own action-packed cover art. Nice!

SCOTT VINAY, DERBY

SHOW US YOURS!

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

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

DEBATEBOX

Last month we asked you...

GUITAR HERO III OR ROCK BAND?

Rock gods clashed, but who won the battle of the bands?

50% GUITAR HERO

Rock Band just seems like a very expensive party game. You'd only use it at parties, which is not very often or at least not as often as GH III.
CHRIS WHARFE, FACEBOOK

Rockband overcomplicates things. It'd be pointless when you're just playing it on your own, and I don't want to pay a shedload of money for a party trick.
PHIL NORMAN, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD

You wouldn't want to step up to the mic on your own. You'd feel stupid! But playing Guitar Hero solo is damned satisfying.
CARLY CHURCH, LONDON

50% ROCKBAND

I really like Guitar Hero but if Rock Band gets the singing (and drumming) right then it's got to be better. GH and SingStar are probably two of the funnest mulitplayer games, so if they're both combined it can't be bad can it? Plus Rock Band has the better song list.
THOMAS ROCHE, LEEDS

GH III has a better song list, but Rock Band is still killer.
JOHN THORNTON, LEEDS

I think Rock Band is a better product than Guitar Hero but it's held back by its hefty price tag
LEE BAKER, FACEBOOK

NEXT MONTH'S DEBATE
SHOULD WE REPLAY PS1 GAMES?
EMAIL PSNATION@FUTURENET.CO.UK OR JOIN IN ON OUR FACEBOOK GROUP (SEE P3 FOR DETAILS)

WORLD OF STRANGE

Tentacle arms

We're all for cute gaming goodies and while trawling across the net, we found this rather nifty Tentacle arm (complete with suction cups) at Gaia Store. Just quite what we'd do with a squid limb is uncertain, but we want it! Check it out at Gaiastore.com.

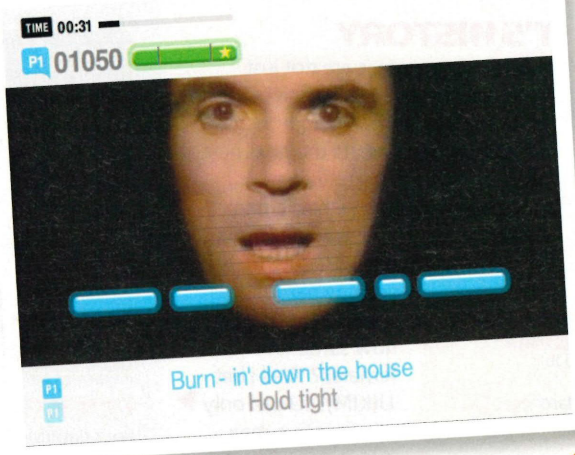
be sexist as male has made more sacrifice to protect females species in history, present and future...
ASH SHRESTHA, LUTON
We think you're missing the point, Ash. Famous figures of both genders have contributed equally to society, and we think games should reflect that.

GET IN THERE GIRLS!

Although Andy is right about how both male and female characters look like models (it is fantasy after all), until there are more women working in the industry the games are always going to be testosterone-filled.
KATIE WALKER, EMAIL
Yes, hopefully as girls become more interested in gaming, there will be a rise in females in the industry and a corresponding shift in attitudes.

GHOSTBUSTING

Do we really need a Ghostbusters game? I love the Ghostbusters films. But that's my point. They're so treasured by fans worldwide, and they were released a long time ago and much of the hype and love has since faded. Also, given the abysmal record of recent movie-based-games, it makes me nervous that it'll be terrible.
K INGLIS, BRISTOL
Given original 'Buster Dan Aykroyd's involvement in the development, we expect it will be better than many money-making tie-ins.



↑ SingStar: better with Elvis? James Ireland and his dad think so!

THE KING OF SING

From the day I first played SingStar, I have had an idea that will attract SingStar fans from around the world. My dad is a huge fan of the singer Elvis Presley and my family and I are always singing in the car to Elvis' music. We think he's the best!

My idea is to make SingStar Elvis. I believe it will attract many gamers as there are billions of Elvis fans around the globe. The game is to include the top 30 Elvis songs: 'Blue Suede Shoes', 'If I Can Dream', 'Rubberneckin'' etc.

It must also include a Campaign where the player sings songs at an Elvis concert to earn star points.
JAMES IRELAND, WESTERN AUSTRALIA
We think this idea would be a big success, James. As The King himself would say, 'Thankyouverymuch'!

← Slimer: better left buried? K Inglis thinks so!

THE SHORT ANSWER
Will Mario ever be on PS2?
BEN SMITH IRELAND
Never.

PLAY USA

I got very excited when I read about Harvey Birdman: Attorney At

CONTACT OPS2 MMS
TEXT PSNATION, THEN A SPACE, THEN YOUR PIC TO 07738 647 177

↑ Oh Harvey, if only you'd sorted out your passport

Law, then had my dreams crushed when I read it wasn't getting a release in the UK. I'm going to New York in a few months, and if I know I can play it when I get it home, I'll pick up a copy while I'm there.
TRACEY ALLAN, FACEBOOK

UMDs are region-free so you can play games bought in the States on a British PSP. Customs won't like it if you bring in too many copies, though…

↓ Quality games like these on the cheap? It must be the interweb!

CHEAP CHEAP

I recently bought a few games off Amazon.co.uk and they're brilliant! I got The Suffering for £1.56, Lego Star Wars II for £8.90 and Spider-Man 2 for £1.78! I recommend Amazon to anyone!
DREW THORMAN, EMAIL
Other cheap games websites are available… ha ha! Yes, Amazon is Bargain Central and a Team OPS2 favourite.

PLAYSTATION PROFILE

CHRIS GALLAGHER IS...

I'M FEELING

TRYING TO GET BACK INTO A REGULAR SLEEP PATTERN.

BIRTH DATE	18/4/1989
HOMETOWN	WARRINGTON
FIRST GAME	SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

MY FRIENDS

BIRCHY

DANE

DEC

SHAUN

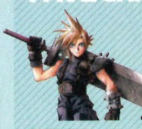
FAVE GAMES

FINAL FANTASY VII

METAL GEAR SOLID 3 SNAKE EATER

RESIDENT EVIL CODE VERONICA X

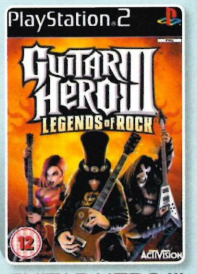
FAVE CHARACTERS


CLOUD STRIFE (FF VII)

SOLID SNAKE (MGS)

RATCHET (RATCHET & CLANK)

WHAT I'M PLAYING NOW



GUITAR HERO III

The best track listing out of the three games and the added multiplayer modes make it one of the most addictive games to come out in years.

MY RATING 0 | 10

MY BEST MOMENT IN A GAME...

THE BIKE CHASE IN MGS3

The chase across the base is one of the most adrenaline-fuelled bits in any game! It's so good I created a save specifically to start from there.

MY LOCAL GAME SHOP

GAMESTATION

MY LIFE

INTERESTS
MAKING FILMS, MUSIC, WALKING, HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS

MUSIC
NIN, ASH, BLOC PARTY, BOARDS OF CANADA, CHARLOTTE HATHERLEY

FILMS
KIDULTHOOD, A LIFE LESS ORDINARY, FIGHT CLUB, TARANTINO, GUY RITCHIE

BOOKS/COMICS
HOUSE OF LEAVES, TRAINSPOTTING, ALLIGATOR STRIP, SPAWN

GAME PET

Gon (Tekken). A dinosaur that fights and does killer farts!

MiTUNES

WHAT I LISTEN TO WHILE I'M GAMING

PANIC PREVENTION (JAMIET)

GAME CHARACTER MOST LIKE ME...

RIKKU (FINAL FANTASY X)

Despite being a girl, she's just like me because she's always positive, doesn't take things seriously and is always up for fun and messing around

SEE YOURSELF HERE!

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

READER REVIEWS

REVIEW AND WIN!

The writer of the star review gets a top PS2 game! Email **psnation@futurenet.co.uk**

Has a game got you in a happy haze, or a ranting rage? Review it, send it in!

THE SIMPSONS

REVIEWED BY **DANIEL GAY, KIDDERMINSTER**
WE GAVE IT 8/10 IN OPS2 #92

Until recently, I was not what you would call a 'fan' of the Simpsons. I have, however, seen a few episodes and the film, and I have not been displeased.

Upon playing The Simpsons Game, the conversion process is complete! This is an utterly authentic, hilarious and addictive Simpsonian experience – the look and feel of the game are such that, if you glued a few of the cutscenes together, you would be able to make a pretty convincing 'proper' episode of The Simpsons (albeit with a few continuity issues)... and a pretty poignant one too, what with all that 'ironic', self-referential stuff about the nature of reality, 'life as a game' and other such pseudo-philosophical gubbins!

But enough of all that... how does it play? Well, I am pleased to announce that the gameyness of The Simpsons is pretty solid.

It's essentially platformy, but because most levels are parodies of other games, there are a few other styles mixed in among the jumping, climbing, collecting and such.

Add to this the fact that all but one level are played cooperatively between two members of the Simpson family, each with unique skills and abilities, and you've got a pretty varied and interesting mix.

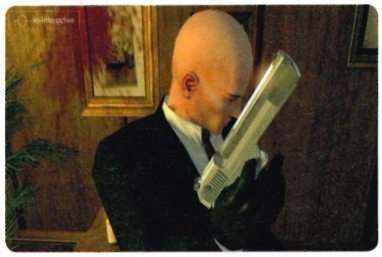
There are some camera issues, and the unlockables could have been more useful/funny/interesting, but because this game is so steeped in irony, parody, self-awareness and what-have-you, I shall presume that any apparent bugs and other shortcomings were, like, totally intentional.

And with that in mind, I hereby declare my allegiance to all things Springfieldian!

9/10

HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY

REVIEWED BY **FREDDIE SANDS, LONDON**
WE GAVE IT 9/10 IN OPS2 #73



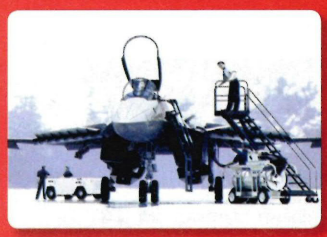
Hitman Blood Money is similar to its predecessors except there's more choice in assassination methods. Should I hide in his room, and then strangle him? Or should I snipe him from the opposite balcony?

This makes a world of difference from the previous games because you

READERSECRETS

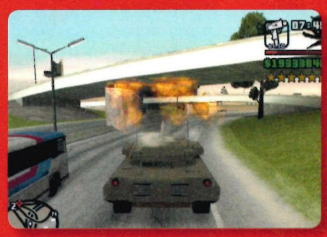
Check out these Easter Eggs and secrets sent in by fellow readers

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



MOBIUS IN ACE COMBAT ZERO: THE BELKAN WAR

On Ace Difficulty, I loaded up the Gauntlet. When I came to fight WIZARD team. Just as I got into attack position, they all exploded, then out of the fire came MOBIUS 1!
RUAIRI FLYNN, EMAIL

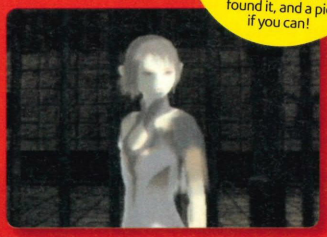


SPAWN A RHINO IN GTA: SAN ANDREAS

To create a tank, enter ◎, ◎, L1, ◎, ◎, ◎, L1, L2, R1, △, ◎, △ at any point during the game.
BEN OLDMAN
GLASGOW

GANGSTER LEON IN RESIDENT EVIL 4

To unlock Leon's gangster outfit, complete the Separate Ways sidequest.
AMY HALL
LEEDS



PLAY AS YORDA IN ICO

Complete the game, watch the credits, then walk along the beach until you find Yorda. Watch the last cutscene, then save the game. Yorda will now become controllable on a second controller pad.
TIM ROBINSON, BRISTOL

get a satisfying feeling for each kill, knowing it was your ingenuity.

This single gameplay mechanic is what the whole game is based around. The freedom of choice makes you the mind in the assassin's body, and the only problem I can think of is that the enemy AI can be botchy (how do they instantly know where I am?).

This game deserves top marks since it's so satisfying to play but moreover the possibilities are endless.

10/10

XYANIDE RESURRECTION

REVIEWED BY **PHIL CARTER, BIDDENHAM**
WE GAVE IT 4/10 IN OPS2 #90

Why, oh why do such abominations exist, when really they should be thrown into the deepest pit of oblivion from the moment of their conception?

Xyanide Resurrection would've been perfectly acceptable as an arcade game all the way back in the day, where people expected to pay a couple of pence for the pleasure of blasting random objects out of a badly drawn sky for a short while.

But for £20, in this day and age? I think not. Because that's all there is to Xyanide Resurrection. Shooting endless reams of miscellaneous flying objects and occasionally taking on a boss.

You might as well be playing the old-school Space Invaders where they plod across the screen in lines.

It's very tedious, very quickly. Sure, the backgrounds are quite trippy to look at and the music is reasonably raving, but toy cap guns carry more punch than the pathetic 'pizz' of your 'fusion guns' firing at one of the enemy spaceships.

Even the event of an enemy ship exploding could be drowned out by a farting mouse.

'Resurrection' is just the right word to use in the title of this game, because Xyanide Resurrection is rather like a shambling zombie risen from its rotting grave. Minus the excitement.

Avoid this pathetic excuse of a game at all costs.

1/10

ZOO PUZZLE

REVIEWED BY **DAN GAY, KIDDERMINSTER**
WE GAVE IT 8/10 IN OPS2 #56

What? Never heard of it? I'm not surprised – it was probably one of those 3-or-4-out-of-10 games (at best) which sunk into bargain bin obscurity, never again to be spoken of by 'true' gamers or gaming journalists alike.

I am pleased to say, however, that I was lucky enough to pick up said game for zero pounds and no pence at a recent 'Swap Shop' hosted by the inimitable Keith 'Cheggers' Chegwin at the Worcester Guild Hall, and as such I feel it is my duty to bring this microscopically thin slice of gaming loveliness to your attention.

If you can find Zoo Puzzle for under a fiver (or indeed for £0.00), then snap it up! And if, upon popping it into your machine and diving straight into a few minutes of Normal mode, you don't crack a smile at the adorable cuteness of it all, I shall engage in the consumption of my fedora! Not that I have a fedora, but you get the point.

Okay, so it's virtually indistinguishable from one of those Tetris-alike time-wasters which you can play for nowt on the internet, in which different coloured 'gems' are swapped to form lines of the same colour and blah-de-blah-de-blah – except in Zoo Puzzle the gems are animals and there's a handful of almost identical modes (Quest, two-player co-op and so on)... Oh, the innovation!

But you know what? It's fun. It's cute, addictive, not-always-as-easy-as-you-might-think fun. And if you can get it cheap – like I said, under a fiver – it's money well spent. But if you end up shelling out £20 or more on it... well, don't say I didn't warn you.

7/10

WRITE FOR OPS2!

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

YOUR GAME IN LIGHTS!

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

TIME FOR WAR: RISE OF THE FOUR NATIONS

DESIGNER
JAIMIE RAINEY, VIA EMAIL

THE PITCH
The world is in chaos and world war has struck out yet again. Step into the muddy boots of a veteran soldier and take on the masses with your trusty machine gun turrets. Objectives include guarding weak points in barricades and wiping out legions of enemy troops.

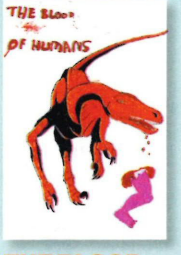
OPS2 VERDICT
It's been a while since we've seen a solid shooter. The level of attention paid to the violence and gore worries us slightly, but then no battlefield is a pretty sight.

DEAL OR NO DEAL?
DEAL!*
CHANCES OF TFW: ROTFN BEING THE NUMBER ONE GAME AT CHRISTMAS:

CHANCE OF **TIME FOR WAR** BEING THE NUMBER-ONE GAME AT CHRISTMAS...

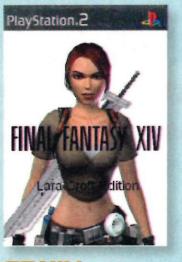
SLIM — REAL

BEST OF THE REST



THE BLOOD OF HUMANS
SAM FAYERS, SURREY
Dinosaurs on the rampage!

SHADOW MAN
RYAN MURRAY, PETERBOROUGH
Destroy the world. That's it.



FF XIV: LARA CROFT EDITION
MIKE WILLIAMS, FACEBOOK
Leading lady Lara Croft takes on a world of magic and sorcery.

SEE YOURSELF HERE

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

*Time for War doesn't really get a publishing deal, but Jaimie does get a framed copy of our design for his game's box art

THE BRAIN DRAIN

It's draining on your brain; get to the end, win some prizes!

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

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

NAME THOSE GAMES

It's a game with no name! Can you guess what the real names are? This is one of the seven star prize questions. See below for details on how to enter.

PS2 MATCH MAKER

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

ANDY'S CRAP DRAWING OF THE MONTH

We should start an art collection from the wonders that our editors churn out. But we're not sure just what they are. Figure out who this PS2 character is, and let us know! You need to answer this question to enter in the Star prize draw. See below for details on how to enter.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

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

1 Which game is a remake of an original version?
A Tomb Raider: Anniversary B Beyond Good and Evil C Primal

2 Which game's lady heroine, Jen, is supported by a gargoyle?
A Tomb Raider: Anniversary B Beyond Good and Evil C Primal

3 Which game was developed in France?
A Tomb Raider: Anniversary B Beyond Good and Evil C Primal

HOW TO ENTER

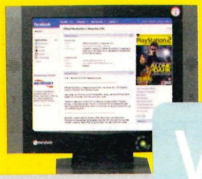
STAR PRIZE

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

OTHER PRIZES

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

All texts charged at 25p plus your standard network tariff rate
Closing date: 26 March 2008
For full competition rules and text terms and conditions, see p111



VIDEOGAME MATHS

A real test of PS2 knowledge: know your numbers, do the maths and send us the answer you get. Don't forget, this is one of the seven star prize questions!

The number at the end of this title: Shin Megami Tensei: Persona…	The number of this issue	The number of coloured buttons on a Guitar Hero controller	The number of playable characters in Resident Evil 4	TOTAL
+	×	÷	=	

WORD FINDER

Answer the questions, decipher the game-related anagram highlighted in red and that's the answer. A star prize question: see below for entry details.

- Complete the title: …. Trek: Encounters
- The first name of our production editor: ..... Mason
- The first name of this action hero: …. Logan
- Complete the title: …... Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater

WHO'S YA BADDIE?

This bunch look pretty evil and nasty, but only one of them is an actual baddie. Tell us which! Text **OPS2BADDIE** then a space, then your name and A, B or C to **87103**.

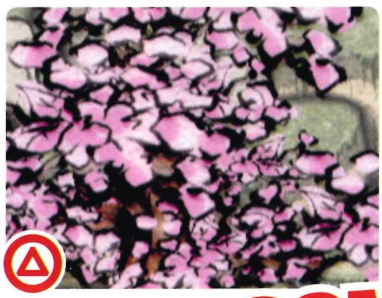
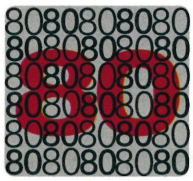


IMAGE ZOOM

Here's a little bit of scenery from a very popular game. Recognise it? Then text **OPS2ZOOM** then a single space followed by your name and answer to **87103**.

VIDEOGAME PICTO-PUZZLE

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



PRIVATE PROPERTY

Do you know who this belongs to? This is a star prize question, so see opposite for details of how to enter.

Please return to…?

WIN ALL THIS! THE PRIZES

Match the question symbols to the prizes, and you could win all this!

STAR PRIZE

WIN THESE GREAT KARAOKE PRIZES!

You must enter all seven star prize question to be in with a chance to win the star prize: Singstar Rocks game with wo microphones; Singstar R&B game; The X Factor Sing game and an OPS2 Magazine T-shirt!

PRIZE BUNDLE #01

Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater soundtrack, MGS2 Stickers and Pirates of the Caribbean sunglasses

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

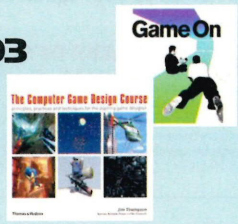
PRIZE BUNDLE #02

Destroy All Humans! soundtrack; DAH! bonus DVD; Lego Boba Fett keyring; The Simpsons game

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

PRIZE BUNDLE #03

Two awesome books! *Game On: The History and Culture of Videogames* and *The Computer Game Design Course*



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

PRIZE BUNDLE #04

Mace Griffin Bounty Hunter game; Total Overdose T-shirt, and an OPS2 Magazine T-shirt

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

ISSUE 94 WINNERS

Star prize: Matthew Breeze, County Durham
Spot the Difference: Michael Dunlop, Lancashire
Multiple Choice: Phillip Poar, via email
Who's Your Baddie?: Stacey Ruscoe, via email
Image Zoom: Aimee Renvoize, Dagenham

Golden Compass bundles: Karen Faulkner, Birmingham; Robert Mawson, County Durham; Kieran McMullin, Scotland

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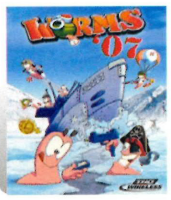
THIS MONTH'S GAME
WORMS



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This month, our choice is Worms – in many ways, the perfect game for mobiles, with its turn-based gameplay and purposefully simply graphics.

There's a full suite of new singleplayer missions and game modes plus deathmatch and challenge missions.

And because it's turn-based, you can play against a friend without Bluetooth or fancy handsets.

All your favourite weapons are in there including banana bombs and the holy hand grenade. You can even give names to your squad of Worms!

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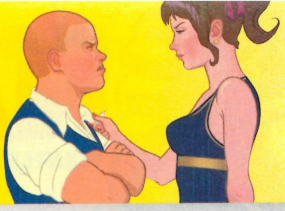

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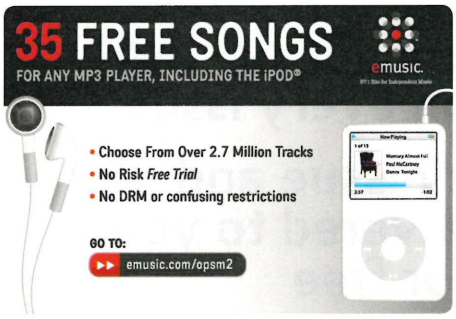

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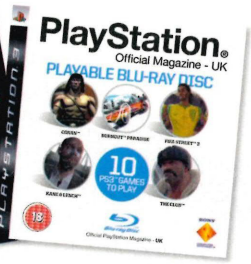

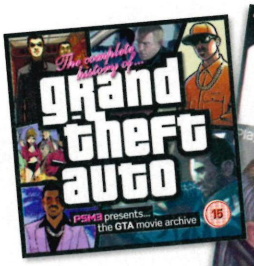

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BLASTS FROM THE PAST

Which PS1 games are worth digging out to play on your PS2 and which are best left in the junk cupboard? Buy wisely with our guide

Go to an internet auction site any day of the week and you'll find plenty of people offering '12 PS1 games for £20' or 'LOOK PS1 games 99p each!!!!!!' or even 'PS1 console plus 20 games CHEAP CHEAP CHEAP'.

You could play these games on your PS2, as you probably already know. But is it worth it, given the advances in graphics and technology since the PS1's heyday, a decade ago?

Well, many of these old games are still well worth slotting into your drive. And to help you decide which ones are worth tracking down, we've put together a list of the PS1 games that have really stood the test of time.

Some of the best are pretty hard to find these days, so we've included a rating of how rare – or not –they are.

Boss or dross?

PS1 games that are still worth playing generally fall into two categories: ones that don't have an equivalent on PS2 and ones that are early episodes from outstanding series. The former, Discworld Noir and Vib-Ribbon for example, offer experiences that you just can't get on PS2. The latter are great if you're a fan of the series and want to know the full story and see 'where it all began'.

As a general rule, though, don't fork out for PS1 versions of driving and sports series.

They're inevitably disappointing if you've played anything similar on PS2, offering limited controls and a frustrating lack of manoeuvrability.

Even if they were groundbreaking at the time, the enjoyment relied on technology that's now out of date.

Crash Team Racing is the exception (see p54). It's a racing game, sure, but it really falls into the 'great for fans' category because it's a chance to see Crash Bandicoot in his prime.

People often say Crash hasn't been so good since he jumped onto PS2. Well, make up your own mind!

Rate of play

Whatever game you choose, the framerates will be lower and the graphics will look old-fashioned, of course. But all the titles we've listed here rely on other factors for their enduring appeal, so don't let a bit of low-res get you down. It's retro!

You may even find a bit's chopped off the bottom of the picture. It's not your TV – it's just a thing that happens with some PS1 games on PS2.

Oh, and don't forget to put a PS1 memory card in your PS2's memory slot, because you can't save PS1 games on a PS2 card.

WHERE TO FIND PS1 GAMES

TOP FIVE HUNTING GROUNDS FOR LAST-GEN TREASURE

5. Ebay
4. Amazon Marketplace
3. Car boot sales
2. Charity shops
1. Your big brother's bedroom

TOMB RAIDER I & II

Putting the 'ass' in 'classic' since 1996

So, you played Tomb Raider: Anniversary. Does that mean you needn't bother with the originals? Hell, no. If you thought Anniversary was a challenge, try the same puzzles with a much more limited move set and graphics so fuzzy that half the time you can barely see what's what.

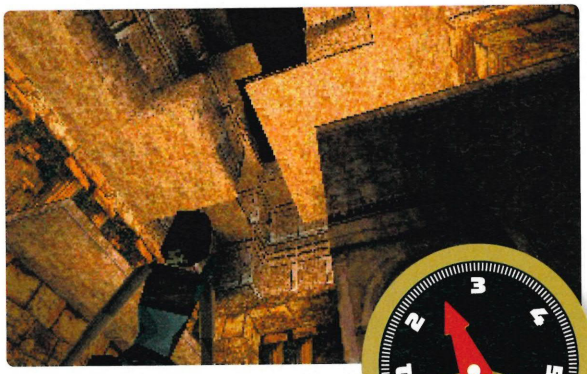
When Lara Croft first hit our screens, 3D puzzling of this type was almost unheard of on a console. Tough, gun-toting, self-sufficient heroines were also almost unheard of, in film as well as games.

Tomb Raider made both these things happen, and as such it's an important part of the history of popular culture.

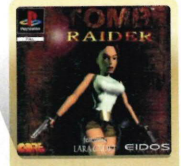
Happily, both the first two games are awesome, too. Sure, there'll be times when you chew your arm off in frustration, but that's part of the fun.

Happy mammaries

But the thing you'll hate about Tomb Raider I and II – the fact that they never make it easy, never budge a goddamn inch to help you – is also the reason you'll love them.



The puzzles are still mind-twisting



Eidos
1996 and 1997
We saw them for: £4.49 each (RetroTrader.com)

RARE RATING

In this age of games that hold your hand so tightly that you wonder why they put puzzles in at all when they spell out the solution in mile-high letters, you can't beat the satisfaction of solving something all by yourself.

By which we mean, with the help of everyone else in your household making suggestions, which is the best way to play 'Raider. **Sophie Mason**

Konami
1999
We saw it for: £10.89 (Amazon.co.uk)

METAL GEAR SOLID

Goes deep into your mind… your soul…

If you told us back in 1998 that an update of the middling-quality Metal Gear series on the NES would become a console-shifting juggernaut that offered up the first signs that the line between games and cinema was eroding, we'd have told you to go sit on a joystick.

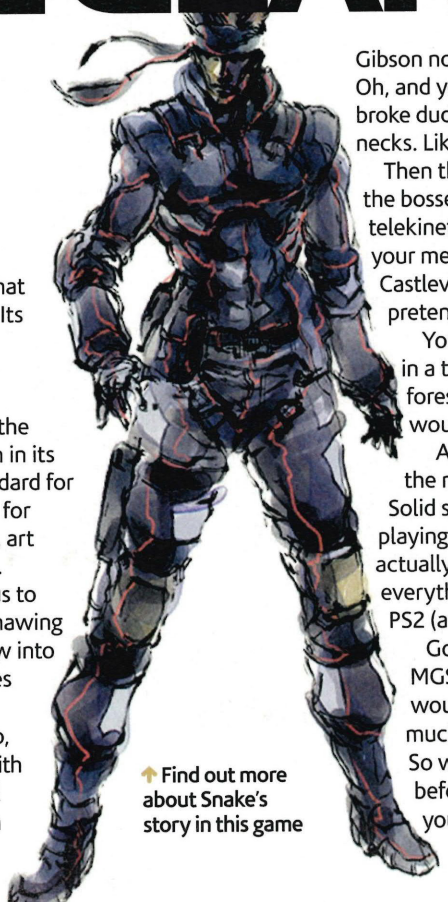
But lo, that's exactly what Metal Gear Solid became. Its achievements are legion.

Precious metal

Not only did it popularise the stealth-'em-up genre, then in its infancy, but it set the standard for gaming production values for years to come, for writing, art direction and voice acting.

It formally introduced us to Solid Snake, a cigarette-gnawing super-spy who would grow into a genuine icon as the series progressed.

And it presented a deep, thought-provoking story with more moral-technological quandaries than a William Gibson novel. Oh, and you broke dudes' necks. Like, a lot.



Find out more about Snake's story in this game

RARE RATING

Then there are the bosses. Psycho Mantis, a telekinetic freak, would read off your memory card ("You like Castlevania, don't you?") and pretend to change the TV channel.

Your duel with Revolver Ocelot in a tripwire-laced room only foreshadowed what a terror he would become in later games.

And there's the rub – due to the nature of the Metal Gear Solid series' snowballing storyline, playing through this first game is actually integral if you want to grasp everything that's going on in the PS2 (and PS3) sequels.

God help you if you dived into MGS2 without playing this: it would have made about as much sense as electric scissors. So whether you've touched MGS before or not, you owe it to yourself to play this. **Mike Sterry**

Squaresoft
1997
We saw it for:
£8.50
(Ebay.co.uk)

FINAL FANTASY VII

Witness the birth of an entire genre

This is the place where legends began. This game gave rise to the iconic figures of 21st-century roleplaying: a surly, spiky-haired boy with a massive sword, a flower girl with a tragic fate and a leather-clad man with the silver locks of a god.

It sold more than 9.5 million copies worldwide and bridged the gap between Western and Eastern gaming. It is Final Fantasy VII.

East meets West

The first Final Fantasy instalment to be released outside of Japan, FFVII is set in a world on the brink of destruction.

The Shinra Corporation has been mining the planet for fuel, and as a result Armageddon is about to be unleashed. Enter Cloud Strife, your boy-warrior hero, who blows up one of Shinra's reactors for a group of eco-warriors.

All is not as simple as it seems, of course, and Cloud is thrown into an epic adventure to save the world and uncover the truth of his dark past.

FFVII brought a cast of personas so detailed and so enthrallingly intertwined that gamers were enraptured in their world, their struggles and their journey. Even now, the shocking death of Aeries, one of the main characters, is still grieved over by stunned gamers.

↑ Revolutionary then, the visuals still impress now

World in motion

FFVII truly broke the boundaries of every aspect of gaming. The power of the PS1 allowed Squaresoft to include an unprecendented 40 minutes of full-motion video. This meant the development team paid extra attention to the quality of the in-game graphics, resulting in a mixture of pre-rendered 2D backgrounds and 3D characters.

As for game mechanics, FFVII is where the action of summoning powerful creatures was born.

The revolutionary Materia system created a character development scheme that was quick to pick up, and a formidable tool when mastered.

As a result of its success in bridging international waters, Japanese RPG makers got more confident about releasing games in the West. So it is the reason why we can today play the likes of Rogue Galaxy and Persona 3.

FFVII is the defining moment in the story of RPGs. Experience a slice of history: buy FFVII. Buy it now. **Kim Richards**

THE OTHERS

THERE ARE TWO MORE FINAL FANTASIES TO FIND ON PS1...

Released in 1999, Final Fantasy VIII had some very large boots to fill. It managed it, by overhauling several traditional FF elements.

This caused some resentment among fans, but the realistic graphics, passionate story and revolutionary use of music helped VIII to sell more than six million copies by the end of 1999.

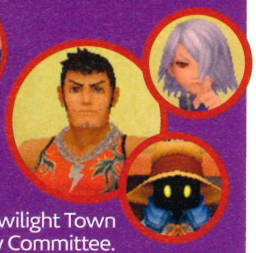
By contrast, the series' last instalment on PS1, Final Fantasy IX, was a return to roots. The world's medieval compared to VII and VIII's sci-fi settings and the character development system is simpler.

The best bit is its beautiful art style, with pre-rendered backgrounds and fluid character motion. Throw in an emotional story and a fascinating cast, and FFIX is unmissable, too.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

The Kingdom Hearts series on PS2 sees the worlds of Final Fantasy and Disney collide. Much to the excitement of many fans, several faces from FFVII pop up to say hello with KH cameos.

SEPHIROTH & CLOUD
...are still trying to work out their emotional issues with one another.



RAIJIN, VIVI & FUJIN
...are the Twilight Town Disciplinary Committee.

SQUALL & YUFFIE
...are fighting the Heartless in Hollow Bastion.

MR DRILLER

Can you dig it?

Games that stand the test of time are often puzzlers, because their appeal relies not on graphics that date quickly, but on a simple, addictive idea.

Mr Driller is just such a game. You control a little chappie who must, for reasons that are never adequately explained, drill his way down through a series of brightly coloured blocks.

Luckily, Susumu Hori – for that is Mr Driller's full name – is pretty handy with a pneumatic, having inherited an immense talent for digging from his father Taizo, star of the original Dig Dug games.

As you go, you must maintain Susumu's air supply by collecting air bubbles, otherwise he'll turn blue and suffocate (mwahaha!).

Driller thriller

Most of the blocks are coloured and can merge in twos, threes or fours to make bigger blocks that you can bust all at once.

But you've also got brown boxes that are tougher and knock 20% off your air supply when they bust, crystal blocks that only appear for a few seconds and pale blocks that won't merge.

It's simple to grasp but fiendishly tough to master.

The bad news is that after PS1, Mr Driller sold out to Nintendo and these days the original PS1 title is rarer than a photo of Britney with hair. So you won't get it cheap. For retro fans and collectors, though, this is a must-have. **Sophie Mason**

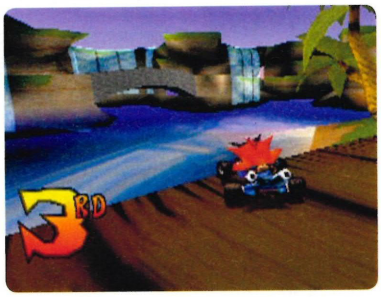
Sony
2000
We saw it for:
£21.99 (Amazon Marketplace)

CRASH TEAM RACING

Your favourite Bandicoot, back when he was still worth knowing

Yes, it's a kart racer. But don't let that put you off. This is the best kart racer ever to grace PS1 – in fact, the best on any PlayStation console until it was remade for PSP in 2005.

It's classic Crash Bandicoot and widely acknowledged as his last great game before he went a bit pants on PS2, so even if you haven't enjoyed any of his other work, try this.



Kart attack

It sees Crash and his gang fighting an evil alien called Nitrous Oxide, but instead of spin attacks and double-jumps, the argument is to be settled via the medium of chaotic kart races. If only they'd try that in the Middle East, eh?

You've got loads of tracks, all your favourite characters, lots of weapons to pick up and attack rivals with and… well, that's about all there is to say about it because, after all, it's a kart racer and it does what it says on the tin.

But that's why Crash Team Racing succeeds where other racers fail. It takes a simple idea – drive fast, blow each other up – and does it very well, even by today's standards. No frills, but plenty of thrills. **Sophie Mason**

Sony
1999
We saw it for
£7.99 (Amazon Marketplace)

VAGRANT STORY

An epic experience that you just can't get on PS2

Squaresoft
2000
We saw it for:
£10.15 (Play-Asia.com)

When Vagrant Story was released, it was somewhat eclipsed by Final Fantasy VIII and Valkyrie Profile. But thanks to its unique battle system and exciting story, it heralded a strong following that still holds today.

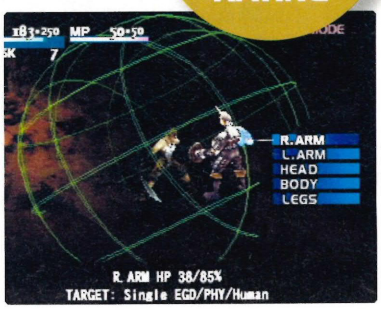
It's laced with all the hallmarks of an epic tale: love, betrayal, conspiracy and so on. Wrongly accused of murder, Ashley Riot travels to the lost world of Lea Monde to uncover the motivations of the real killer.

Nouvelle vagrant

Breathing originality and doing away with roleplaying game stereotypes, VS plays like a platformer, filled with puzzles and obstacles. Ashley is the only playable character, but he's credible enough to hold his own.

You hit ◎ to enable Battle mode and bring up a spherical grid around your burly warrior. He'll then target any baddie within its circumference and bring up a menu of limbs to attack.

Depending on the foe, different strategies can be evolved to chain attacks and unlock combos. It's an original and stylish system. And that, in fact, sums up VS: original and stylish. **Kim Richards**



RESIDENT EVIL: DIRECTOR'S CUT

Aim for the head. If it's got one...

Capcom
1997
We saw it for:
£8.99
(Amazon.co.uk)

The first Resident Evil contains two of our all-time favourite gaming moments. The first time you lock eyes with a cannibalistic corpse – something indelibly printed on our minds – and the note you find in a zombie scientist's desk, ending with the pithy "Itchy. Tasty." after his first meal of human flesh.

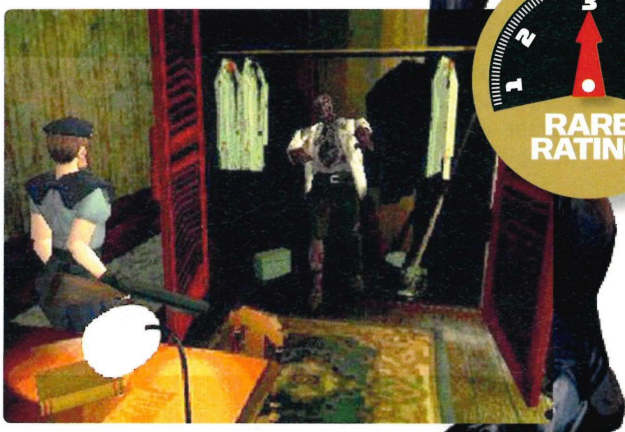
Sure, the dialogue is laughable, the loading is long and Jill Valentine's outfit is a blueberry nightmare.

Yet, despite sporting a polygon count that makes it look lumpier than a bowl of minestrone soup, Resident Evil still manages to scare.

A cut above

The Director's Cut is a rarer find than the original version, but it's much better. There are numerous gameplay tweaks and extra content including a Beginner mode that turns the final quarter of the game from nigh-impossible to merely bloody hard.

And yes, the gameplay itself is a tad ponderous when compared to Resi 4, but c'mon – not all history lessons are this exciting. **Mike Sterry**



He might be getting on a bit, but you still wouldn't spill his pint

ODDWORLD: ABE'S ODDYSEE

Follow me if you want to live

GT Interactive
1997
We saw it for:
£4.99
(Ebay.co.uk)

Abe is a Mudokon slave who works at the RuptureFarms meat processing factory. One day, he finds out the company plans to start killing the Mudokons and turning them into Tasty Treats. Nasty!

That's where you come in. Controlling Abe, you must escape the factory, save your people and wreak revenge by assuming the power of the Shrykull, a mystical demigod creature.

Nice to meat you

Fundamentally a platformer, Abe's Oddysee is a cult classic and long overdue a turn on PS2. For now, though, you have to play the last-gen version.

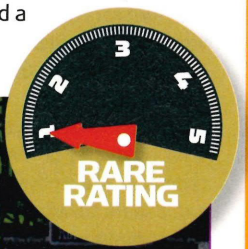
Weirdly creepy, its dark atmosphere is enhanced by the fact that it gives few instructions: you have to search levels and peer into the backgrounds for clues.

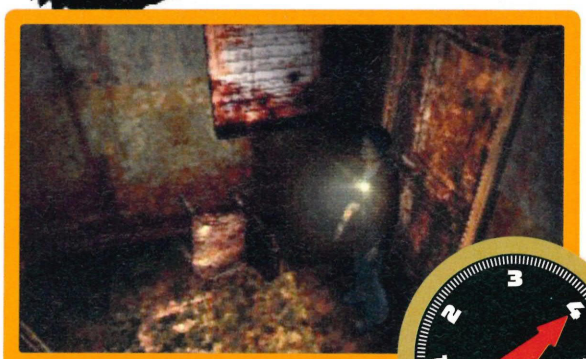
But despite being dingy and really quite difficult, it's just so damn endearing.

As you go through Abe's journey of self-discovery you can't help caring about him and his brilliantly characterised friends and hating his odious enemies.

The Mudokons may be dumb and seemingly suicidal, but that just spurs you on to save more of them.

It's eerie, funny and weirdly cute – an odd world and a wonderful one. **Sophie Mason**





SILENT HILL

The monsters... they won't leave us... alone...

Even today, the original Silent Hill will make your skin tingle. The visuals may be basic, fuzzy and dark by modern standards, but this only adds to the fear because you're never quite sure what's coming at you through the mist.

You play as Harry Mason, who's searching for his daughter in a fog-shrouded town, after a mysterious car accident.

The basic gameplay hasn't changed much since 1999 (a quick look at SH Origins on PSP is testament to that), so fans will feel immediately at home with the game.

Add that to the cast of bonkers bit-part players and the baffling yet genius plot and it's clear this is a classic you can't ignore. **Andy Hartup**

Konami
1999
We saw it for:
£15.49
(Amazon.co.uk)

FEAR EFFECT 2: RETRO HELIX

So, are you two gun-toting mercenaries together...?

Let's not beat about the, er, bush: Fear Effect 2 is mostly famous for hot lesbo action. And yes, its two female main characters do have a 'close' relationship. But there are many more reasons than that to buy a copy.

The action centres on futuristic mercenaries so it's got a sci-fi feel. But the tense, mystery-riddled story, based on themes from Chinese folk tales, also blends in horror, humour and gunnage galore.

And it entertains every moment from start to finish. One minute you'll be shooting frantically, the next you'll be relaxing, enjoying some of the two hours of animated cutscenes; then you'll be scratching your head as you work out a puzzle before tackling a complex, challenging boss fight.

Eidos
2001
We saw it for:
99p
(Ebay.co.uk)

Graphic violence

Retro Helix's graphic-novel-style, cel-shaded graphics still look fresh, and the visuals are accompanied by top-quality voice acting.

So it's a much deeper and more engrossing experience than you might think, given its sexy notoriety.

Sophie Mason

SHEEP, DOG 'N' WOLF

Shear puzzling joy

Cartoon games are usually duff. But Sheep, Dog 'n' Wolf is one of the few to enter the history books with its reputation intact.

It's funny, it's challenging, it's inventive. You play as Wile E Coyote's cousin Ralph Wolf, who's jonesing for a plateful of extra-rare mutton chops.

However, between him and the still-grazing sheep stands Sam Sheepdog, meting out a beating to anyone that comes near his flock. Using Acme-trademarked comedy traps, bait and some old-fashioned tip-toeing, your aim is to snaffle the sheep without getting caught.

With cameos from icons such as Roadrunner, Porky Pig and Elmer Fudd, it's a must for anyone who likes Looney Tunes. **Andy Hartup**

Atari
2001
We saw it for:
£3.70
(Ebay.co.uk)

SYPHON FILTER

Logan's one. And two. And three

Sony
2001
We saw it for:
£11.34 for all three games (Amazon)

Before there was 24's Jack Bauer or Tom Clancy's Sam Fisher, there was Gabe Logan. The all-action playboy of PS1, Gabe ushered in a new era of third-person shooting that has been often imitated, but seldom bettered.

Three of a kind

In his three PS1 games, our hero is on the hunt for the deadly Syphon Filter virus, which targets specific ethnic groups.

Throughout the series, Gabe destroys various strains of the chemical agent, but can't seem to wipe it out completely.

Syphon Filter 3 is the best example of gunplay, Gabe Logan style, but if you want to understand the excellent plots of the later games, start at the beginning and work through.

With the series experiencing a renaissance on PSP and PS2, with Dark Mirror and Logan's Shadow, now is the time to dip into Gabe Logan's personal files to find out where it all began.

Andy Hartup

CASTLEVANIA SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT

A symphony of delight

Konami
1997
We saw it for:
£54.00
(Ebay.co.uk)

There's a reason copies of Castlevania: Symphony of the Night sell for more than double the cost of your average new PS2 title: it's one of the greatest games of all time.

Why is a pixellated, 2D side-scroller still fêted as one of the greatest games ever made? Well, for a start, it features gameplay and character customisation deeper than the Grand Canyon, reaching the pinnacle of what 2D gaming could provide.

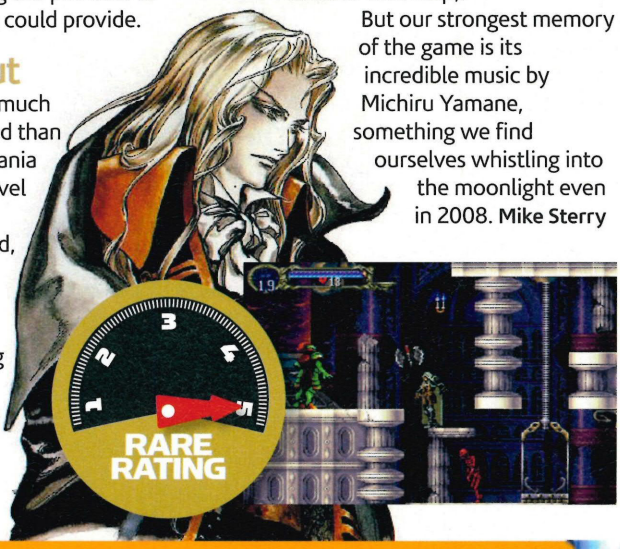
Fang about

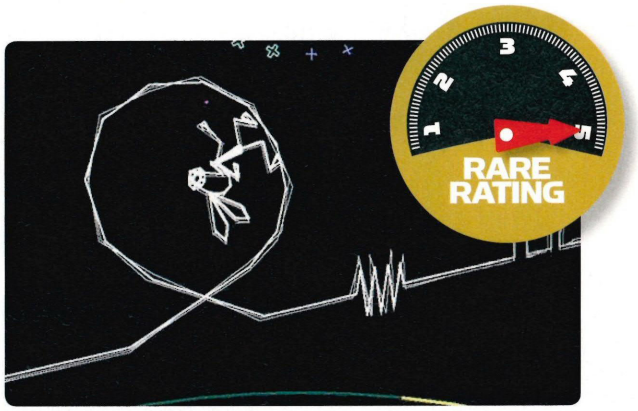
The play style is much more open-ended than previous Castlevania titles. You can level up vampiric anti-hero Alucard, equip new weapons and armour, even summon floating familiars to aid him – mechanics that proved so popular that they were used in all subsequent Castlevania games.

The castle itself is massive, almost intimidatingly so.

Not only that, but while working your way to the game's 'best' ending, the castle will flip upside-down and must be traversed again in its entirety (happily, by this point Alucard's got new abilities that help).

But our strongest memory of the game is its incredible music by Michiru Yamane, something we find ourselves whistling into the moonlight even in 2008. **Mike Sterry**





VIB-RIBBON

Music for your eyes

If you like your games a bit leftfield, you'll love Vib-Ribbon: there's nothing else like it. Well, apart from its two sequels. But anyway.

It's a platform-cum-rhythm-action type of thang. But the twist is that you can put any music CD into the console and an obstacle course is created according to the music being played (the game itself downloads to the console's memory).

You guide Vibri (a rabbit) along the levels by pressing combos in time to the tune. At the end of a level she sings a song to show how well you did.

It's all done in a flickery, stick-figure, hand-animated style that's cute and weird and cool all at the same time.

On the downside, Vibri is a rare beast so her game will cost you a few bob. But it's so worth it. **Sophie Mason**

Sony
1999
We saw it for:
£14.99
(Amazon.co.uk)

LEGEND OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER

The first step on your journey across dimensions

Eidos
1999
We saw it for:
£3.47
(Ebay.co.uk)

Like the rest of the Legacy of Kain series, Soul Reaver is an odd mix.

One moment you're impaling a pox-covered mutant with a spear; the next you'll hear Raziel eloquently railing against the machinations of fate in cod-Shakespearean soliloquy.

At the time, it was easily the best voice acting in any game (Metal Gear Solid included), and its cynical musings on the nature of existence and fate were surprising to find in so mainstream a title.

To quote our hero: "This world is wracked with cataclysms. The earth strains to shrug off the pestilence of Kain's parasitic empire. The fate of this world was preordained in an instant, by a solitary man." Ape Escape it ain't.

The convoluted Legacy of Kain story continued on PS2 with a strong follow-up, Soul Reaver 2, the passable Blood Omen 2 and the superior Legacy of Kain: Defiance.

Despite their notoriously frustrating cliffhanger endings, the epic journey that begins with Soul Reaver on PS1 is well worth the trip. **Mike Sterry**

THE LEVEL

We celebrate a classic sequence in XIII

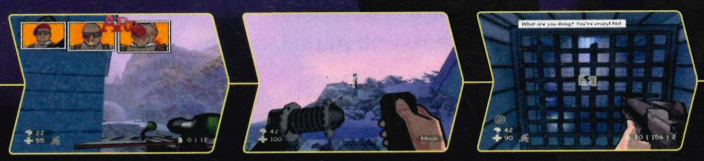
THE STORY SO FAR...

Our mysterious, amnesiac hero, known only as XIII, has been captured and charged with killing the US president. He's rescued by Jones, who suggests XIII finds General Carrington because he might shed light on XIII's past...

Carrington is being held in a military base in mountains. As XIII is dropped in, the base is under attack by mercenaries known as SPADs.

The SPAD guards are spread out, so louder weapons such as the shotgun can be used as XIII makes his way to the main part of the base.

The SPADs have cut off the power supply to the bridge, so firstly XIII needs to sneak into the operator's hut and clang him over the head with a shovel.



Clearing out the last snipers, XIII scales the mountainside with a grapple hook and enters the base's forecourt through an air vent.

Here it gets tough. XIII must take out four generators without any SPAD soldier seeing him and raising the alarm. Throwing knives help.

XIII has to pick his way through the base carefully, using stealth kills, hiding the bodies then exploding in action around the generators.

The bodies can't be discovered because then the alarm will raised and the mission will be failed.

Dropping down into the base, XIII clears the corridors of guards, then gets to see at first hand how the SPADs deal with their enemies.

Using the vents to move around can be dangerous, especially since some tunnels have electrical faults, so XIII must get into the map room quickly.

Releasing Carrington from his cell, XIII must blast his way out of the complex using the element of surprise to his advantage.

Bursting out of the prison complex, Carrington and XIII choose to use the cable car to escape the mountain.

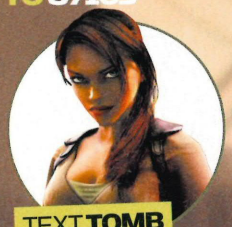
Carrington arms XIII with a sniper rifle and explains that their descent won't be easy. Sure enough, their car comes under attack!

After clearing the ground with the rifle, XIII and Carrington use the grapple gun to get to the ground, then sprint to the prearranged rendezvous.

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

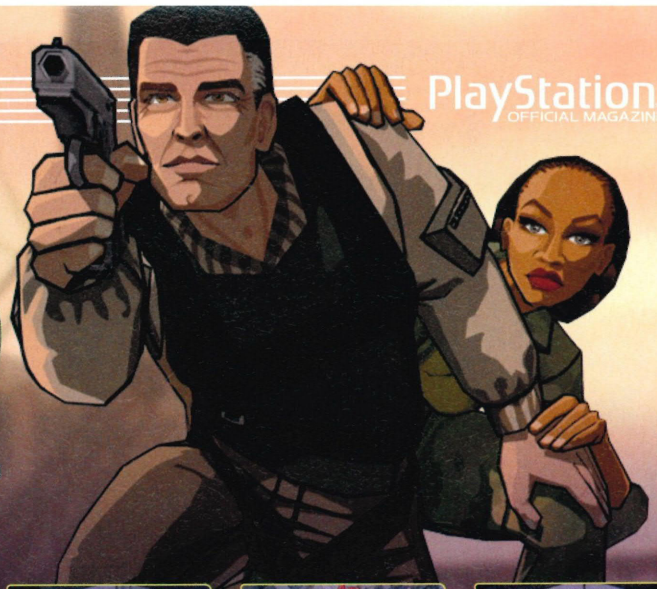
TEXT JOE
The sub from Viewtiful Joe

TEXT WARLORD
The Keep from Onimusha: Warlords



TEXT TOMB
Midas' Palace from Tomb Raider

See p111 for text charges and full terms and conditions. Lines close 26 March 2008. You can also vote for your favourite level by email to psnation@futurenet.co.uk (put LEVEL in the subject line).



↑ The SPADs are merciless with the US soldiers so XIII uses similar lethal forces, dispensing with the first guard via the medium of a crossbow.

↑ Only headshots guarantee a kill with crossbow so XIII must be accurate with his aim and swift in his actions to take down the other SPAD sentries.

↑ The main generator is in a nearby warehouse. And now XIII has an automatic rifle with a grenade launcher, which makes repowering easier.

↑ Proving XIII can mix stealth with brute force, he uses a cunning combination of exploding barrel and jeep to take out a sentry point.

↑ Fortunately many of the SPAD guards seem to be hard of hearing, so a grenade popped through the window accounts for one…

↑ … and picking the lock of a room near the main door reveals the next, who can be destroyed with one blast of a shotgun.

↑ Once the last generator is destroyed, XIII climbs the main gate, then uses the grapple hook to find another air vent to enter the main complex.

↑ As XIII crawls through the vents he overhears a conversation: an unknown colonel berating the SPADs over the slaughter of the US soldiers.

↑ XIII uses a bank of security cameras to find Carrington's cell. Unsurprisingly, it's heavily guarded, so it's time to get that trigger finger warmed up.

↑ Using the air vents once again, XIII hears Carrington's voice, prompting a flashback of Carrington assigning XIII to a dangerous mission.

↑ Carrington stays undercover while XIII searches for the keycard that's needed to find the fuse for the cable car.

↑ After relieving a SPAD of the keycard, the fuse is found in a nearby hut. Some quick repairs, and the cable car begins to work.

↑ Jones is waiting with a helicopter for the duo, but is coming under serious attack from the chasing SPAD guards.

↑ After using a mounted gun to give Carrington time to board the chopper, XIII finally makes a run for it, ending one of the toughest bits of the game.

THE PS2 GAMES YOU SHOULD OWN #07

If you haven't played Project Zero, you don't know the meaning of fear. We recommend you leave the lights on

KNOW THIS

Publisher Wanadoo
Developer Tecmo
Genre Horror
Score 8/10 OPS2 #24

WE SAID... *'Genuinely disturbing survival horror, dripping with menace.'*

NOW WE SAY... Wonderfully unsettling and absolutely terrifying.

If we say 'survival horror', you say Resident Evil. If we ask 'scariest game ever?', you'll reply Silent Hill. But we'll say 'Ah, young padawan, try again'.

No, the definitive PS2 title if you want bowel-churning terror and spine-shivering fear is, in fact, Project Zero. Startlingly disturbing, it is a slice of Japanese horror at its finest.

Any fan of Japanese horror films such as The Ring will recognise the call signs of the genre: stylistic camera angles, a disturbing plot and, of course, a freaky girl with long black hair and a taste for your soul.

It is set in and around Himuro Mansion, a derelict building which, naturally, harbours a dark history.

According to frightened locals, the mansion residents engaged in forbidden Shinto rituals: the perfect setting for a tale of supernatural woe.

Enter Miku Hanasaki, a young college girl whose brother went missing after entering the mansion to look for his boss (the little suck-up).

You must guide Miku through this haunted house and find clues as to her brother's fate.

Amid hallways of hanging ropes, rooms with stained kimonos and shrines with faded mirrors, the mansion is littered with the debris of its victims.

Audio tapes, scraps of diaries, notebooks and news articles piece together the chilling story of the Himuro family, the mansion's history and the existence of a particular vicious ghost called Kirie the Rope Maiden.

Snap happy

Project Zero truly is a survival horror in every sense of the phrase. In Resident Evil, you can't move for AK-47s and red herbs. Silent Hill is littered with energy drinks. In Project Zero, Miku has only a camera. That's right, a camera.

Luckily, these particular ghosts really hate having their photos taken, which makes for a beautifully unique battle system.

When confronted by a vengeful spirit, Miku must whip out her 35mm and target a circle that'll appear

↑ Shadowy figures will always appear when you least expect it

↑ Maybe you should just scream now to get it all over with?

Miku gets a nasty surprise from one of the game's sneaky spectres

around the ghoul's head. The camera's power charges as you target, so if you wait long enough and time your shot perfectly, you'll deal more damage.

The camera can be upgraded over the course of the game, using points from photos and Spirit Stones to unlock special ghost-suppressing abilities. But it's all you have.

The ethereal foes you'll be snapping divide into three categories: hidden, vanishing and attacking ghosts.

Hidden ghosts are harmless, existing only to boost up your camera's points (if you can find them). Vanishing ghosts appear when you least expect it, and you must snap them before they fade away.

But worst of all are the attacking ghosts, who just want to destroy you. Blinded women, mishapen men, and – shudder – young children crawling across the floor… they make the most hardened gamer drop the controller and shriek at the TV in fear.

Behind you

Camerawork plays a big part in stirring up the tension. Walk along a balcony, and suddenly the camera will pan out to reveal… something… walking off the screen below you. Open a door, and it'll switch to a third-person perspective, bringing a horribly voyeuristic edge. Walk under a beam, and you'll just make out an arm dangling off of it.

Add flickering shadows, creaky floorboards and voices that sound like Satan growling into a distortion pedal, and there's never a moment when you're fully relaxed. It's terrifying. And it's awesome. **Kim Richards**

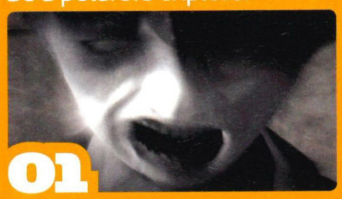
Target the ghost's head with your camera and snap to damage it

TOP FACT

The game's title is a pun on the Japanese character for 'zero': it is normally read as 'rei', which also means 'ghost'!

3 REASONS TO OWN IT

Be a polaroid explorer



01 GUT-WRENCHING FEAR

Hear the creaking… watch the shadows… oh my god what's that in the corner? Is it moving…

02 ENGAGING PLOT LINES

What happened to Miku's brother? Where is his boss? What dark rituals did the Himuros get up to?

03 GHOSTBUSTING

Each spectre you face up to is full of spine-tingling character and detail – best not to stare too long, though…

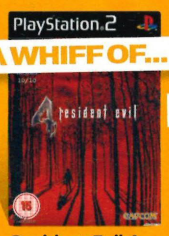
J-horror rule #1: young girls with long hair are bad news

IN THE MIX

The ingredients of horror for Project Zero

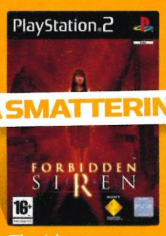
A SLICE OF...

Atmospheric lighting and crackling static, à la **Silent Hill 2**



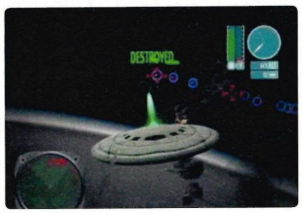
A WHIFF OF...

Resident Evil 4-style monstrous enemies and ghouls



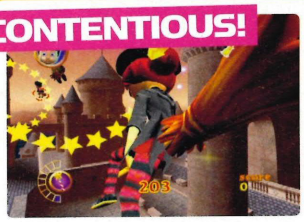
A SMATTERING OF...

The J-horror elements of **Forbidden Siren**



They Came From The Sky
2005
This 1960-set sci-fi shoot-'em-up has you defending planet Earth from old-school extra-terrestrials. You even get to pilot a flying saucer... or is that just a giant frisbee?

CONTENTIOUS!

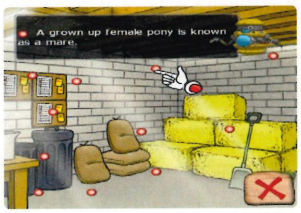


Billy the Wizard: Rocket Broomstick Racing
2005
A castle, a super-fast broomstick, a boy wizard... remind you of anyone? That's right, he's a bit like Mickey Mouse in *Fantasia*! What's that you say? Harry who? Oh...

WWC World Wrestling Championship
2007
Wow! It's like WWE, but only one letter different! And a bit like WCW with the letters shuffled round! So presumably, WWC is a good as WWE and WCW put together!

Chemist Tycoon
2007
Live the dream of running your own chemist! Mix with the infected on a daily basis, look at rashes and have a jolly good wheeze when you mix up the prescriptions and someone dies!

White Van Racer
2007
All the fun of terrorising other road users while hiding behind the anonymity that white vans afford their hateful drivers.



Clever Kids Pony World
2008
The word 'clever' could probably be replaced by the word 'bullied' if the other kids saw you playing this.

GREAT BUDGET

Not every game can enjoy the development budget of a new God Of War. And it shows...

So when we say 'greatest' in relation to budget games, we're not talking about hidden gems or titles that are especially great value for money (although of course some of these may be just that; it's all a matter of what you're looking for).

No, our standard for inclusion in this month's Greatest is a certain carefully crafted naffness – a special magic that immediately captures the imagination and warms the soul.

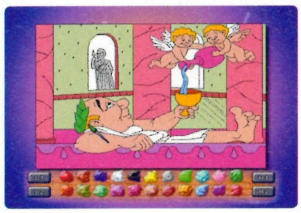
This effect is achieved in many different ways. For instance, there's the 'lame concept' of Carwash Tycoon; the 'tragic pun' like NinjaBread Man and then you have the 'godawful lead character' of which Hoppie, a butchered rabbit/spring hybrid, is a particularly good example.

Here, then, is our tribute to 24 of the brave, budget soldiers that have to compete against the big boys of the PS2 world. And if any tickle your fancy, remember: each of these can be yours for less than a tenner!

Gun Club
2006
All the thrills of peppering a paper target and being marked by your grouping without having to hang around with members of the religious right and people convinced a zombie holocaust is inevitable.

Hamster Heroes
2006
Cute, furry critters, rolling around cunningly crafted obstacle courses in balls – it can only be Super Monkey B... er, Hamster Heroes.

Deadly Strike
2005
How about those graphics? It's like they've got a 12-year-old to draw Dante from Devil May Cry and make him look slightly jaundiced.



Legend of Herkules
2003
Spelt with a K to nail that European market and starring a Hercules who looks more lady-boy than legend. Still, it comes with its own jigsaw puzzle and colouring-in game.

BEST NAME!

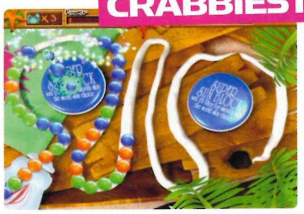
NinjaBread Man
2005
A biscuit armed with a samurai sword goes on a killing rampage, slicing up jelly monsters and cup cakes. And all this just because 'ninja' rhymes with 'ginger'.

Ruff Trigger: The Vanocore Conspiracy
2006
Hey, it's Ruff Trigger, and the furry little guy is off on an intergalactic adventure with his robot sidekick! Could this be where they got the idea for Ratchet & Clank?

EST PS2 GAMES

Did we miss out your favourite budget game? Tell us about it at psnation@futurenet.co.uk

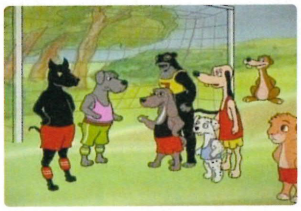
CRABBIEST!



Crabby Adventure

2006

In which Crabby – who's a crab – must protect his underwater kingdom from an attack of coloured marbles. That'll teach him for being so, ahem, shellfish.



Animal Soccer World

2006

Who needs Pro Evolution Soccer or FIFA Street when you've got the cast-offs from *Over The Hedge* hoofing balls about? Magic.

Carwash Tycoon

2007

Think it can't get any more exciting than Chemist Tycoon? Well, think again as the sexy and dangerous world of washing cars comes to a PS2 near you!

Extreme Sprint 3010

2006

This racing game is set in a futuristic world where a totalitarian government keeps the population in check by forcing people to compete in 'Extreme Sprinting'. What next? No-holds-barred hurdling?

Iron Chef

2006

Sounds like a new member of the Wu-Tang Clan, but is actually a fat-headed chef looking for some ingredients that have been swiped by mice.

Hoppie

2008

A rabbit on a spring? What's the point of that? It's a rabbit! It doesn't need a spring! It can hop perfectly well on its own! And is 'Hoppie' *really* the best name you could come up with?! Next!

Snow White and the Seven Clever Boys

2006

Seven Clever Boys? Can't we say 'dwarves' any more? And just where does Dopey fit into this 'clever' theme? And how come the 'boys' have beards?

Maniac Mole

2007

The name was probably intended to give this platformer a 'krazy' vibe, but to us it sounds like Maniac Mole is cold-blooded sociopath, intent on slaying your family with a spade.

London Cab Challenge

2006

Know how to cut up cyclists, make sweeping generalisations about immigration and never have change for a 20? Then you too could make it big in the glamorous world of London taxi driving.

CRUDEST!

Paparazzi

2005

Become a pariah of society and take photos of fictional celebs! Sadly lacking a 'chase-a-celebrity-to-their-doom-on-a-moped' time trial.

Wacky Zoo GP

2007

At first, we thought it was about a zoo based general practitioner with mental health issues. Then we saw the moose in the car and realised it was just a mini-cart game.

The Toys Room

2008

How creepy is this? Who on earth would buy their kids toys like this? If we're not mistaken, when they magically come alive they will kill you in your sleep...

UNSUNG HERO

BLOCK PARTY 3

#07 Lego Admiral Ackbar: your heart can't repel character of this magnitude!

It's all about the criteria. When inducting characters into our Unsung Hero Hall of Fame, we don't go for the obvious.

We could have chosen Raz from Psychonauts or Wander from Shadow of the Colossus, but that'd be too easy. Too safe.

We're searching for true diamonds in the rough here, characters who stand out from the crowd, waving a big flag with "Love me!" written on it. Characters like: Lego Admiral Ackbar.

Now, Lego Admiral Ackbar might not look like a hero. With his giant squid head and a voice that recalls Bernard Manning drowning in his own sick, he's hardly a chick magnet.

But give him a chance. Beneath his cephalopodan exterior lies one of the greatest military tacticians the Republic has ever known, a noble member of the Mon Calamari race who rose from Imperial Slave to commander of the Alliance fleet.

We ♥ calamari

In fact, when we were young, we didn't want to be Luke Skywalker. We didn't lust after a toy lightsaber, we had no pretensions of being a Jedi. We wanted to be Admiral Ackbar.

Sadly, there were no toys to cater to our wishes, so we had improvise with a visit to the fishmonger's and the rotting head of a giant octopus.

Lego Star Wars is the first game to honour the great Mon Calamari Admiral by making him a playable character. And he's not merely a blaster-toting extra. Oh no, even among the 50-odd characters on hand, Ackbar is special.

He can jump, dive, roll up on one knee and smoke fools with his quick-draw custom blaster.

And if you walk by a pack of Rebel troopers, he'll even get saluted.

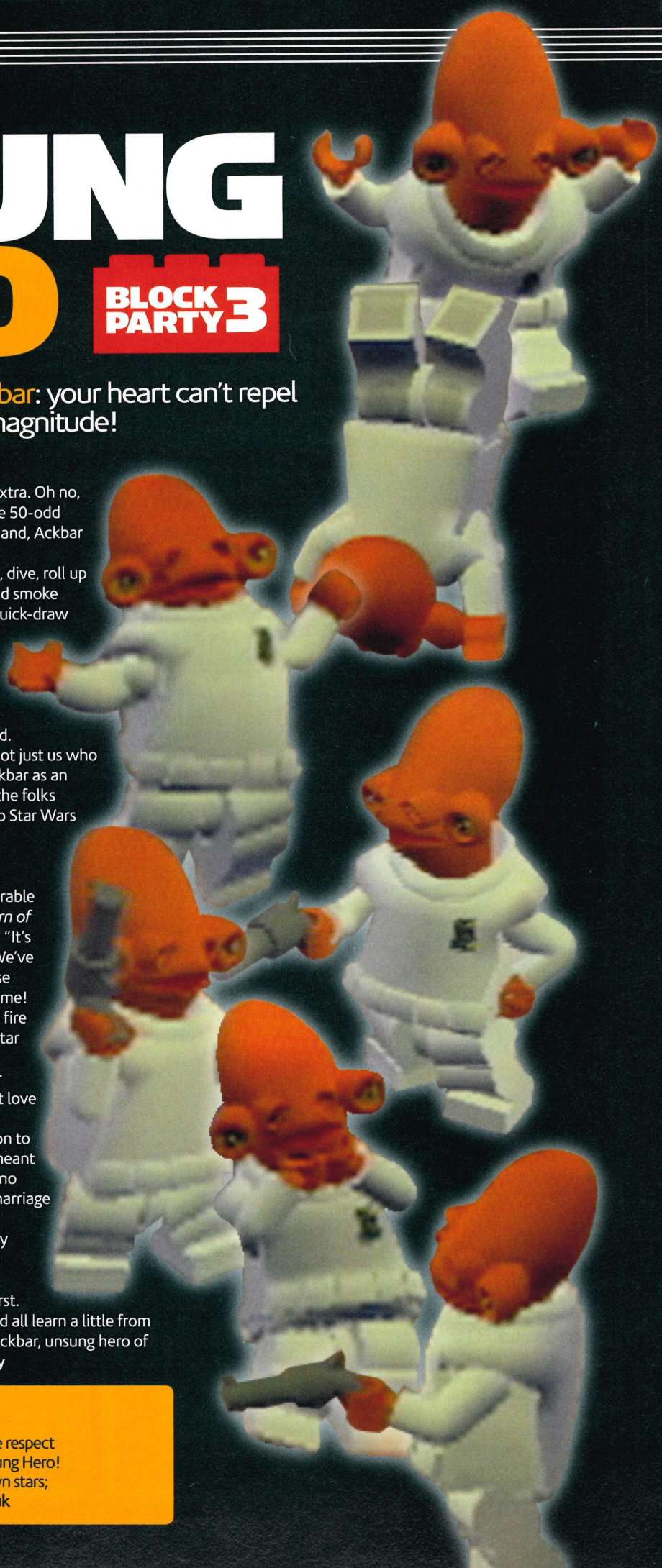
Clearly, it's not just us who see Admiral Ackbar as an unsung hero – the folks behind the Lego Star Wars series do, too.

Squids in

With his memorable lines from *Return of the Jedi* such as "It's a trap!" and "We've got to give those fighters more time! Concentrate all fire on that Super Star Destroyer!", Admiral Ackbar taught us about love and friendship.

His dedication to duty, though, meant he himself had no time for love, marriage or family. The Republic, and by extension the freedom of the galaxy, came first.

Yes, we could all learn a little from Lego Admiral Ackbar, unsung hero of PS2. **Mike Sterry**



YOUR HEROES!

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

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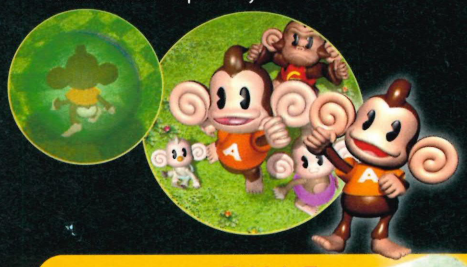
OFFICIAL PLAYSTATION 2 CHIMP-O-METER

Want to get up to some monkey business? Here are the PS2 habitats most favoured by jungle VIPs...

START HERE

SUPER MONKEY BALL 2

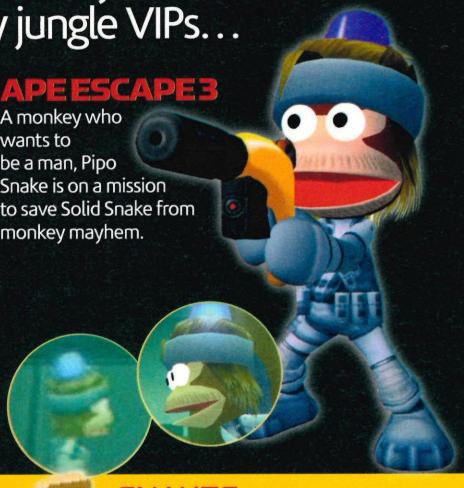
Aiai, Meemee, Baby and GonGon are relentlessly cute, but their tendency to wear clothes and pose for cameras is suspiciously human.



BALLS

APE ESCAPE 3

A monkey who wants to be a man, Pipo Snake is on a mission to save Solid Snake from monkey mayhem.



SNAKES

DRAGONBALL Z: BUDOKAI TENKAICHI 3

When the crazy lads from Dragon Ball Z get angry enough, they can transform into powerful beings, such as these super monkeys!

TRANSFORMERS

EYETOY: MONKEY MANIA

Monkeys and humans working together? You heard it here first, although we have trouble telling the children from the apes...

MANIACS

BUZZ! JUNIOR: JUNGLE PARTY

This clutter of colourful chimps are will be your best friends if you can handle their luminous fur and hyperactivity.

CHIMPY

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

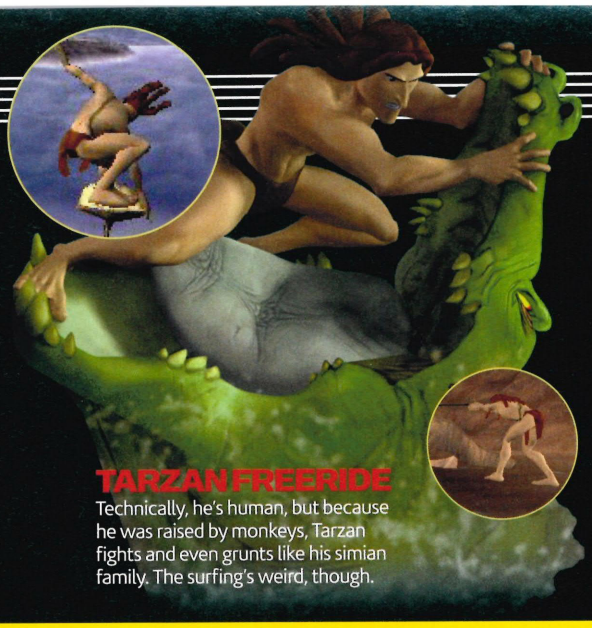
The largest of the large, King Kong is truly the king of the swingers. He can battle dinosaurs and climb skyscrapers, but he's also in touch with his sensitive side.

BEAST

SIMS 2 CASTAWAY

If you're marooned on a desert island, having a horde of simian servants isn't such a bad idea. They give good hugs, too.

ISLANDERS

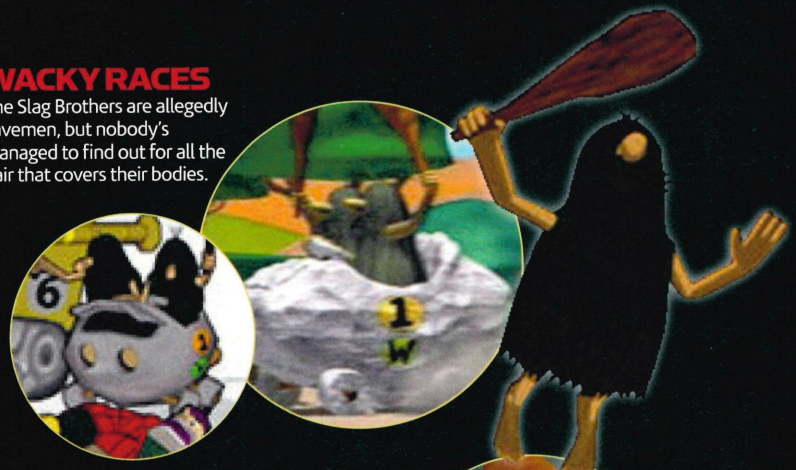


TARZAN FREERIDE

Technically, he's human, but because he was raised by monkeys, Tarzan fights and even grunts like his simian family. The surfing's weird, though.

WACKY RACES

The Slag Brothers are allegedly cavemen, but nobody's managed to find out for all the hair that covers their bodies.

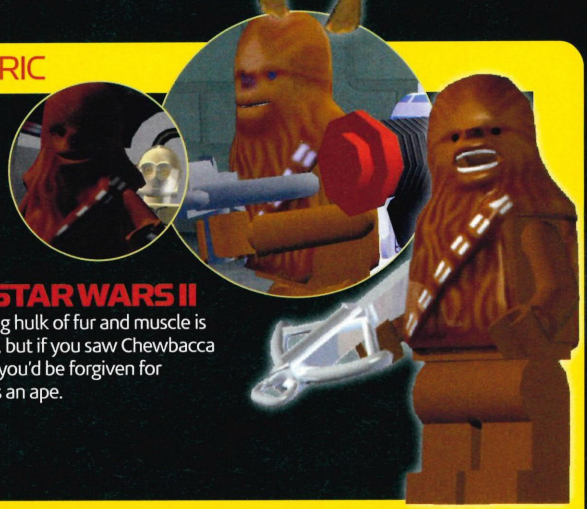


MONKEY BOY

PREHISTORIC

CRASH OF THE TITANS

Part gorilla, part scorpion, you definitely wouldn't want to bump into Scorporilla, the largest monster to rock the world in Crash of the Titans.

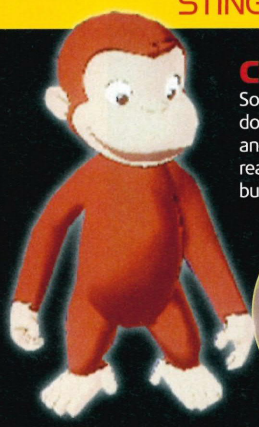


LEGO STAR WARS II

This towering hulk of fur and muscle is all Wookiee, but if you saw Chewbacca in dim light, you'd be forgiven for thinking he's an ape.

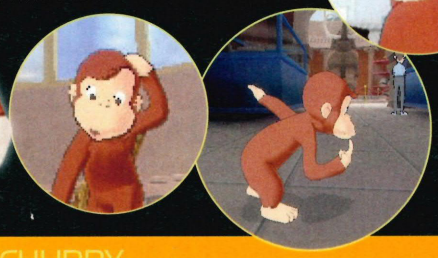
STING IN THE TAIL

FURRY



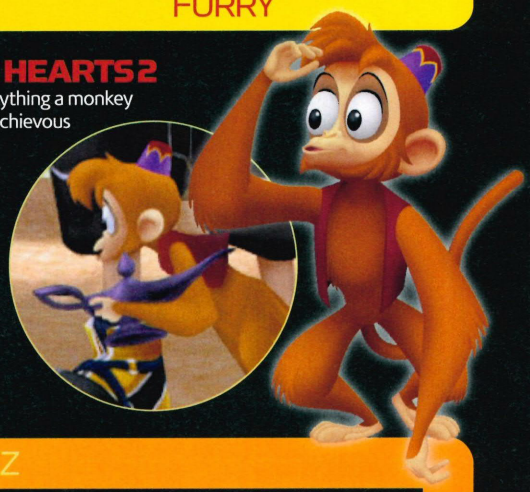
CURIOUS GEORGE

So small, so sweet, Curious George doesn't have a bad bone in his body, and his only flaw is that he really, really wants to know what that red button does…



KINGDOM HEARTS 2

Abu embodies everything a monkey should be: spry, mischievous and downright annoying. When he isn't pinching the vital item you need, he'll be stealing bananas and laughing at your face.

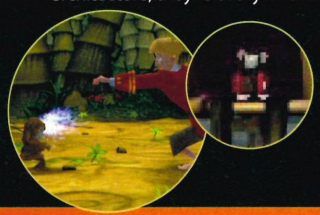


CHUBBY

FEZ

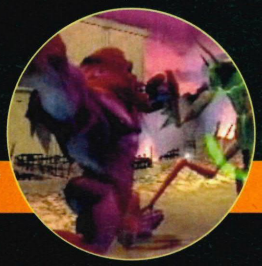
ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND

Guybrush Threepwood can't move for monkeys on this island. Whether they're sniggering at him from trees, or immortalized as totem poles and architecture, they're everywhere.



WAR OF THE MONSTERS

Poor Congar's tragic journey into space has made him rather miffed. As well as being strong enough to hurl giants around, his sonic roar is so loud, it makes mere mortals pop.



RAMPAGE: TOTAL DESTRUCTION

When you need to destroy an entire city, you want a good, solid gorilla like George here. Mammoth and eternally adrenaline-pumped, he'll get the job done.

MASSES

ALSO ANGRY

ANGRY

WANTED

FOR SECURING EXCLUSIVE HANDS-ON

DESCRIPTION

CONTENT: GTAIV Hands-On	**FREE:** PS3 Pad Triggers	**ON SALE:** 14-02-08
GTA-SPECIAL: DVD	**DUAL-SIDED:** A1 Wallchart	**PRICE:** £4.99

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REVIEWS

LATEST GAMES · TESTED · BUYING ADVICE · KICKINGS

ONE MEAN, GREEN, GAMING MACHINE

I'm going to let you in on a secret: I'm quite a fan of The Spiderwick Chronicles. Yes, I know this isn't something a grown man of 24 usually admits to, but I am who I am.

And I'll let you in on another little titbit about myself, too: I reckon the Spiderwick game is looking good.

In good elf

It's not the story that I'm mad about, nor is it the cast of vaguely precocious kids. Nope, it's the goblins.

There's something very satisfying about seeing a well-rendered fantasy creature tottering about on the screen, jabbing at you with a spear.

Spiderwick has some of the finest goblins I've seen on PS2, and that alone nudges it to the top of my 'must play' list for this month.

Puzzle Quest has plenty of great beasties, too. And, yes, I'd recommend that game to a friend, as well.

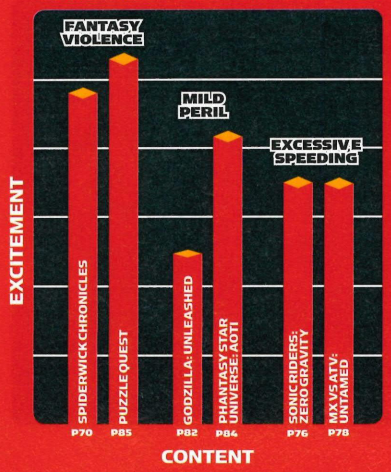
Sadly, though, Godzilla: Unleashed is a big let-down. All that monster potential but it just looks like a bunch of Japanese men parading around in rubber suits. It'll never catch on.

MIKE STERRY
STAFF WRITER
msterry@futurenet.co.uk

'ACTUALLY RATHER GOOD'

THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES P70

THIS SECTION CONTAINS



UNDERSTAND OUR SCORES!

10 ESSENTIAL
If you have a PS2, you owe it to yourself to own this game

9 OUTSTANDING
Truly innovative with lasting appeal: well made in all respects

8 AWESOME
A sterling effort, very playable and highly recommended

7 VERY GOOD
Falls short of brilliant, but still a great idea, well executed

6 GOOD
Has flaws, but fans of the genre or series will still enjoy it

5 AVERAGE
Not much cop, but maybe worth a go if you find it in a bargain bin

4 BELOW AVERAGE
Disappointing and boring, with few redeeming qualities

3 POOR
Oh dear. We recommend you steer well clear of this one

2 AWFUL
Broken, very badly made or actually unplayable

1 HORRIFIC
Not so much a game as an insult to console owners

AWARDS

The Star Game medal is for great games that just have to be played, regardless of your usual genre preferences. The Hall Of Fame medal is for titles that rock our world so hard they'll be inducted into our OPS2 Hall Of Fame next issue (find this month's complete listing on p88).

Release 28 March **Publisher** Vivendi **Developer** Stormfront Studio **Price** £29.99 **Players** 1-2
Web spiderwickgame.com **Also try** Harry Potter & the Order of the Phoenix

THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES

Could cinema tie-ins be getting better? This one certainly looks like it

Imagine the scene. You've just moved into your Uncle's decrepit mansion with your twin brother, your older sister and your mum.

Your dad's no longer in the picture, you're expelled from school for getting into a fight and there's a mysterious knocking coming from the walls of the dusty old house.

After spending hours exploring, you discover a heavy, leather-bound book locked in a hidden chest.

There's a note on it. It says: "Do not dare to read this book, for if you take one fateful look, you barter at your life's expense, and face a deadly consequence." Do you open it?

Well, if you were a sensible human being, you'd put the book back into the chest, lock it up again and bask in the knowledge that you haven't brought the world to an end.

However, you're Jared Grace, an angry nine-year-old, so obviously you open the book – thus placing you and your family at the top of evil ogre Mulgarath's hit list.

Mulgarath wants that book and he's willing to kill you to get at it. Welcome to The Spiderwick Chronicles, the game of the film of the

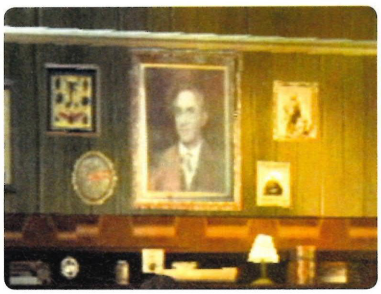
THE WORLD IS WELL RENDERED, THE GAMEPLAY ENGAGING

very popular children's books. But wait – don't turn the page. We're normally quite dubious about movie tie-ins, but this one manages to achieve something we thought wasn't possible: a credible videogame.

Yes, you read that correctly. Sure, it's a game best suited for younglings and fans of the books and film, but it's actually rather good.

The gameplay is engaging, the world is well rendered and the narrative is understandable. There will be moments where you're not exactly sure what's going on, but anyone with a fleeting knowledge of the Spiderwick world won't feel too put out. So here's a quick run-down.

Mulgarath and his nasty goblin army are the kids' main enemies



All that is left of Uncle Arthur is this painting in his hidden study

Fairy stuff

The story revolves around the Field Guide to Faeries, written by Jared's missing uncle. It documents the magic folk of the Spiderwick mansion.

That's useful, given that the newly settled Grace family are being

Redcap is Mulgarath's chief goblin and he's vicious

WHERE ARE THE MONSTERS HIDING?

IN THE WOODS
THE GARDEN SHED
AT THE QUARRY
IN THE CAVERNS

bugged by Thimbletack, the house brownie who's become so aggravated by their arrival that he's turned into a mischievous Boggart.

Unfortunately, the book is also the one thing that malevolent ogre Mulgarath needs to rule over human and faerie kind.

As well as documenting the various sprites you'll come across, it acts as a quest log and stats menu, giving you hints as to where you have to go next and how to solve puzzles.

Most of the objectives are vague and very unhelpful, so you spend a fair bit of time wandering around the estate trying to figure out what to do – intriguing at first, but it can get frustrating later on.

For example, one section has you at the bottom of a quarry, needing to find a path to Byron the gryphon. There's a vague hint about finding the Tree Folk, but little information on who the Tree Folk are and where they might be (those pages of the Field Guide are missing).

After roughly an hour of fumbling around, we discovered that the 'Tree Folk' is a grouchy-looking tree in a completely different area.

It doesn't help that there's no map, which amplifies the irritation you'll experience as you're wandering around trying to figure out just where the hell you're going and why you've walked past that clump of rocks for the umpteenth time and you *still can't find the path back to the mansion*. This happens a lot. Too much.

Variety show

But don't be put off. The game itself is quite well balanced. Developer Stormfront Studio has put in a nice mix of action-adventure elements, which keeps the whole thing interesting and rarely repetitive.

The visual style really creates a magical, mysterious feel

MEET

JARED
Nine-year-old Jared is an angry lad, since his Dad recently walked out on the family. The tough kid of the Grace family, he's strong, determined and often gets himself into trouble.

SIMON
Jared's twin brother Simon is the sensitive one of the two. Instead of fighting, he'd much rather raise animals, construct random items and muse about the world.

MALLORY
The boys' older sister, Mallory is a fencing champion. Sharp with her sword and her tongue, she's not one to back down in a sticky situation.

THE SPRITE CLUB

The leading characters in Spiderwick Chronicles

▶ HOGSQUEAL

Hobgoblin Hogsqueal used to work for Mulgarath, but he has since defected and helps the children against his former master. Enjoys eating birds.

◀ THIMBLETACK

Spiderwick Mansion's resident brownie, Thimbletack is very defensive about his old master's house. He gets so angry when Jared accidentally destroys his home that he turns into a Boggart and plays pranks on them.

▶ BYRON

A mighty gryphon, summoned by Simon to aid them in their quest to find out what happened to Uncle Arthur.

◀ MULGARATH

Pure evil in ogre form, Mulgarath wants to rule all forms of life and won't let anything get in his way. He can shapeshift, making him an especially formidable foe.

▶ KNOCKER

Strange creatures that hide in dark caves. If you can lure them out, they bestow you with powerful ammunition for Simon's slingshot.

A new friend? Or has Jared just been drinking artificial flavourings again?

Mallory's a fencing champion and that makes her darn handy with a sword

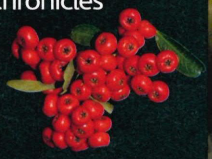
At some points you play as Thimbletack the brownie

Simon isn't as much of a fighter as his brother but has his own useful abilities

SURVIVAL KIT BAG

Four essential items to get you through The Spiderwick Chronicles

SANDWICH BAGS
Handy for making anti Goblin bombs



BERRIES
To lure hidden sprites out into the open

TEETH
Particularly goblin teeth. They level up your offensive attacks

CATAPULT
Handy for picking off sniping hobgoblins

There are survival brawls, puzzles, item gathering, chases and platforming.

Each of the three children has different abilities which are vital to solving various puzzles or sections. Simon's water gun can put out fires so he can collect Fire Salamanders, while Mallory's fencing skills can disarm Redcap (Mulgarath's chief goblin).

Even Thimbletack gets his own platforming sections where you must scurry through the walls of the mansion looking for magical objects.

Faeries and sprites play a big part in boosting your abilities and generally helping you along. Sprites are found in nooks and crannies, floating or hopping about, and you catch them in a net. Then you can use their power by hitting Ⓐ.

If it's a sprite that's as yet unrecorded in the Field Guide, you get a minigame where you must sketch it before a time limit runs out. If you get attacked while drawing, it'll stop the minigame.

Ogre and ogre

But remember, you're at war with Mulgarath, so it's not all drawing pictures and exploring the estate. You often come under attack from Mulgarath's army of goblins.

Stick around the forest too long and they'll come bounding along in whooping packs, eager for human flesh. Turn away from them and they'll leap onto your back, forcing you to shake them off.

Thankfully, combat isn't a simple button-bashing affair. Each character

has their own weapon and although fighting mostly involves ⊗, there are several combos you can pull off depending on the situation.

Hold down ⊗ to charge up a swing; hit it again at the right moment when your foe is mid-air for maximum pain; bash it in quick succession to charge attack. Punch ⊡, then ⊗ to launch a super-dramatic slow-mo evade-attack.

It's so brilliantly simple that even the newest of console players will easily pick it up.

Simon and Jared can even go into Ranged Mode and pick off goblins with their catapults, gobstones and tomato bombs.

New combos and upgraded attacks can be unlocked by collecting goblin teeth, bringing a gentle roleplaying feel to proceedings.

Unfortunately, the crazy camera means that if you're backed into a corner, you won't be able to see yourself or where you're frantically waving your weapon.

Quest world

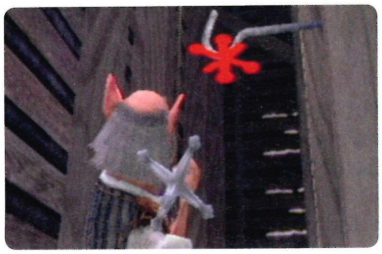
The Spiderwick Chronicles boasts an impressive number of side quests to supplement the main storyline. Tackle them and you're rewarded with stat boosts and weapon upgrades.

For example, every time you record two Leatherwing Sprites, your health bar will increase.

And each character has individual tasks, ranging from discovery missions (Simon must find hidden Cave Knocker creatures) to target kills (kill 50 cockroaches as Thimbletack). They're enjoyable and not too long.

The game itself is surprisingly short, and the final 'battle' with Mulgorath is an incredible anticlimax, being, in fact, just a chase. That's right, no battle to the death, no clash of swords: just run through the mansion pursued by the lumbering ogre, until you get to the roof.

There is a multiplayer mode, but frankly, it feels a bit tacked on.



↑ Thimbletack can use a jack with string attached to swing across gaps

↓ You won't like Thimbletack when he's angry...

GAME CLOCK
Time spent trying to figure out just how the hell to get to Byron the gryphon.

Contenders simply rack up points either by catching sprites or massacring goblins.

That's a shame, because the world that Stormfront Studios has created leaves you wanting more. Its attention to detail really breathes life into this magical, fantastical piece of fiction.

The autumnal landscape, with its dusky pathways and floating leaves is utterly enchanting. Glimmering dust motes swirl around the forest paths, while the subtle chattering of sprites hiding in the undergrowth hints at hidden wonders. Levels don't really feel like levels, but exploration.

Nothing is forgotten from the books. The animation of the children really reflects their characters: Simon walks with a slight hunch, reflecting his shyness, while Jared has his shoulders back and meets everything head-on.

Best of all, if any of the magical folk move out of your peripheral view, they'll fade out, reinforcing the fact that you can't see them without a Seeing Stone strapped to your eye – just like in the book.

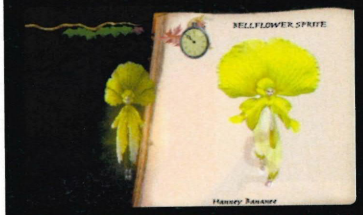
The exasperation you'll experience thanks to the diabolical omission of a map or informative quest hints does hinder the magic.

But the entertaining gameplay and combat mean that you won't regret opening that book. **Kim Richards**

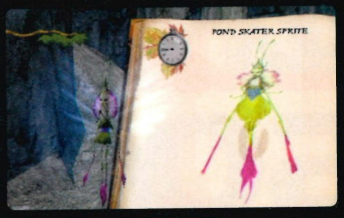
LUST LIST

The choice Sprites to help against the goblin horde.

LEATHERWING
These Sprites will fully heal your weary body and boost your health bar with each one you record.



BELLFLOWER SPRITE
They may look pretty and harmless, but Bellflower sprites boost your attacks for a limited amount of time.



POND SKATER
Quick and nimble, Pond Skaters are so powerful that they grant you temporary invulnerability.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Immersive, magical atmosphere
- Well-balanced game
- Terrible camera mechanics
- Unhelpful – with no map!

An enjoyable and enchanting adventure with a few flaws but fountains of fun, especially (but not exclusively) for kids

7

Release Out now **Publisher** Sega **Developer** Sega **Price** £29.99
Players 1-4 **Web** sega.com **Also try** SSX3

SONIC RIDERS ZERO GRAVITY

Gimmicks galore in the blue blur's new kart racer

If you are the kind of Sega fanatic who sleeps under a Sonic-brand duvet and gently cries yourself to sleep at the thought that there will never be a Dreamcast 2, you best look away now.

Yes, it's another Sonic Riders game. For too long, the Riders series has meddled with one of the most important rules of the Sega universe, and it is this: Sonic the Hedgehog is supposed to be the fastest creature alive.

However, Sonic Riders presents a world in which it's faster for Sonic to hop on a hoverboard (or, 'extreme gear', as its known here) than it is for him to run. Heresy!

Sonic Riders also shows us a world in which Sonic's nemesis, portly sociopath Dr Eggman, can hop on a trike and beat the cerulean flea-trap in a race. Scandal!

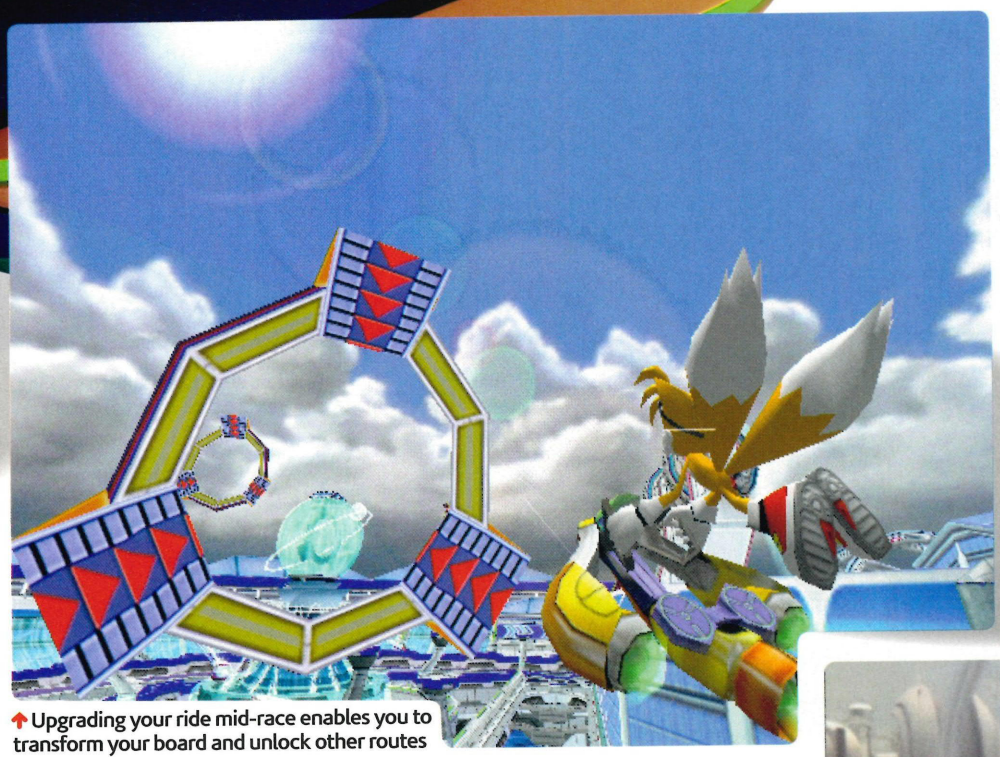
'GEAR CHANGE' LETS YOU UPGRADE YOUR RIDE MID-RACE

← Disco dancing at 560mph isn't something we can endorse

Race odyssey

But there's another reason why Sega buffs are wary of anything bearing the 'Sonic Riders' title.

The original game was a pretty dreadful affair – terrible handling, repetitive courses, evil AI – seriously misusing Sega's biggest franchise. And that's why we were surprised to find



Upgrading your ride mid-race enables you to transform your board and unlock other routes

CAST LIST

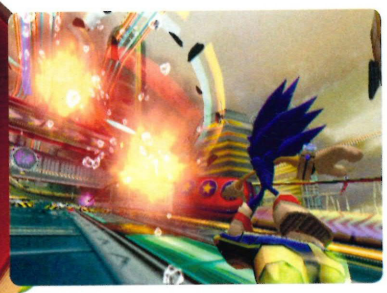
Sonic's lesser-known pals

CREAM THE RABBIT
Her best friend is called 'Cheese'. No, really

SHADOW THE HEDGEHOG
Sonic crossed with My Chemical Romance

SILVER THE HEDGEHOG
The clue's in the name. Comes from the future

JET THE HAWK
The biggest jackass in Sonic history. AKA 'Legendary Wind Master'



A bit slow in the head, Knuckles never called shotgun first

ourselves having fun with Zero Gravity. Like, actual fun.

There's not much of it though - Zero Gravity is brief in the extreme. The main campaign can be completed in two hours, and doing so will unlock both a bonus Grand Prix mode and a set of missions for each of the game's 16 levels. But you're fundamentally playing the same 16 levels over again.

The only incentive is that you can unlock characters and extreme gear based on classic Sega franchises such as NiGHTs and Crazy Taxi, but there's scant difference between them.

Vomit comet

The game's chief gimmick is 'Gravity'. No, there's not some mind-bending physics model at work here, nor does the game see Sonic attempt to reconcile Einstein's theories with quantum mechanics.

It just replaces the Dash meter from the previous game, and lets you and your fellow racers initiate a handful of special powers during a race.

Thing is, your three Gravity abilities are really only useful at three very specific points on a course. Using them at any other point will usually have disastrous results.

That said, they look and feel very cool, particularly the way Gravity Drift slows down time to a crawl, freeing you to take 90° corners by rotating the camera and flinging away in the new direction you face.

The best idea is Gear Change, which enables you to upgrade your ride *mid-race* by collecting a certain number of rings.

By the second upgrade, your ride will transform into a full vehicle and your character will be able to make use of gear-specific shortcuts around the track, either by grinding, flying, or smashing through them.

By manipulating gravity you can take hairpin turns with ease

Soon, however, you will have mastered each course in the game, memorised where the shortcuts and gravity zones are, and will have little desire to play them again.

Worse still, since there's so much happening on-screen – flying debris, explosions and whatnot – that the four-way multiplayer can be a little difficult to manage.

Kudos to Sega for fixing the original Sonic Riders, it's just a shame they didn't make more of it. **Mike Sterry**

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Interesting twist on kart racing
- Great union of sound and visuals
- Gimmicky premise bores quickly
- Far too short

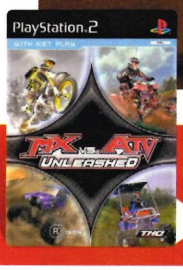
As a straight kart racer, Zero Gravity performs well. There's just not enough depth and content here to propel it higher

7

Compete in muddy races as a top motocross pros

The AI riders are susceptible to making mistakes, giving a nice dose of realism

Doing tricks mid-race may look pretty impressive, but they don't help you win



Release 7 March **Publisher** THQ **Developer** Incinerator Games **Price** £29.99
Players 1-4 **Web** mxvsatv.com **Also try** Moto GP 07

MX VS ATV UNTAMED

Muddy racer is nothing to get revved up about

There's a deceptive subtlety to motocross games. Once you pick through the gut-punching music and the extreme sports posturing, underneath is a challenge requiring delicate rhythm and timing.

It's all about jump judgement. The perfect jump is one that has the bike leaving the ramp cleanly, travelling through the air in a steady arc and then landling cleanly on the downward slope of the next jump.

This can only be achieved by approaching the jump with enough speed and preloading the requisite amount ('preloading' being the art of pushing back on the bike, then lifting off to give it extra spring).

THERE'S NO FEELING OF SPEED OR OF BEING ON THE EDGE

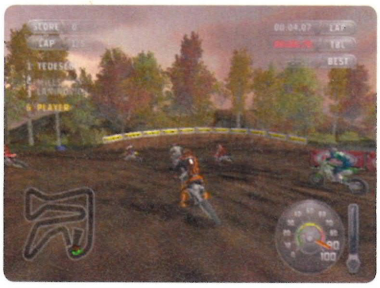
The ski-jump is a quick way to get points to unlock more vehicles

Preloading is achieved by pushing back and forward on the left analogue stick and requires the same sweet caress as a Tiger Woods golf swing, proving there's far more to MX than keeping a sensible racing line and being prepared to get muddy.

Bike curious

Untamed captures this preloading/jumping ethos superbly, but that shouldn't come as any surprise because it's been the backbone of the MX series for several years.

No, the really surprising thing is that it's the only real high point of Untamed. And it struggles to shine through, not because of the mud coating but because of the mass of mediocrity that surrounds it.



The Open Cross races offer a more conventional type of event

Use the clutch rather than the brake to negotiate sharp corners

Mix up the races to compete against other vehicle types

SOMETHING'S MISSING

This game would be better if...

THE TRACKS WERE BETTER
Some tracks are so poorly lit and presented that you can actually lose your way, and indecision at corners is the last thing you need in a race.

IT HAD A SENSATION OF SPEED AND HEIGHT
Not even when caning it down a ski-jump then flying several bus lengths do you ever get the feeling you're doing something 'extreme'.

RACES WEREN'T ALWAYS TWO HEATS
Having to complete each race twice just to progress through X-Cross mode soon takes its toll. Why didn't they mix it up a little?

Untamed is a half-baked sequel that, despite being bigger and having more content, fails to actually be better than previous efforts.

With more than 50 tracks, tons of licensed equipment, bikes, all-terrain vehicles, trophy trucks, monster trucks and sand rails, MX isn't lacking in content. What's missing is the incentive to plough through it all.

A perfect example of this is the new X-Cross mode. It allows you to dip into the different race types while picking up points to spend in the shop.

Rather than getting you through races quickly, it encourages you to take practice laps – an option that can, thankfully, be skipped – and then has you competing in a two-heat race of five laps apiece. So that's 10 whole laps of the same ultra-brown track just to get a placing.

The problem is compounded by the fact the tracks are really, really dull; just turd-coloured, scarred earth completely lacking in any character.

Despite the stunt-filled sport at its heart, the game looks dull

Mud in your eye

Of course, real MX courses are mostly just landscaped mud, and this could have been overlooked if the game had excitement elsewhere, but it doesn't.

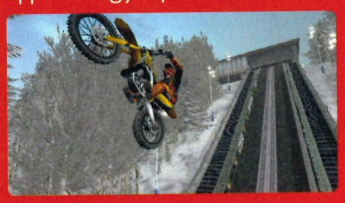
There's no sensation of speed, no feeling of being out of control or on the edge; just a woolly, floaty, muddy bike ride.

Remember, this is supposed to be a recreation of an extreme sport, so to lack stomach-flipping moments, or anything remotely like one, is seriously remiss.

LIVE THE DREAM

In MX vs ATV you can...

GET DIRTY ON ATVS
Easier to steer than the bikes, but not as sharp in terms of acceleration which means much more care and attention has to be applied when approaching jumps.



GO FREESTYLE
Take a break from the monotony of the track challenges and try some freestyle events. The ski jump is perfect for trying out different combinations of tricks.

ZIP AROUND ON SAND RAILS AND TROPHY TRUCKS
These are a lot of fun – fast and quick off the mark but relatively easy to control around the course. Easier to land after large jumps too.

What we have here is a series that's petering out, that doesn't have anything fresh or interesting to offer and which has failed to build upon its previous strengths.

The result is a game so predictable and stodgy that rather than being untamed, it's rolled over, played dead and been neutered. **Dave Harrison**

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

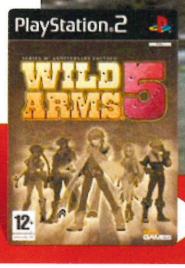
- Lots of race options and vehicles
- Technique and timing matter
- Looks dated and tired
- The racing lacks bite

A motocross game that's jam-packed with options and content, but nothing that raises the pulse or even peaks the interest

6

In Wild Arms 5 you battle across Filgaia to save it from the evil Veruni

Towns are suitably picturesque, complete with save-point parrots



Release Out now **Publisher** 505 Games **Developer** XSeed **Price** £29.99
Players 1 **Web** wildarms5.com **Also try** Shadow Hearts: From the New World

WILD ARMS 5

Saddle up, cowboy, there's trouble in town

In the world of Filgaia, cowboys search dusty plains for ancient robots called golems. Magic and technology harmoniously coexist; an alien race called the Veruni has enslaved mankind and a boy and a girl called Dean and Rebecca are heading out on a quest.

They've met this lass called Avril, you see, who's lost her memory. And their ensuing attempts to find out what's up will become the epic coming-of-age tale of Wild Arms 5.

It fuses the fun world of the Wild West and the bizarre sense of humour found in the best Japanese roleplaying games to form a nicely light-hearted chunk of Americana – a magical RPG with cowboys, basically.

It has a cutscene about every 10 minutes. But that's okay, given the wide range of strong characters on offer: a disgraced cowboy out for revenge, a clumsy young girl looking for her professor and psychotic aliens hell-bent on the destruction of the planet.

The world of Filgaia is a vast place and really quite beautifully designed

STORY SO FAR

Enthusiastic boy hero Dean is about to head out into the world when a giant robot arm falls from the sky with the mysterious Avril nestled in its palm. Dean and his athletic friend Rebecca take her on a quest to recover her memory. Meanwhile, a rebel faction of the Veruni alien race is plotting to overthrow the government and destroy the land of Filgaia…

The good

Fans of the Wild Arms series, rejoice, for the trademark Hex battle system is back, complete with garish menus.

The battlefield is split into seven hexagons, upon which your team and the enemy are randomly placed.

Whatever action you take on a 'hex' affects all individuals contained within in, be it offensive or defensive.

Rather like a hexagonal chessboard, the system turns what could be monotonous battles into fiercely tactical affairs. And, as with any board game, master the tactics and you'll master the game.

As well as attacking with your guns, you can use magic or Force attacks, both of which are actioned by equipping Mediums – the Filgaean character development item that supplies your team with more abilities as you level up.

ALL TOO SOON THE DUNGEONS BEGIN TO LOOK THE SAME

Dungeons are marked out with route trackers, to help you on your way

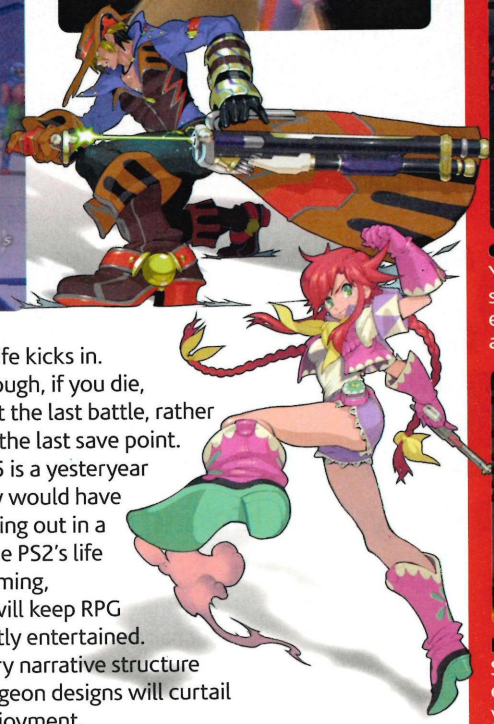
The bad

Unfortunately, WA5 lets itself down by using the time worn structure of 'visit dungeon, fight boss, return to village, go to next dungeon'. All too

Combine Force powers to unleash powerful attacks

Use your 'ARM' (that's Wild Arms for 'weapon') to solve dungeon puzzles

Golems are ancient technologies that became buried under Filgaia's surface



soon, the dungeons begin to look the same, obstacles become tiresome and the sadistically high frequency of random encounter battles grates.

There are some nice features, such as orbs that enable you to turn off random monster encounters, and you can also use your arms to solve puzzles and pick up magic gems. But they don't completely compensate for the drudge.

To add to the misery, maps are over-simplified, giving no realistic indication of where you are. A faux pas, seeing as the game involves frequent puzzle-laden dungeons.

The ugly

Even worse, WA5 commits a cardinal RPG sin. It hides save points deep in dungeons, so to avoid losing progress you *have* to devote a good hour to complete a section or leave your PS2 on when real life kicks in. Thankfully, though, if you die, you'll restart at the last battle, rather than return to the last save point.

Wild Arms 5 is a yesteryear RPG that really would have benefited coming out in a lot earlier in the PS2's life cycle. It's charming, genuine, and will keep RPG buffs sufficiently entertained.

But its weary narrative structure and fiddly dungeon designs will curtail any serious enjoyment.

And that's a real shame, because if it didn't have so many niggling problems, this would be a solid and interesting game. **Kim Richards**

Collecting coins in dungeons gives a platformer vibe

HEX AND THE CITY

How to master the Hex battle system

AVENGED SEVENFOLD
You're randomly placed in a 'hex' at the start of battles and must control all the battlefield's seven zones to win. Jump into an Escape Zone hex to swap party members in and out.

CROWDED HOUSE
You and a foe can never occupy the same space. Also, if you force several enemies into one hex, you'll attack all of them, and vice versa.

ELEMENTAL AS ANYTHING
Several of the hexes will have elemental properties that strengthen your attacks if you use them against an baddy who's deficient in that particular element.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Engaging, tactical battles
- Enjoyable storyline
- Seriously unhelpful maps
- Minimalist dungeon save points

Fun, comical and light-hearted, but does get tiresome due to endless random battles and the hero's over-the-top quips.

6

The star of the show uses a not-very-mighty breath attack on Mechagodzilla

Release 22 February **Publisher** Atari **Developer** Pipeworks Software **Price** £39.99
Players 1-4 **Web** uk.atari.com **Also try** War of Monsters

MISSION GUIDE

Around the world in Godzilla Unleashed...

01. SYDNEY
It's in the midst of a cold snap due to alien crystals but you can just make out the Opera House.

02. SAN FRANCISCO
It's slightly hilly, it's near some water and there's a prison. Might as well be the Isle of Wight.

03. NEW YORK
The Manhattan skyline is unmistakeable but this collection of anonymous black towers most definitely is mistakeable.

04. LONDON
This is the Thames and you can just make out Big Ben. Unfortunately there's no London Eye to hula-hoop with, though.

GODZILLA UNLEASHED

Up from the depths, 30 storeys high, looking really tired, we wonder why they try...

There's one reason why we play monster games and it isn't to become a slavering beast. It's not the scales, the fangs or the bulging eyes that appeal; it's the raw, savage destructive power that we want.

For those of us who are constantly pushed round by The Man and who brim with impotent rage, it's satisfying to be the biggest, and baddest around, to have an entire city at your mercy... They will pay! Oh yes, they will pay!

So it comes as a crushing disappointment to discover that Godzilla Unleashed is as empowering as having your cheek pinched and your hair ruffled.

Never, at any point do you feel as though you're controlling a 100m tall, 30,000 ton mutant lizard. It's like watching a toddler stumble through a model village, only less cute.

IT'S LIKE A TODDLER STUMBLING THROUGH A MODEL VILLAGE

The main reason for this is the pathetic way Godzilla interacts with the city environments.

Falling down

Buildings don't shatter and crumble when Godzilla swings a claw. They just deflate and sink into the ground.

Helicopters don't spin off wildly, they merely disintegrate. There's no visual sting, no moment, not even a sound effect to make you feel godlike.

Granted, though, the destruction of the city isn't the main objective in Unleashed because the game is basically a beat-'em-up.

As Godzilla, you must protect the planet from assorted alien and mutant monster-shaped threats by taking them on one or two at a time in cities around the world.

The action is a lot like the very underrated War of Monsters, but

Each monster has a projectile attack that needs time to charge up

If three or more monsters are involved, keep out of the scrap

CHARACTER PROFILE

What you need to know about Godzilla

MOVIESTAR
Godzilla first appeared in a 1954 movie *Godzilla* made by Japanese film company Toho.

HEAVY SLEEPER
In the original film he was a prehistoric beast who was awoken by a US hydrogen bomb test.

SEA-MONKEY
'Godzilla' comes from 'gojira', a combination of the Japanese words for 'gorilla' and 'whale'.

This is meant to be San Francisco: recreated with no attention to detail

It all kicks off on the aptly named Monster Island in the South Pacific

Unleashed lacks any of the wit and ease of play of Sony's 2003 game.

The moves at your disposal are incredibly primitive: punch-and-kick combos, a tail flick and special projectile attack.

They're all performed with a simple button press, so this doesn't become a challenge of digit dexterity and timing, just a brainless button bash. And since when does Godzilla do kick combos?

Monster chuck rally

What about hurling objects from afar? Well, despite being a skyscraper-tall freak of nature, only certain sized buildings can be picked up.

You almost have to pan for rocks to chuck. Throwing towers like javelins or wielding cranes like baseball bats would have been so much more fun.

It only takes a single bout to bore you stupid, and Story mode is just a string of them back-to-back, the single saving grace being that you only need to complete 11 of these tedious sessions to finish the game.

Godzilla's fight moves call for no more than bashing buttons

And Unleashed's problems go beyond the gameplay; hand-drawn stills make far from dynamic cutscenes, especially when the same one is used repeatedly.

The only real positive is that there are more than 20 monsters from the Godzilla universe in the game, each with its own authentic sound effects.

You could argue that the game is only as cheap-looking and naff as its B-Movie subject matter. But it's so completely lacking in charm that the only thing monstrous about it is its sheer lack of quality. **Dave Harrison**

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Loads of monsters to unlock
- Dull and repetitive
- Really poor presentation
- Clumsy fighting system

A big, stodgy pudding of a beat-'em-up that lacks any punch or bite.

4

New content includes special attacks you haven't used before

Choose to play as a human, an elf-thing, a beast-person or a robot like this guy

Release Out now **Publisher** SEGA **Developer** Sonic Team **Price** £29.99
Players 1-4 **Web** phantasystaruniverse.com **Also try** Final Fantasy XI

PHANTASY STAR UNIVERSE: AMBITION OF THE ILLUMINUS

Not as phantastic as it might have been

It's a fact that consoles have eroded the personal computer's gaming dominance in the past decade. From first-person shooter to real-time strategy, the console can now do everything the PC once claimed as its own.

Except, that is, the MMORPG. The home console basically has no answer to such phenomena as World of Warcraft, though there have been some admirable attempts – namely, Phantasy Star Universe.

The original PSU split itself into two unique halves, online and offline play. But the new standalone expansion, Ambition of the Illuminus, opts for a more streamlined approach in which you create a unique character from the get-go and can initiate the game's storyline or play online immediately.

The consequence of this is that your created character is a mute nobody whose role in the storyline is little more than fleshy furniture. It's your despicable party members who actually carry the story.

GAME LAW

THINGS THAT ARE TRUE IN **PSU: AOTI**

1. Chicks dig a big laser sword.
2. The future looks like one big out-of-town shopping mall.
3. Your fellow players are surprisingly polite.
4. Playing with friends is better than playing with yourself.
5. You can't get naked, sadly.

Phan service

With the original PSU, most people were willing to forgive the lacklustre offline story mode. We were just pleased that one had been included at all in an MMO.

But now that the story – complete with abominable voice acting, forgettable characters and a ho-hum plot – is pretty much an inescapable facet of online play. So it has to be called out for what it truly is. Namely: absolute ass.

Wussy PSU star Ethan Weber has grown some balls for this new game

Because PSU is an MMO, there's a lot of 'grinding' to be done for gold and experience, a play structure that grows dull quickly if you game offline.

That said, PSU's work-to-reward ratio is one of the better ones out there. Doing a half-hour quest will almost immediately yield you better weapons, abilities and – most importantly for those who wish to show off online – new armour and clothing options.

In fact, this is the bit where PSU: AOTI does truly shine – there's enough new content here to choke a large cat. And if you're a PSU fan, that's all you need to hear. **Mike Sterry**

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK VERDICT

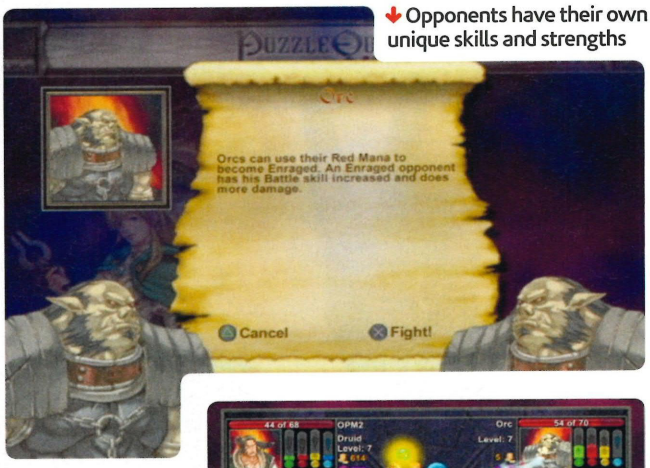
- Tons of new content
- Sugary music and visuals
- Good character creation options
- Storyline penned by a toddler

Still offers the definitive MMO experience on PS2, but online is still the only way to get the most out of this expansion

7

Instead of battling with enemies, your differences are settled by puzzle-solving

Opponents have their own unique skills and strengths



Release Out now **Publisher** D3 **Developer** Beenox **Price** £19.99
Players 1-2 **Web** infinite-interactive.com/puzzlequest **Also try** Lumines

PUZZLE QUEST: CHALLENGE OF THE WARLORDS

Pure colour-matching, bubble-popping wizardry

Puzzle Quest is a strangely powerful game. Not only does it have the power to entertain and engage, it's also more than capable of stripping you of your dignity.

It achieves the entertaining bit by slotting an addictive puzzle challenge into a roleplaying game structure.

Your hero travels across a map defeating typical RPG nasties, the difference being that turn-based battles are replaced with puzzles.

The humiliation part comes in when your puzzle skills are pitted against a rat and you lose. That's a hard loss to take. But getting your ass handed to you by rodent won't stop you appreciating what a well-crafted game Puzzle Quest is, so you will keep coming back.

The main puzzle is familiar enough to make it easy to grasp: it's just a case of matching up coloured balls.

But sprinkled on top is a magic system that adds a whole dimension of strategic options.

So as well as targeting the skulls that drain the heath of your rivals, there's also the option of building up magic-fuelling mana so that you can cast match-winning spells.

Quest behaviour

The only disappointment is that nothing has been done to update the game since it first appeared on PSP.

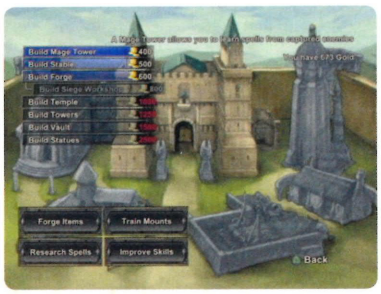
So in terms of visuals and presentation, it's quaint and woolly, rather than slick and exciting.

Still, it's very reasonably priced, offers hours of mind-troubling play and is far more sophisticated than the 'Puzzle Bobble with wizards' game it initially seems to be. **Dave Harrison**

GAME LAW

THINGS THAT ARE TRUE IN **PUZZLE QUEST**

1. Three or more objects of the same colour cannot exist in the same space – they explode.
2. Bats are good at puzzle games.
3. You go to pubs to hear rumours, not to get drunk.
4. It takes a noble warrior to clear a basement of rats.
5. Druids wear feathers in their hair and are a bit touchy-feely.



Earn money during puzzles to build up a citadel

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Layered, addictive puzzling
- RPG structure gives purpose
- Presentation is lacklustre
- Damn those bats!

This is puzzling with a purpose – simple to get into, it quickly becomes addictive.

8

COMPUTER AND VIDEO GAMES...

Established 1981

CVG .CO.UK

HALL OF FAME

PS2'S 100 GREATEST · BEST GAMES EVER · CLASSICS · HISTORY

WELCOME TO THE OPS2 HALL OF FAME

We all love stepping into the shoes of invincible super-soldiers who can single-handedly blast through battalions of Nazis/commies/non-specific Middle Eastern terrorists, but sometimes it's fun to take war seriously. And that's what Full Spectrum Warrior does.

You take control of two squads of American soldiers and order them around the streets of a generic, war-torn city in the Middle East.

So far, so familiar, right? Wrong. What makes FSW unique is that you never actually fire a single shot.

This is a strategy game with a war theme, and it has more in common with chess than Call Of Duty.

Speccy four-guys

Success means finding cover, setting fire zones and priorities, and keeping the grunts in your squad alive.

If any one of your men dies from his wounds before you get him back to the medical centre, it's game over. If you shoot a civilian, it's game over.

If you're after something a little more thoughtful than the usual run-and-gun affair, FSW is essential.

ANDY HARTUP
ACTING EDITOR
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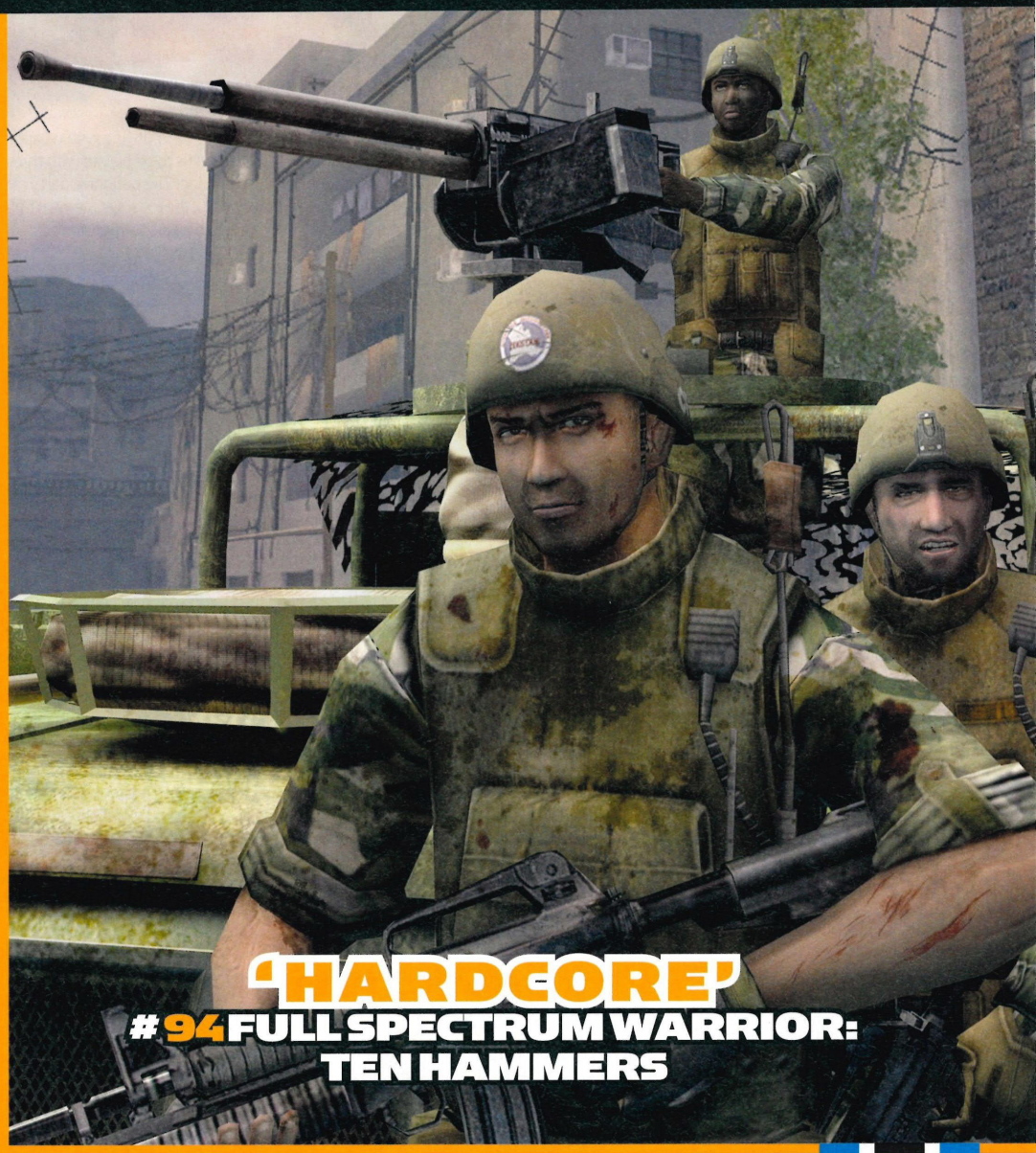
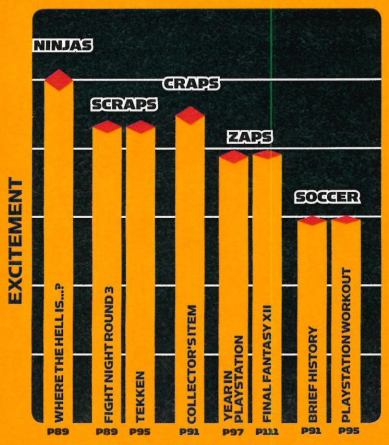


'HARDCORE'
#94 FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR: TEN HAMMERS

THIS SECTION CONTAINS



HALL OF FAME ESSENTIAL INFO

HOW A GAME GETS IN THE TOP 100

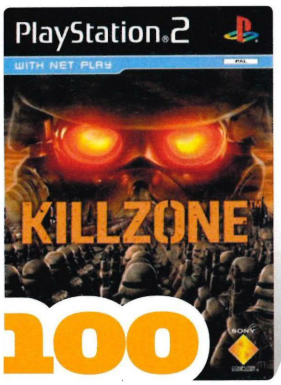
We don't award membership to the Hall Of Fame lightly. To prove itself worthy of induction, a game must demonstrate many of these qualities: outstanding gameplay, glorious graphics, pioneering innovation, superior use of sound and great replay value.

WE USE OLD REVIEW SCORES

Scores for games listed in the Hall Of Fame are those that were awarded when the game was first reviewed in OPS2. Times change and technology evolves, so some of the games released early in the PS2's life, while still great, may not have the same polish as more recent titles.

AWARDS

If you see this medal on the verdict box in a game review, it means the title is worthy of a place in the Hall Of Fame and will be inducted in the following issue.



100

KILLZONE
Sony, 2004 Shooter

Didn't turn out to be the Halo-killer that it was billed as, but worth a blast anyway, if only to see what all the fuss was about.

Buy it if... you need a lesson in vaulting ambition and you like blasting aliens.

OPS2 #51 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

99

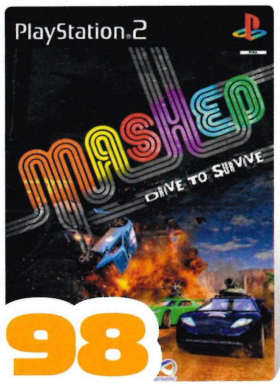
THE THING
Konami, 2002 Horror

Takes up where the 1982 sci-fi/horror movie left off: you and your troops must survive a nightmarish Arctic in a tense, atmospheric thriller. Chilling stuff (arf!).

Buy it if... you don't feel the cold.

OPS2 #25 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



98

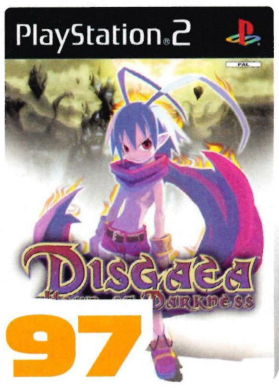
MASHED
Empire, 2004 Racing

Birds-eye-view driving with weapons that just screams to be played with three mates via multitap. The definitive party racer.

Buy it if... the local garage won't fit homing missiles to your motor.

OPS2 #48 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



97

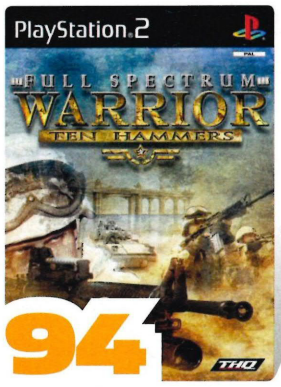
DISGAEA: HOUR OF DARKNESS
KOEI, 2004 RPG

Strategic RPG with more depth than the Marianas Trench and it's full of giggles.

Buy it if... the idea of deploying exploding penguins in a tactical RPG appeals.

OPS2 #47 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



94

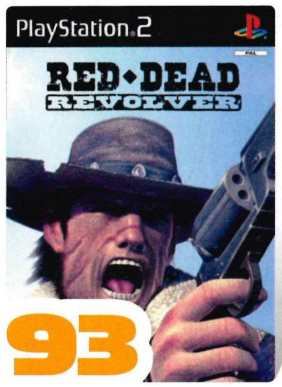
FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR: TEN HAMMERS
THQ, 2006 Tactical shooter

Hardcore, squad-based tactical sim used by the US Army to help train new recruits.

Buy it if... you failed your Territorial Army recruitment physical.

OPS2 #72 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



93

RED DEAD REVOLVER
Rockstar, 2004 Adventure

Not quite as good as Gun (see #76), but if you love John Wayne and shooting greasy robber-barons in the face, this is for you.

Buy it if... in your house, 'spaghetti' goes with Westerns, not bolognese.

OPS2 #47 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

TOP CHEAT
For a free song, press then enter ↑ ↓ ← → three times.

92

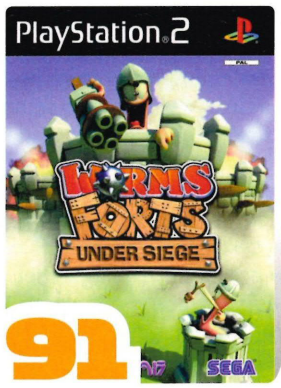
MUSIC 3000
Jester Interactive, 2003 Music

A powerful music editor. There's little else like this on PS2; it lets you sample MP3s, CDs or even your old GameBoy.

Buy it if... you tout yourself around as the new Fatboy Slim.

OPS2 #33 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



91

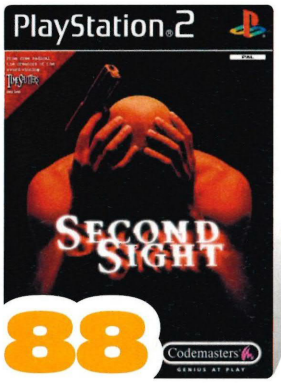
WORMS FORTS
Sega, 2004 Real-time strategy

Multiplayer laughs with an extra input of strategy via the fort-construction element – vastly under-scored in its original review.

Buy it if... throwing sheep, rhinos and grannies at your friends sounds like fun.

OPS2 #53 7/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



88

SECOND SIGHT
Codemasters, 2004 Adventure

There aren't enough games that let you telekinetically throw people off buildings.

Buy it if... you ever wondered what Professor X from *The X-Men* would be like with no wheelchair and an SMG.

OPS2 #50 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

87

JAMES BOND 007: FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE
EA, 2005 Action

Superb adaptation: as close as you'll get to being 007 without actually killing a man.

Buy it if... you've been ex-schpecting it, Mr Bond.

OPS2 #66 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

86

NBA 2K7
2K Sports, 2006 Sport

You don't have to be a b-ball fan to enjoy the subtleties of this top-tier basketball game. If you are, well, 2K7 will have you believing in true love.

Buy it if... the local court is rained out.

OPS2 #79 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

TOP CHEAT
For unlimited subweapon energy complete the game, restart from the Clear Data save, pick Naked Jehuty as your OF and equip all subweapons.

85

ZONE OF THE ENDERS: 2ND RUNNER
Konami, 2003 Action

Metal Gear Solid creator Hideo Kojima's other series, it couples scraps in flying mechs with a bonkers plot to great effect.

Buy it if... you're a Transformers fan.

OPS2 #38 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

96

WALLACE AND GROMIT: THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT

Konami, 2005 Platformer

Well-crafted, with pleasing graphics that do justice to the original characters.

Buy it if... you wear the wrong trousers.

OPS2 #65 **8/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

TOP FACT
Women are not allowed to be US navy SEALs.

95

SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS

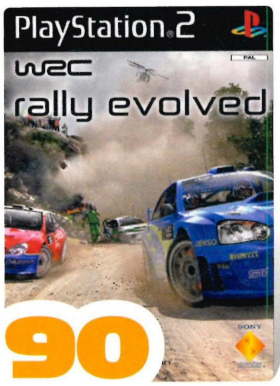
Sony, 2004 Shooter

The daddy of squad-based tactical war simulations, SOCOM still boasts a thriving online community.

Buy it if... you've yet to experience the joys of squad-based online play.

OPS2 #43 **8/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



90

WRC RALLY EVOLVED

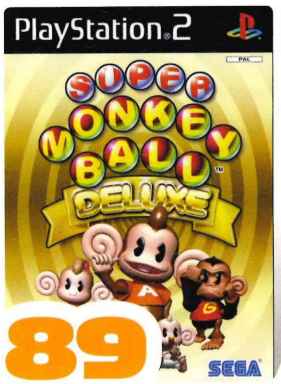
Sony, 2005 Racing

Sits neatly between punishing sim and fluffy arcade racing and remains accessible while gradually ramping up the challenge.

Buy it if... you've already nailed Colin McRae Rally 2005.

OPS2 #65 **9/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



89

SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE

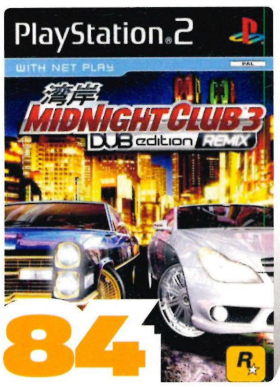
Sega, 2005 Puzzle

Crazy action-puzzler-racer with chimps locked in giant plastic balls. A bit like that dream we have after eating cheese.

Buy it if... hamster balls fascinate you.

OPS2 #59 **8/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



84

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION REMIX

Rockstar, 2006 Racing

Nitro-tastic, open-world street racer with a generous selection of authentic vehicles, modding options, race types and tunes.

Buy it if... you're a fast-driving insomniac.

OPS2 #72 **8/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

83

HARRY POTTER & THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX

EA, 2007 Adventure

Roam freely around Hogwarts in a surprisingly fantastic game that Potter obsessives and lay folk alike will enjoy

Buy it if... you're not a Muggle.

OPS2 #87 **8/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

SECRETS ARCHIVE

Cheats, Easter eggs and hidden goodies from some of the PS2's greatest titles

BURGER ME!

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3

How's this for marketing? If you complete the Burger King event in the carer mode, you'll unlock the Burger King mascot 'The King' as a trainer, so you can have the big-faced royal sitting in your corner.

SMELL THE GLOVE!

PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN

To find a Rayman glove for the Prince to use as a weapon, go to the main tomb in the Catacombs, then as you exit this area you'll begin the Dahaka chase. Turn left when the passageway branches during the second and third chase, and break the weapon rack immediately to your left. The glove looks stupid but it can knock enemies down with one blow.

SUITS YOU, SIR!

SCARFACE: THE WORLD IS YOURS

A crime kingpin has to dress the part, so get Tony Montana out of his Hawaiian and into something sharp. At the Cheats menu, enter SANDY, BLACK, WHITE or BLUE for differently coloured suits – tan, black, white or blue ones. Obviously. Add SH on the end of SANDY and BLUE to have Tony wearing shades.

SHOW US YOUR EASTER EGGS!
Email your game tips to psnation@futurenet.co.uk

WHERE THE HELL IS...?

I-Ninja

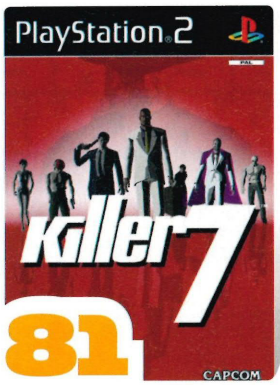
Sony, 2004

This month's great game that didn't quite make it into the Hall of Fame is I-Ninja, nominated by OPS2 acting editor Andy Hartup. "It's a wonderful game that mixes agile plaforming, humour and combat," he says. "It looks like a kids' game, but it's not."

Did we miss out *your* fave game? Tell us why it should go in! Contact details on p3.

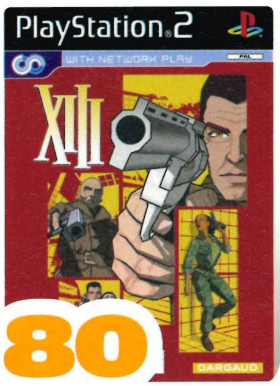
82

RATCHET & CLANK
Sony, 2002 Platformer
One of the finest games of the PS2's early years, the original R&C is still one of the most entertaining, inventive romps you can buy, even after three sequels.
Buy it if... you haven't played it already!
OPS2 #26 9/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



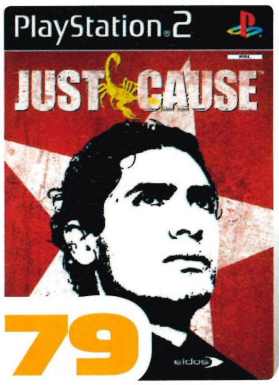
81

KILLER 7
Capcom, 2005 Action
Unorthodox, on-rails shooter where you play as a wheelchair-bound assassin who can call on seven personalities with special powers to work for him.
Buy it if... the voices tell you to.
OPS2 #61 8/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



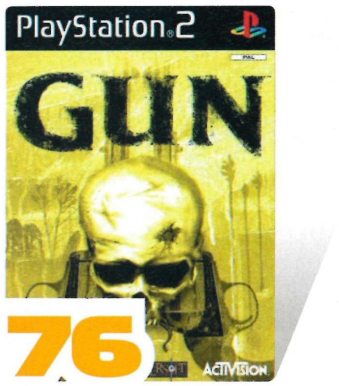
80

XIII
Ubisoft, 2004 Shooter
Highly original shooter starring a special-forces agent with amnesia who must crack a global conspiracy. Presented just like the cult comic book it's based on.
Buy it if... you love graphic novels.
OPS2 #40 8/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



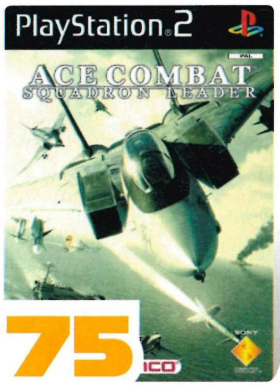
79

JUST CAUSE
Eidos, 2006 Action
Parachute into the shoes of a CIA agent and bring down a corrupt government. Huge, beautiful and free-roaming.
Buy it if... the idea of Grand Theft Auto with politics gets you excited.
OPS2 #77 8/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



76

GUN
Activision, 2005 Shooter
Gun-totin', horse-ridin', baccy-chewin', poker-playin', free-roamin' Wild West action with a classic cowboys'n'injuns storyline and great voice acting.
Buy it if... you're an outlaw.
OPS2 #67 9/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

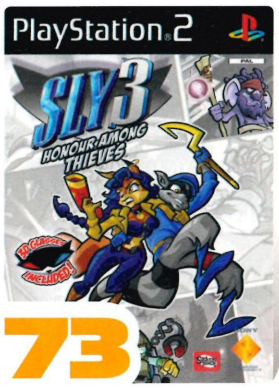


75

ACE COMBAT: SQUADRON LEADER
Sony, 2005 Shooter
An unashamedly arcadey flight sim with tons to do and all kinds of aerial combat.
Buy it if... you failed your eye test for the RAF.
OPS2 #56 8/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

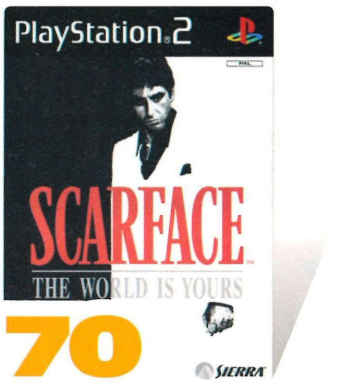
74

EYETOY PLAY 2
Sony, 2004 Party
Twelve entertaining, movement-based mini-games, plus the ability to turn your EyeToy camera into an inexpensive home security system, will make you smile.
Buy it if... you dream of being on the telly.
OPS2 #53 8/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



73

SLY 3: HONOUR AMONG THIEVES
Sony, 2005 Platformer
Cartoon japes starring a light-fingered raccoon and his gang, Sly is slick, stylish and bursting with ideas.
Buy it if... diamonds are your best friend.
OPS2 #52 9/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



70

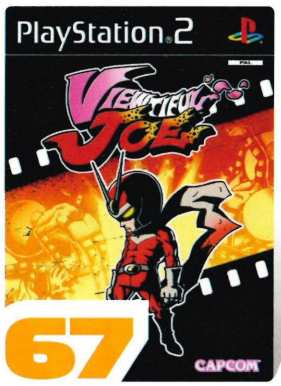
SCARFACE: THE WORLD IS YOURS
Vivendi, 2006 Action
A GTA-inspired swear-a-thon that has you guiding Tony Montana from death's door to top of the Miami underworld.
Buy it if... you wanna play rough.
OPS2 #78 8/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

69

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND
Eidos, 2006 Adventure
Helping us forget the horror that was Angel Of Darkness, Lara's *real* PS2 debut is a trifle easy and a little short but a return to past form nonetheless.
Buy it if... you had a happy Anniversary.
OPS2 #71 8/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

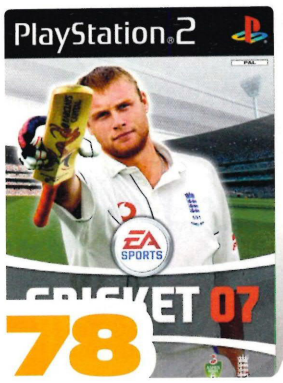
68

ROGUE GALAXY
Sony, 2007 RPG
An excellent intergalactic roleplayer that borrows heavily from *Star Wars*, but in the most affectionate way. And with pirates.
Buy it if... you want great characters, settings and story. With pirates.
OPS2 #86 9/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



67

VIEWTIFUL JOE
Capcom, 2004 Fighting
A sexy marriage of snazzy, comic-book visuals and a retrotastic difficulty level, this loves to be hard but is hard not to love.
Buy it if... the words 'challenging' and 'retro' quicken your pulse.
OPS2 #52 8/10
PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



78

CRICKET 07

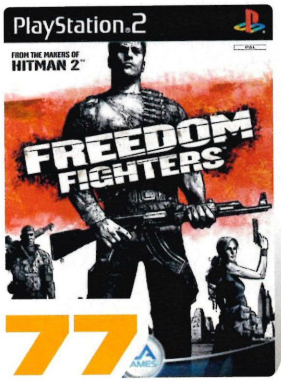
EA, 2006 Sport

The definitive sim of the ultimate real-time strategy game, it's more demanding than the Brian Lara games but also far superior.

Buy it if... you know your square cut from your Square-Enix.

OPS2 #80 8/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



77

FREEDOM FIGHTERS

EA, 2003 Shooter

Insanely addictive strategic and tactical shoot-'em-up set in a bleak New York overrun by Communist Russians.

Buy it if... you wonder what it would've been like if Russia had invaded the USA.

OPS2 #37 9/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

72

AMPLITUDE

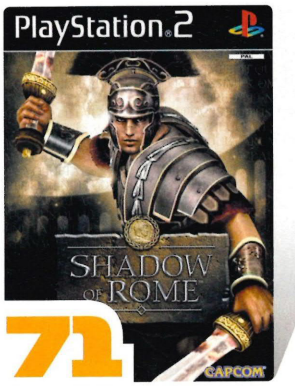
Sony, 2003 Music

Vastly under-rated rhythm action: peform, mix and remix your way through classic tunes from the likes of David Bowie, Slipknot, BT, Pink and Run DMC.

Buy it if... you're a bedroom DJ.

OPS2 #38 8/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



71

SHADOW OF ROME

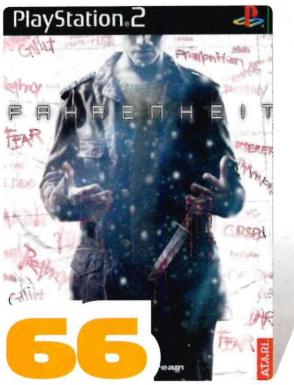
Capcom, 2005 Action

Gruesome toga'n'slash action mixed with stealthy detective work and a story that has more twists than Homer's *Odyssey*.

Buy it if... *Gladiator* and *The 300* are your favourite films.

OPS2 #56 8/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



66

FAHRENHEIT

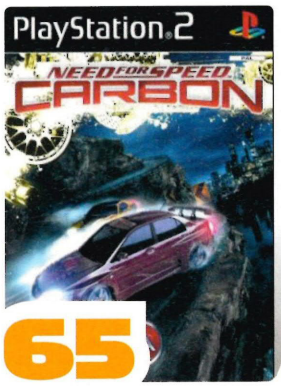
Atari, 2005 Adventure

Ambitious and engrossing, this plays like an interactive movie. You must find out how you were made to commit a murder before the police catch up with you.

Buy it if... you like messing up your mind.

OPS2 #64 8/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



65

NEED FOR SPEED CARBON

EA, 2006 Racing

A blur of spoilers, nitros and elaborate paint jobs that speeds past you in the outside lane doing 175mph, this is the best in the Need For Speed series so far.

Buy it if... you feel the need.

OPS2 #79 8/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

A BRIEF HISTORY OF... PES

Pro Evolution Soccer is arguably the best soccer series on PS2 today. Let's look at the highlights of its career so far...

ISS PRO

PS1's International Superstar Soccer Pro was an embryonic PES, with the same ball control system and strategic elements. And, significantly, it treated the ball and player as separate when dribbling.

ISS PRO EVOLUTION

With this instalment, the action became much more sophisticated and the Master League was introduced. Oh, and the 'Evolution' bit was brought in to differentiate this from the Nintendo ISS (totally different in style and approach).

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

The series moved onto PS2, with improvements to the graphics and to the ways players could trap and manipulate the ball. And the Master League got a second division.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4

The game improved year-on-year and by PES 4 the gameplay was unparalleled. Konami had even managed to secure the occasional official licence by this point.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2008

Today's PES is a complete football experience with a hugely engaging Master League, fully licensed players (unfortunately not the Premiership) and online play for up to four people.

COLLECTOR'S ITEM

Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas dice

Rockstar must spend a long time coming up with merchandise for its games: for San Andreas you could get jackets, socks, shorts, basketballs, domino sets and even these incredible craps dice! Now available on certain parts of the internet for a mere 25 smackers. Bargain. Ish.

RARITY VALUE

ANGRY PEDESTRIANS — JET PACKS

OPS2 HALL OF FAME

64

QUAKE III REVOLUTION

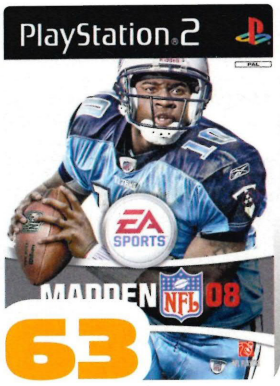
EA, 2001 Shooter

Old as the hills it may be, but Quake's only appearance on PS2 remains a solidly enjoyable, stress-relieving blastathon.

Buy it if... you need a breather from TimeSplitters 2 (see number 4).

OPS2 #6 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



63

MADDEN NFL 08

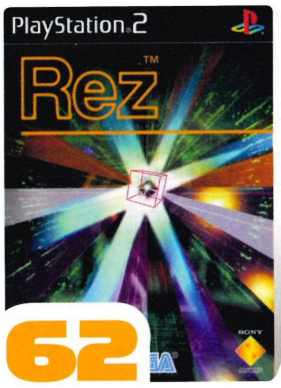
EA, 2007 Sport

Another improvement on EA's superlative gridiron sim. With an in-depth Franchise mode and accessible on-pitch gameplay this really is American Football for all.

Buy it if... rugby looks too dangerous.

OPS2 #90 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



62

REZ

Sega, 2002 Shooter

A brain-frying, psychedelic, on-rails shooter-cum-music game where you hear colours and see sound. No, really.

Buy it if... taking your brain to another dimension sounds like a good idea.

OPS2 #16 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

61

SIMS 2 CASTAWAY

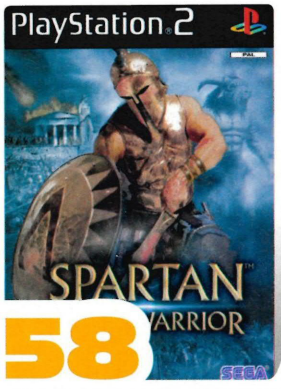
EA, 2007 God sim

You wake up marooned on a desert island. What do you do next? Anything you want in this addictive, funny adventure that is open-ended but never feels aimless.

Buy it if... you want a holiday.

OPS2 #92 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



58

SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR

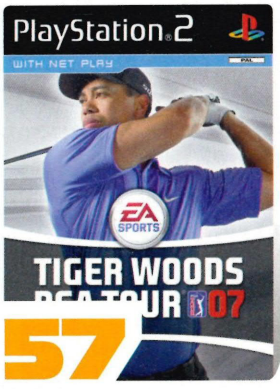
Sega, 2005 Action

A battle-heavy romp through the ancient world that blends the historical and mythological with swords and sorcery to great effect.

Buy it if... you want to be one of the 300.

OPS2 #64 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



57

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07

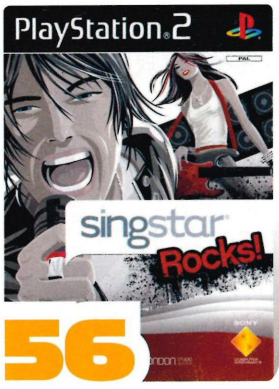
EA, 2007 Sport

With excellent analogue stick controls for your swing and a dazzling array of official licences and customisation options, this is the definitive pro tour title.

Buy it if... you're a serious golf fan.

OPS2 #78 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



56

SINGSTAR ROCKS!

Sony, 2006 Karaoke

Our favourite of the SingStar series, with Bloc Party, The Killers, Coldplay, The Rolling Stones and Keane on the tracklist.

Buy it if... you wanna rock! Also try SingStars Pop Hits, '90s and Legends.

OPS2 #72 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

55

PROJECT ZERO 2: CRIMSON BUTTERFLY

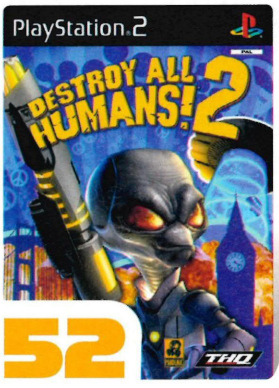
Ubisoft, 2004 Horror

A gore-free yet terrifying ghost story; your only weapon is a camera that can exorcise the spirits trying to steal your soul.

Buy it if... you dare.

OPS2 #46 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



52

DESTROY ALL HUMANS! 2

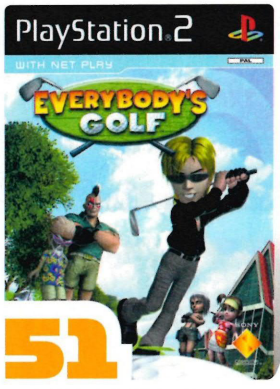
THQ, 2006 Action

B-movie-inspired shooter that puts you in an alien's spacesuit, hands you an anal probe and lets you take revenge on mankind for all the ET-blasting games.

Buy it if... you hate the human race.

OPS2 #78 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



51

EVERYBODY'S GOLF

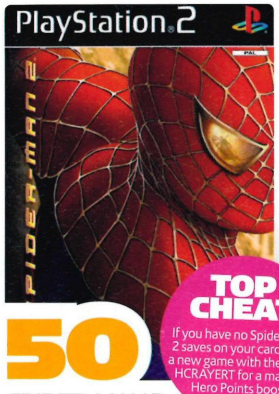
Sony, 2005 Sport

If you're not bothered about official PGA licences and don't mind the cute, cartoony looks, you'll find this to be the finest and friendliest golf game of all time.

Buy it if... you can live without Tiger.

OPS2 #65 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



TOP CHEAT
If you have no Spider-Man 2 saves on your card, start a new game with the name HCRAYERT for a massive Hero Points boost.

50

SPIDER-MAN 2

Activision, 2004 Action

Free-roaming and beautifully animated web-slinging adventure based on, but also expanding on, the movie of the same name. The best Spidey game, bar none.

Buy it if... your spider senses are tingling.

OPS2 #49 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

TOP CHEAT
Pause the game, hold [illegible] and [illegible], then press ↑, ↓, ←, ↓, ←, ↓, ←, → to get comic-book captions when you attack a Rebel as a Wampa.

49

STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT II

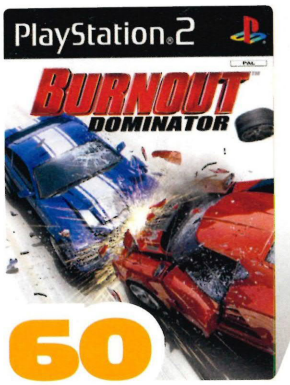
Activision, 2005 Shooter

Offers both tactical and arcade gameplay options plus all your favourite characters, vehicles and locales.

Buy it if... you can feel a disturbance in the Force.

OPS2 #66 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



60

BURNOUT DOMINATOR

EA, 2007 Racing

Reckless driving? We don't recommend it. Burnout Dominator? Yup, totally recommend it. Great soundtrack, too.

Buy it if... you don't want to lose your no claims bonus.

OPS2 #83 **8/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

59

BUZZ! THE MEGA QUIZ

Sony, 2007 Party

Quiz show-style fun for all the family that comes with special buzzer controllers. Kids should try the Buzz! Junior series.

Buy it if... you like quizzes but can't stand that Noel Edmonds.

OPS2 #84 **8/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

54

BROTHERS IN ARMS: ROAD TO HILL 30

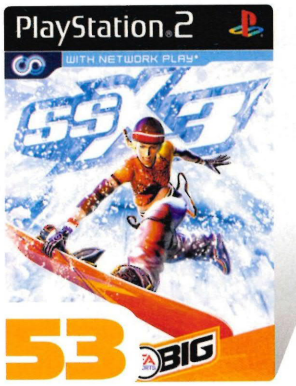
Ubisoft, 2005 Shooter

The story of a squad from the 101st Airborne in Normandy after D-Day. Realistic, atmospheric and respectful.

Buy it if... all's quiet on the Western front.

OPS2 #58 **8/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



53

SSX 3

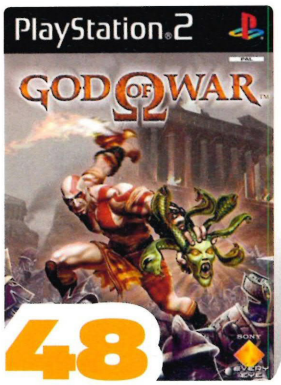
EA, 2003 Sport

Sublime snowboard sim with one giant mountain to play on, dozens of disciplines to learn and hundreds of tricks to pull off.

Buy it if... bailing on concrete is too painful a prospect.

OPS2 #40 **9/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



48

GOD OF WAR

Sony, 2005 Action

Blessed with divine inspiration, this gore-spattered hack-fest begins the tale of Kratos, the angriest man in ancient Greece. Bettered only by its sequel.

Buy it if... you want to stick the knife in.

OPS2 #60 **9/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

47

PRINCE OF PERSIA: WARRIOR WITHIN

Ubisoft, 2007 Adventure

Combat-heavy platforming with a spellbinding story adds up to an electrifying experience.

Buy it if... you can run up walls.

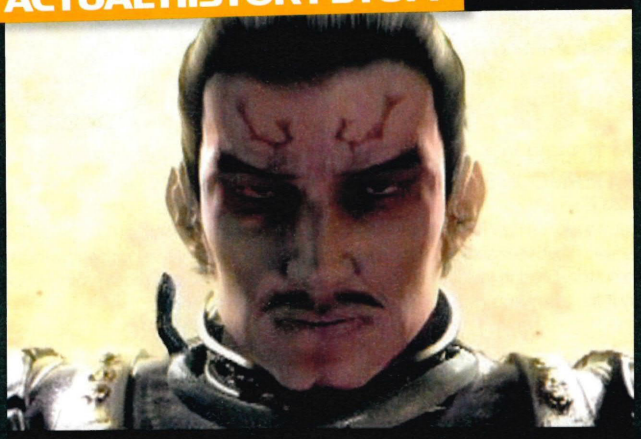
OPS2 #54 **9/10**

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

GREAT GAME INGREDIENTS ONIMUSHA

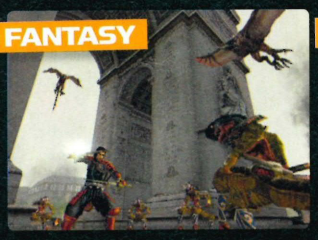
What gives this series its lasting appeal?

ACTUAL HISTORY STUFF



Onimusha is set in ancient Japan and features real-life figures such as Oda Nobunaga, the main bad guy in the series. The real one was a feudal lord at the centre of several bloody power struggles during the 16th century.

FANTASY



Although the setting has some historical authenticity, most battles are against supernatural forces. There's even time travelling!

CELEBS

Takeshi 'House of Flying Daggers' Kaneshiro and Jean 'Leon' Reno are among the real movie stars whose likenesses and voices are used.

MATES

Onimusha 2 has you acquiring the help of allies by giving them gifts that must be specific to their tastes.

SILLY STUFF

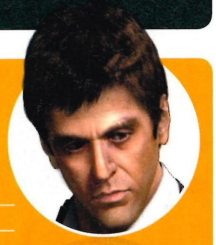
Samurais like to have a laugh as well, you know! Look, it's Samanosuke in a panda suit. What a card, eh?

MONSTERS

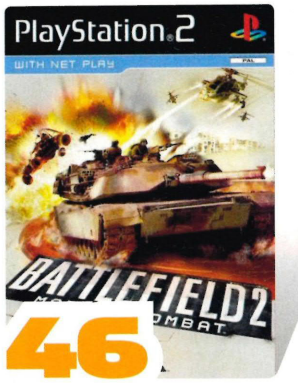
From zombie samurais to huge, toxic, green man-spiders, the series teams with nightmarish creatures to fight.

DO YOU LOVE ONIMUSHA?
Send us your memories: psnation@futurenet.co.uk

TOP 10 Games of films



10	James Bond 007: From Russia With Love
9	Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King
8	The Warriors
7	Rocky Legends
6	The Matrix: Path of Neo
5	Peter Jackson's King Kong
4	Spider-Man 2
3	The Thing
2	Lego Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy
#01	**Scarface: The World is Yours** You play with him, you're playing with the best!



BATTLEFIELD 2: MODERN COMBAT

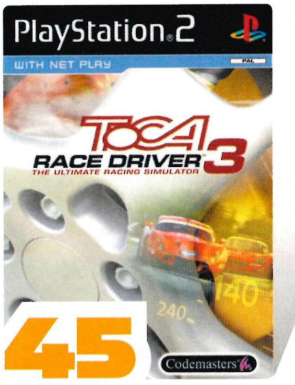
EA, 2005 Shooter

A superb modern warfare shooter that lets you switch between soldiers at the touch of a button. Great in multiplayer, too.

Buy it if... you're an armchair general.

OPS2 #65 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



TOCA RACE DRIVER 3

Codemasters, 2006 Racing

Variety is the spice of life and with all sorts of wheels on offer this multi-disciplined racer is a potent feast for petrol-heads.

Buy it if... you love motorsports but can't choose a favourite.

OPS2 #69 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE

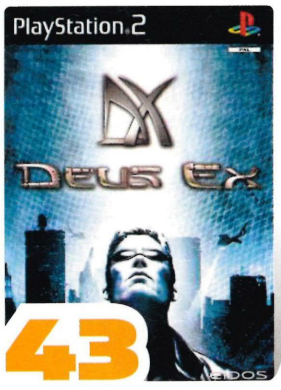
Konami, 2003 Stealth shooter

The plot may be complex but MGS2 is still one of the most thrilling, cerebral games on PS2. Substance includes extras galore.

Buy it if... you can follow the storyline.

OPS2 #32 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



DEUS EX

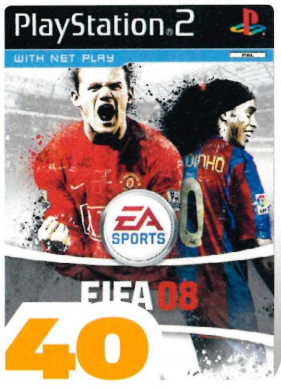
Eidos, 2002 RPG

PC gamers: they think they're all that. Well, they ain't. PS2 owners have one of their greatest games in the shape of Deus Ex.

Buy it if... you suspect you may actually be a nanotech-enhanced superhuman.

OPS2 #20 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



FIFA 08

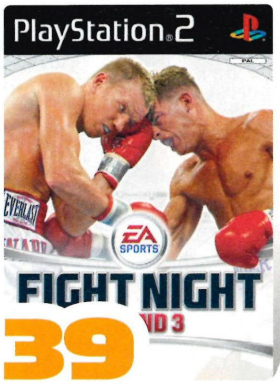
EA, 2007 Sport

The best season yet for the veteran footie sim, a plethora of licences combined with striking gameplay. The awesome Be A Pro mode is worth the price in itself.

Buy it if... you want to keep it official.

OPS2 #91 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3

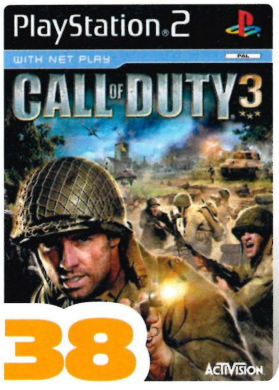
EA, 2006 Sport

There's nothing quite like punching a man in the chin and watching as sweat and blood flies off in slow-mo.

Buy it if... you need a legal outlet for your anger-management issues.

OPS2 #71 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



CALL OF DUTY 3

Activision, 2006 Shooter

There are roughly one million WWII games out there, but this is by far the best of them thanks to some intense action and great multiplayer.

Buy it if... you hate Nazis.

OPS2 #80 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

TOP CHEAT

For invisibility, complete Trained to Kill and Border Patrol, then press ◎, ◎, ◎, ↓, ◎, △, ◎, ↑ at the main menu.

MANHUNT

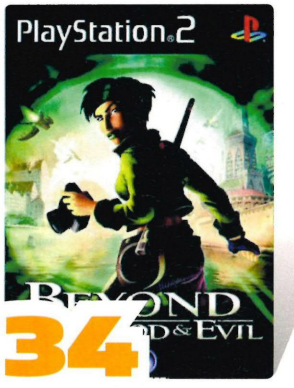
Rockstar, 2004 Stealth

The grisliest game ever to find its way onto PS2, this sinister stealther drips with atmosphere and twisted tension.

Buy it if... you have a lust for gore and are looking for a sicko storyline.

OPS2 #42 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



BEYOND GOOD & EVIL

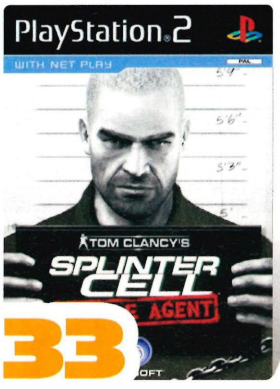
Ubisoft, 2003 Adventure

Under-appreciated weirdness starring a female photo journalist and her piggy uncle fighting off an alien menace.

Buy it if... you've got an eye for a photo and a penchant for green eyeshadow.

OPS2 #40 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



SPLINTER CELL: DOUBLE AGENT

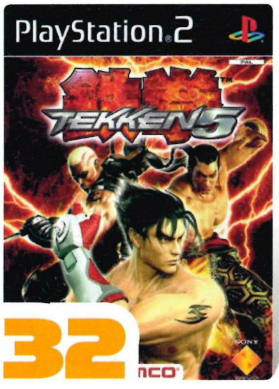
Ubisoft, 2006 Stealth

Pinnacle of the futuristic stealth series on PS2, this has moral dilemmas to get to grips with as well as nailbiting action.

Buy it if... you can think as well as sneak.

OPS2 #79 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



TEKKEN 5

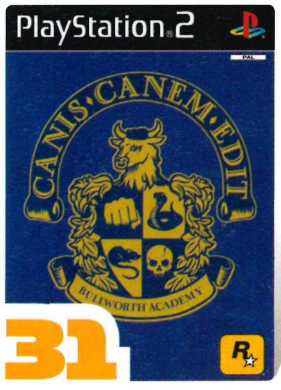
Sony, 2005 Fighting

The King Of Iron Fist Tournament returns with more fighters and fancier settings than ever. The quintessential 'easy to play, hard to master' scrapper.

Buy it if... you heed the call.

OPS2 #61 8/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



CANIS CANEM EDIT

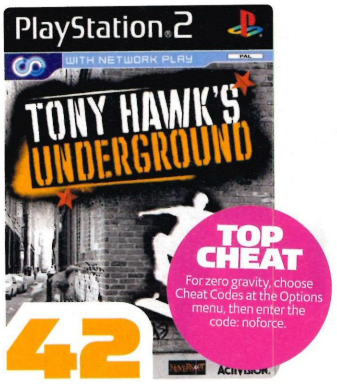
Rockstar, 2006 Action

Grand Theft Auto meets Grange Hill for free-roaming adventure fun set in an American private school.

Buy it if... you like melting Jelly Babies in test tubes.

OPS2 #79 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

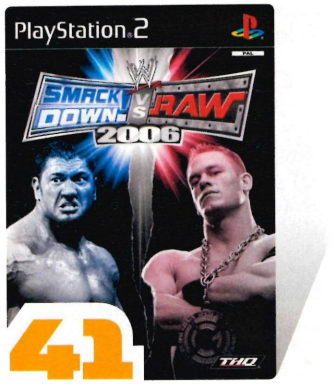
Activision, 2003 Sport

With its story-driven trickplay, this is the best of the many titles in the skate series.

Buy it if... you ever dreamed of pulling a backside 360° heelflip to fakie.

OPS2 #40 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW 2006

THQ, 2005 Fighting

It's not the most recent in the franchise but pound for pound, SmackDown! Vs Raw 2006 is the best wrestler out there.

Buy it if... you're a wrestling fan.

OPS2 #66 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

DRAGON QUEST VIII: JOURNEY OF THE CURSED KING

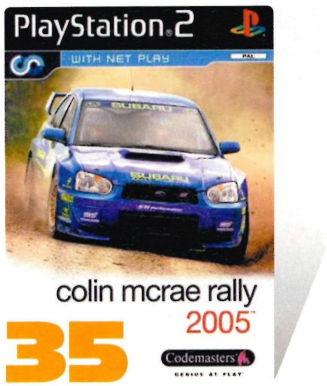
Square Enix, 2006 RPG

A truly epic, old-school roleplayer with alluring visuals and a strong narrative.

Buy it if... you've 100 or so hours to spare.

OPS2 #71 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005

Codemasters, 2004 Racing

Rally legend McRae will be remembered not only for his racing, but also for the ace games to which he lent his name. This is the best mud-slider on the market.

Buy it if... you live life close to the hedge.

OPS2 #51 **9/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

KINGDOM HEARTS II

Square Enix, 2006 RPG

The stars of Final Fantasy make friends with the Disney crew for a super-cute adventure that's as deep as it is handsome.

Buy it if... Donald Duck and Cloud Strife in the same game is your idea of heaven.

OPS2 #78 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

JAK 3

Sony, 2004 Platformer

Second only to Ratchet & Clank in the PS2's platformer-cum-shooter stakes, Jak and Daxter's third outing has variety and charm in brightly coloured spades.

Buy it if... you're a Jak of all trades.

OPS2 #53 **8/10**

■ PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

PLAYSTATION WORKOUT

Andy Hartup kicks your football gaming into shape with this four-week training course

WEEK 01

EASY

FIFA STREET 2

First you need to get the hang of basic passing and movement and develop quick feet. FIFA Street 2's Rule the Street mode will teach you to treat the ball like a friend – a round friend that you kick.

■ COMPLETE IT ON SEMI-PRO
■ MUST DO GET A PLAYER RATING OF 85 FOR INTERNATIONAL MATCHES

WEEK 02

MEDIUM

FIFA 08

Now you've nailed the basic skills, the next lesson is how to be a team player. Play a whole season in Be A Pro mode and you'll soon see that football is all about working hard for your pals.

■ COMPLETE IT ON SEMI-PRO
■ MUST DO GET A TOP-THREE FINISH WITH YOUR SELECTED TEAM

WEEK 03

HARD

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2008

Now let's see you control a whole team. Keep the difficulty relatively low and play Master League with the default players, then win the top division only using these players – no transfers.

■ COMPLETE IT ON REGULAR
■ MUST SEE HAMSUN OR STREMER LIFT THE DIVISION ONE TROPHY

WEEK 04

KILLER

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2007

The final challenge tests your wits rather than your reflexes as you move off the pitch and into management. Pick a Championship side, establish them as a Premiership side and then get into Europe.

■ COMPLETE IT ON MEDIUM
■ MUST DO TAKE ON EUROPE'S FINEST AS STOKE, CARDIFF OR NORWICH

TOP CHUMPS

Lee Chaolan

Always the bridesmaid...

He can hold his own against the best fighters in Tekken but it's impossible to respect Lee. Adopted into the Mishima family to give Kazuya some sibling rivalry, Lee has repeatedly failed to take control of the family business and is basically just a weak-minded pawn with an Andy Warhol barnet.

See him in Every Tekken ever

28

ONIMUSHA 3

Capcom, 2004 Action

Jean Reno stars in this demon-slaying Samurai spectacular that flips between modern day Paris and feudal Japan.

Buy it if... you think the film *Leon* would have been better with a spear whip.

OPS2 #48 9/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

TOP FACT
Psychonauts designer Tim Schafer is now working on a heavy metal adventure game called Brütal Legend.

27

PSYCHONAUTS

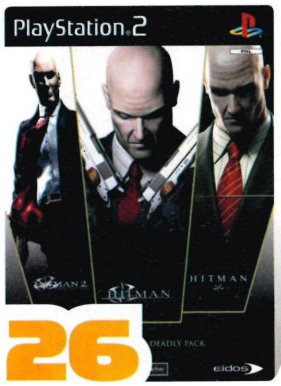
THQ, 2006 Platformer

Quirky, funny and genuinely entertaining, this is one of the greatest yet sadly most overlooked platformers on PS2.

Buy it if... you like a side order of laughs with your gaming.

OPS2 #65 9/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



26

HITMAN TRIPLE PACK

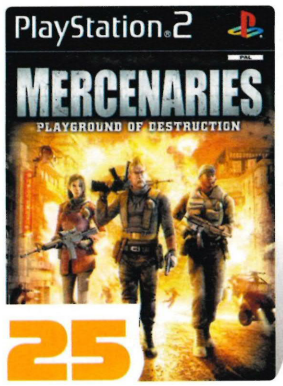
Eidos, 2007 Stealth

All three PS2 games – worth getting for Blood Money alone. Sneak around using disguises and cunning to carry out hits.

Buy it if... you fancy yourself as a genetically engineered assassin.

OPS2 #88 8/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



25

MERCENARIES

Activision, 2005 Action

Hijack tanks, demolish buildings and topple a dictatorial regime in North Korea – all while making a pretty penny.

Buy it if... you think the explosions in Grand Theft Auto are kind of puny.

OPS2 #55 9/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

22

LEGO STAR WARS II: THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

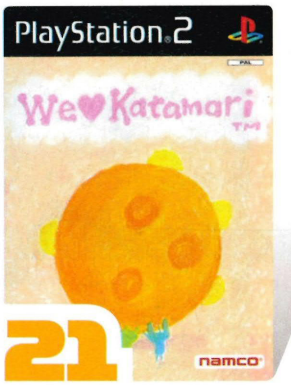
Activision, 2006 Adventure

The best *Star Wars* game money can buy. It's fresh, funny and cute without being sickly sweet or disrespectful to the films.

Buy it if... you liked the Ewoks best.

OPS2 #77 9/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



21

WE ♥ KATAMARI

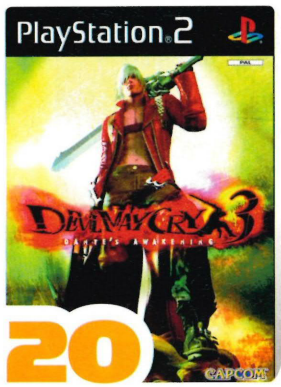
EA, 2006 Puzzle

Completely mental, utterly unique and dangerously addictive, Katamari's genius is in its simplicity. Just roll a sticky ball around a city and collect stuff!

Buy it if... your life isn't weird enough yet.

OPS2 #69 8/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



20

DEVIL MAY CRY 3: DANTE'S AWAKENING

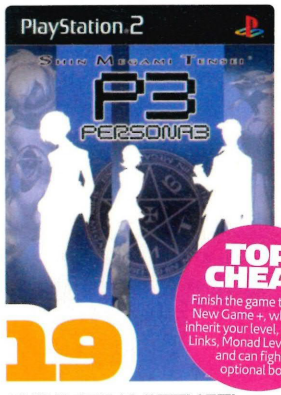
Capcom, 2006 Action

Super-hard prequel to the first-rate demon-slaying action series. Buy the Special Edition if you're inexperienced.

Buy it if... modern games are too easy.

OPS2 #77 8/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT



TOP CHEAT
Finish the game to unlock New Game +, where you inherit your level, kit, Social Links, Monad Level access and can fight an optional boss.

19

SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI: PERSONA 3

Atlus, 2008 RPG

A sublimely detailed roleplayer that blends thrilling demon-slaying with a unique 'school lessons and socialising' mechanic.

Buy it if... you have an 'interesting' fringe.

OPS2 #95 10/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

16

TOMB RAIDER: ANNIVERSARY

Eidos, 2007 Adventure

This stunning revamp of a classic title expands upon the original by extending fiendish tombs and adding extra puzzles.

Buy it if... you want globe-trotting action.

OPS2 #85 8/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

15

GRAN TURISMO 4

Sony, 2005 Racing

PS2's most comprehensive and authentic racer offers some 700 of the world's finest cars and 50 tracks to drive them around.

Buy it if... you never miss an episode of *Top Gear*.

OPS2 #57 9/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

14

RATCHET & CLANK 3

Sony, 2004 Platformer

This third helping of pan-galactic, combat-centric platforming is a riot of barmy weapons, barmier enemies and glorious environments.

Buy it if... you want *Star Wars* with smiles.

OPS2 #53 9/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

TOP CHEAT
For invisible vehicles, enter △, L1, △, L2, ○, L1, L1 during play without pausing.

13

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

Rockstar, 2003 Action

A massively ambitious, crime-filled romp with planes, trains and automobiles by the score and 1001 things to see and do.

Buy it if... you're the original gangster.

OPS2 #54 10/10

PLAYED IT ■ OWN IT

24

DARK CHRONICLE
Sony, 2002 RPG

An engrossing, attractive Japanese RPG with a great storyline, real-time combat, time travel and town planning among its many delights. Nick's favourite game!

Buy it if... you enjoyed Rogue Galaxy.

OPS2 #35 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

23

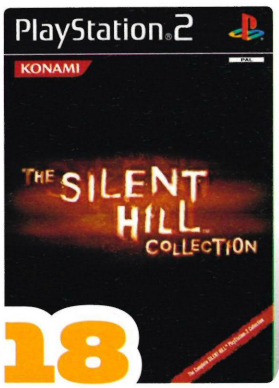
ICO
Sony, 2002 Adventure

Visually stunning, intensely atmospheric puzzler with simple combat. Reminds you how emotionally powerful games can be.

Buy it if... the puzzles in Tomb Raider were a bit easy for you.

OPS2 #69 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



18

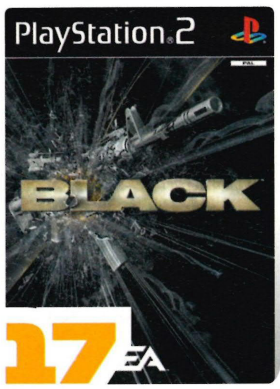
SILENT HILL COLLECTION
Konami, 2006 Horror

A bumper pack of Silent Hill scares: each chapter has you guiding doomed visitors through a twisted, terrifying ghost town.

Buy it if... you want to own a meaty chunk of horror history.

Not reviewed

PLAYED IT OWN IT



17

BLACK
EA, 2006 Shooter

The makers of Burnout set their sights on the shooter genre with delightfully destructive results. As fine a guns'n'ammo game as you could wish for

Buy it if... you love to blow shit up!

OPS2 #69 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

12

SOUL CALIBUR III
Sony, 2005 Fighting

Some purists cry foul at a fighting game involving weapons, but Soul Calibur III is as deep and engaging as they come.

Buy it if... you've a hankering for some stunning-looking swordplay.

OPS2 #66 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

11

OKAMI
Capcom, 2007 Adventure

Restore life to a cursed world with a magic 'paintbrush'. An epic, emotionally charged journey with stunning, picture-book art.

Buy it if... you'd like to make the world a nicer place.

OPS2 #81 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

THE YEAR IN PLAYSTATION 2001

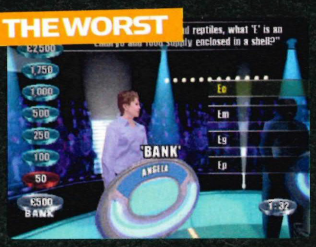
It was a PlayStation Odyssey as the PS2 really started to get into its stride

THE BEST

GRAND THEFT AUTO 3
Rockstar, Action

With Max Payne, Metal Gear Solid 2 and Final Fantasy X, it was a top year for games; but GTA 3 was the most groundbreaking and influential.

THE WORST



THE WEAKEST LINK
Activision, Quiz

Cheap spin-off from the (then) smash hit TV quiz that was guilty of relaunching Anne Robinson's TV career. Slow and painful.

UNDER-RATED

KENGO: MASTER OF BUSHIDO BLADE
Ubisoft, Fighting

Create and train a Bushido master, then choose an appropriate fighting style in this tight, quirky scrapper.

OVER-HYPED

HARRY POTTER & THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE
EA, Adventure

A bog-standard action-adventure that captured none of the magic of JK Rowling's world.

FORGOTTEN

LEGACY OF KAIN: SOUL REAVER 2
Eidos, Adventure

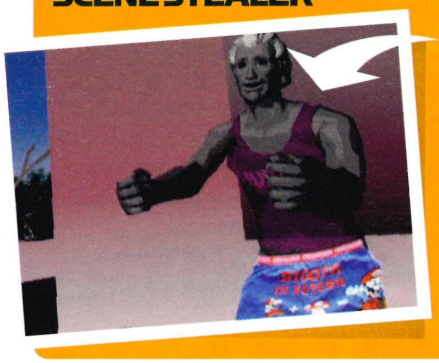
What Crystal Dynamics did before it got the Tomb Raider: Anniversary gig. A rich, compelling adventure.

NEVER AGAIN!

FLINTSTONES: VIVA ROCK VEGAS
Avalon, Racing

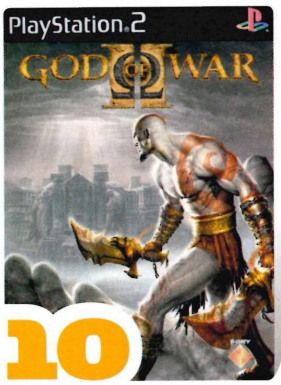
Tawdry mini-karting knocked out to go with the equally tawdry film. A stain on the pages of pre-history.

SCENE STEALER



Spectre in a tank top
Killer 7
Capcom, 2005

Remnant Psyches (advice-giving spirits) pop up throughout Killer 7; the most intriguing of them is Travis Bell, who looks like a hollow-eyed Jimmy Saville and wears vest tops with suggestive messages on them. It's a shame he's a ghost: he looks like a fun guy to go out partying with.



10

GOD OF WAR II

Sony, 2007 Action

Accessible, exhilarating and macho as all hell, the second thunderous outing for PS2's angriest anti-hero is an essential buy.

Buy it if... you're feeling a little tense – and have a strong stomach.

OPS2 #83 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

09

FINAL FANTASY XII

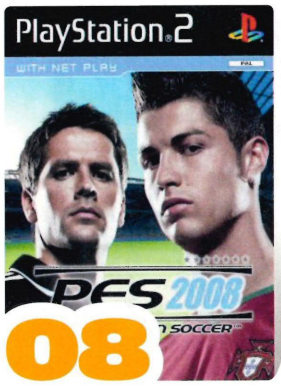
Square Enix, 2007 RPG

The latest in the fabled roleplaying series is as engaging of plot, epic of scale and achingly beautiful as any of its ilk.

Buy it if... you're on a quest to find the apex of sword and sorcery adventuring.

OPS2 #81 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



08

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2008

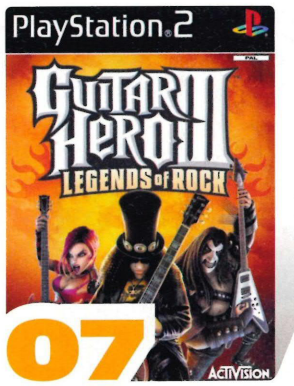
Konami, 2006 Sport

The ultimate PS2 kickabout, even more so than last year's fantastic PES 6. Also: plays better on PS2 than it does on PS3. Ha!

Buy it if... the world is at your feet.

OPS2 #92 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



07

GUITAR HERO III

Activision, 2007 Rhythm action

The best in this rock-tastic series, with real songs, loads of co-op multiplayer options and fiendishly fierce two-player battles.

Buy it if... you're a legend in your own living room. Or anyone else's.

OPS2 #93 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

RUNNER-UP!

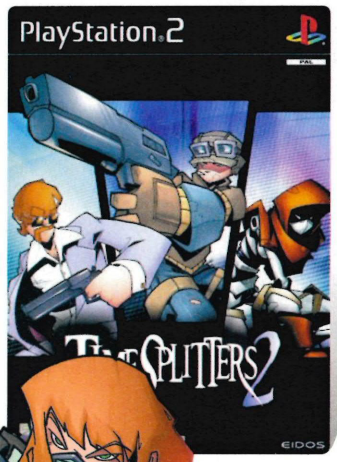
TOP FACT

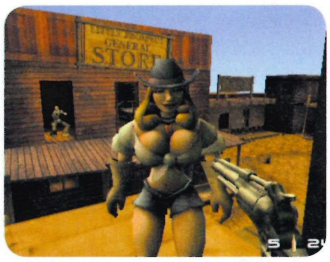
The PS2 TimeSplitters has a smaller playing field for minigames such as Anaconda than on versions for other consoles. Boo!

04

ON THE PODIUM!

03





TIMESPLITTERS 2

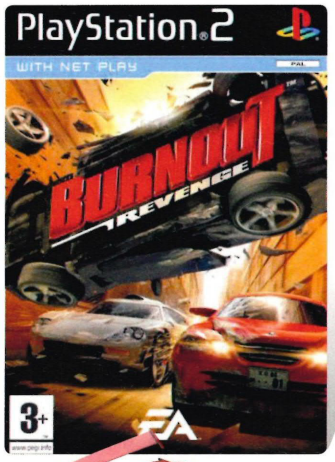
Eidos, 2002 Shooter

Killzone, Medal Of Honor, Call Of Duty – they all pale in comparison to this, simply the best first-person shooter on PS2. The singleplayer affair stands up by itself but it's in the expansive multiplayer modes that the game really shines. A copy of 'Splitters 2 plus a multitap equals countless hours of fun.

Buy it if... you have friends.

OPS2 #25 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



BURNOUT: REVENGE

EA, 2005 Racing

Insanely chaotic race'n'crash action – speed through rush-hour traffic, shoving ultra-aggressive opponents off the road, then watch slow-mo replays of the massive explosions that result. Great online multiplayer, too. All the Burnouts are classics, but Revenge is the definitive version.

Buy it if... VROOM! SMASH! and BOOM! are your favourite words.

OPS2 #64 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

06

SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS

Sony, 2006 Adventure

Battle a series of gigantic monsters in a world touched by artistic genius and have your heart warmed by PS2's most original and unique game.

Buy it if... you've got the wanderlust.

OPS2 #68 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT

05

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE

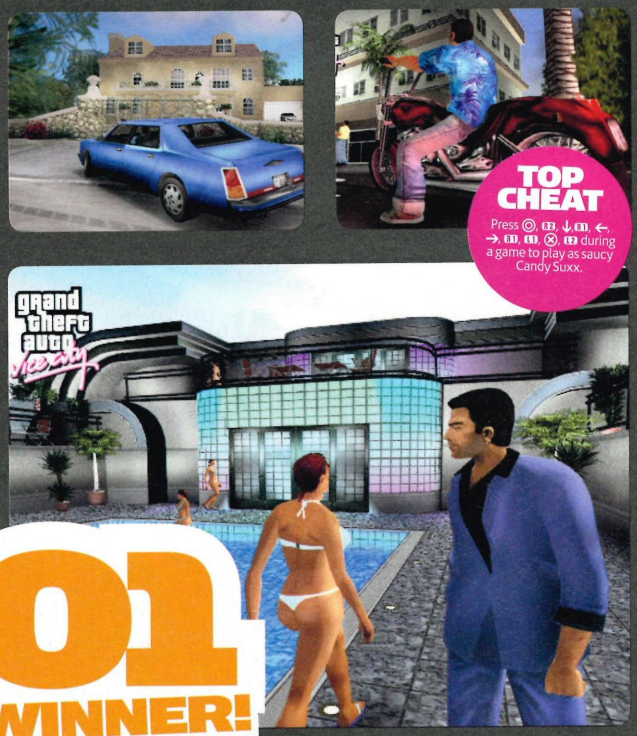
Konami, 2005 Stealth shooter

The finest blend of sneakery and shooting that money can buy includes two extra discs containing a mass of extras.

Buy it if... you like to stay hidden.

OPS2 #78 9/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



TOP CHEAT

Press ◎, ◎, ↓, ◎, ←, →, ◎, ◎, ⊗, ◎ during a game to play as saucy Candy Suxx.

01 WINNER!

GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY

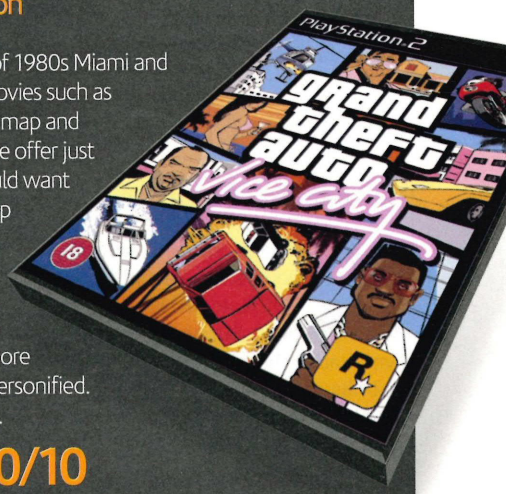
Rockstar, 2004 Action

Set in Rockstar's version of 1980s Miami and taking inspiration from movies such as *Scarface*, the open-world map and freeform mission-structure offer just about everything you could want from a game: a razor-sharp script, superb voice work, awesome music, fast driving, helicopter gunships, shooting up the 'hood and oh, so much more besides. Gaming genius personified.

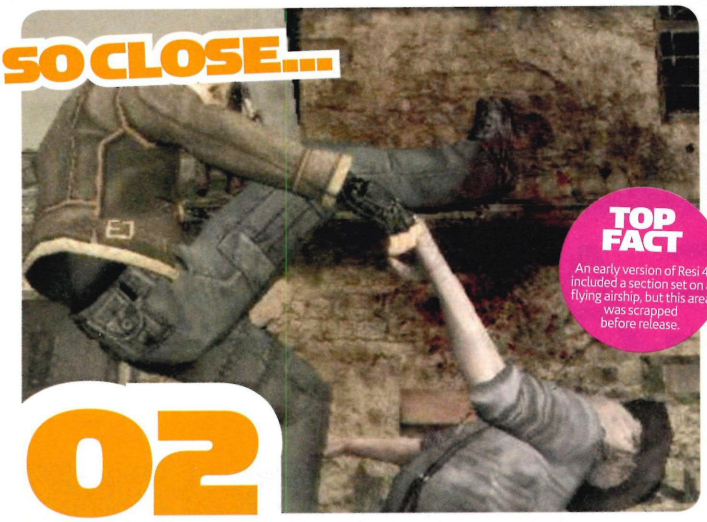
Buy it if... you own a PS2.

OPS2 #27 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



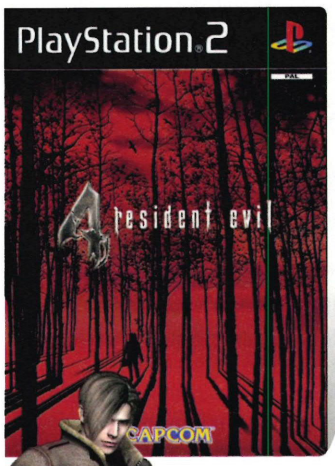
SO CLOSE...



TOP FACT

An early version of Resi 4 included a section set on a flying airship, but this area was scrapped before release.

02



RESIDENT EVIL 4

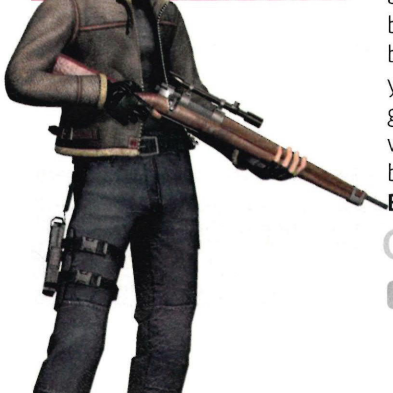
Capcom, 2005 Survival horror

An immaculate adventure that outshines every other horror title and most other games full stop. A blend of beguiling plot, puzzles, boss battles and barmy villagers out for your blood, you can play the main game through numerous times without getting bored and there are bonus missions galore too. Essential.

Buy it if... your veins contain blood.

OPS2 #65 10/10

PLAYED IT OWN IT



HALL OF FAME FEEDBACK FORM

OI! YOU'RE WRONG!

Dear OPS2, I disagree with your Top 100 in the following respects:

GAME NAME	OPS2 NO.	MY NO.

I am right, you are wrong, so change the list immediately. Thankyou.

Name .....

Email .....

Alternatively email feedback to psnation@futurenet.co.uk

PS3 IN OPS2

All you need to know about what's happening in next-gen

GRIDS ARE ALRIGHT

With **Race Driver Grid** the TOCA legacy is in safe hands

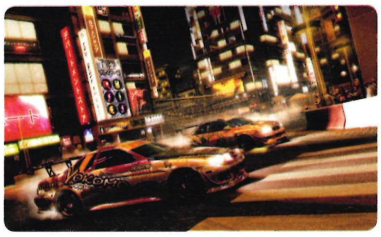
PUB Codemasters DEV Codemasters ETA Summer WEB codemasters.com/grid

Touring car fans, brace yourselves. Ready? Right. TOCA, as you know it, is dead. But never fear: Grid is very much the natural successor to the brilliant TOCA Race Driver 3.

It looks great, handles even better, and looks to be a bona fide contender to Burnout Paradise's racing crown.

In simple terms Grid is like Colin McRae Dirt on tarmac. It's based on the same 'Neon' engine, and that's no bad thing given Dirt's driver-friendly handling, oodles of speed and brazen good looks.

But this isn't just the McRae game with a new skin. Much has improved.



↑The 'Neon' graphics engine means Grid has amazing looks *and* handling

There are 20 cars per race instead of ten, and races occur at dusk or nightfall instead of solely in the day.

Vehicle damage is nothing short of spectacular; it's totally context-sensitive, so dents and scrapes are picked up every time you nick a wall or a rival vehicle. And every crash is strangely rewarding in that afterwards you can relive it in super slow-mo.

There's even a facility to 'flashback' and continue the race from where you were just before the crash, although Codemasters is still deciding on how often this option should be available.

Wheel feel

Of course, the one factor that will make or break Grid is the driving itself, and it's strong. Hammering around San Fran in a Koenigsegg CC GT – making its videogame debut – is thrilling, in an effortlessly smooth sort of way, while drifting a Nissan Silvia 515 through Yokahama docks at dusk requires iron nerves and tons of skill.

Other faves include the Dodge Viper SRT-10 (a classic muscle car and a half) and Aston Martin DBR9 (perfect for zipping around Le Mans as day turns into night and back again).

↑TOCA's successor has fewer cars but each feels truly unique to race

The team has taken a 'quality not quantity' approach to the cars, with 'only' 45 vehicles to drive.

But our hands-on suggests that the smaller garage is a masterstroke, with every single car feeling unique and handling just the way we imagine its real-life counterpart would.

HOW COMPLETE?

RACE DRIVER GRID

CONCEPT | ALPHA | RELEASE

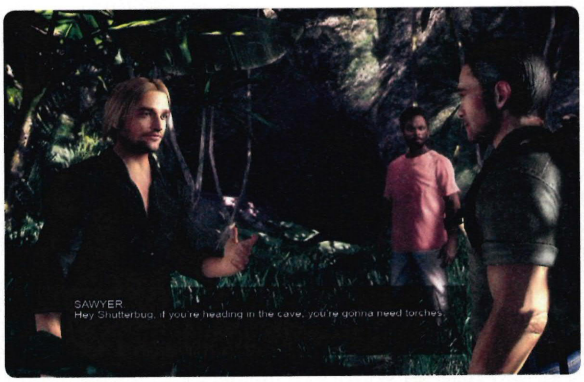
PRE-ALPHA | BETA | JULY

BEACHER'S PET

With a new character to discover and tons of oblique puzzling to be done, **Lost** will be a must for fans of the mysterious TV series

PUB Ubisoft DEV Ubisoft Montreal ETA 29 February WEB lostgame.us.ubi.com

For a while we refused to accept that the Lost game even existed. Not to add an extra layer of enigma, but because the very idea of making a game about a TV show with almost no action, that hasn't resolved a single plot thread in three seasons, seemed so preposterous. And yet here we are, on the beach, looking for our luggage.



Sand in hand

Designed with casual gamers and hardcore fans in mind, it's an adventure game but it won't explain any of the show's key secrets, or indeed affect the back story of the main characters, so as not to cheat non-gamers out of key info.

Instead, you play a new character, an amnesiac called Elliot, who must rediscover his identity – including the obligatory secret – and escape the island… with the help (or not) of all your favourite characters, of course.

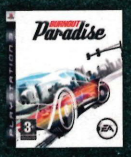
↑ In the game you'll experience Oceanic Flight 815's crash first hand

↑ All the familiar faces will appear

HOW COMPLETE?
LOST
CONCEPT ALPHA RELEASE
PRE-ALPHA BETA
FEB

PS3 TOP 5 CHARTS

The UK's best-selling titles – and that's official!



01 BURNOUT PARADISE
Publisher EA
OPS2 Score 9/10

02 COD4: MODERN WARFARE
Publisher Activision
OPS2 Score 10/10

03 ASSASSIN'S CREED
Publisher Ubisoft
OPS2 Score 8/10

04 UNCHARTED: DF
Publisher Sony
OPS2 Score 9/10

05 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2008
Publisher Konami
OPS2 Score 8/10

HIGH AND FIGHTY

Does the world need a **Highlander** game?

PUB Eidos DEV Widescreen Games ETA 2008 WEB wsg.fr

To be honest, it's a little hard to think of a good reason for making a Highlander game right now, other than that the licence came cheap.

That said, the setup – immortal warriors decapitate each other in a quest for power – and the movies' multi-era timeline do have potential.

The game is set in the same universe as the 1986 film, which is a good start. The epic story spans more than 2,000 years, jumping between Japan, the Scottish Highlands, New York City and pre-lava Pompeii.

↑ Go on, admit it – Highlander looks pretty decent, doesn't it?

Clan you kick it?

You play one of the series' fabled Immortals, called Owen Macleod (from the name, we're guessing he's, ooh, maybe Scottish?), and the combat is all about swordplay. Owen also has special powers called Quickening techniques at his disposal.

These include 'fireblade' and 'chi balance'; our fingers are crossed that the former means roasting your opponent with a single sword swipe and the latter, ninja-style skills.

↑ This is why you should never play footy in an electrical substation, kids!

You'll definitely be able to use your dagger to scale walls and leap over rooftops, though, so the potential is there for a good dose of Devil May Cry-style acrobatic action to book-end the head-lopping duels.

Of course, PS3 isn't exactly short of sword-based actioners, so we'll have to wait until we've had a proper go on it before we start doing the whole arms outstretched 'there can be only one' routine…

HOW COMPLETE?
HIGHLANDER
CONCEPT ALPHA RELEASE
PRE-ALPHA BETA
2008

Release Out now **Publisher** Capcom **Developer** Capcom **Price** £49.99
Players 1 **Web** devilmaycry.com **Also try** Ninja Gaiden Sigma

DEVIL MAY CRY 4

Not better than the Devils you know, but still up there with the best

Devil May Cry 4 isn't just the first in the series to hit PS3; it feels like the first in the series, full stop.

It's all about the DMC's signature combo-based, jackhammer-strength action with subtle control and not-so-subtle visual excess. So it feels more like a return to roots than a step up from DMC3.

The one big change is that you aren't able to play as series hero Dante until the halfway point.

This is the tale of young buck Nero: a story of kidnapped girlfriends, monsters masquerading as a cult of angels, and the god-like power of our hero's demonic hand – Devil Bringer.

It can be used to grasp enemies from a distance and reel them in, (or bring you to them, if they're heavy enough), or to dole out brutal slams and throws to lesser foes.

Upgrades give it greater reach and power, but it's mostly a grappling hook that enables you to stitch together combos more easily and to swing over gaps. Nero's weapons, Devil Trigger mode (a temporary burst of ultra-badassness) and base abilities are upgraded using tokens awarded at the end of each level.

Brilliantly, you can unlearn skills whenever you like, and get a full refund, so you can tweak and experiment from the off.

And when you finally get to play as Dante, it's brilliant – especially the Pandora's Box weapon which transforms into all sorts of mental stuff including a vehicle.

Human after all

Also, Capcom has finally made the easiest difficulty level in one of its action games actually… easy!

DMC4 offers two difficulties at the start – Human and Devil Hunter – with two more to unlock. The former is for DMC virgins; it's not a pushover, but it's free from dumb difficulty spikes.

It's more welcoming for newcomers to the series, but DMC4 is a treat for fans, too. The series hallmarks are all in place: sharp visuals, world-class production and flamboyant cutscenes.

Sure, you've seen much of it before, but it's never looked so searingly brilliant, or felt so surging.

DMC4 doesn't innovate much but does its thing very well

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Awesome weapons
- Retina-meltingly gorgeous
- Doubles back halfway through
- Repetitive boss fights

PS3's premier slash-'em-up, DMC4 will make your eyes pop, although it won't stop you hankering after God Of War III

9

↓ It'll take more than Special Brew to cheer this hobo up…

Release 14 March **Publisher** Sega **Developer** Monolith **Price** £49.99 **Players** 1-16 **Web** snipurl.com/1xdev **Also try** Jericho

CONDEMNED 2

Think CSI: Silent Hill, as directed by the makers of Hostel

This is a nasty, evil game. The epitome of adults-only. Never has a horror game been more deserving of its 18 rating – in fact, developer Monolith worked with censors to stay just within the boundaries.

The most memorable (read: therapy-inducing) moments include an incident with an S&M fetishist's head, a vice and slightly more pressure than is required, and dousing a deranged tramp in booze before setting him alight. And we're supposed to be the good guy…

It's genuinely scary, mixing grindingly atonal audio with brutal violence and relentless dread. You don't so much play the game as wade through it, investigating a series of grisly murders in a city that's collapsed into chaos. A place where rioters wear grisly masks, attackers leer through rheumy eyes and drug addicts glisten with scabs.

You play as Ethan Thomas, a washed-up, alcoholic, ex-Special Crimes Unit investigator. Despite his obvious unsuitability, he's dragged back into the SCU after a posthumous message from a murdered mate asking for help.

Monster bash

Guns are a rare luxury: instead of squeezing triggers you'll be swinging fists. Or wrenches, or locker doors, hammers, bowling balls… it's a flexible combat system and surprisingly intuitive.

At various points you have to examine evidence. Inspecting an object brings up a series of multiple choices and, using what you see, you must pick the right answer to your colleague's questions. This creates brilliant moments as you inspect evidence, photograph weapons or send samples to the lab.

Sadly, the *CSI* stuff is criminally underused, the challenge never progressing beyond "Is it a man or woman?".

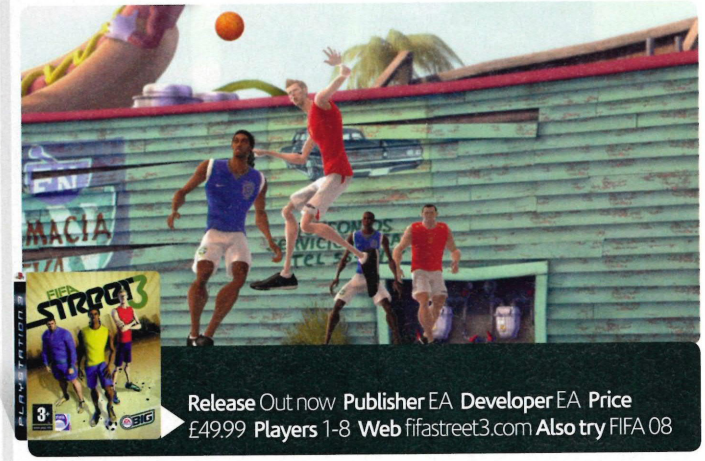
However, if you're on the trail of a first-class scare, this truly terrifying game is unmissable.

↑ 'Yeah, *I'm* calling you a clown. Wanna make something of it?'

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK
VERDICT
The first proper horror experience on PS3 and it's a cracker. A skull cracker…
9

FIFA STREET 3

Kicking with confidence?



Release Out now **Publisher** EA **Developer** EA **Price** £49.99 **Players** 1-8 **Web** fifastreet3.com **Also try** FIFA 08

FIFA Street is the punk-haired, upstart younger brother to the serious-minded FIFA series – a flashy fanfare of over-the-top kicks and flicks with exaggerated, acrobatic physics and an emphasis not just on winning, but winning *cool*.

This year's update sees the introduction of a cartoony visual style and the pace of the game has been eased by a free-flowing new animation system.

This is mostly good news. It's easy to make your five-man team look good, knocking the ball about quickly and scoring outrageous goals.

But it often feels like the game's guiding your passes and shaping your play. As a result the mechanics are too loose to feel properly competitive.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK
VERDICT
Flamboyant fun, but doesn't feel like you're playing real football
6

PlayStation®
Official Magazine - UK

PREVIEWS
Grand Theft Auto IV
The Bourne Conspiracy
Tiberium
Project Origin
Tom Clancy's EndWar

REVIEWS
Lost Planet
Turok
Conflict: Denied Ops
PixelJunk Monsters
High Velocity Bowling

FEATURES
Online Gaming
Resistance 2

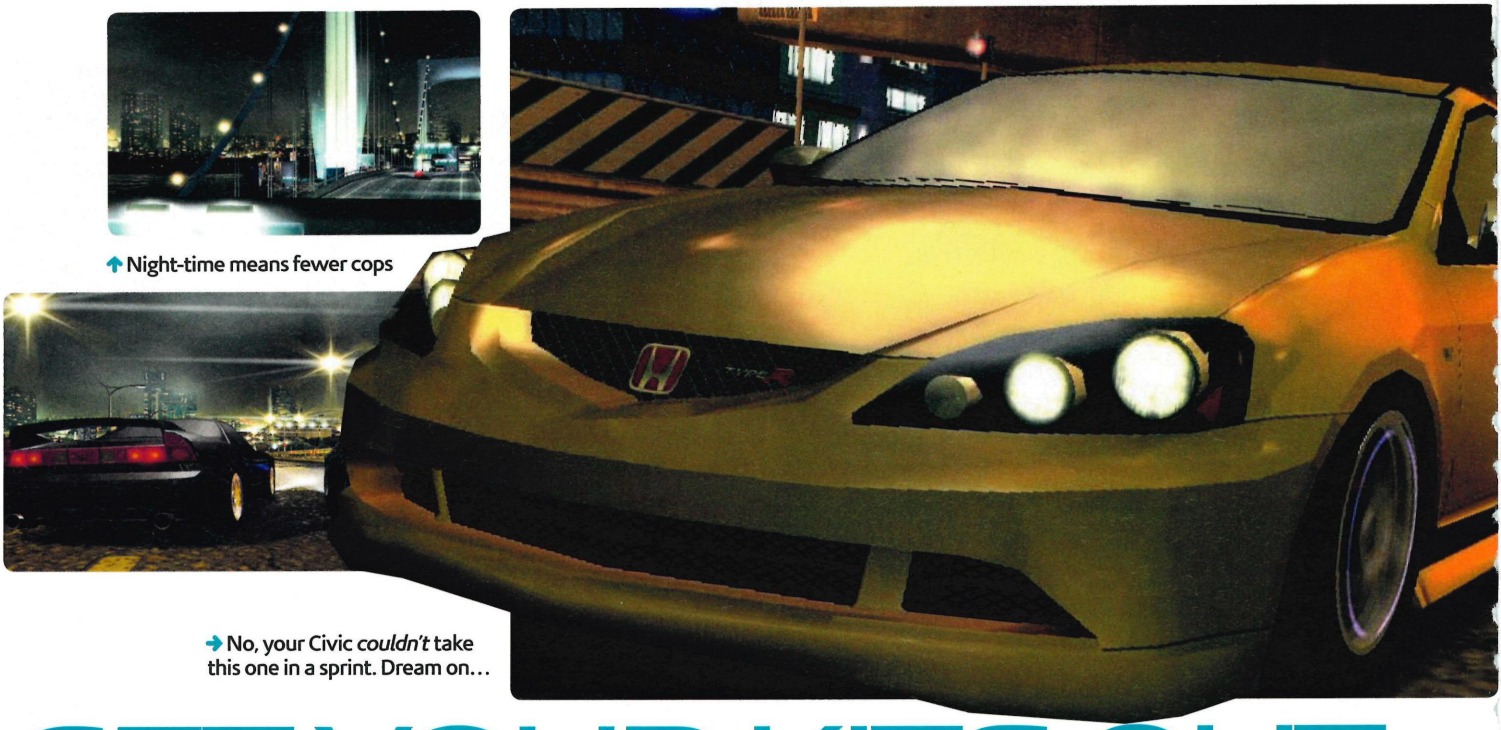
PLAYABLE DEMOS
Burnout Paradise
Kane & Lynch: Dead Men
The Club

ON SALE NOW!

PSP IN OPS2

Your quick guide to the best new games for your handheld friend

↑ Night-time means fewer cops



→ No, your Civic *couldn't* take this one in a sprint. Dream on…

GET YOUR KITS OUT

The Fast & The Furious: Tokyo Drift is playing our tune

PUB Koch **DEV** Eutechnyx **ETA** March

Tokyo Drift has been a bit delayed. Initially due in summer 2006, it's shifted publishers in the meantime, from EA to Koch. But never fear. All the boring business stuff has been sorted, and the game's now on target for March.

It's inspired by the 'hit' films, rather than based directly on the storyline of *The Fast & The Furious: Tokyo Drift*.

As such it's all about hooning round in heavily customised cars at night, flashing your lights at other people and firing the nitrous so hard your head actually bobbles around.

So you've got the super-high-speed straightline highway racing of the original film and the drifting of the third movie. Tokyo Drift really looks the part when you get it sideways, too – monster clouds of smoke billow from the wheels as the cars yaw towards seemingly certain destruction.

↑ You don't have to know your Accuras from your NSXs to enjoy the handling

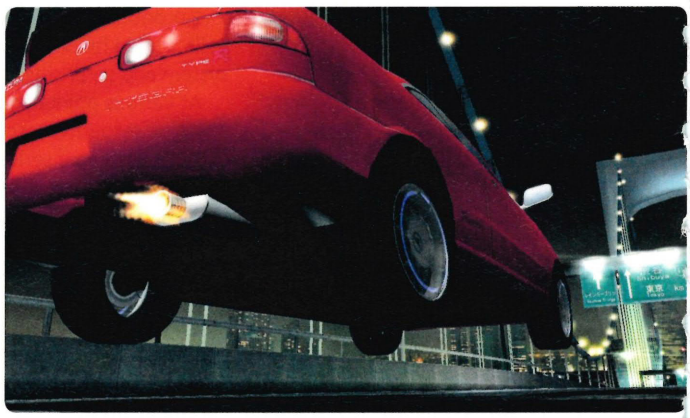
There's a good, weighty feel to the sliding, however, and lots of control – plus, if you're nervous, there's always the drifting-oriented driving aids.

Wangan tough

Naturally, you can also customise and tune your whip, or ride, or sled, or – who knows? – your car.

There are more than 500 body kits here and the heavily Japanese slant (it's very excited about featuring Tokyo's Wangan highway) means it's all cultishly authentic.

Sure, you've seen most, if not all, of this stuff before. The Need For Speed and Juiced games in particular cover the same areas, though they lack the licence from the actual film that pretty much started it all – and arguably they don't look this good.



↑ If you don't fly with fire belching out of your exhaust, you're not *trying*

Plus, Tokyo Drift has dropped in price during its long delay; it'll only cost you a penny less than £20.

HOW COMPLETE?

FAST & THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT

CONCEPT | ALPHA | RELEASE

PRE-ALPHA | BETA | MAR

BLOK AND LOAD

Blokus Portable: Steambot Championship rolls the dice...

PUB Majesco **DEV** IREM **ETA** May **WEB** majescoentertainment.com

Blokus, in case you didn't know, is a board game. An award-winning board game, in fact.

But obviously, on PSP we've got our own spread of strategic entertainment, so even Blokus needs an edge – and that edge is the anime stylings of the Steambot Chronicles series (a series that's only had one instalment so far, last year on PS2, but more are coming).

Blokus is a puzzle game with an admirably simple premise. You place coloured tiles on a board so their corners touch other tiles of the same colour, but their sides don't. You then you try to cover the board with your own colour before your opponents do.

↑ Remove all the anime trimmings and this is an addictive board game

↓ Don't be deceived – this is a puzzler, not a mech game

From the Steambot side of the equation come 19 characters to unlock and character customisation.

Block head-to-head

Blokus Portable: Steambot Championship supports up to 16 players in ad-hoc mode or three players on just one UMD via the gift of game-sharing. And it'll be here in May.

HOW COMPLETE?
BLOKUS PORTABLE
CONCEPT | ALPHA | RELEASE
PRE-ALPHA | BETA | MAR

PSP TOP 5 CHARTS

Big sales on a little console! The biggest right now are...

01 FIFA 08
Publisher EA
OPS2 score 8/10

02 SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2008
Publisher THQ
OPS2 score 8/10

03 FOOTBALL MANAGER 2008
Publisher Sega
OPS2 score 8/10

04 THE SIMPSONS GAME
Publisher EA
OPS2 score 8/10

05 MEDAL OF HONOR: HEROES 2
Publisher EA
Score 8/10

UNDERGROUND ART

Dungeon Explorer: Warriors of Ancient Arts – the clue's in the name with this one, really

PUB Hudson **DEV** Hudson Soft **ETA** March **WEB** mountainsheep.net

If we found a dungeon under our house, or off some lonely platform on the Tube, the last thing we'd do is explore. We'd probably call the police. But then, we are not warriors of ancient arts.

Now, however, we can be such heroes, thanks to Hudson Soft's resurrection of a series that first appeared way back in 1989.

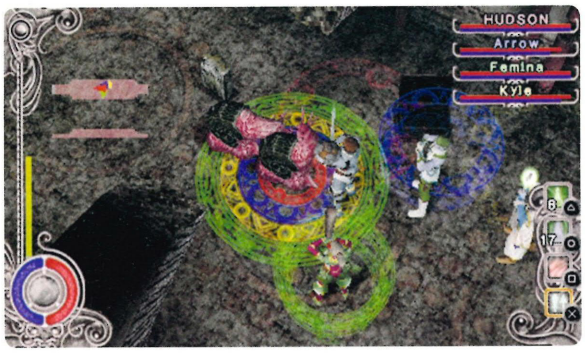
As an action roleplaying game, there's plenty of scope for adventuring the way you want: weapons and armour are upgradable and there are hundreds of fighting styles for the 70-odd male and female warrior races, including the promising-sounding 'Big Bang Arts', to perfect.

These 'Big Bang Arts' are specially formulated for three people playing cooperatively via ad-hoc, so to use them you'll need mates. You can also fight as a party of up to four through the campaign, or dive into a more immediate battle with AI allies.

Although Dungeon Explorer is coming out on Nintendo DS, too, only the PSP has all these features. And that's what will make it enthralling.

↓ '*Slate*? Get Homebase on the phone – I definitely ordered the marble...'

↓ Get three mates and you can explore the game as a team



HOW COMPLETE?
DUNGEON EXPLORER
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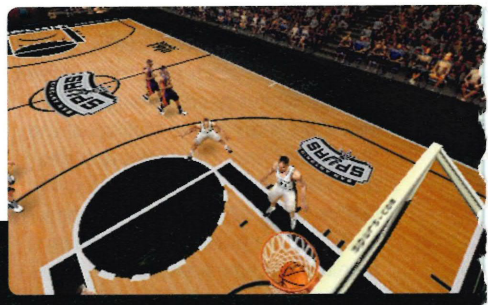
What you're looking at is the best version of NBA Live 08 money can buy



Release Out now **Publisher** EA Sports **Developer** EA **Price** £34.99
Wi-fi Yes **Web** electronicarts.co.uk/games/11595,gen **Also try** NHL 07

NBA LIVE 08

Ball rise: this court is now in session

Like Tottenham Hotspurs and Noel Edmunds, NBA Live is experiencing a resurgence. EA's hoop sim is lifting itself out of the deep, dirty hole it dug for itself in recent years.

Spearheading this is the PSP version, which is the best NBA Live 08 you can buy. Why? One word: polish.

Live 08 has been tailor-made to fit snugly onto PSP, and everything about it feels slick and well finished. There are none of the framerate issues of the next-gen version, nor the bizarre two-buttons-to-shoot control madness plaguing the PS2.

On court the action is smoother than its own buffed-wood floors, and the sense of atmosphere is staggering.

The developer has crafted a brilliant big stadium feel with fantastic commentary and crowd ambience.

In terms of player and shot control, the PSP's nubbin is used for movement, while dunks, lay-ups and regular shots are all mapped onto ◎. Simple, but effective. This leaves everything else free for fancy tactical moves and subtle shot variations.

Good looks and slick controls. Ace

So even though there are fewer buttons to work with, NBA Live 08 doesn't feel like the malnourished cousin of its console counterparts.

Rim and proper

When it comes to wider options such as the Dynasty and Season modes, this is easily the best version available.

Imagine the licensed gameplay of FIFA combined with the accurate stat-crunching of Football Manager, and you get some idea of it.

Start a career in Dynasty mode and it'll be hours before you've got a grip of your team and potentially months before you get a sniff of the play-offs at the end of the 82-game season.

You can hire coaches, fitness trainers and scouts, cycle through endless menus of free-agent players and college draughts before you've set foot on court for your first game.

And when the season finally gets under way you can micro-manage all the players in your squad.

Of course, if pick-up-and-play is more your thing, you can still just jump into a quick game between any of the current NBA teams.

Everything is tied together by a roleplaying-game-style feature called NBA Crown. Achieve things in-game, such as pulling off a set number of rebounds/three-pointers/steals, and you're rewarded with ranking points that unlock ever more swag.

As a result, you feel you've really progressed in your b-ball career – much as NBA Live is progressing itself.

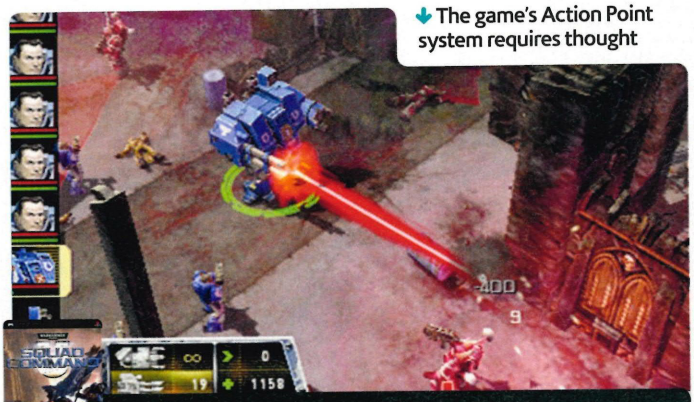
PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK

VERDICT

- Silky controls
- Masses of modes
- Licensed kit and good likenesses
- In-depth stat-crunching

Whether you want to play in-depth for hours or just drop in, keep it PSP for the finest NBA experience

8



The game's Action Point system requires thought

Release Out now **Publisher** THQ **Developer** Red Lynx
Price £29.99 **Wi-fi** Yes **Web** tinyurl.com/28noms
Also try Final Fantasy Tactics: The War of the Lions

WARHAMMER 40,000

Get your **Squad Command** at the ready

We've never really 'got' table-top Warhammer. But thanks to PSP, we can now finally see why Games Workshop outlets make a profit.

The best way to describe Squad Command is by likening it to chess. Swap your pawns for Space Marines, the knights for a land-speeder and your queen for a laser-cannon-toting mechwarrior with a sword and you've got yourself a turn-based strategic war, mister.

This provides hours of tactical choices as you plough through the lengthy solo campaign mode.

Is it complicated? Sliding your cursor around a map and hitting ⊗ to move your grunt is about as taxing as the controls get.

The real test, though, is working out whether you've got enough Action Points (AP) to carry out your daring assault.

Hammer time

As an example, most ground units have up to 40 AP, which means they can take 40 steps, or take 20 then use the remaining 20 to slash with a powerful

melee weapon. A shrewd player would save points for retreating, just in case the fog of war lifts and reveals six heavy mechs. But a brave player may get lucky…

As well as being able to upgrade your footsoldiers' shotguns, swords and the like to long-range stuff such as sniper rifles, you can simply ride into battle using enormous tanks and blast enemy cover into rubble before sending in your boys. Skill!

Overall, the action does get repetitive, though. In the tabletop version, stories are created in your mind, but PSP can't hide the fact that most games involve either reaching a certain checkpoint then blowing stuff up or killing everyone on the map.

That, plus the increasingly tough difficulty level, means although it's great fun for a while, you'll soon get disillusioned.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK
VERDICT
Thoughtful, strategic and neat, but you may get bored after a while
6

SPIDER-MAN 3

Never mind swinging, this game ought to hang

Release Out now **Publisher** Activision **Developer** Vicarious Visions **Price** £34.99 **Wi-fi** Yes **Web** snipurl.com/1z0m3
Also try The Warriors

We PSP owners have been screwed. The next-gen version of Spider-Man 3 appeared at the same time as the film, in May last year, and was a decent slice of web-slingery.

PSP owners, however, have had to wait seven long months for a new Spider-Man game, for no great reason. And it stinks.

It's basically a port of the distinctly average PS2 version, with slightly shakier controls and an oddly shiny Spider-Man character model. Oh, and it bears little resemblance to the film that inspired it, so that's another poke in the eye.

The map is huge and the swinging and climbing works fine. But the combat is atrocious, the missions are dull and the whole thing's over in five hours.

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine UK
VERDICT
A loveless afterthought that's best avoided
5

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#15 THE ELDERLY

Old people: they're just like us, only with more ear and nose hair. And there are plenty with starring roles on PS2

EMPEROR PALPATINE

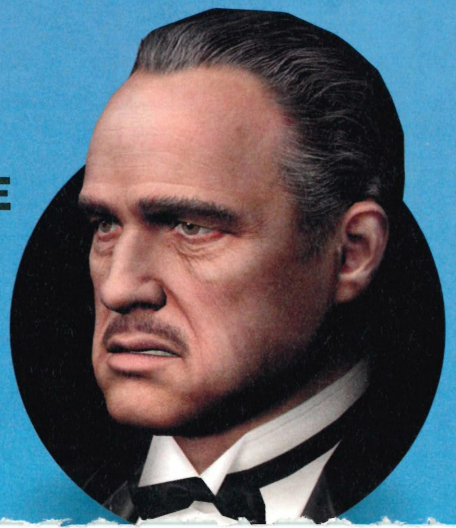
As seen in Star Wars Episode III (2005)
Elderly stereotype The Bastard. The kind of oldie who is usually found wandering around town stinking of gin, muttering curses and dousing errant children in Force lightning.

SHANG TSUNG

As seen in Mortal Kombat: Shaolin Monks (2005)
Elderly stereotype The Cranky Neighbour. Harmless, providing you keep off the grass, don't play your music too loud and stay away from his portal to the realm of the damned.

MRS AND MR ORANGE

As seen in Okami (2007)
Elderly stereotype The Senile Couple. Typical symptoms include making cups of tea every five minutes and talking to the dog like it's an ancient sun deity.

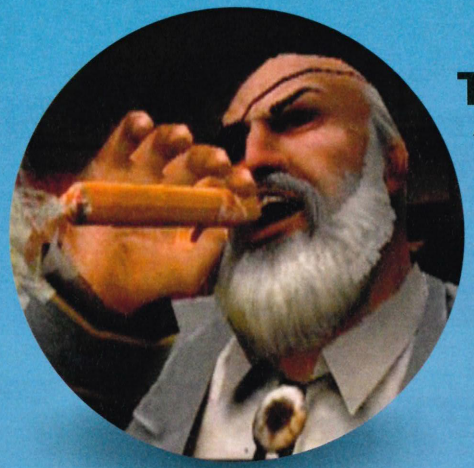


VITO CORLEONE

As seen in Godfather (2006)
Elderly stereotype The Godfather. Hey, if you're family, you're taken care of. Just don't cross him.

HARMAN SMITH

As seen in Killer 7 (2005)
Elderly stereotype The Invalid. His body may be a bit the worse for wear but his personalities are still sharp. All seven of them.

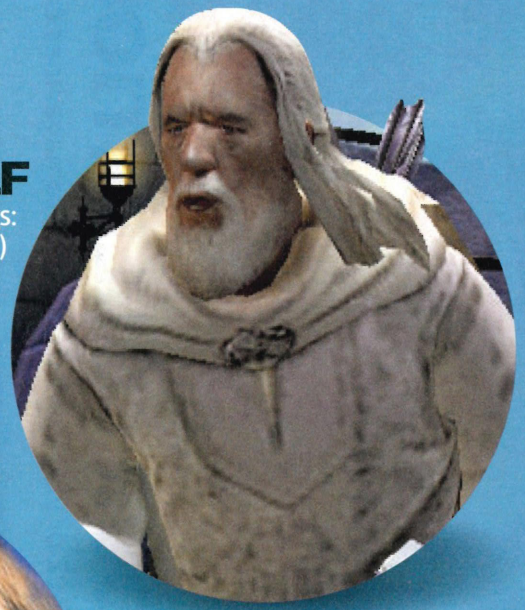


THOMAS MAGRUDER

As seen in Gun (2005)
Elderly stereotype The Anti-Santa. Often blokes who most resemble Father Christmas in appearance least resemble him in demeanour – their grandchildren may be found covered in cigar burns.

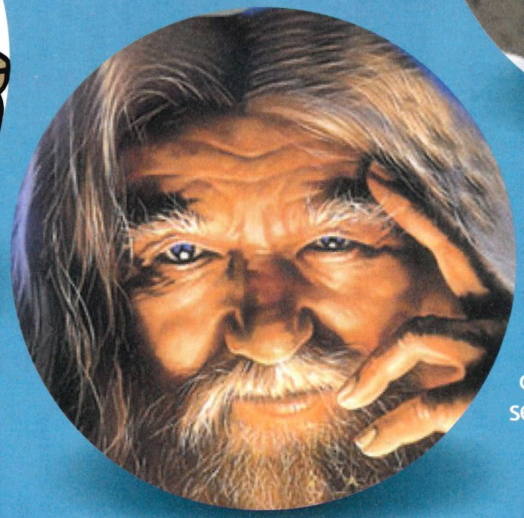
PROFESSOR FARNSWORTH

As seen in Futurama (2003)
Elderly stereotype The Wormfeed. Some people just live too long, requiring the kind of medical maintenance that bankrupts their younger relatives.



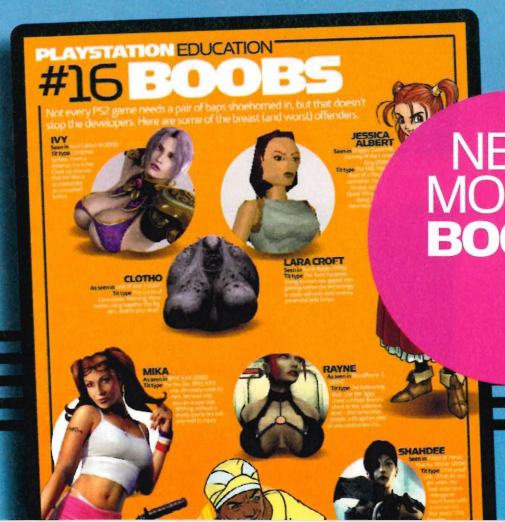
GANDALF

As seen in The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers (2003)
Elderly stereotype: The War Veteran. Loves to regale you with the story about the time he held off an army of orcs with nothing but a… *yawn*.



THE CHESSMASTER

As seen in Chessmaster (2003)
Elderly stereotype The Smug Coot. Prides himself on still being as sharp as a tack. Often found counting out exact change for the bus and finishing your sentences for you.



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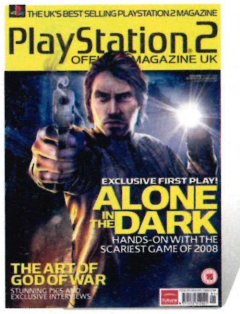

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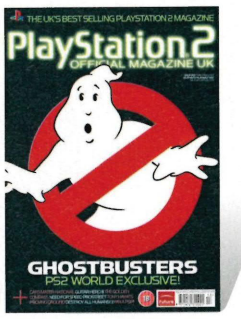

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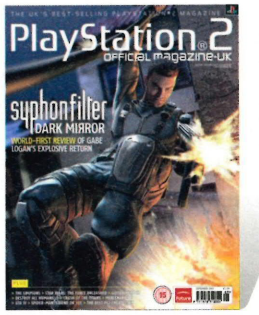

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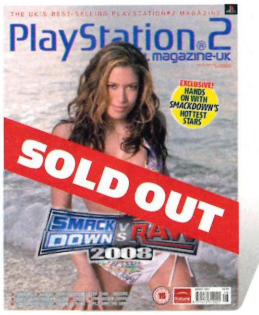

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SPLIT SCREEN

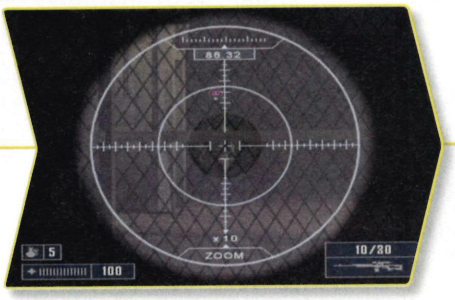
One classic level, two ways to complete it. This month: Mercenaries

MISSION START

Alright, so we're here to take out the Ace of Diamonds, so we plunk for super-stealthy Jennifer Mui as our character. We have no idea why guards tend to ignore her. As the only woman in the game– and a hottie – it's surprising the North Koreans aren't scrambling to her with gifts and declarations of love.

METHOD 1 STEALTHY STYLE

The North Korean APC allows Mui to blend in with the NK military. Er, except there's a disguise-busting officer standing guard. Doh!

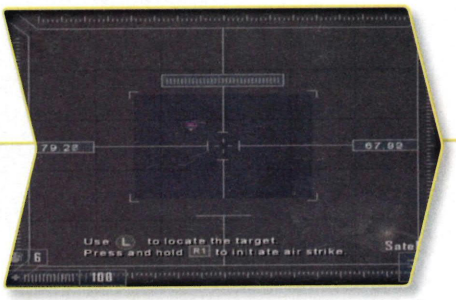


We're rolling covertly, so Mui snipes him between the eyes. As the base erupts in chaos, we resume our disguise as an innocent APC.

But our APC's puny gun won't help us later in the mission. Luckily, we espy a lone tank on an empty road: a grenade in the hatch and it's ours.

Oh look – Allied soldiers battling an NK scout squad. To fit in with the NKs, we slaughter the Westerners like dogs. It costs us, but it's fun.

A problem. The path to our objective is blocked by a huge NK base crawling with officers. The solution? Heavy ordinance…



A satellite-guided fuel-air bomb should do the trick. It's probably against the Geneva Convention, but needs must.

Although visibly spooked by the flash-frying of their friends, this heavily-armed squad is none the wiser as we slip by in our disguised tank.

Sneaking into the NK's gun emplacement, we take out the bad gun that's shelling South Korea. Cover broken, it's back in the tank to bring hell.

Oh! It turns out that in the ensuing melee we've run over the Ace of Diamonds with our tank by accident. Hooray! We win!

MISSION COMPLETE

All that remains is to practise our amateur photography by taking a snapshot of the dead general. After adjusting the shutter speed to account for the fading light and reattaching the general's arms, we send the photo back to HQ and find ourselves $125,000 richer. Yay!

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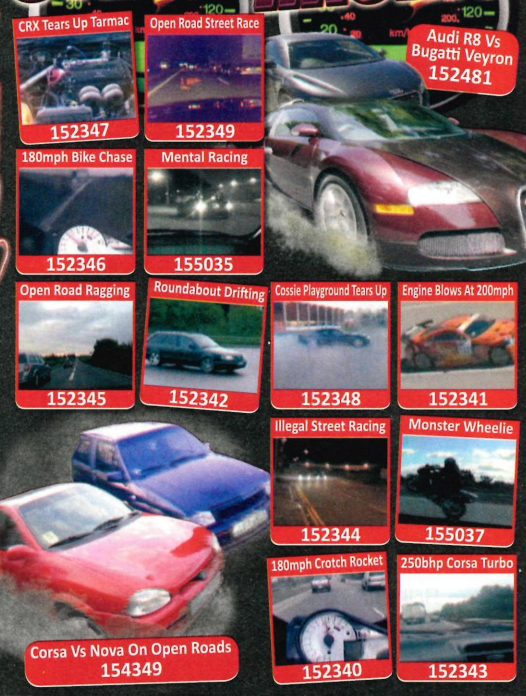

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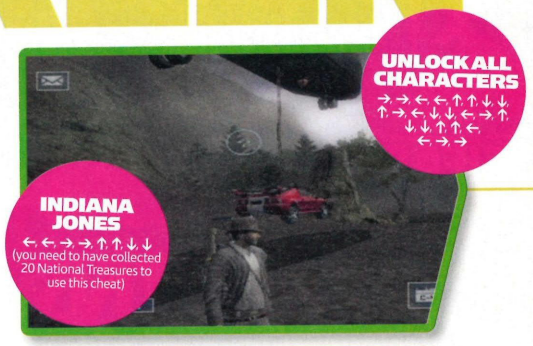
SPLIT SCREEN

One classic level, two ways to complete it. This month: Mercenaries

MISSION START

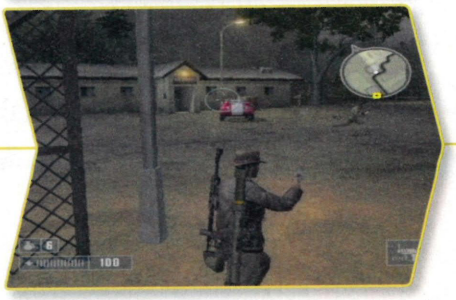
First, we enter the two codes on the Faction screen of our PDA to play as Indiana Jones. But because we were playing Jennifer before, he's using her character model. So you'll have to ignore Indy's childbearing hips and the girlish way he flicks his hair when left idle. It'll corrupt your dreams.



METHOD 2 INDY STYLE

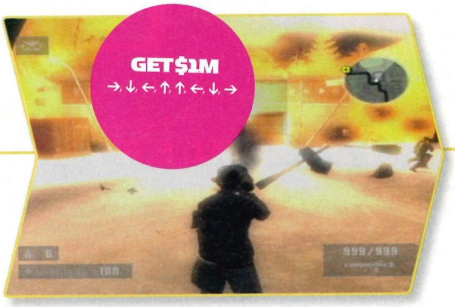
First, we get Indy a shiny sports car. It has no weaponry, but we can fix that with a few wads of C4. It's Indiana Jones and the Blast Crusade!

Indy sets off for his first NK base. "Hey, is that Harrison Ford cruising by in a sports car?" "No way, dude, you're imagining things again."



Indy points the car towards the barracks and dives out, brandishing his C4 detonator. Things can only get warmer and louder from here…

Hmmm… it didn't quite have the impact we wanted. The building's still standing! Only one thing to do: call in a crate of cheat weapons.



The Street Sweeper? The Pocket Artillery? We pick the Portable Air-Strike. Why? Look at the picture. That's not the sun coming up. It's death.

With infinite health, Indy's experiment with a Portable Air Strike ends not in self-immolation but a classic 'running from an explosion' shot.

Mui had to cross this irradiated bridge in an enclosed vehicle for protection. But Indy doesn't care. Hell, radiation didn't exist in the 1930s!

Indy takes a dip to wash off errant atoms. You can't swim in Mercenaries, so what Indy is doing (with the health cheat) is directed drowning.

We dress up for the occasion of meeting the Ace of Diamonds: as Han Solo. Surprised to see a Star Wars character, the Ace goes down easy.

MISSION COMPLETE

We handcuffed him, but that doesn't stop us from running to the nearest body of water and drowning the war criminal for his crimes. If the UN come round and start asking questions, just tell them: "He tripped and accidentally inhaled part of the ocean." Thanks.

MISSION SELECT

Have you got a favourite mission you'd like us to feature here? Tell us about it! Email psnation@futurenet.co.uk or write to Split Screen, OPS2, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

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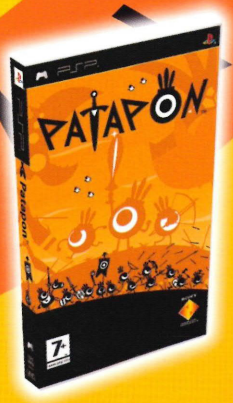
SLIM & LITE

PSP
PlayStation Portable

Give in to the hypnotic beat
As if you have a choice. Using nothing but your rhythm to control an army of Patapons, a life of Patapon induced chanting and foot tapping is just around the corner.



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