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PlayStation®2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

ISSUE 076 • SEPTEMBER 2006
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FIFA 07

NEW SEASON, FRESH START... CAN FIFA FINALLY WIN OVER ITS CRITICS?

PLUS

> GTA: VICE CITY STORIES > JERICHO > NEED FOR SPEED CARBON > YAKUZA
> MOTORSTORM > THE SIMS 2 PETS > ARMY OF TWO > BLU-RAY MOVIES
> THE SOPRANOS > HALF-LIFE 2 > THE GREATEST MINI-GAMES EVER!

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0870 837 4773 (UK queries and back issues)
+44 1858 438794 (Overseas new orders and renewals)
+44 1858 438795 (Overseas queries and back issues)
Distributed through the UK Newstrade by Marketforce (UK) Ltd, 5th Floor, Low Rise Building, Kings Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS
Tel: 020 7633 3300
Overseas Distribution by Future Publishing Ltd
Tel: 01225 442244
If you had any problems finding this issue of *OPS2*, please call Russell Hughes on 01225 442244
Printed in the UK by Southernprint

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ABC 132,069 Jul-Dec 2005
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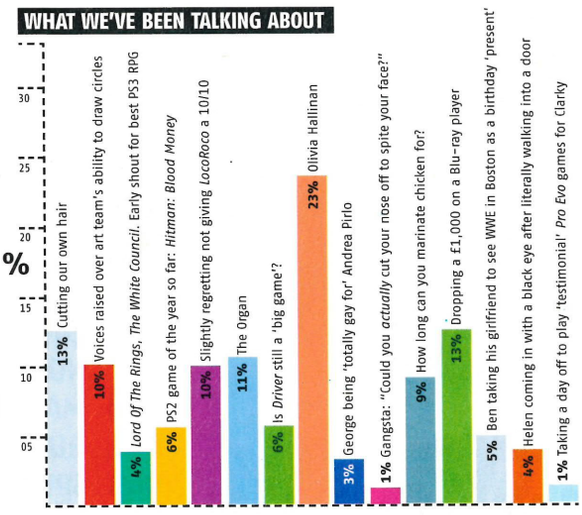
*To celebrate our *FIFA 07* feature, we asked the team which footballer they'd like to swap lives with"

FREE TRANSFER

Next time you score a goal on PS2, stop for a second and think about all the work that went into making it happen. Not your fancy stepovers and Pythagorean passing. No, I'm talking about the graft done by people who spend their lives painstakingly creating player likeness, designing complex tactical algorithms and endlessly tweaking balls. Developing a football game is a monolithic, multi-million pound challenge. Think about it this way: your average shooter struggles to make the interaction between man, shotgun and terrorist look convincing. A football game has to cope with 22 players, a ball, and the obsessive expectations of fans who watch the real thing every week. The modern game is dominated by *Pro Evo* and *FIFA*, with everything else having long since collapsed on the side of the pitch. The battle between these two titans is one of the most fascinating rivalries on PS2. *Pro Evo* has long been the purist's choice, while *FIFA* was seen to rely on its licensed kits and clubs to hoover up mainstream sales. But as we discovered this month, that might not be the case for much longer. To answer the deliberately contentious question posed on our packaging, *FIFA* isn't better than *Pro Evo*. What it is, is different. EA is no longer trying to chase Konami with one hand grabbing for its metaphorical shirt. Instead, the *07* model focuses on accessibility and entertainment, while at the same time doing a better job than ever of looking and feeling like real footy. Read the rest on p60. Non-fans, meanwhile, can direct themselves to our feature on what watching Blu-ray movies is really like (p56) or the world's first info and shots on *GTA: Vice City Stories* (p96). I'm off to make a 'secret' magazine next month, so there'll be new face here. Possibly with less implausibly high cheekbones. It's been a short but brilliant time in the big chair, but they do say the light that burns twice as bright burns half as long. Make sure George wears a black armband for me, and I'll see you all again soon.



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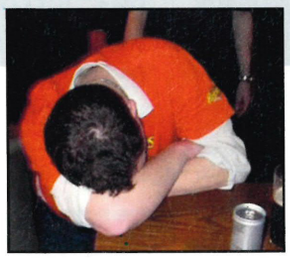
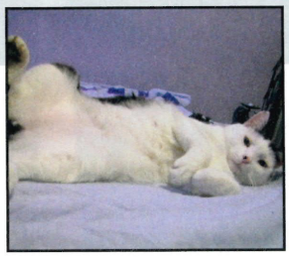
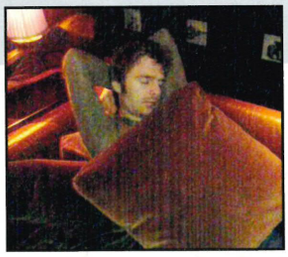


Jon Hamblin
Writer, *Vice City Stories* feature (p96)
For reasons too convoluted to go into, we had to contact Jon using a non-work email account this month. "Your message was very cryptic," says Jon. "I thought I was being recruited for MI6." Shhhhhh... don't tell *everyone*.



Leon Hurley
Writer, *Yakuza* review (p74)
Leon's cat passed away this month. He told us via the medium of his blog rather than using actual words because we had said cruel things about the cat in the past. 'Sorry'. Here's some more budget games to review. That'll cheer you up.



George Walter
Writer, Blu-ray feature (p55)
Our international man of travel flew to San Fran to see EA's line-up this month. Here, you can see our international man of travel, who routinely goes to bed before 10pm, sleeping in a hotel lobby like a big baby.

'Gangsta' Al Wardle
Design, Sports Special feature (p60)
"Brrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrap!" says Al. All the time. Despite his hardman of hip-hop posturing, we gave his five-a-side team a hammering this month. Nonetheless, he claims to be a 'reet canny player, like.' Which we presume is Geordie for 'I know two tricks and never, ever pass.'

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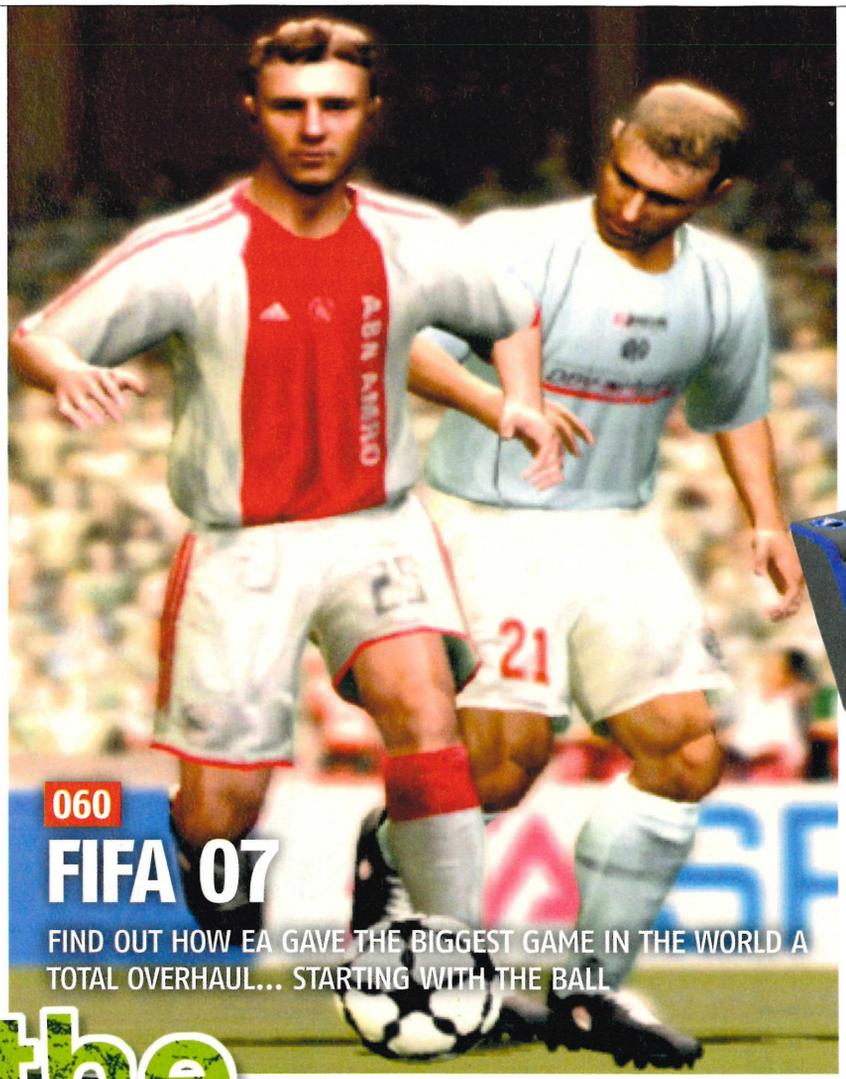

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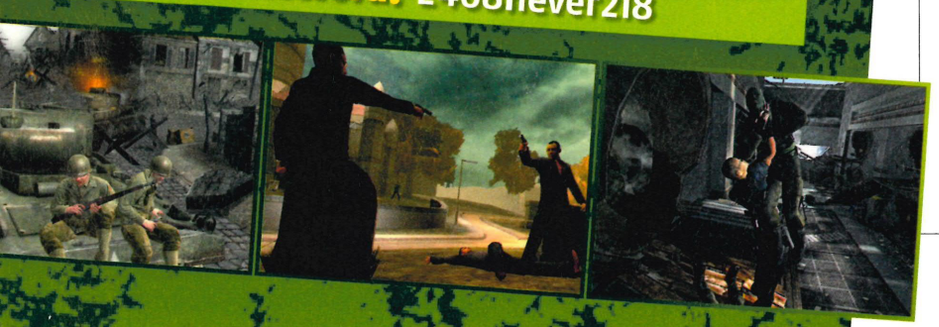
FIFA 07
FIND OUT HOW EA GAVE THE BIGGEST GAME IN THE WORLD A TOTAL OVERHAUL... STARTING WITH THE BALL

the stash.tv
Exclusive free access to the very latest game videos as we get them. Head to our readers-only website **www.thestash.tv** and enter the password below to see the white hot footage.

This month: *Call Of Duty 3*, *Spy Hunter*, *Made Man*, plus tons of other PS2, PSP and PS3 footage...

Password: 2468never218



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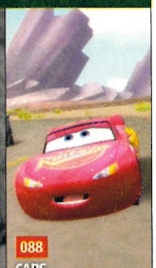

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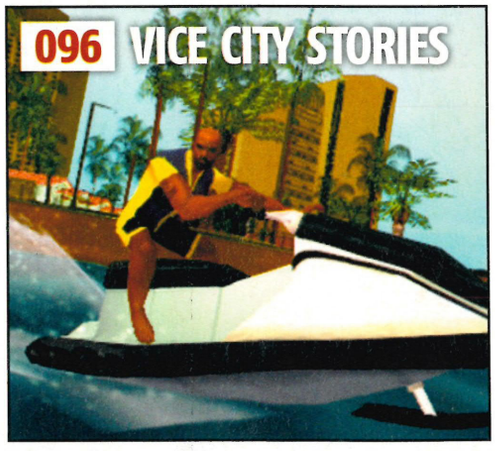

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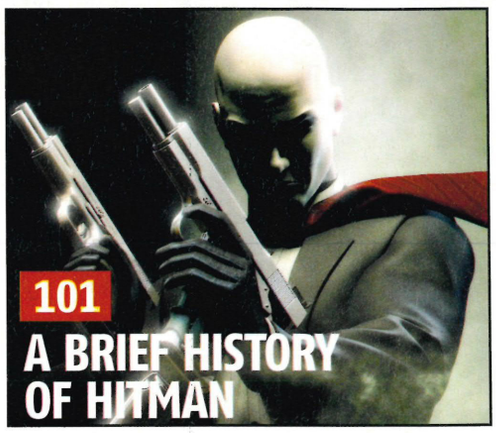

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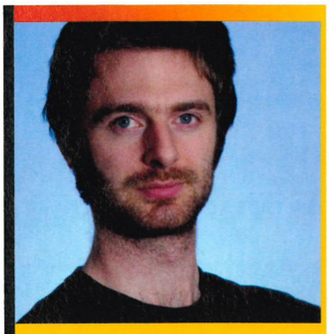
PLAY GAMES

THIS MONTH'S HOTTEST DEMOS!



I can tell a game is onto something when, five minutes in, I glance behind me and find the whole of Team *OPS2* rubbernecking at the screen instead of working. Which is exactly what happened this month with our huge *Yakuza* demo. Deep? Absorbing? A total blast? Yes. Yes, and yes. (Find out what we thought of the full game in the review on page 74.) If that's not enough, there's a brilliant first play of *Lego Star Wars II: The Original Trilogy*, plus *Shinobido*, *F1 06* and six more killer demos to get stuck into. Enjoy the disc – I certainly have...

George Walter,
Disc editor

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT WON'T MY DISC WORK?

To be honest, we're not sure. But seriously, if your DVD appears not to be loading properly, first try resetting the console and loading the disc again. If that fails, we'll gladly replace it for you. Simply mail the faulty disc (no need to send the box) to *OPS2* Magazine, Disc Returns, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. If you have any further queries, email us at ps2disc@futurenet.co.uk.

01 YAKUZA

What you get: First ever playable demo of Sega's *GTA*-flavoured crime epic, *Yakuza*. Take to the streets of Tokyo's entertainment district and get stuck in to five separate activities. Explore the game's story mode, learn the ropes of the game's brutal hand-to-hand combat, take those head cracking skills onto the streets, head to the hostess bar for a bit of lady-flavoured R&R, or unwind with your baseball bat in the batting cage mini-game.

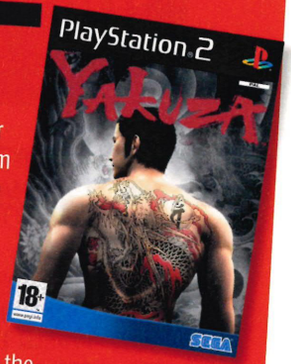
02 LEGO STAR WARS II: THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

What you get: Experience the game's sun-baked Mos Eisley level, flitting between control of Lego Obi-Wan, Luke, C-3PO and R2-D2 to explore every nook and cranny, busting stormtroopers and hunting for extras. Can you find and build the hidden AT-ST?

DISC CHALLENGE

Win yourself a copy of *Yakuza*!

CHALLENGE DETAILS



Explore the neon-saturated world of *Yakuza* and you'll discover that a gangster with a good batting arm can be quite persuasive in a fight. But practice makes perfect, and to be in with a chance of winning one of five copies of *Yakuza* you'll need to step up to the plate and show us what you're made of. Choosing the 'batting cage' option at the start of the demo, select the hard game and see how many home runs you can score from the 20 balls you're given. Simply send us a snap of your best score, and if yours is one of the highest five we receive, you'll win a copy of the game. Happy swinging!

Attach your MMS picture then text **CHALLENGEDISC** (then a space) followed by your name and where you live to **07738 647 177**

Only the five entries that *OPS2* judges to have scored the highest number of home runs on this month's *Yakuza* demo will each win a copy of the game for PS2. Texts will be charged at 50p plus your standard network tariff rate. Please source all necessary permissions. Lines are open from 10 August to 06 September inclusive. We will not advise non-winners of the result.*

***DISC CHALLENGE COMPETITION TERMS AND CONDITIONS** By entering you are agreeing to receive details of future offers from Future Publishing Ltd and third parties. Only UK residents over the age of 15 may enter. If you do not want to receive information relating to future offers and promotions, please include the word NO at the end of your text message. Winners will be notified within 28 days. No employees of Future Publishing, any associated company or any member of their close family may enter. Prizes are as stated and no alternatives, cash or otherwise are available. Publicity may be given to any entrants and their names, addresses and/or photographs printed in *OPS2*. Editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. No purchase necessary.

And there's more...

This month's exclusive extra DVD content

Downloader

Not content with giving you the hottest playable demos, we're giving you 19 killer saves for games ranging from *Amplitude* to *ZOE2*. We've even included an exclusive '*Splitters 2* map designed by the creator of the game, David Doak. To access them all, select 'Replay' from the title menu, and follow the on-screen instructions.

04 FORMULA ONE 06

What you get: A three-lap race around either Nurburgring or Catalunya circuits as any one of the '06 season's 22 top drivers, including wunderkind new boy Nico Rosberg.

03 SHINOBIDO: WAY OF THE NINJA

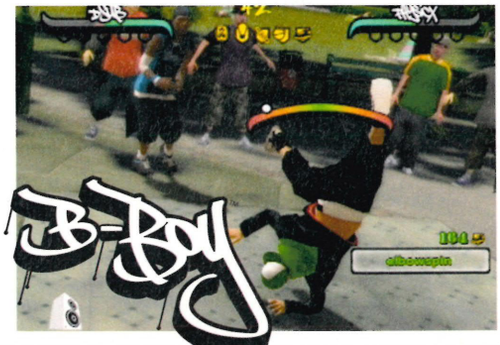
What you get: Three whole missions from Sony's black jim-jam-wearing adventure. Become one with the night and deliver some pointy justice.

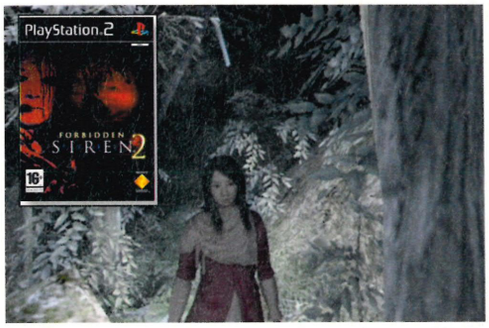
05 FIFA 06

What you get: A friendly match for one or two players. Take your pick from Barcelona, Man Utd, PSG, Bayern Munich or AC Milan. How friendly it is depends on your playing style, and whether you opt for Roo as the lone frontman in a 4-5-1 formation...

02 B-BOY

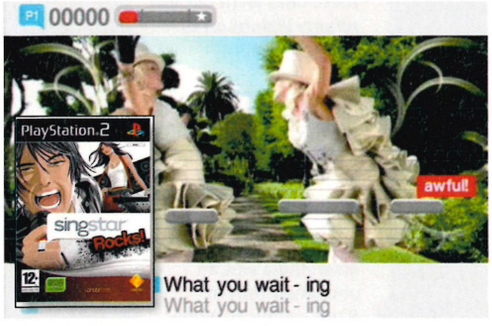
What you get: Toprock like a pro with this, Sony's unique breakdancing game. Humiliate opponent Physicx in a dance-off as DSub, without giving yourself a hernia or snapping your neck like a twig. (Don't worry, it's not *that* difficult.)





07 FORBIDDEN SIREN 2

What you get: A chilling dose of twisted Japo-horror in the opening level of what is arguably the scariest game on PS2. Escort a helpless friend to safety, or just look after number one.

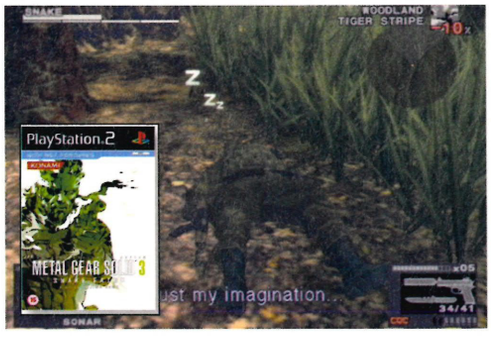


08 SINGSTAR ROCKS!

What you get: Four tracks on which to unleash your paint-stripping vocals. Choose from hits by The Killers, The Rolling Stones, Gwen Stefani or Blur. "Good evening living room!"

09 METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER

What you get: The *entire* prologue mission from the best *Metal Gear* to date. Rescue Sokolov the scientist, and play with the crocs!



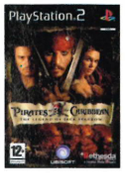
10 BLACK

What you get: Knacker your surround sound with this, the staggeringly shooty Veblensk City Street mission from *the* most hardcore gun game yet on PS2. If this doesn't convince you to part with your cash, you must be dead inside.

postal

THIS MONTH: LOST AND FOUND COPIES OF *BLACK*, DOG-CHEWED PSPs, AND ELEPHANTS

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



WIN THIS!
This month, any letters published here will receive a copy of *Pirates Of The Caribbean: The Legend Of Jack Sparrow* courtesy of Gamestation.co.uk. The Star Letter also wins *FlatOut 2*, *Super Monkey Ball Adventure* and *Fight Night Round 3*. Only main Postal letters receive games. Letters will be edited for length and clarity.

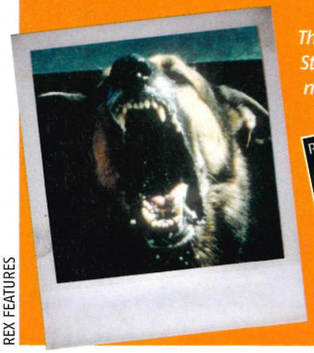
gamestation

star letter

THE DOG ATE MY PSP

I'm writing this letter on behalf of my mates, Karl Styler and Kirsty Cray, who are too upset to write in themselves. The other night they were at my house for a few games of *Pro Evo*. The evening went well and in the small hours they called a taxi, returned home and went to bed. Imagine their horror when, in the morning, they discovered that while they'd been out, their 18 month-old Alsatian, Freya, had eaten their brand new PSP. To say they were angry is an understatement. I'm sure your readers will share their pain when they see the enclosed photo.

Malcom Thomas, Penbrokeshire



REX FEATURES

The real question is what happened to the Memory Stick? Probably best to check Freya's stools for the next few days, just in case.

RUN, DAVID, RUN

I bought *2006 FIFA World Cup* after you said it was the best *FIFA* game yet. You were right, except for one niggly bit that just kept annoying me. The star players are supposed to play like they do in real life but they don't. If you watch a game as England for example, you don't see Gerrard and Lampard shooting screamers from 35 yards. Wayne Rooney never gets sent off and Beckham never sprints up the flank. Oh, and why are there no star defenders?

Lewis Channing, Shropshire

Lampard scoring screamers? Beckham sprinting? Which World Cup were you watching? The last time Beckham sprinted was down to the petrol station to buy every copy of the Sunday papers when the Rebecca Loos thing broke. Frankly, after the shambles that was Germany '06, we dread to think how bad 'our boys' are going to be in the next FIFA *and* Pro Evo.

EMPICS

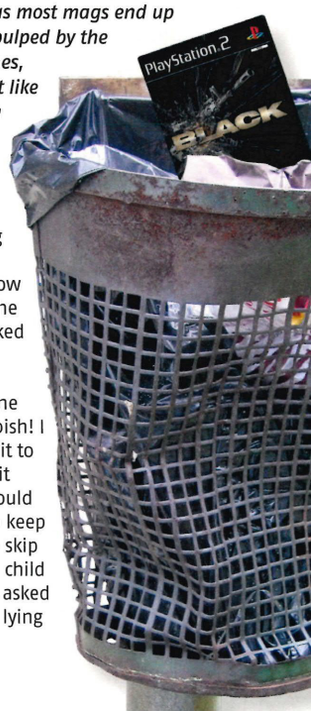
At half time, Becks makes the mistake of looking at Posh's credit card bill...

THE FIRE STILL BURNS

The other day my cousin came to my house to sleep over and we decided that we would have a massive bonfire in the garden. After we finished building it and set it alight we realised that, as it was mostly paper, it was going to burn out quickly. While I went to the garage to look for some firewood my cousin asked my mum if there was anything else to burn. My mum told him to use some magazines and by the time I got back my entire collection of *OPS2* was ablaze. It was too late to save them. Now, all I have left is issue 73, half of the burnt cover of 41 and pages 12 to 16 of issue 69.

Kristen Thobroe, email

Try to accentuate the positives, Kirsten. Issue 73 was a particularly strong month, and whereas most mags end up on landfill sites or pulped by the big pulping machines, these ones went out like mighty Vikings on a blazing pyre.



MY HEART IS *BLACK*

While walking along my street the other day I decided to throw some rubbish into the bin. But when I looked down there was an unopened copy of *Black*, sitting all alone on top of some rubbish! I was going to report it to the local police but it occurred to me it would be a lot more fun to keep it. So I was about to skip home when a small child came up to me and asked if I'd seen his game lying

Milky Joe: thinking about French philosophy as usual

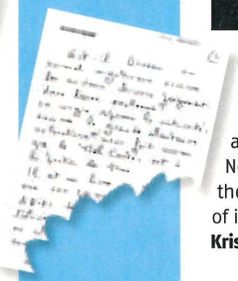
CUT 'N' PASTE

THE EDITED HIGHLIGHTS SPILLED FROM SOME VERY STRANGE MINDS

Tom, Sussex
I was so desperate to play *Hologram Time Traveller*, I pierced my hand with a compass.

Viper, email
John, if you're reading this, I know you stole my magazine again. Traitor.

Dominic Jaques, email
This letter is crappy because a fat kid ate most of it.



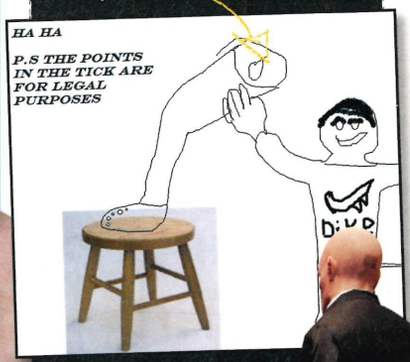
Cillian McGillycuddy, email
I just got a 256MB memory stick for €15. I ate the receipt.

Alarick Stewart, Colchester
Can you tell my mate to give back my memory card or I will unleash your Milky Joe army upon him.

DISTRESSING DELIVERY

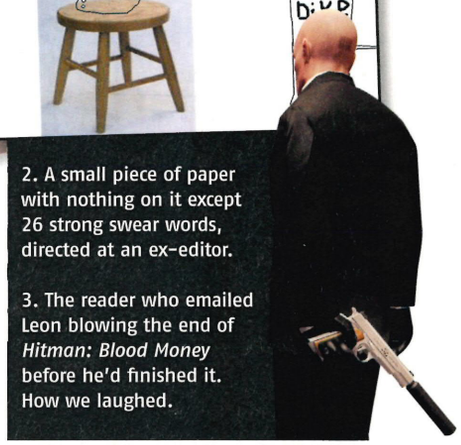
WHAT WE WERE REALLY TROUBLED TO FIND IN OUR SACK THIS MONTH

1. This unexplained and very weird picture.



2. A small piece of paper with nothing on it except 26 strong swear words, directed at an ex-editor.

3. The reader who emailed Leon blowing the end of *Hitman: Blood Money* before he'd finished it. How we laughed.



in the street. I must say that this was the most difficult decision I've ever had to make. I said..."Yes, I found this" and pulled the treasured *Black* out of my jacket. The boy gave me a look and said "No, I was looking for *Rayman*." I raised my eyebrow but it appeared he *actually* was looking for his copy of *Rayman*. Relieved, I ran home straight away to play on my new copy of *Black*.
Danny, Southampton

Maybe our local tramps rummage through bins looking for free games? Here's a list of cool things we've found.
George: £20 note
Tim: Keys
Ben: Unopened sandwich
Andy: Winning scratchcard
Leon: God

A LESS WRINKLY SNAKE

I decided to make this picture of a younger Snake from *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns Of The Patriots*. Notice that the wrinkles and moustache have gone. I hope you like it. Maybe you could print it and hang it on the wall?
Paul McAllen, email

Good Photoshop skills, Paul. Maybe you could do the same for some of the more broken-looking members of Team OPS2 – the pictures on our Myspace profiles say sinister rather than sexy. As for 'Old Snake', Kojima reckons it's a reflection of his increasing awareness of his own mortality. Sounds like the game should be a right laugh.

THE SHORT ANSWER

Q If you print this will I get a game?
Matt, Cardiff
A *No.*

Q Is it true Ubisoft are making a game based on the TV series *Lost*?
Sapegg, email
A *Yes.*

Q What's happening with Snake's eye patch in *Metal Gear* games? One picture has it on his left, another on his right.
Adam Dean, email
A *Two different people. Left eye: Solid Snake. Right eye: Big Boss.*

Q Don't you think the movie *Panic Room* could be made into a brilliant game?
Phillip Collins, Weston-super-Mare
A *No.*

READER FACE OFF

THINK OF IT LIKE A FIGHT BUT WITH INK SPILT INSTEAD OF BLOOD
THIS MONTH: IS UNLOCKABLE CONTENT A WASTE OF TIME?

FREE FOR ALL
Why do some games make you unlock half the stuff in them? There's loads in *Resident Evil 4*, for example, that you can't play until you complete the game. Extra costumes don't bother me but when it's whole sections or levels it's maddening. Why can't you just have it to start with? Surely you'd have a bigger and better game? I don't want to *have* to finish something because all the best bits are hidden at the end. I'm not going to struggle through a game to reach new content; I'm going to play something else instead. **Karen,** Swansea

VS

UNLOCK THE FUN
I think that games without unlockable extras aren't likely to be replayed. I recently finished *Hitman: Blood Money*. But then I found there was nothing else to do. I play other games again and again for the bonus content. *God Of War*, *Metal Gear* and *Resi 4* have loads of satisfying extras. Games are fun without them but extras make them more interesting and diverse.
Jorden Broderick, Stevenage

JORDEN WINS. GOOD EXTRAS ARE WORTH UNLOCKING. THEY ARE, AFTER ALL, A REWARD FOR SKILFUL GAMING AND EFFORT.

TXT THE EDITOR

Something to say or a picture we need to see right now? Fire away...

TXT 87103 OR SEND YOUR PICS TO 87738 647 177

Be sure to text 'TXTTIM', then a space, then your message or picture. Thanks

THANX 4 THE PIC OF BEANS IN UR LATEST ISH. I LUV BEANS THEY'RE GORGEOUS! FROM H.

I RECKON THE PS2 STARS I'D LIKE 2 C GET MARRIED ARE PRO EVO AND FIFA. THEN YOU'D HAVE THE ULTIMATE FOOTY GAME. I'LL BRING THE CONFETTI! ANON

WHEN I GROW UP I WANT 2B A HELGHAN. STITCH

WHAT WAS SO BAD ABOUT SHADOW?

NOW, HEROES, THERE WAS A CRAPPY GAME! ANON

I JUST BOUGHT *MERCENARIES* AND I THINK IT'S GREAT! I CANNOT WAIT 2 GET THE SECOND 1. PS UR MAG IS THE GREATEST!!! ANON

I'M GONNA START A PETITION TO GET LISA RALPH BACK. WILL

DANTE AND LARA 4EVA! OH, AND I HATE THE SHIELD GUYS IN *BLACK* TOO. MARCUS

By texting the editor you are agreeing to receive details of future offers from Future Publishing Ltd and third parties. If you do not want to receive this information please text the word NO at the end of your message. Texts will be charged at 25p plus standard network tariff rate. Please ask permission from whoever pays the bill. Maximum letter characters per text is 160.

"score bores"

Are you disrespecting us?

I can't believe you only gave *SingStar Rocks!* 8/10. It has an amazing range of rock songs, although, to be honest, it should be called *SingStar Indie*. 9/10 from me.
Gary Scott, Aberdeen

Black is the worst game in history. Who persuaded you to give it a 10/10? Rescore it 1/10, it sucks.
Slash, email

I can't believe you gave *X-Men: The Official Game* 3/10 in your magazine. Did you even *see* the giant flaming serpent?!
Felix Miall, Devon

7/10 for *Forbidden Siren 2* is an appalling score. Not only is it much better than the first game but it's unbelievably frightening. You were obviously far too scared to play it enough to see how good it is. You girls.
Stephen Frenancz, West Lothian

Final Fantasy X-2 got 9/10... Are you stupid? It's not *Final Fantasy*, it's a pop movie gone wrong.
Gavin Evans, email

letters

PUT 'EM UP

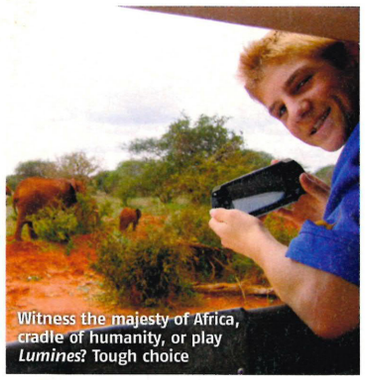
I've had a brilliant idea for *Fight Night* on PlayStation 3. If the controllers can sense motion then you could have one in each hand and use them to punch the air in front of the TV. It would be like real boxing but less painful.
Ted Harbot, Cumbria

We're not sure the PS3's eight-way sensing technology would enable you to punch in the manner suggested. However, one way it could work in* Fight Night *is to tilt your boxer's body, leaning him in and out of the action by angling the pad.

SAFARI SO GOOD

A few issues ago you had a picture of someone travelling up Ben Nevis with his PSP. I thought I'd top that by taking a shot of me and my PSP in Kenya while on a safari trip. There are only elephants in the picture but I also saw cheetahs, hippos, lions, warthogs and giraffes.
Kristian, Essex

You want to watch those hippos. They're the most dangerous animal in Africa, and really bad losers when it comes to a quick round of Liberty City Survivor. The challenge has been set though. Anyone manage to get some handheld gaming action anywhere more exotic than Africa?

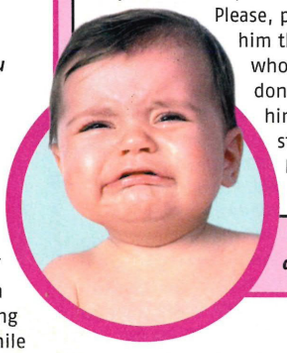


Witness the majesty of Africa, cradle of humanity, or play *Lumines*? Tough choice

FAT CRYING BABY

WE ☠ KATAMARI

My fellow gamers, I need your help. If you can't assist me then I feel that I will throttle my boyfriend with the very PS2 control pad he so proudly holds in his hands. Please, please, please print this and tell him that *We ❤ Katamari* is for kids who are learning to play games. I don't find it amusing when I watch him play it. I would much rather stick pins in my eyes.
Mags, email



There's only one person acting like a kid around here.

GOT A GRIEVANCE BUT SECRETLY KNOW THAT NOBODY'S TO BLAME BUT YOU? FEEL LIKE WHINING ABOUT IT ANYWAY? BE CAREFUL, YOU COULD END UP IN OUR PRAM OF SHAME.

MISSION POSSIBLE

The Hardest Levels feature in a recent issue made me look back, shuddering, to the Death Row mission in *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*. After trying the conventional approaches, like running in with M4s, AK-47s and so on I swiftly moved on to the 'mad methods', like sprinting in with a chainsaw after throwing Molotovs over the wall. After several unsuccessful attempts that reduced my nerves to splinters, I started using ridiculous cheats like flying cars to try and rescue Lance from his impenetrable fortress. Eventually I gave up, spawned a tank and stormed through the mission easily. So if anyone wants to complete this mission without losing any hair, my advice is to get a tank and save your sanity.
Nick Even-Cook, Hampshire

There's a perverse pleasure when you finally crack a really badly-designed mission. (Check out the last level of the original* Driver *for a real shocker.) Although, with Lance set to appear in* GTA: Vice City Stories *on PSP we could easily suffer some sort of post-traumatic relapse. ■

JOIN THE RESISTANCE

I'm crazy about PS3, and one of the games I'm most excited about is *Resistance: Fall Of Man*. I'm so hyped up about it that I've started a clan for the online mode. If you want to join then you can check it out at http://sirvan.topcities.com.
Sirvan Almasi, email

Nice work there Sirvan. Although 'planning to only play* Resistance: Fall Of Man*' as it says on the home page means you're setting yourself up to miss out on all the other quality PS3 shooters that are on their way.* Call Of Duty 3 *and* Haze *both look brilliant, and further ahead there's* Mercenaries 2 *and* Killzone *coming.

GAMES FOR TAT!

We want stuff, you want games. The first person to send us these oddities gets the related gamery. Simple as that

WE WANT...

A Roger Moore-style '70s safari jacket

YOU GET...

A copy of *Dragon Quest: The Journey Of The Cursed King*

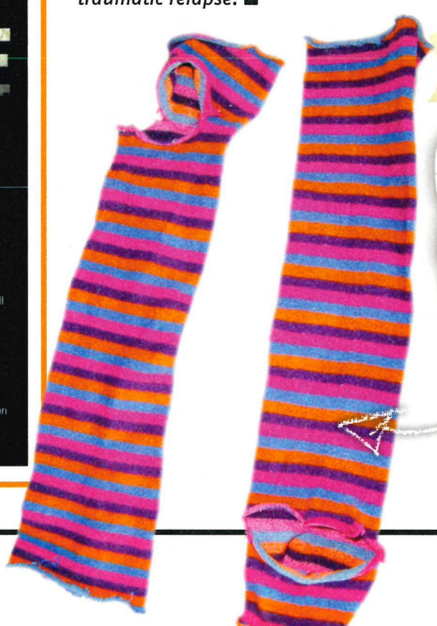
WE WANT...

A set of PS2-themed Kubrick figures

YOU GET...

A copy of *24: The Game* and *Destroy All Humans!*

Mark the package 'Games For Tat' and send to the usual address (include *your* address). The first one we receive gets the swag, any others will be returned.



NAME and SHAME

This Month's Postal Pest

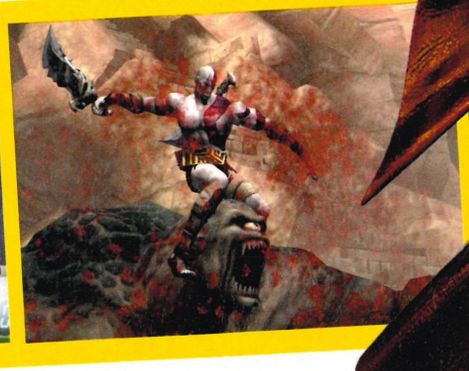
Name: James Britton
Offence: We asked for arm socks in Games For Tat. James sent us a pair of *actual* socks (unwashed, judging by the smell) with holes cut in them.

ARE YOU A GAMING LEGEND?

Then send us your completed saves and get a free game*!

Have you cracked *Devil May Cry 3* on 'Dante Must Die' mode? Did you demolish *God Of War* in a single sitting? Good. Well done. You're officially a gaming legend, and it's time you were rewarded for your efforts. We're offering the best gamers out there a spot among the immortals, by sharing their perfect game saves with the world. If you want to prove that you've found absolutely every secret on *Liberty City Stories* or that you're nails at *Hitman: Blood Money*, this is your chance. Simply send us your finished save and we'll feature the best ones on the *OPS2* demo disc each month.

Once you've finished a game, pop the memory card containing the completed save in an envelope (along with an SAE so we can return it to you safely) and send it to the address below. Every save featured on the *OPS2* disc will win its owner a game. We recommend sending your memory card using Recorded Delivery – *OPS2* cannot be held responsible for any memory cards lost in the post. ■



SEND YOUR MEMORY CARD TO:

YES, I'M A LEGEND

Official PlayStation 2 Magazine
Future Publishing Ltd
30 Monmouth Street
Bath BA1 2BW

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:
*Memory cards are sent to *OPS2* at the sender's risk and *OPS2* cannot be held responsible for the non-receipt of memory cards. Readers whose saves are used on the *OPS2* disc will win a game of the editor's choice. There's no prize for saves that are not used on the *OPS2* disc. All memory cards will be returned by Recorded Delivery as soon as possible. We reserve the right to amend the prize offered at any time. The editor's decision is final.

spy

SPY CONTRIBUTORS | TIM CLARK, TIM EDWARDS, PAUL FITZPATRICK, ANDY HARTUP, LEON HURLEY, GEORGE WALTER, BEN WILSON

RAINING CATS AND DOGS

CREATE YOUR OWN CAT!

Take a walk on the wild side with **Sims 2 Pets**

PSP PETS!

The game will also appear on handheld in October, and you'll be able to share pets between the PS2 and PSP versions

The grim reality of owning animals is that your house ends up smelling like the killer's basement from *Silence Of The Lambs*, and your heart breaks when, years later, you realise that dad didn't take 'Skipper' to live on a farm at all. Why didn't you let us say goodbye dad, *why*?

Fortunately we never need to feel real emotions ever again, thanks to *The Sims 2 Pets*. It's out on PS2 this October, and the real surprise is that it's taken this long for *The Sims* to get some furry friends. In the game (which we're under orders not to call an expansion pack) you begin by designing your own cat, dog or guinea pig. Once lowered, tricked out and fitted with spoilers, you're ready to move in. Each animal will have a distinct personality, so choose a dog and theoretically you'll be able to create a faithful companion like Lassie or (fingers crossed) a canine maniac like Cujo.

Caring for your walking flea colony involves keeping it fed (warning: some pets will be picky eaters) and making it perform all manner of dignity-robbing tricks. "Sims

"This is demeaning us both, isn't it scraps?"

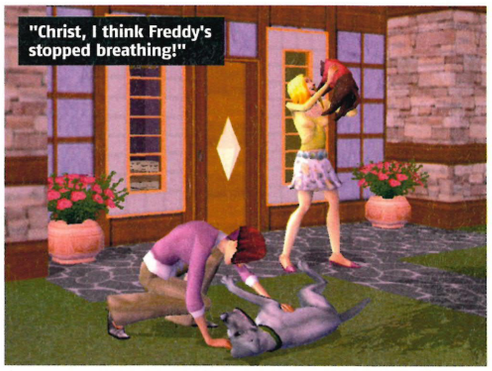
"I'm going out – no rutting on the carpet"

Grooming your pet earns respect

Teach your pets tricks by acting like a tool

Affectionate or predatory? It could go either way

"I'm sorry Honey, we sold all your puppies"


"Christ, I think Freddy's stopped breathing!"

teach pets by showing them how to do a trick," explains producer Benjamin Bell. "For example, when a Sim is teaching a dog to play dead, the Sim will play dead first. You can also encourage the pet by giving it treats during training. You get points for taking care of your pets and teaching them tricks, which can be used to buy cool stuff for your Sims and pets to play with." Cool stuff like little hats and sunglasses.

'WHAT'S THAT? TOMMY'S FALLEN DOWN A WELL?'

But what about sex, you furtively mutter. Good news: you can breed your pets. There are 22 different varieties of dog and 15 flavours of cat. Any cat or dog can breed with any other cat or dog, but there's no inter-species, Dr Moreau-style meddling. Before you begin churning out puppies and kittens, first you'll need to get your pet laid. Which means acquiring a new pet from one of the stores located around the new town park area. Here you can buy animals and items for them to play with. Each Sims household will be able to support up to six pets, although the more you have, the less space there is for human inhabitants. So obviously the coolest thing to do is make a lady sim live on her own with six cats and refuse to let her mop the mess up.

By now, some readers – specifically, those readers who like putting their Sims in the swimming pool and then deleting the steps – will already be having dark thoughts about the pets. No dice, psychos. You can scold your pet as a means to teaching it better behaviour (not eating rubbish, scratching furniture or chasing the postman) but if you mistreat it, then eventually it will run away. "Sims and pets form a bond," says Bell "If you take care of your pet, it will consider you its master and it will seek attention from you. Pets will even get jealous if you don't give them enough attention."

Animals aside, EA reckons the gameplay is classic *Sims* – meaning you'll have to rush around micro-managing every aspect of their lives. Hopefully it'll be easier to chat up a hot sim when you're out walking your dog – because nothing says 'I'm not a sex killer' quite like an adorable Labrador puppy with a little jacket. One serious oversight though: why no monkeys? "They kept attacking the dogs," says Bell. Such a wag. ■ **TC**

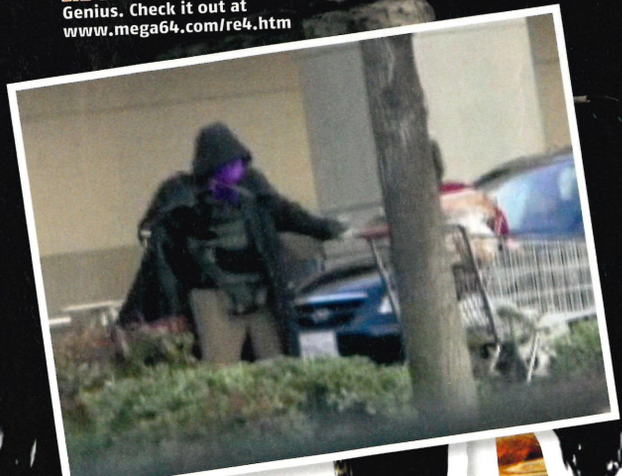
No new info on PS3 shocker **Alone In The Dark** this month, so you'll have to content yourself with these new screens. The title's self-explanatory, anyway

SNAPPED!
The future of PlayStation presented in pictures

REX FEATURES

Only 9.5% of a surveyed group of Japanese housewives are interested in buying a **PS3**. So we're sending Nariko back when she arrives

Man pretending to be the merchant from **Resident Evil 4** hassles passers by. Genius. Check it out at www.mega64.com/re4.htm



Kratos' creator David Jaffe has hinted that **God Of War 3** is in the works, but says he never wants to make another epic action game

spy

Japan's love affair with all things fish continues with the superbly named **Fish Eyes Portable** for PSP

Nothing says "buy **Formula One 06**" quite like glamour model Keeley Hazell, standing airbags deployed next to one of the cars

These tasteful, vinyl **PSP skins** are available from Amazon.co.uk for the bargain price of £4.99. Thankfully, they're also removable

INFO NUDGE

PS3 WEBSITE LAUNCHED

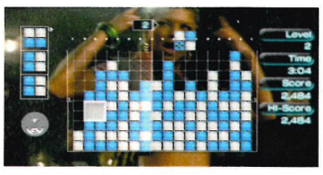
Further proof that PS3 is a) indeed real, and b) coming out in November, Sony has launched the official website for its next-gen console (uk.playstation.com/ps3), and you can log on now to receive updates and fresh info on the most anticipated games machine in history. There's also a link to the PlayStation UK forums, where you can log on and chat about all things PS3, like how to save up for one, and which games you're looking forward to at launch.

COMPLEX ISSUES

Splinter Cell Double Agent hasn't been announced for PS3 yet. That makes us sad and angry in equal measure. So instead, allow us to direct your attention to a similarly square-jawed stealth game, *Cipher Complex*, currently in development for PS3. A Clancy title in all but name, it sees you filling the shoes of a US government agent called John Cipher, sent to discover the truth behind the destruction of a top-secret spy satellite. Fisher: we are *so* over you.

TRACKS OF OUR FEARS

"In order to showcase my vision for *Lumines II*, we needed to find music and videos with just the right tone, mix and energy." So says Q Entertainment's trance puzzle king Tetsuya Mizuguchi, a man we have nothing but respect for. But not enough to prevent us from asking "Black Eyed Peas! WTF are you thinking?" Fortunately they're joined by more palatable artists, including Beck, Gwen Stefani, New Order and Missy Elliot. The not-that-different but sure-to-be-genius sequel is out on PSP this winter.



STIRRED, NOT SHAKEN

MotorStorm will rely on its visuals rather than rumble feedback

"NO RUMBLE? WHAT OF IT?"

MotorStorm man talks PS3 pad

Madness. That was our first thought when we heard the news that Sony had ditched the rumble function from its next-gen pad. Concerned that racing games would suffer from the lack of track feedback, we contacted *MotorStorm* developer, Evolution Studios, to see what the off-road specialists made of the news.

"We think the many positives of the PS3 far outweigh the lack of rumble," says Matt Southern, producer at Evolution. "I think that by 2007 we'll say 'No rumble? What of it?'". That's a confident claim. One of *MotorStorm*'s most interesting features is that it asks players to vary their driving according to the track. If it's wet, you'll slide through the mud, but once the sun comes out, the mud will dry – leaving deep, hard tyre marks in the crusty surface of the road. No rumble? Are you sure? "Rumble has no effect on handling or the effect of the surface on the vehicle." Southern reiterates, "We're sure with the huge amount of particles we can throw around on PS3, you'll know exactly what surface type you are on."

So there you have it. Thanks to PS3's surgically sharp visuals you'll be able to *see* the subtleties of the surface, so there's no need to have the pad jiggling around in your hands like an epileptic gerbil. So any plans to use the new six-way sensing instead? "Of course," he adds, "it's a really cool feature..." **AH**

You're the meat in a redneck sandwich. Gross!

Micro Machines V4

www.brandshatch.co.uk

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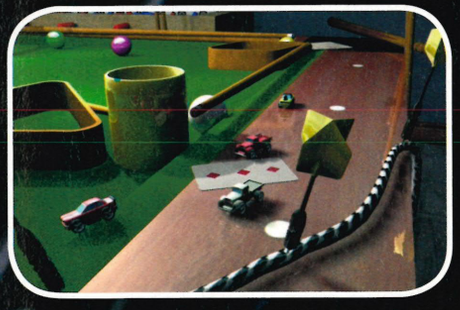
BABY BRANDS HATCH?

GRAB SOME FRIENDS, START YOUR MICRO ENGINES AND PREPARE FOR THE CRAZIEST AND MOST ADDICTIVE MULTI-PLAYER MAYHEM EVER. WITH FIENDISH TRACKS AND HUNDREDS OF CARS TO COLLECT, IT'S THE MOST FUN YOU'LL HAVE THIS SUMMER!



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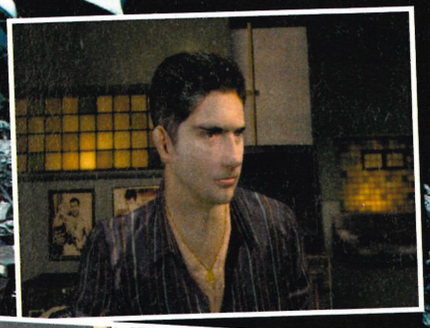
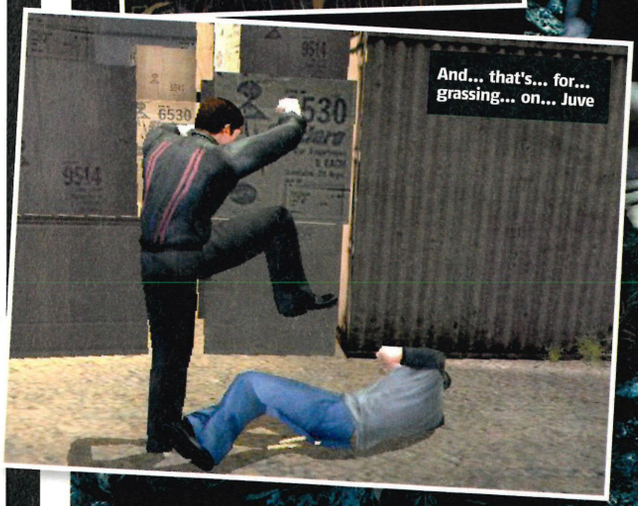
REX FEATURES

THE SOPRANOS TAKE CARE OF BUSINESS

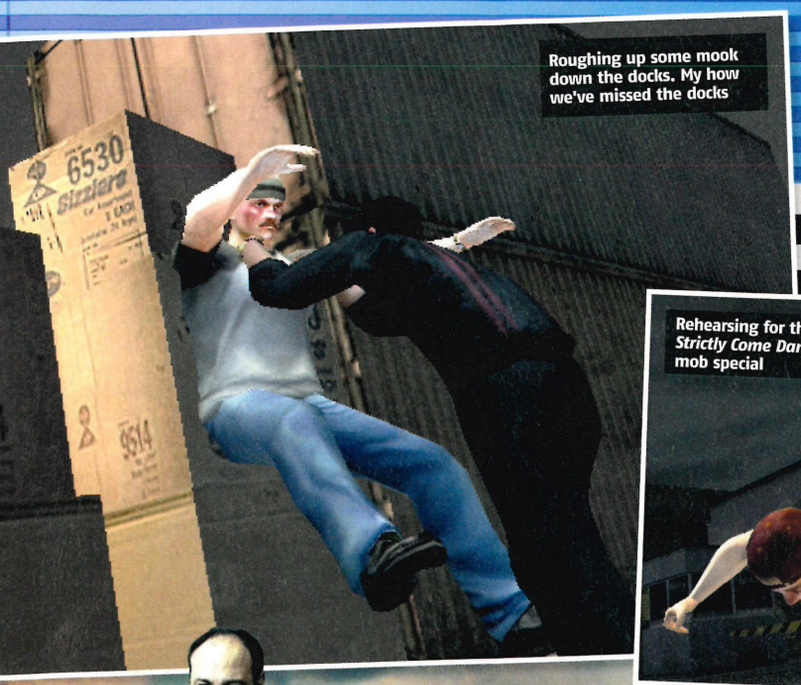
New shots reveal brutal truth of **mob life**

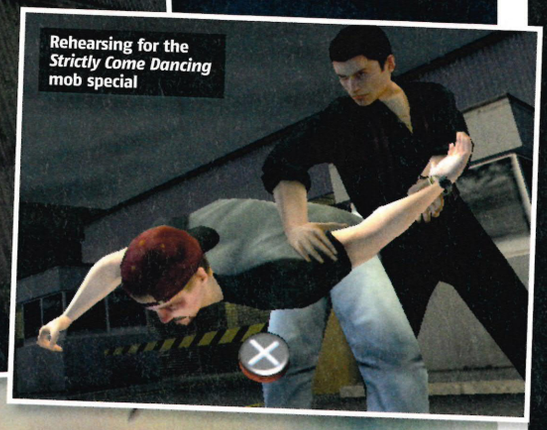


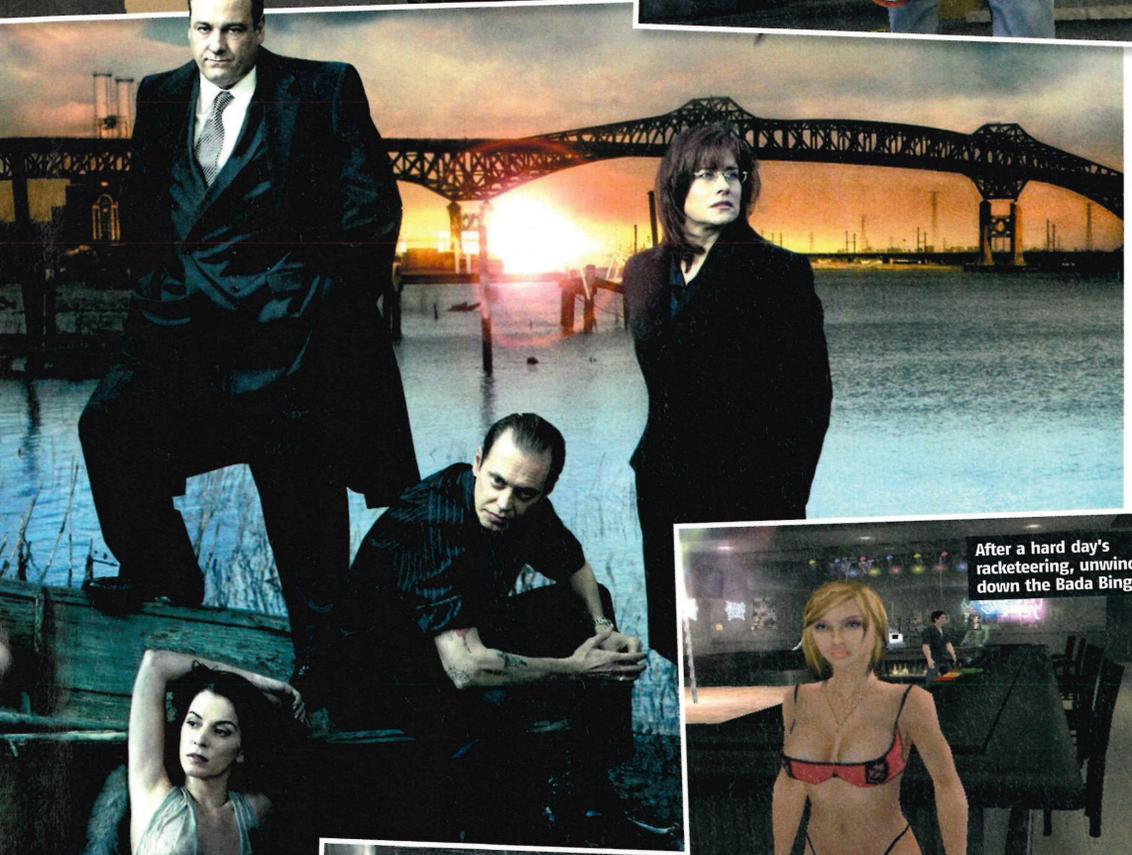


Both men are smiling and, at first, the conversation seems innocent enough. Suddenly, there's a flurry of insults in Italian, a mother's reputation is called into question, and the end result is an outbreak of sickening (but also quite entertaining) violence. But forget the World Cup final for a moment, let's talk *The Sopranos: Road To Respect*. Due out on PS2 this November, the game casts you as Joey, the illegitimate son of Sal 'Big Pussy' Bonpensiero (current residence: the ocean floor). Set against the backdrop of a mob war between the Sopranos and a powerful family from Philadelphia, the aim of the game is to ingratiate yourself with Tony and the gang. Initially that will mean collecting cash from various illegal rackets and providing muscle, but as your status grows you'll be called on to perform more significant tasks. "Adriana, I *promise* I'm taking you to see Christopher... c'mon, stop crying".

Key to the game is the intimidation system. This pops up during conversations, and allows you to modify your responses according to what you think will achieve the best results. So if the other character seems nervy, you can go in threatening from the outset. But when dealing with someone with more stones, you might want to try a smoother, more diplomatic approach. Whatever you choose, the conversation will either end in agreement or a scuffle. The overarching idea is that you choose what kind of character your mobster becomes. To be honest, it's a promise that's been made to us too many times before, and the whole thing looks more than a little like *The Godfather* game. Which sort of cools our marinara sauce, since that didn't work out so well. Nonetheless, we love *The Sopranos* show like a particularly loyal second cousin, so desperately want this to be good. Expect an update once we've had a 'sit down' with the developers next month. ■ TC


Roughing up some mook down the docks. My how we've missed the docks


Rehearsing for the *Strictly Come Dancing* mob special



After a hard day's racketeering, unwind down the Bada Bing

DRIVER GETS JACKED

Ubi snaps up the original crime series

Just won the lottery but think that blowing the cash on grasping supermodels and fast cars is a bit obvious? How about buying your own game franchise, complete with black T-shirt-clad programmers – yours for just north of £13m. That's the amount Ubisoft has just paid to take *Driver* off Atari's hands. "We're thrilled with this acquisition," said Ubi boss Yves Guillemot, "which will allow us to add a prestigious title to our catalogue and enter into the driving games segment."

There's no word on when the next game's due, although it's certain to appear on PS3. Reflections, the developer that originally created *Driver*, was included as part of the deal and will continue to work on the series, with input also coming from Ubi's in-house studios. Hopefully the move will mark the next step in the franchise's creative rebirth. After the abysmal *Driv3r*, it had seemed all but over for the game that kick-started the free-roaming crim sim, but last year's *Parallel Lines* went some way to restoring its reputation. Expect more info soon. ■ **TC**

£13 MILLION BURNING A HOLE IN YOUR POCKET?

Consider splashing out on these...

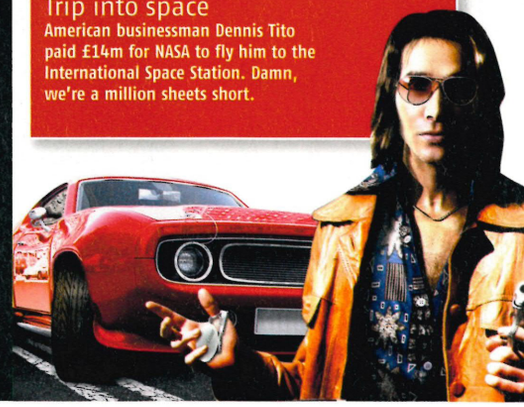
Arjen Robben
Chelsea's Bambi-legged prima donna cost a cool £12 million back in 2004. Spend the loose change on a lifetime supply of Regaine and an Olympic-sized pool.

F/A 18 Hornet
Sick of the neighbours playing psy-trance at all hours? Strafe them with your own fighter jet, yours for $24m. Hellfire missiles not included.

REX FEATURES

Burger Empire
Setting up your own Burger King franchise costs around £450k, meaning you could afford 28 of your own flamed-cow emporiums. (It goes without saying that this is our preferred option.)

Trip into space
American businessman Dennis Tito paid £14m for NASA to fly him to the International Space Station. Damn, we're a million sheets short.



SHE AIN'T HEAVY

WHO'S THAT GIRL?

Meet Aurélie Bancilhon, the unknown French actress whose digital alter ego stars in the brilliant trailer for PS3 thriller **Heavy Rain**

SEE IT NOW ON the Stash.tv
See the trailer now at thestash.tv (see page 4)

Aurélie as she appears in the stunning trailer for Heavy Rain. Tres belle, non?

***OPS2*: How were you selected for the role?**
Aurélie: I auditioned, just like I would for any part. I had to choose between scenes from *Pulp Fiction* and *Kill Bill*. I mostly work in French so I don't often get to audition with Tarantino characters.

***OPS2*: How did you find the process of creating the trailer and what was involved?**
Aurélie: It was really fun, new and exciting. The hard part was that I had to record my face and body separately. They motion-captured my face and recorded my voice while I remained seated, immobile. Then they put my recorded voice on speaker, and motion-captured my body movements. As far as acting is concerned, that's really awkward, because you don't act the same when you're sitting and when you're moving. The script was very well written and that makes it much easier. David Cage [whose last game was *Fahrenheit*] is a very good director. He likes actors, he likes working with them and listens to them. All of that definitely makes my job a whole lot simpler. It isn't often you meet someone like that on a regular shoot so I wasn't expecting it for a videogame!

***OPS2*: What did you think of the finished result?**
Aurélie: I was really impressed. They did a great job with the setting, the lighting, and, of course, the animation. The body movements especially impressed me. And that last bit when she points the gun at the camera, I thought was terrific. At that moment, they really captured the intensity of the scene. There were details that I thought were a little off at times, like the mouth animation, but the trailer, as a whole, I really liked.

***OPS2*: Are you happy with your digital alter ego's appearance?**
Aurélie: She looks great! I saw pictures of her before the finished trailer and they were a real shock because she looked so much like me. They had copied every small detail of my face. I thought it was hilarious! At times, I think she looks exactly like me, the way I talk, my facial expressions, everything. And then other times I don't recognise myself at all. It's funny how one detail can change an entire face – all of a sudden, it's another girl.

***OPS2*: Do you know any more about the character or the game's plot?**
Aurélie: No, they haven't told me anything – it's like the secret service over there [developer Quantic Dream]. There's a fingerprint ID at the door so you can imagine they wouldn't tell anything to a girl who's got such a big mouth.

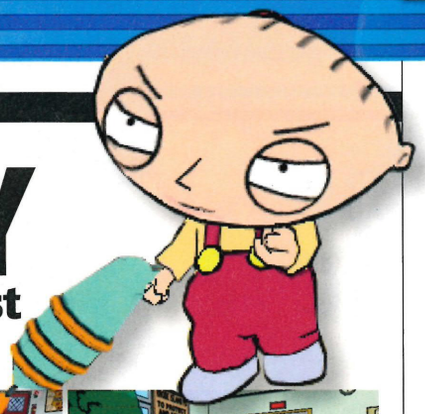
***OPS2*: Do you think it's possible to faithfully capture an actor's performance digitally or will there always be something lost in translation?**
Aurélie: For me, there's always something lost. An actor's performance will always be too human, too artistic to be perfectly digitised. But that doesn't mean you can't try to get as close to it as possible. I think David is right: to bring emotions to a digital performance, you have to use actors. And that's true wherever technology and art work together. The more advanced technology gets, the more we go back to the basics of the arts – which I believe to be a good thing. Although computers can copy musical instruments perfectly, everyone still wants to use live musicians. And although you'd think actors are losing their jobs to virtual actors, it's actually the opposite – because a digital performance will be stronger if an actor animates it.

***OPS2*: Winona Ryder had her clothes digitally removed for the film *A Scanner Darkly* [which overlays animation on live action]. Is that a better solution than stripping off?**
Aurélie: Anything that helps me keep my clothes on is welcome. I'm not a big fan of the whole being-naked-in-front-of-an-entire-film-crew thing. However, I'm not sure that's why they went through the trouble of doing that - I'm afraid it's more to make her look like she's 20 again, although I'm sure she looks just fine the way she is. ■

THE GUY GAME

FAMILY GUY

New screens and info on the **hottest cartoon** that's not *The Simpsons*

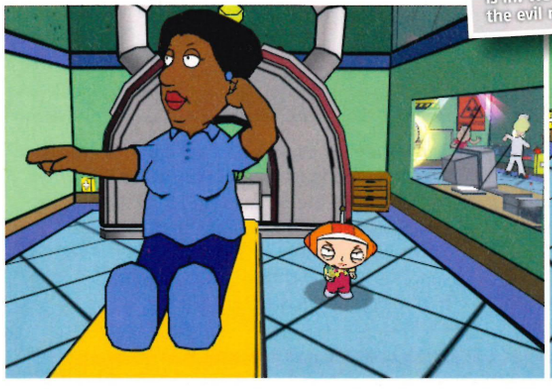


We want to be excited about the *Family Guy* game. We really do. But there's no ignoring the track record for videogame spinoffs based on cult animated TV shows. *Futurama*, *SpongeBob* and virtually every single *Simpsons* game have all struck-out on PS2, but despite that we're quietly optimistic that *Family Guy* will buck the trend.

These shots show off the visuals, which are alarmingly close to the actual show. We also know that the entire cast will be in the game – yes, even God, Jesus and Death – with Peter, Brian and Stewie appearing as playable characters. Gameplay remains under wraps, although we're told the characters will be able to interact with the locals and wreak havoc in locations from the show. Thankfully, the development team is working closely with the show's creators on the project, and it's been rated as a 15+ – so you can expect a game that, just like the show, isn't just near the knuckle, it's halfway down the wrist. *Family Guy* is out in October on PS2 and February 2007 on PSP, so we'll be reviewing the 'big' version real soon. ■ **AH**

Brian sniffs out a good spot to cock his leg

The whole *Family Guy* cast is in. We can't wait to see the evil monkey



Stewie's sections are all about mind control

Kwik Fitz

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

CONFIRMED: *Mercury Meltdown*, the sequel to PSP launch puzzler *Mercury*, is out 15 September

RUMOURED: Sony is developing a *WipEout* game for PS3, no release date slated yet though

CONFIRMED: *Lumines* developer Q Entertainment is making a new PSP puzzler called *Gunpey-R*

RUMOURED: A next-gen version of popular PSP footy game *World Tour Soccer* is in development

RUMOURED: *Pro Evo 6* on PSP will include the Master League mode and a wider camera angle

CONFIRMED: The PS3 is backwards compatible with all old PS2 and PSone games

RUMOURED: *World Of Warcraft* developer Blizzard is working on a PS3 game

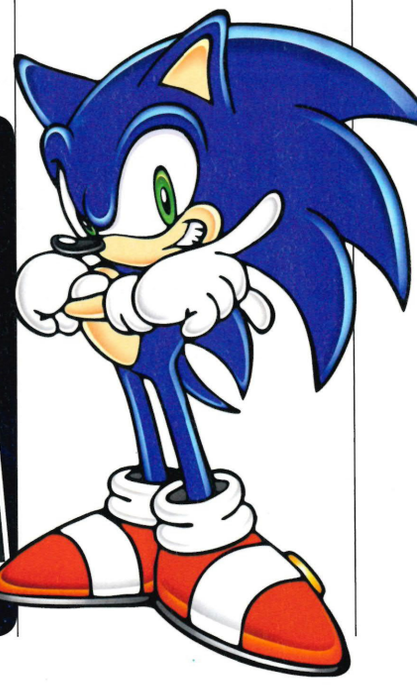
RUMOURED: *Spider-Man 3* looks 'significantly better' on PS3 than Xbox 360, says a development source

SHOT IN THE DARK

No screenshots? No problem! This month's secret game: **Guitar Revolution**

Before the mighty *Guitar Hero*, there was an arcade game called *GuitarFreaks*. It was made by Konami, who incidentally, has recently registered trademarks for a new console game called *Guitar Revolution*, and a peripheral that matches the description of a certain, virtual rock instrument. Can you guess what it might be? Konami has released several similarly named games, including *Dance, Dance Revolution* and *Karaoke Revolution* for PS2 – both of which included branded peripherals (a dance mat and a microphone respectively), so the likelihood of Guitar Revolution appearing with its own plastic axe is high. We expect an official announcement soon. Until then, darkness. ■ **AH**

This is what a blank space looks like in 720p



could be a classic

TAKING PSP TO THE DRIVE-IN AND TRYING TO COP A FEEL

BROOKTOWN HIGH: SENIOR YEAR

Publisher: Konami
Developer: Backbone Entertainment
Release: Spring 2007 (USA) TBC (UK)

Rule number one when speaking to girls: maintain contact with the *eyes*

WHAT WE KNOW

Ever wondered what might have been with that special someone from school? Did the cruel taunts and relentless rejections end your relationship before it began or did the teacher get a verbal warning and hasty transfer to another school?

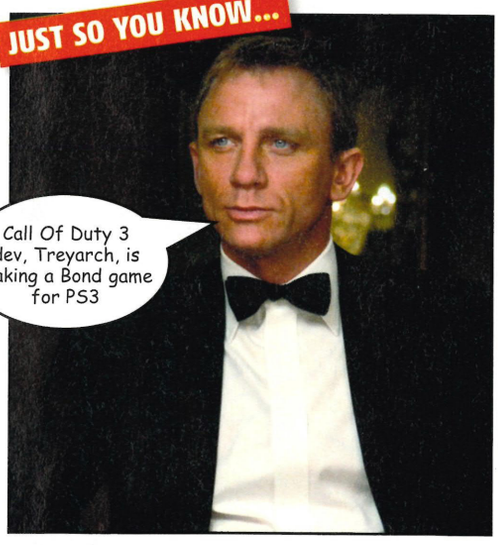
Brooktown High, a crazy sims-style PSP game from the States, is offering you a virtual second bite of the/her cherry. This means custom building a character then thrusting them into the hormonally turbulent senior year of a stateside High School, where 12 different young stereotypes (students, not staff... sadly) are waiting to be dated and, God willing, taken to second-base. Sadly, much like life itself, you have to put in the legwork first – so you need to make friends first. Which actually *never* works in real life.

Once you finally go on a date, there's a load of mini-games to play through including joke-telling, and, curiously, shopping. As far as we know, there's no option to keep necking Buds until you feel comfortable enough to go for some over-the-sweater action. Missed opportunity, there.

COULD BE A CLASSIC BECAUSE

Dating sims are massive in Japan but for some reason, none make it to the English-speaking world. That leaves a large hole in the PSP's line-up just waiting to be filled, so *Brooktown High* – tailor-made for anyone who laughed at films like *American Pie* – could be a cult smash. If developer, Backbone can steer clear of the *Leisure Suit Larry* trap and keep the knob gags to a minimum, this could be a hit with the *Sims* crowd. The downside? It's more American than ill-conceived regime change, so don't expect a UK version any time soon. ■ **AH**

JUST SO YOU KNOW...



BRRRRAAAP!

99 PROBLEMS

And a screenshot is one. We answer the big questions about the bizarre game formerly known as *Def Jam 3*

1) What's with the name change? While EA Chicago maintains it'll still be getting hip-hop guidance from record label Def Jam they're no longer in the title. The new one will be announced soon.

2) What's new? It's still a fighting game, but a total reinvention of the genre. And it sounds and looks mental. The key changes are increased involvement of environments in a fight and music as a core part of the fighting mechanic. It doesn't make a modicum of sense.

3) What've you seen? A short trailer in which two rappers, one of which is Ludacris, face off in a gas station, hurl gas canisters at each other and crash through doors. As the fight reaches a climax the music (*99 Problems* by Jay-Z) makes the entire world bounce up and down before the garage explodes.

4) So when's it out? Next year, and it's on PS3.

4a) Can we see some shots? No. There aren't any. ■ **GW**

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GAME

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FIRST PLACE FOR GAMES

JARGON: BUSTED

PLAYSTATION UNSPUN

Translating **back of the box bullsh*t** so you don't have to

"Never before seen characters and locations"
We glimpsed a script for the film, once, and 'imagineered' the rest over lunch

"EPIC, OPEN-ENDED PLAY, SET IN A LIVING WORLD"
If we could legally print 'it's like *GTA* – please buy it' on the box, we would

"40+ VEHICLES"
41

"GRITTY, URBAN ENVIRONMENTS"
Everything's brown

"FULLY DESTRUCTIBLE ENVIRONMENTS"
(Some) things break

"UNPARALLELED SENSE OF SPEED"
We've blurred the edge of the screen

"Bleeding-edge ragdoll physics"
Yeah, and someday we may even manage to make enemies collapse like human beings. Maybe

"SMASH HIT IN JAPAN"
Also-ran RPG

"FROM THE PEOPLE WHO BROUGHT YOU..."
Well, Dave the workie made tea on the original. Does that count?

"CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED"
Nobody bought the last one

"A NIGHTMARE VISION OF THE FUTURE"
Lots of robots, exploding barrels and furious men in metal suits with big shoulder pads

"RICH AND COMPELLING STORYLINE"
48 Hours of unskippable cut-scenes

"HEAVY WEAPONS AND EXPLOSIVES EXPERT"
Fat, slow, carries a shotgun

"REVOLUTIONARY NEXT-GEN GRAPHICS"
All characters look like wax-skinned sex dolls

"STREAMLINED HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT"
Keep hammering ⊗

"REINVENTING THE SERIES"
It *was* a classic shoot-'em-up – it's now a kart racer

"Fully licensed"
We spunked two-thirds of the budget before we even wrote a line of code

"Over 200 levels of old-skool arcade action"
It's going to feel like 1,000

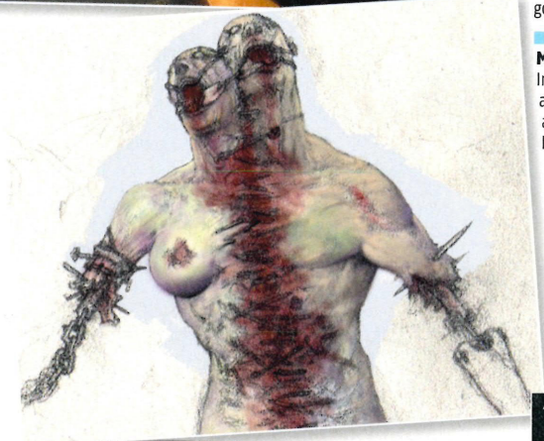
"INSPIRED BY..."
Has vague resemblance to...

HOLY WAR

Sweet Jesus! It's **Bible horror!**

Springing from the dark, bubbling imagination of terror novelist Clive Barker (*Hellraiser*, *Candyman*) comes *Jericho*, a newly announced fantasy-horror shooter for PS3 from Codemasters. "There are things in my imagination which I think can only be paintings, things that can only be books, and this has to be a game," explains Clive. What he probably *didn't* say is that it had to be a squad-based shooter. You assume the role of a special forces operative whose team is sent to investigate the mysterious reappearance of the titular Jericho, an ancient city mentioned in the Bible because it was besieged, destroyed, and cursed by a holy army. There's some sort of unspeakable evil brewing in the heart of the ruined city, so you and the boys have been ordered to give it a lead-enema and save the world as we know it.

Unscheduled reappearance of a biblical city notwithstanding, *Jericho* is an FPS, so expect plenty of spook-busting weaponry from the start. In an interesting deviation, Barker has also hinted that as you progress, you'll travel back in time and weapons will become cruder and combat more primal. You'll also have full command over your teammates, with the option of sending in your cronies to check out dodgy-looking rooms first. Right now it's all sounding very *F.E.A.R* (an outstanding FPS for the PC, rumoured to be PS3-bound as well) but that's no bad thing. *Jericho* (out late 2007) is being aimed at a mature, scare-craving audience, so the horror is guaranteed to be strong, although probably not tinged with the usual sexy wrongness of Barker's novels. **AH**



WTF IS IT THINKING?

Best caption gets a top PS2 prize

We've already blocked out the memory of the Roquefort-ripe confuse-a-thon that was *Silent Hill* the movie, but for the Japanese the nightmare is just beginning, as the film goes on general release this month. Naturally, they've treated it – like most events – as an excuse for a good-old cosplay knees-up, by cramming a gang of nubile 20-something ladies into skimpy nurse outfits, and a single, slightly hot and bothered bloke into the Pyramid Head outfit. What does the triangular-bonced demon make of it all? That's for you to say. Send us your speech bubble captions to the usual address, marking them 'I Don't Know If I'm Horrified Or Horny'. The best entry wins a copy of *The Silent Hill Collection*.

Nice one James Lewis: your caption was the best of the bunch. A copy of *God Of War* and *Spartan: Total Warrior* are on their way to you...

THE LIGHT SIDE

TEKKEN: DARK RESURRECTION
Namco deliver first must-have PSP title since *Liberty City Stories*

THE PREM
The new season starts soon. Hopefully it will wash the taste of the World Cup out of our mouths

TIGER WOODS ON PS3
Who'd have thought the best-looking PS3 game to date would be a golf title?

BLU-RAY MOVIES
Images sharp like a surgeon's knife and sweet like heaven's mercy

IN THE SABER

PS3 DEV KIT
Need For Speed dev staff struggle with 'big grey box' during game demo. Red faces all round

LOST
Not the show, but the game. The more we think about it, the more it scares us like being left in a room with Locke

PRICEY PRE-ORDERS
You may have to put down £150 to pre-order a PS3. [Checks piggy bank] We need more time!

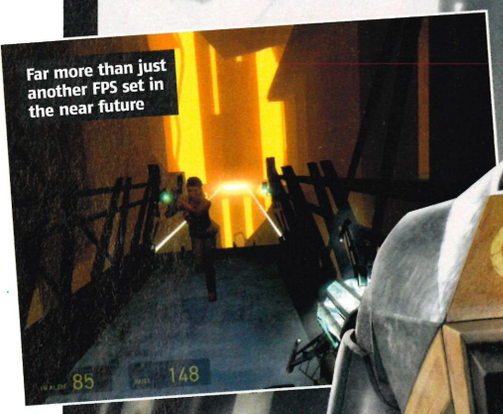
SENSI SOCCER WAR RAGES ON
Some of you are outraged after we gave it 4/10. 'Some of you' are wrong

THE DARK SIDE

RADIOACTIVE!

'GREATEST SHOOTER EVER' HITS PS3

Definitive version of **Half-Life 2** confirmed for 2007



DOG'S BALL

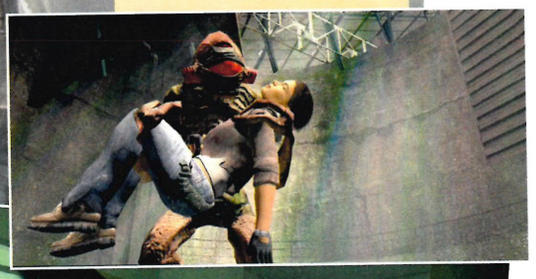
How many shooters have metal mutts to keep you company?

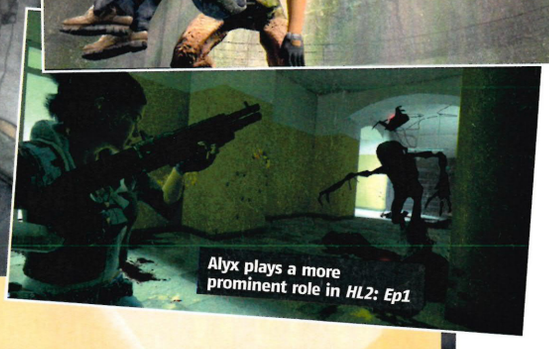
Like any good puppy, Dog likes to play fetch. But Dog is a robot dog, and has arms that can bend steel. So he plays fetch with trucks, shipping containers and a solid iron ball. This early section is meant to show you how to use the 'gravity gun' – a piece of weird science that lets you pick up and chuck practically anything in the game. Once you've lobbed the ball, Dog scampers after it and throws it back. Genius.

If you want the *real* emotion engine then look into Alyx's eyes. Go on, have a good, long stare. Although you play nerd-turned-hero Gordon Freeman, she's the real star of *Half-Life 2* – widely cited as the best PC game of all time, and now the hottest property on PS3. Literally millions and millions of dollars were poured into Alyx, making her a proper 'virtual thespian'. Her home, City 17, is under siege – an alien invasion force, known as the Combine, has made humanity its slaves. She, and her father, lead the resistance, deploying alien technology and messing around with the fabric of reality, while desperately searching for a solution.

Half-Life 2 is colossal. Beyond colossal. It's a glorious first-person combination of wild action (most battles involve using the gravity gun to hurl tables, chairs, and sharp-tipped saw blades at zombies, aliens, and the occasional *Starship Troopers*-style monster), heart-melting scripted scenes (the way that Alyx and her father look after each other puts almost every Hollywood dad/daughter combo in the shade), and conspiracy theories. (Hint: keep an eye on the sinister guy in the suit.) And it's coming to PS3 in a glorious enhanced package.

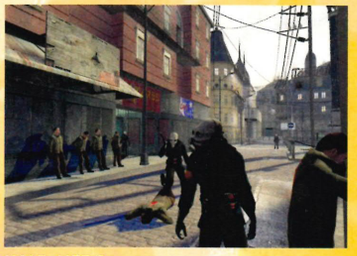
For your cash, you'll be playing *Half-Life 2* and its two sequels, *Episode 1* and *2*. In the same box you'll also find *Team Fortress 2* (a team-based, multiplayer Capture The Flag effort famed for being in development for years), and *Portal*, a mini-game where you create holes in walls and walk through them to get to different parts of each level. It's a staggering package – easily a good hundred hours of next-gen gaming, almost every second of which will outclass every FPS you've played. So you should probably check it out. ■ TE





FOUR GAMES IN ONE!

The PS3 version of *Half-Life 2* is a magnificent quad game package



HALF-LIFE 2

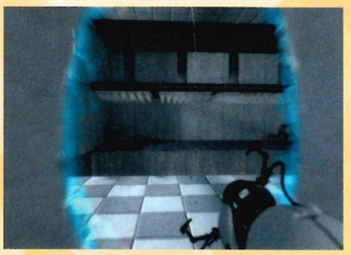
The main game, and therefore the meat of the package, this legendary shooter is the daddy of all PC games. It may be a couple of years old, but it's still fresh like a horny teenager.

HALF-LIFE 2: EPISODES 1+2

PC players have to fork out extra bucks for these *Half-Life 2* adventure expansions, but lucky PS3 owners will get them as part of the pack.

TEAM FORTRESS 2

Don't tell the keyboard and mouse fanciers, but the multiplayer game they've been waiting for (for almost a decade) will be ported straight to PS3.



PORTAL

If you don't feel sick when you play this physics-defying game, we reckon you should demand your money back. The best mini-game on PS3? Already? Oh yes.

"I SAID GO LEFFFTTTT!"

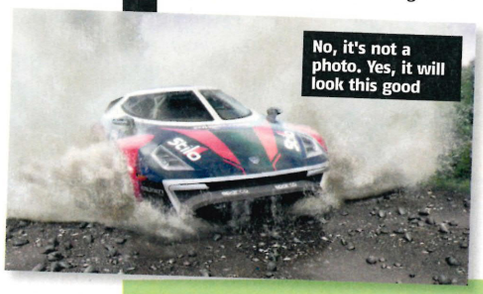
COLIN DRIVES DIRTY

McRae goes next-gen. Gets new name. Packs in more rallying than ever

The love affair with rally is officially back on. The PS3 is still months from launch, but already it has a three-strong off-road racing line-up: *MotorStorm*, *Sega Rally* and the renamed, reborn *Colin McRae: DIRT*. And it's the flying Scotsman's latest outing that's been generating the most heat this month.

After a stint in the racing wilderness (we haven't seen a Colin game on PS2 since the brilliant 2005 edition), McRae is back with a bevy of new features and modes that more than make up for his hiatus. Straight rallying and Hillclimb events are back, with the infamous Pikes Peak course appearing in all its 150-corner glory. They'll be joined by Rally Cross (four cars on one circuit at the same time) and Rally Raid, which sees players racing 4x4s and Dakar trucks across formidable desert terrain. Although there are no confirmed details, we're expecting this game to be fully licensed from cup holders to hubcaps. After all, turn-by-turn recreations of every pro-rally championship track have become a standard feature for every McRae racer, and we don't expect *DIRT* to let the franchise down on that score.

Much like *MotorStorm*, *DIRT*'s tracks are reactive – meaning the conditions change according to what the weather is like, and how much wear and tear has been inflicted on the course beforehand. Cool. But to be honest, we can't get over how impossibly detailed the little stones look in the shots. *Colin McRae: DIRT* will arrive, high-def stones and all, next year. ■ **AH**


No, it's not a photo. Yes, it will look this good

KERR-CHING

Readers hit gaming gold...

ODate: 10/06/06 11:27
Staff:
Till No.: Trans.

SALE

Description		Amount
Club Football: Liver USED	PS2	0.99
Total EUR		0.99
Cash		1.00
Cash		0.01
VAT B 21%	0.99	0.17

8028-02 1549

THIS MONTH: This month we're giving a hearty slap on the back to David Holdstock from Trim, Ireland. He netted a copy of *Club Football Liverpool* for the rock bottom price of 99c – that works out at around 65p!

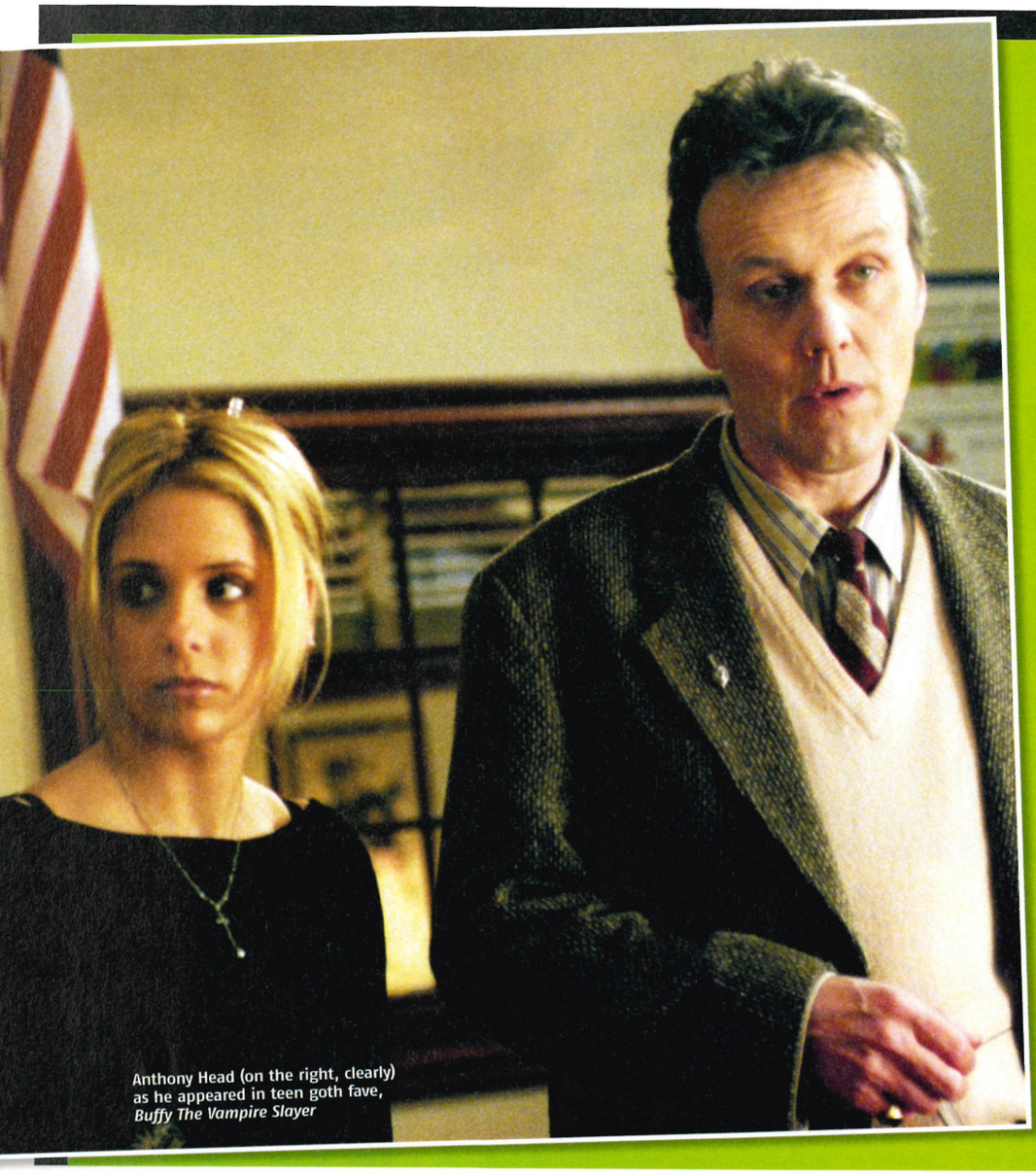
Found a really cheap game? Let us know. Send the receipt to **Kerr-ching, *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW**

EA's next-gen orc botherer is looking mint

SHINY NEW RING!

EA summons **PS3 role-player**

Ring obsessives and *Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion* fanciers rejoice! EA has finally confirmed it's working on *The White Council* – an epic Tolkien themed RPG for PS3 that's been grist for the rumour mill for the last six months. Set prior to *The Hobbit*, you can play as either a man, an elf, a dwarf, or a hobbit, and the aim of the game is for your character to work as an agent for the White Council against the evil that is spreading across Middle-earth. We know Gandalf, Saruman, Elrond and Galadriel are all in – so we're expecting a weighty and wordy plot. Don't worry if you're not a 'saviour of the realm' sort, though: *The White Council* features a gargantuan amount of side-quests to tackle and non-player characters to interact with, letting you to beat your own, unique path through Middle-earth. Putting it mildly, we can't wait. ■ **AH**



Anthony Head (on the right, clearly) as he appeared in teen goth fave, *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*

ALIEN NATION

FROM *BUFFY* TO BRAIN STEMS

OPS2 chats to cult TV star Anthony Head about voicing *Destroy All Humans! 2*

Gaming voice-over announcements usually turn out to be massive disappointments. '*Generic Shooter X* now featuring the talents of third guy from the left in the scene where Bruce Willis rolls along the floor in *Die Hard*'! We'll keep the champagne on ice, thanks.

However, for *Destroy All Humans! 2* THQ has bucked the trend by snapping up a genuine British household name to play the role of Crypto's blue-blooded nemesis Lord Ponsonby. Anthony Head has starred in some of the biggest TV series around, including *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*, *Dr Who* and *Little Britain* (plus for pensionable caffeine addicts, the sexually charged Nescafe Gold Blend ads of old). We nervously accepted his invitation in for coffee.

OPS2: Why did you decide to do voice work for *Destroy All Humans! 2*?

AH: Just for fun. When I was approached for *Destroy All Humans! 2* the first thing I said was that I really don't want to do anything like *Grand Theft Auto*. I didn't

ALL I HAVE IN THIS WORLD IS MY BALLS AND MY WORD.
AND I DON'T BREAK 'EM FOR NO ONE.

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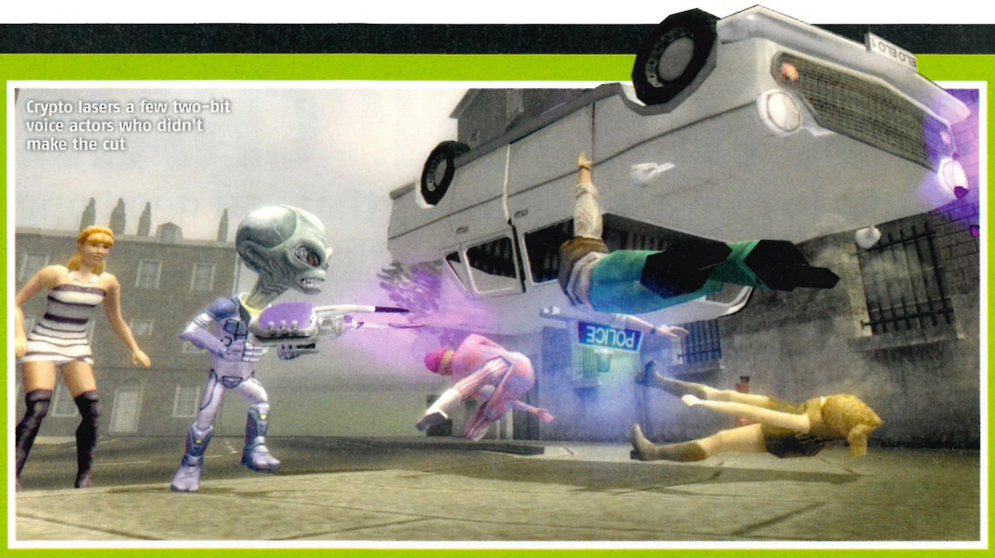

Crypto lasers a few two-bit voice actors who didn't make the cut

want to do something that's extremely violent, but they assured me it wasn't like that. It's not just a case of me waking up one day and saying 'I fancy doing voice-over for videogames': it has to be the right one.

OPS2: Even if the story's great, we often find game scripts a bit poor. How is the dialogue in *Destroy All Humans! 2*?
AH: There was nothing in the script that made me think 'I'm not saying that'. There were some very funny lines, which really made me laugh. At one point Ponsonby launches into this extremely wordy and florid rhetoric and it's genuinely funny. The thing I like about games is that they're constantly changing. In *DAH!2* there's more than one way for the situations to play out, so for someone like me doing the voice, it's a great way to flesh out the character's personality.

OPS2: So how does it compare to working for TV in stuff like *Buffy* and *Dr Who*?
AH: It's much more free. You're not bound by camera moves or visuals, so the imagination can run wild and you can really concentrate on the dialogue. I did some VO work for the *Buffy* game a while ago, but that was something I was already a character in. With *DAH!2* I found that as long as I stayed in character, I could go anywhere with it. I discovered that you can throw a few things at the wall and see what sticks. It's great because no one ever says, 'You can't do that'. The only real problem with voicing games is that you end up hoarse at the end of the day.

OPS2: Why?
AH: Well, if you're playing a bad guy – like I always seem to be doing – there's a scene at the end where you get shot, and you have to scream.

OPS2: Why is it always a Brit that ends up playing the bad guy?
AH: I think its something to do with the austerity, and the stiff upper lip of the British. It's always fun to imagine that the person with the stiff upper lip is actually curling it. The English are extremely inscrutable – we don't give much away. So behind that poker face there can be a wealth of angst and hidden emotions waiting to give rise to bad behaviour. Having said that, with the characters I've played, they've never been one-dimensional. You could never say that they're just plain bad, and that's the end of it.

OPS2: So there's more to Ponsonby than meets the eye?
AH: Of course. There's a reason he's bad, even if it's just blind ambition, there's a reason he's chosen a particular path and it's fun to give this some underbelly, some substance, but I was never playing him like a true bad guy.

OPS2: Does this mean you'd consider doing more gaming voice work?
AH: Definitely, as long as they're not games about people chopping each other's heads off and things like that. I look at all these games about gangsters, and shooting, and graffiti and I just don't think they're very constructive, so I'd never do one of those. ■ **AH**

SCARFACEGAME.COM
COMING SOON

INFO NUDGE

WHAT, *MORE* EVIL?!

Paul W S Anderson has been making worrying noises about a third *Resi* film. *Resident Evil: Extinction* is set in a near future where the majority of the Earth's population has been wiped out by the T-virus. Survivors travel around in heavily armoured trucks, and live in remote parts of the globe to avoid the undead hordes. Jill Valentine, Claire Redfield and Alice are all involved, and for some reason, Ashanti will be making an appearance as someone called Nurse Betty. No, doesn't sound like the games to us either.

EXIT AGAIN

Overlooked PSP puzzler *Exit* has spawned a sequel. The new game, *Thinking Exit*, is more puzzle focused as it takes away the ability to directly control lead character, Mr ESC, forcing you to move him around by inputting actions rather than using the D-pad. In addition to the in-game refinements there's a bunch of new survivors to rescue and an assortment of fresh obstacles like rope-bridges and escalators to avoid. Escalators?

COMPETITION

WIN A ROCKIN' CHAIR

We've got two to give away. Show us that you need one

Always hankered after a better gaming setup, but can never find the cash to fork out for a massive TV and sleek surround sound system? Then this competition's for you. We've got two Sound Rocker seats to give away. To enter, take a picture of your current gaming setup, send it in, and we'll look at each entry to decide whom needs the biggest lifestyle overhaul. So, you're more likely to win if you're playing on a 12" black and white TV in your Grandmother's attic than using a HD-ready plasma in an ultra-modern man-flat.

The Sound Rocker is a comfy chair with powerful surround sound speakers, a 5.5" sub-woofer, and body-shaking vibration built into it. Designed specifically for synchronisation with games and films, it's the ideal peripheral for anyone who wants to feel even more connected with their in-game experience. We're giving away two, but if you don't want to take your chances, check out www.iwantoneofthose.com.

HOW TO WIN

Send in a photo of your pitifully under-specced PS2 setup. We'll check out all the entries and award the chairs to the two readers who have what we consider to be the *worst* setups.

YOU HAVE THREE WAYS TO ENTER

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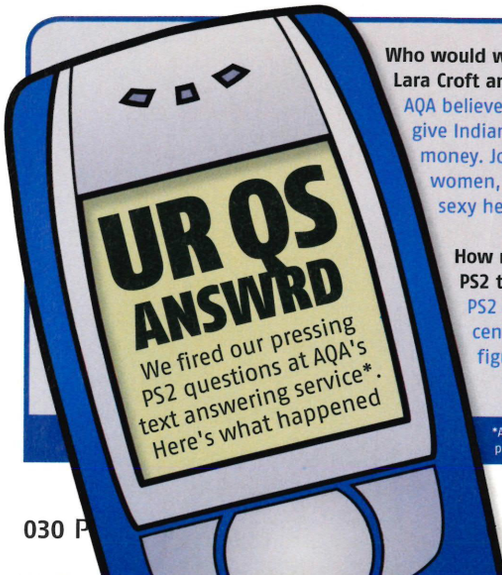
Send your pictures to 'Rockin' Chair', *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW

By email

Email your picture to ps2compos@futurenet.co.uk and put 'Rockin' Chair' in the subject line

By SMS

Attach your picture then text ROCKINCHAIR to 07738 647 177



Who would win in a fight between Lara Croft and Indiana Jones?

AQA believes that Lara Croft would give Indiana Jones a run for his money. Jones has a weakness for women, easily exploitable by the sexy heiress.

How many people use their PS2 to play online games?

PS2 online gaming has no central hub, so there are no figures for the number of people who have played online. AQA estimates the number to be 350,000.

Which PS2 game character would have made the best *Big Brother* housemate?

AQA thinks that Agent 47 from *Hitman: Blood Money* would've made the best *Big Brother* housemate.

How long does it take to finish *Dragon Quest: The Journey Of The Cursed King*?

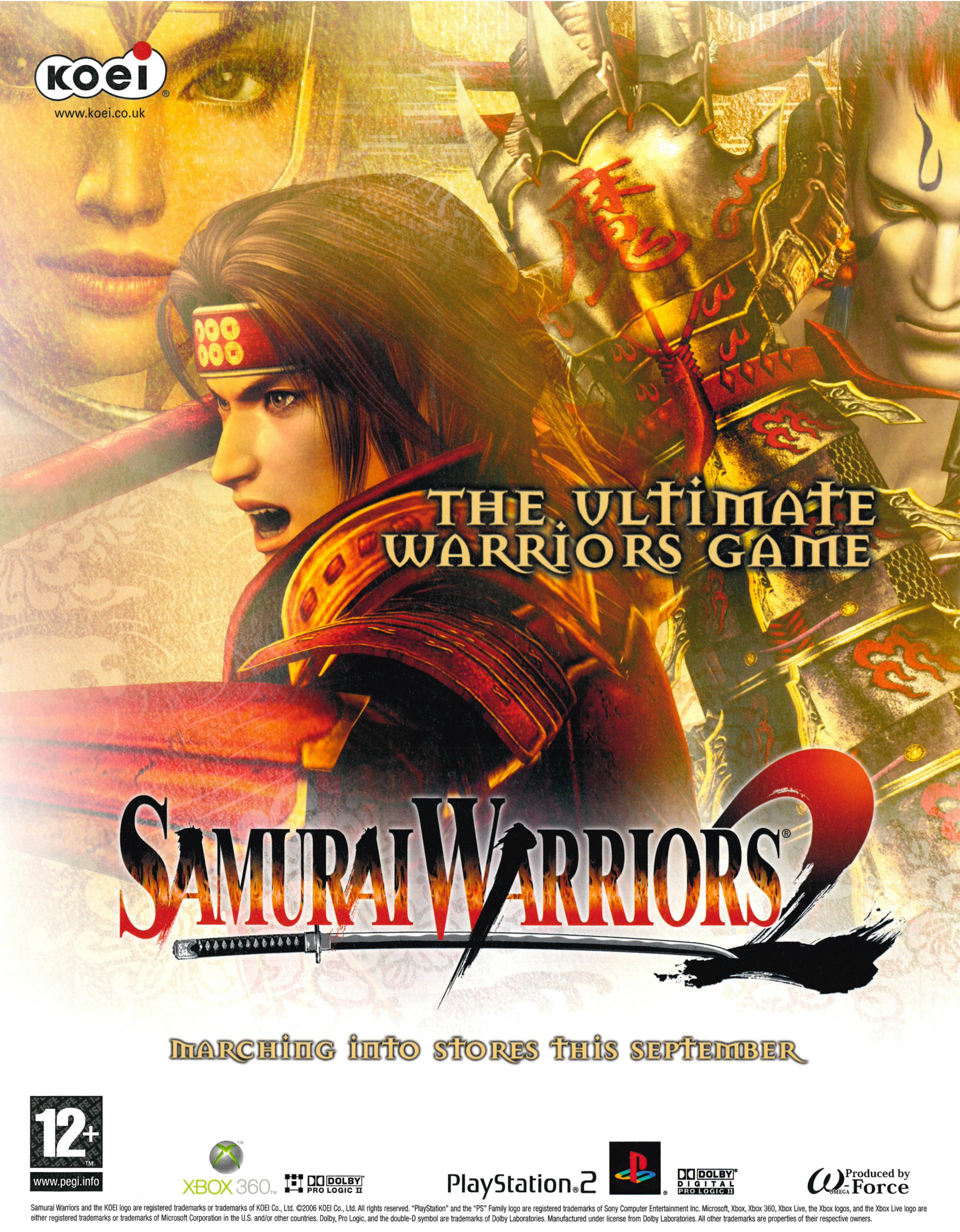
Dragon Quest: The Journey Of The Cursed King (PS2) can take upwards of 60 hours to complete. If you were to do everything it would take more than 100 hours.

***Pro Evo* or *FIFA*?**

[This is the quickest answer we've ever had back] AQA prefers *Pro Evo* as it has better gameplay. However, AQA does not like the stupid player names in *Pro Evo*.

*All answers obtained are printed as they appeared from AQA. To have a go yourself, send your questions to 63336. All texts to AQA cost £1 per message. If your question spans more than one text message (160 characters) you will incur an additional £1 for each text message.

COMPO TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Only the two entries *OPS2* judges to be the most suitable will each win a Sound Rocker chair. Texts charged at 50p plus your standard network tariff rate. Please source all necessary permissions. Lines are open from 10 August to 6 September. We'll not advise non-winners of the result. By entering you are agreeing to receive details of future offers from Future Publishing Ltd and third parties. Only UK residents over the age of 15 may enter. If you do not want to receive information relating to future promotions, include the word NO at the end of your text. No employees of Future Publishing, any associated company or any member of their close family may enter. Prizes are as stated. No alternatives, cash or otherwise are available. Editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. No purchase necessary.



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No.1 for PS3

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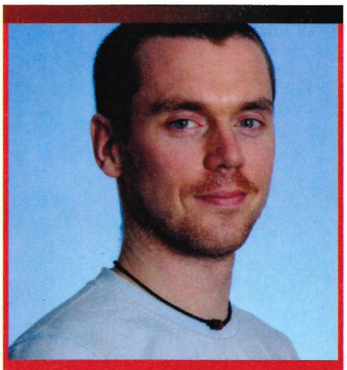
monitor

HUGGING TOMORROW AND PICKING ITS POCKETS



The big thing this month is *Just Cause*. Seriously, it's huge. Bigger than every other game in this month's Monitor section combined. And every inch of it looks amazing. But I'm not going to say any more on the subject – just turn the page to find out more. We've also been experimenting with the good/bad moral choices that Sam has to make in *Splinter Cell Double Agent*. Do you protect the innocent and annoy the terrorists you're undercover with, or use lethal force and upset Third Echelon? Or do you opt for a Blair-ite 'third way' and just take everyone out?

We've also been checking out Sonic's PS3 debut. The series is taking a back-to-basics approach – more speed, less AK47s – and, control niggles aside, should be a real return to form. Best of all, we've got new shots and info on the 'bring a friend' shooter, *Army Of Two*. Featuring the most offensively dangerous looking machine gun I have ever seen. And believe me, I've seen quite a few of them.

Leon

Leon Hurley,
Staff writer

JUST CAUSE

CLUB TROPICANA, AMMO'S FREE...
JETS AND GUNFIRE, THERE'S ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE

034

038 **SPY HUNTER: NOWHERE TO RUN**
...well, other than away from The Rock's new vanity project

040 **MADE MAN**
Who'd have thought being a 'nam vet and career criminal would involve so much shooting?

043 **SPLINTER CELL DOUBLE AGENT**
We go hands-on with Sam Fisher.
(And we didn't even buy him dinner first)

044 **PHANTASY STAR UNIVERSE**
Sega's space epic leave us unsure – should we choose the massive laser sword or electro shotgun?

046 **SONIC THE HEDGEHOG**
Sonic: looking back on form. Silver: shaping up well. Shadow: are you *still* here?

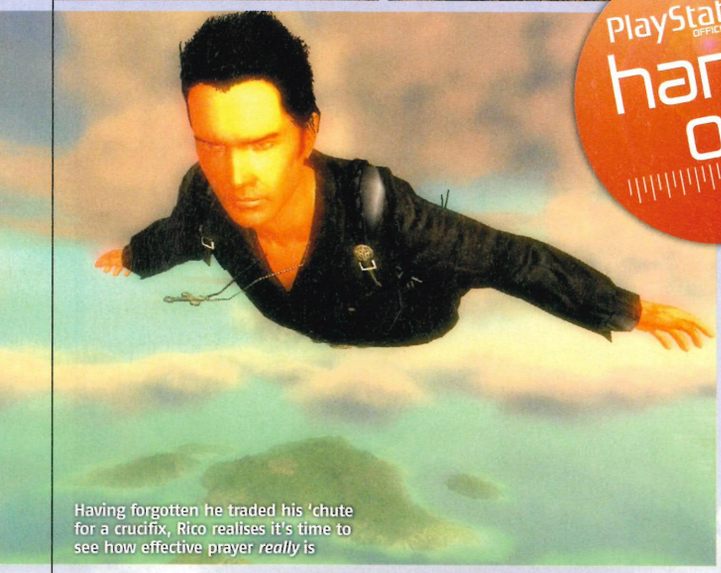
048 **FULL AUTO 2: BATTLELINES**
Think *Burnout* with high calibre weapons and destructible environments. Roads? Who needs 'em?

050 **NEED FOR SPEED CARBON**
Will squad, sorry 'crew'-based racing change the *Speed* experience?

052 **ARMY OF TWO**
Seven reasons why this buddy shooter will rock your world. And then blow it up

PLUS

041 GUN: SHOWDOWN
047 KILLZONE: LIBERATION



Having forgotten he traded his 'chute for a crucifix, Rico realises it's time to see how effective prayer *really* is

PlayStation 2 official magazine-UK hands on

Cause as much mayhem as you like – the whole place is going to hell as it is...

PUBLISHER **EIDOS** | DEVELOPER **AVALANCHE STUDIOS** | WEBSITE **HTTP://JUSTCAUSEGAME.COM**

JUST CAUSE

THE PERFECT HOLIDAY: SUN, SEA, SAND AND... SEMTEX?

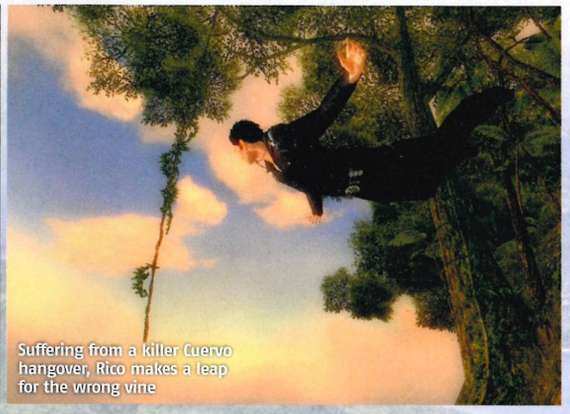
We had a simple plan. Get hold of a near-complete version of *Just Cause* and play it to death. We wanted to spend as much time as possible exploring San Esperito's rolling tropical hills to deliver a definitive development MOT before our huge review next month. The trouble is, after exploring the massive island for hours, the only thing we're sure of is that, in reality, we'd need weeks to get our head around it all properly. It's *huge*, and we don't just mean geographically. A quick look at the map reveals that we can't even see the landscape because it's buried under a mass of icons, markers and indicators. There are *290* missions in total, including the main story, side missions, race challenges, oppressed settlements to liberate and various caches of hidden objects to locate. Then there are 'Points Of Interest', highlighting useful things like vehicles. And, with the exception of the unfolding plot, most of it's available right from the start. So, plenty to be getting on with then.

What we've sampled of this giganto-game so far, however, is brilliant. You're free to explore anywhere on the 32 square km island. And, because we like a challenge, the first thing we tried to do was to steal a plane and fly to the other side. We gave up after five minutes, having flown across just one of the 34 provinces that form the politically unstable territory. In the main story each one of these provinces will eventually need to be liberated. Otherwise Rico, the CIA agent sent in to overthrow the corrupt government, won't stand a chance when he finally tries to free San Esperito from El Presidente's corrupt grip.

HIGH-JACKING

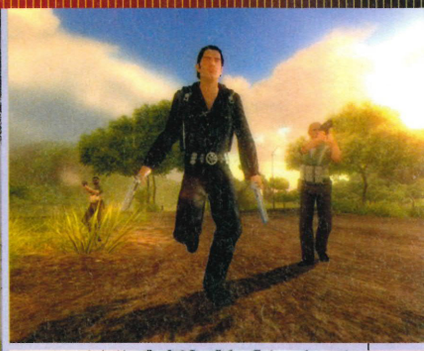
The stand-out feature so far has to be Rico's reusable parachute. Not only can it be used for some impromptu base jumping but, by using a handy grappling hook gun, you can fasten a line to any passing vehicle, deploy the 'chute and soar skywards as the canopy catches the wind. Quite simply, it's one of the greatest time wasting activities ever. We spent *ages* catching lifts from passing trucks and using them to get airborne. Once up, you can feed out the cable, climbing higher into the sky before cutting yourself loose and drifting back to Earth. (Or, if you can't wait, skydive to the ground before popping the parachute at the last possible minute to avoid ending up as street pizza.) You can also reel yourself in to hijack cars by landing on their roofs and swinging in through the window. Best of all, you can even do it to low-flying planes and helicopters. Once you've hijacked a passing airliner from the roof of a speeding police car you will *never* want to walk again.

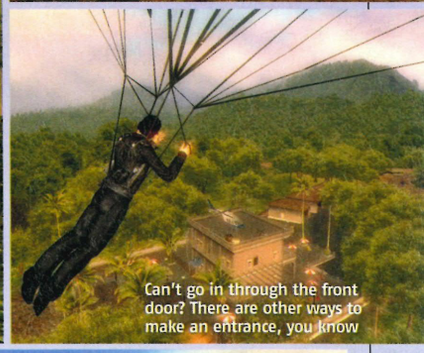
The first mission, when we finally get around to it, is simple: kill a cocaine dealer and assume his identity. It's



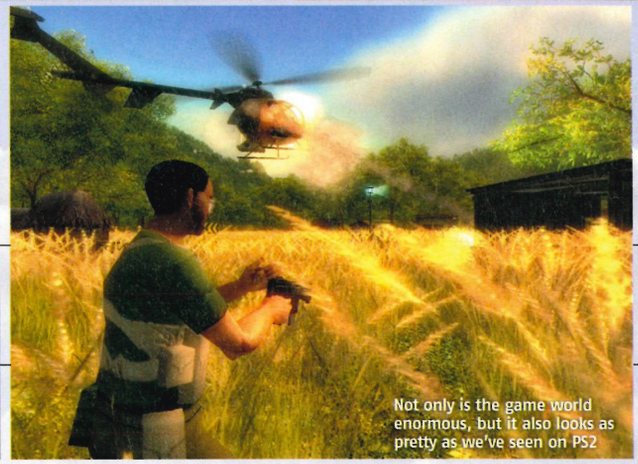
Suffering from a killer Cuervo hangover, Rico makes a leap for the wrong vine

Backed up by the CIA, there's no shortage of hardware you can have airlifted to you




Can't go in through the front door? There are other ways to make an entrance, you know

San Esperito covers a gigantic area and gives you tons of ways to explore it


Not only is the game world enormous, but it also looks as pretty as we've seen on PS2

a CIA mission, but completing it opens up a series of assignments working undercover for a drug cartel. A quick check of the map reveals our target heading along a road. There's also a nearby 'Point Of Interest' marker up on a hill. It could be anything useful – from a hole in a security fence to a vehicle. In this case it's a plane. Result. We're airborne and on the tail of our mark.

'CHUTE TO KILL

When we find our target – a limousine convoy on the road below – we hatch a suicidal plan. Leaping from the plane we enter freefall, steering towards the vehicle using the helpful red arrows flashing overhead. A few hundred feet above the ground we pop the 'chute and glide onto the car's roof. The security escort goes ballistic. Kicking out the driver and taking control of the limo just makes them angrier. But it's too late. We drive the car, victim and all, off the nearest cliff. It explodes on the valley floor below as we parachute to safety. We couldn't feel more like an action movie star without impregnating Katie Holmes and becoming an 'Operating Thetan Seven' Scientologist.

The other missions we sample are just as excellent. In one, we sneak into a rival's drug factory disguised as a worker. Once inside we destroy some storage silos with C4 before making off with a lorry full of gak. We escape with bricks of the stuff rattling around the back of our truck as the enemy give chase, trying to knock it free. The best assignment, though, has to be an assassination. Our

Well, you can't overthrow a government without cracking a few heads

DEAR AVALANCHE STUDIOS,

Please cut out and keep so you don't forget to...

MAKE A HOT KEY FOR THE GRAPPLING HOOK GUN

If a helicopter flies over head we want to harpoon it instantly, not fart around cycling through inventory options

SORT OUT THE CAR HANDLING

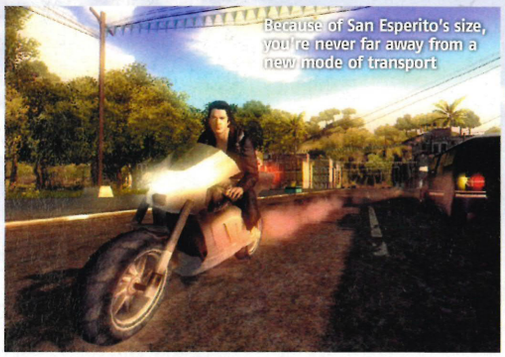
The skydiving, parachuting, boats, planes and helicopters all feel perfect. So why are the cars a bit spongy and un-responsive?

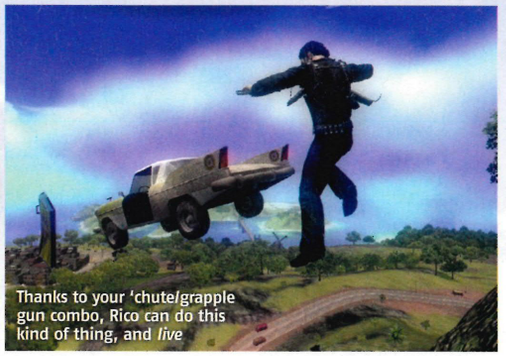
TONE DOWN THE SLOW-MOTION STUNT CAM

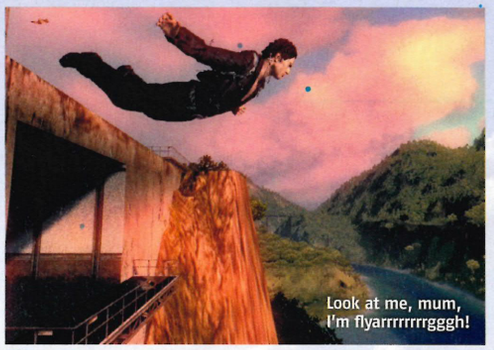
Driving down a bumpy, tree-covered mountain is hard enough without triggering slow-mo every time more than one wheel leaves the ground

INCREASE THE MAP'S ZOOM LEVEL

If you are going to have 50 gazillion markers on display, can we get in close enough to see them all separately please?


Because of San Esperito's size, you're never far away from a new mode of transport


Thanks to your 'chute/grapple gun combo, Rico can do this kind of thing, and *live*


Look at me, mum, I'm flyarrrrrrrrgggh!

target is relaxing at a resort located in the centre of an enormous dead volcano. We have to steal a helicopter and fly it down the mouth of the hollow mountain to reach him. Very James Bond.

NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT

Adding to the main missions are tons of other side events and activities. Like races over all sorts of terrain and in a wide range of vehicles. We tackled everything from mountainous off-road tracks in beat up trucks to high-speed, coastal boat races. We also tried our hand at several of the Liberation objectives. These all-out action sections involve joining guerrilla forces as they attempt to free buildings and settlements from government control. The rewards for these subversive efforts are well worth it too. One of our Che Guevara moments netted us a new hideout, complete with rooftop helipad and a shiny new whirly-bird to play with.

Despite spending more time exploring *Just Cause* than some games take to complete, we feel like we've barely scratched the surface. Hell, we haven't even nicked it. Fortunately there are some welcome attempts to make the immense size of it all more manageable. You have free access to a range of vehicles which can be airlifted to you instantly, *Mercenaries*-style. To start with it's simple motorbikes and jeeps but later you can access things like choppers and fighter jets. You don't have to buy them either. Once unlocked they're yours to call in at will, repeatedly. It's dead handy when you're stuck in the middle of nowhere. Another genius touch is the ability to be airlifted to any of your hideouts. Plus the checkpoint system is incredibly generous – die during a mission and you won't have to start from scratch. There are a few minor issues we'd like to see sorted, outlined above right in 'Dear Avalanche Studios'. But despite these, what we've seen so far has been incredible. The range of options, wealth of missions and the near superhuman freedom provided by *that* parachute is overwhelming. Right now, there isn't any other game we want to get our hands on more. ■ **LH**

Pick-up trucks: the transport of choice for military junta

monitor — PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK

QUITE SIMPLY THE BIGGEST, most exciting-looking thing we've seen on PS2 this year. In terms of scope and ambition, *Just Cause* is massive. The words 'pre-order' and 'now' spring to mind

HOT OR NOT

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN

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PUBLISHER **MIDWAY** | DEVELOPER **TERMINAL REALITY** | WEBSITE **HTTP://THESPYHUNTER.COM**

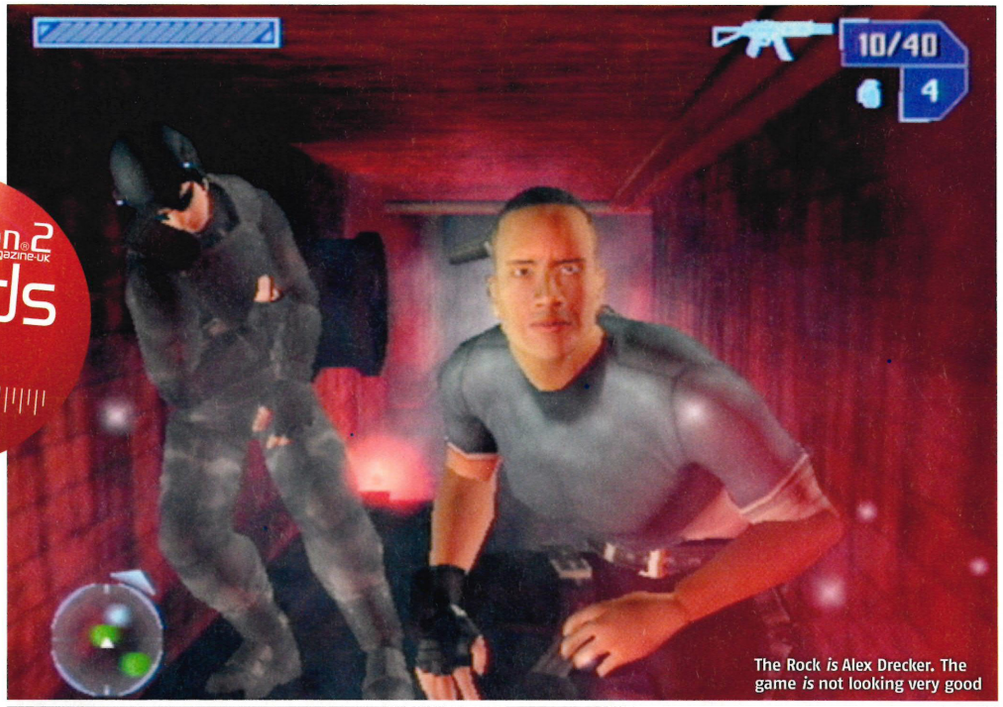
SPY HUNTER: NOWHERE TO RUN

SWEET JESUS, STAY IN THE CAR

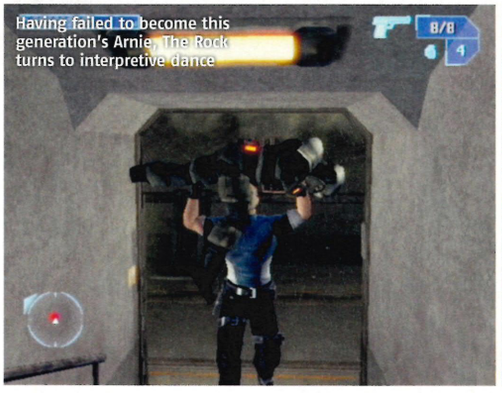
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK hands on

A little background. The first two *Spy Hunter* games drove the wheels off the 'weapon encrusted car' concept, introducing the Interceptor, a morphing car/boat/bike vehicle – a bit like a Transformer, only without the robotics. Now a film's on the way, starring Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson as spook Alex Drecker, and to accommodate his brisket-headed likeness, this is the inevitable tie-in. It's also taking the franchise where it's never been before... On foot. *On foot?* As residents of a tourist-clogged town with inadequate parking, we're used to 'on foot', and it's not all that. And herein lies *Nowhere To Run*'s first problem – if your game's appeal hinges on gadget-assisted automotive combat, the *last* thing you do is GET OUT OF THE CAR. Did *Driver 2* die for nothing?

It's not even as though the extra-vehicular sections dovetail neatly with the rest of the game. A case in point sees Drecker screeching up to the gate of an enemy base. Ahead is a locked metal barrier. At this point, we're mulling over which of the Interceptor's wide array of missiles we'll use to blow the bastard off its hinges. What we're *not* contemplating is parking, getting out and taking on a small army just so we can *unlock* the gate. The game has other ideas, though, and we're locked out of our own car and not allowed back in until it's done.



The Rock *is* Alex Drecker. The game *is* not looking very good



Having failed to become this generation's Arnie, The Rock turns to interpretive dance

Bizarrely, it doesn't even look as good as the first *Spy Hunter*

DRAGGING ITS FEET

This blow would be softened, somewhat, if Drecker were as nimble as a mountain goat. Which he categorically is not. We'll gloss over the canyon-sized inconsistency that Alex (a character that's not The Rock, remember) inexplicably has a range of wrestling moves including a certain trademark WWE slam called Rock Bottom. What we can't ignore is his inability to step over grass (grass!) or 'tackle' gentle slopes thanks to a slew of invisible walls that he ineptly moonwalks against.

There's more. And worse. Stupidly, the action button doubles as Drecker's 'grapple' move, often making the big lunk clumsily hug switches, locks, vehicles etc. like a happy drunk. Plus, there are missions that don't make *any* sense. Tasked to retrieve the only prototype Interceptor, we end up returning with just the bike bit, having jettisoned a trillion dollars' worth of bleeding edge hardware en route. In another, two out of four structural weak points in a submarine we're sent to wire with C4 are located in the same room. *Right next to each other.* Still, at least the core driving/speedboat sections are solid, right? Well, put it like this: the Interceptor boat currently grips and corners better than the car. And it's a boat. Maybe walking isn't such a bad idea... ■ **PF**

Look at the explosion. It makes the angels sad

monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

A LESS THAN stellar franchise reheated as a tie-in prequel to a movie we're not convinced anyone wants to see. Right now it's looking rushed, lazy and riddled with inconsistencies

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID | WARM | HOT | BOILING | MELTDOWN

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PUBLISHER MASTERTRONIC | DEVELOPER SILVERBACK STUDIOS | WEBSITE WWW.SILVERBACK-STUDIOS.COM/MADEMAN_INTRO.HTM

MADE MAN

ANOTHER CRIMINAL MAFIA GAME?

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK hands on

Made Man is the game equivalent of *Pulp Fiction* – a story told consistently out of synch, jumping back and forth in time, starting at the end and finishing in the middle. It's a bold and original attempt to differentiate itself from the other 900 million shooting-obsessed third-person games available for PS2. So why does the underlying experience end up feeling so familiar?

We begin at a North Carolina truck stop in 1971. Which is a pleasant surprise, both in terms of location and time frame. In the scheme of the story (written by Mafia expert David Fisher) this is our character Joey's first job for the Mafia after his return from 'Nam, shellshocked and in need of work. At this stage, due to the back-to-front narrative, all the player knows is he's driving some contraband 'cross country. The idea is, you're propelled through the game by a desire to make sense of what's going on. This filmic style of progression is accompanied by Joey's intermittent voiceover and sharp, unobtrusive cut-scene editing. It's a promising start, at least.

Seriously, aside from the tiger mask, this looks like every other shooter we've played

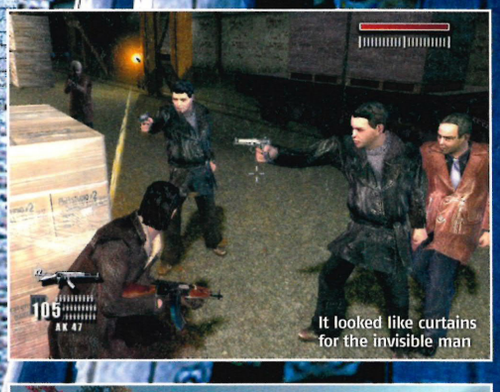
SHOT IN THE FOOT

Which makes it all the more disappointing that *Made Man* resorts to such a basic, hackneyed style of play within the first three minutes. Your first encounter comes in the shape of a gun battle with a gang of rednecks who've just nicked your van full of hooky Silk Cut. Your man walks around, arms aloft in a zombie stance, monotonously shooting at other men. *Oh no.* You pick up better weapons like shotguns and sniper rifles and get rewarded for headshots. *Christ.* Fancy kills fill a Kill Rack meter that activates Slow Time. Seriously. That's what it's called at the moment – *Slow Time.* It slows the action down. It's not even worth making a joke about that.

Non-joking aside, the main issue we have with the shooting is that, instead of using a lock-on function (like *GTA* or *Bond*), the crosshairs are fixed in the middle of the screen. This gives the unsatisfactory impression that you're aiming with the game camera rather than the weapon. Plus, presently, the crosshairs are nowhere near bright enough. Other irritations are Joey's inability to climb over low walls and that there's no way of firing blindly over the top of cover – you just pop up and fully expose yourself to the fatal kiss of scalding lead.

One of the key hooks is that you get to play during various periods of Joey's life, including flashbacks to his time in Vietnam (one of these is triggered at the end of the opening level when Joey sees a helicopter fly over a swamp). A change of pace and combat style, you might think? No. It's the same as the other 16 levels, bar the inclusion of sticky jungle window-dressing, grenades and the occasional mounted machine gun. And while we're at it, outdoor levels are unconvincingly 'boxed in', the perimeter of the game world marked out by low-res background textures.

Made Man has some decent ideas – the unusual chronology, the movie-style storytelling, some above average voice-acting and an absorbing plot. The problem is, this isn't backed up by an equally remarkable game. It really is the epitome of the 'bog-standard shooter' – and, God knows, nobody loves an underachiever. With titles like *Splinter Cell Double Agent* and *Just Cause* offering so much more scope and variety it's hard to imagine many people appreciating *Made Man*'s few moments of invention. ■ **GW**



It looked like curtains for the invisible man

A graveyard provides a scenic location for a shootout. Mind the goths!

THE LONGEST LIMO RIDE

Why you shouldn't skip the cut-scenes

Made Man's story revolves around a limo ride where Joey is on his way to get 'made'. During this journey he recounts the events in his life that have led up to this day. His 'big' day. These recollections are intros to each of the levels. Whether he actually gets 'made' in the end is something you're just going to have to be patient about. Although hints at a PS3 sequel already in the works suggest it might not be as straightforward as that...

monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

THE MAFIA WILL probably take out a contract on us for saying this but, as yet, this hoodlum adventure is falling well short of its ambitious narrative

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN

GETTING 'MADE'

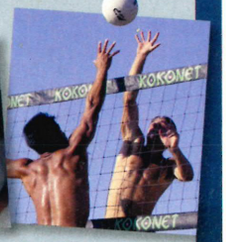
Being initiated into to the Mafia allegedly involves smearing your blood on the picture of a saint. But that's by no means the worst rite of passage – here are our top five scariest initiation ceremonies

1. MANHOOD
The Ilahita Arapesh tribe of Papua New Guinea dress up as wild boars and rub the genitals of the initiates with stinging nettles. As a second phase they have their swollen todger sliced with bamboo and have to dangle it into a stream, watching it bleed into the water.

2. ANTS
Native Indian tribe the Luiseño like to initiate their warriors by forcing them to lie motionless while being bitten by hordes of angry ants.

3. KLAN
One well-documented initiation to the Ku Klux Klan involved being blindfolded, tied with a noose to a tree and then shot at with paintballs. The ceremony went very wrong when a real bullet, fired in the air to mimic gunfire, killed the redneck initiate on its way back down.

4. TATTOOS
Certain Brazilian Indian tribes include tattooing as a part of initiation for young girls – on their faces.



5. NAKED
Nollningen is an institutionalised Swedish University initiation ceremony in which male freshers are forced to play games and participate in sports completely naked, while female co-eds goad and humiliate them. We call that 'Tuesdays'.

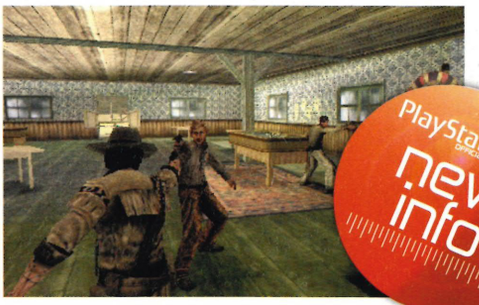
REX FEATURES

ALSO 1 MONTH AWAY...

PUBLISHER **ACTIVISION** | DEVELOPER **REBELLION/NEVERSOFT**
WEBSITE **HTTP://GUNTHEGAME.COM**

GUN SHOWDOWN

SCALP YOUR MATES WIRELESSLY

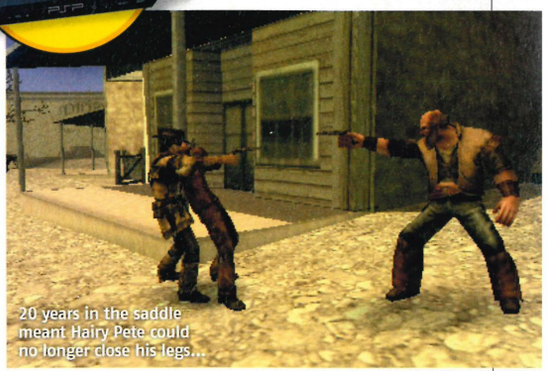


PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK new info

This might be another PS2 to PSP port but at the very least it gives people another chance to rediscover this criminally underrated cowboy adventure. And adding to the free-roaming, claret-spattered story mode of the 9/10 scoring original are a wealth of extra side missions and multiplayer modes.

We're most excited about the latter though. And, given that *GUN* was originally only single-player, we've already got our tomahawk out at the thought of skinning our mates. Deathmatch and Last Man Standing modes are self explanatory. In Golden Cross, however, one player takes possession of a mythical crucifix that features prominently in the main story, and the others have to get it off him by whatever means they see fit. The skull-busting bloodshed on offer makes the multiplayer in *Liberty City Stories* seem about hardcore as a game of British bulldog. Still, the squeamish are also catered for with the option to gather around the card table for a spot of WiFi Texas Hold 'Em. Bless 'em and their weak baby minds, we're off to watch *Deadwood*. ■ **BW**

It's on PSP



20 years in the saddle meant Hairy Pete could no longer close his legs...

If dressage was like this we'd watch it

HOT OR NOT?

The bloodiest multiplayer game on PSP. We can't wait

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

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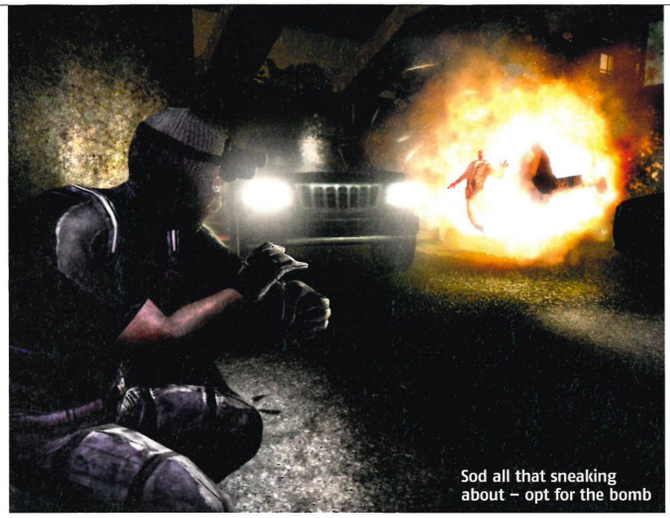
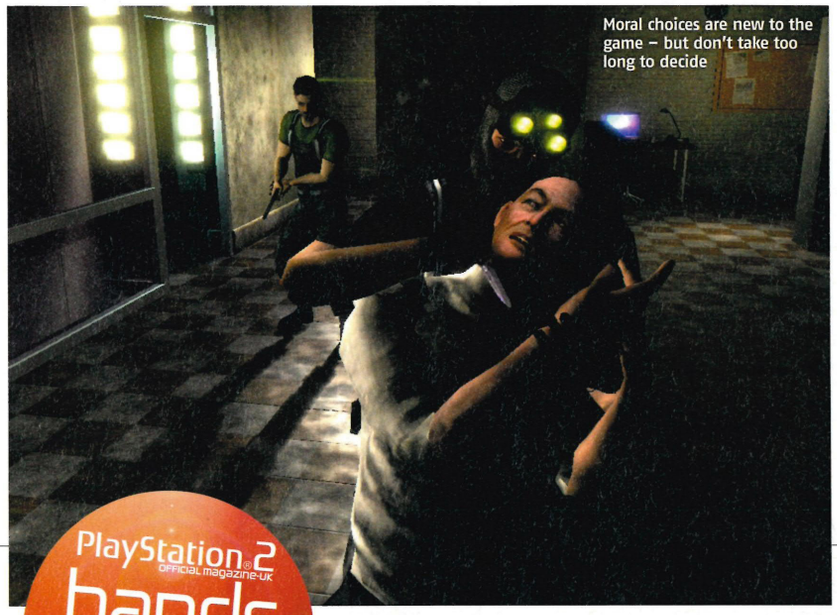

Sod all that sneaking about – opt for the bomb


Moral choices are new to the game – but don't take too long to decide

PUBLISHER **UBISOFT** | DEVELOPER **UBISOFT SHANGHAI** | WEBSITE **WWW.BEWARESAMFISHER.COM**

SPLINTER CELL DOUBLE AGENT

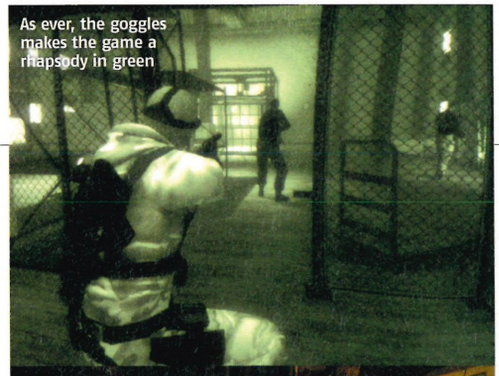
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK hands on

DO YOU PRESS ⊗ TO SKIP THIS PREVIEW OR ◎ TO READ ON?

After a slew of promo screenshots showing Sam Fisher in chokey mourning the death of his daughter, we're surprised to find *Double Agent* starts in Iceland, with Sam on the trail of some stolen Red Mercury (a semi-mythical ingredient of ultra-portable nukes). As well as introducing the new story it serves as a training level for anyone new to Sam's style of gadget-led special ops. A quick recap: the alternative fire on the pistol disrupts laser tripwires and CCTV, opening the door with your knife is noisier (but cooler) than using the lock-pick and thermal imaging is pretty but pointless.

So, why's Sam in prison? Well, it seems Fisher's having a bit of a mid-life crisis: his daughter's death has led a disillusioned Sam to take on a suicide mission to infiltrate and destroy a US terrorist organisation called John Brown's Army, led by one Emile Dufraisne. First, Fisher has to earn the trust of Jamie, a member of the JBA serving time in a Kansas prison. And what better way to do that than help him bust out?

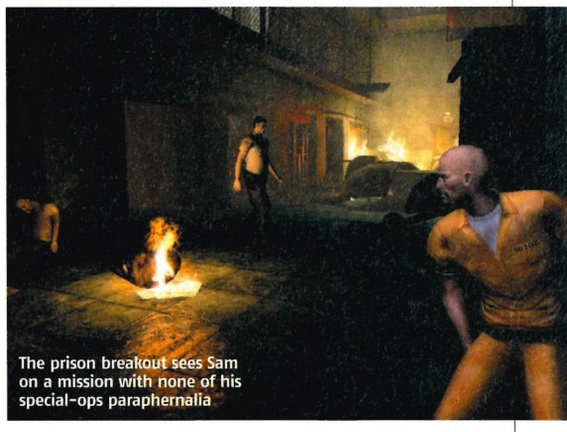
Aside from being a memorable and especially tense level, it's the first time in ages we've undertaken a jailbreak in a game. We'd like more please. Prior to the breakout, the first instance of the player being given the chance to make a moral decision (*Double Agent*'s main new feature) occurs in the prison gym. A thug called Barnum is threatening Jamie. The choice? Kill him and earn his (and, in turn, the JBA's) trust or just knock him out (as instructed by Lambert, Sam's boss) so the NSA can grill him later. Sadly, we ummed and ahhed for too long, so the PS2 decided for us and Fisher knocked him out. Typical. Our instinct was to off him. Anyway, this breach of trust meant we had to play the entire level with the lock-pick as our only weapon, while Jamie got to keep a gun we'd pinched.


As ever, the goggles makes the game a rhapsody in green

"Promise you'll never leave me"

GOOD OPS, BAD OPS

In the four-level demo we played these moral dilemmas came up less frequently than expected, but their inclusion liberates the traditionally linear flow of *Splinter Cell*'s storyline. The best example of this comes in the New York City subway. The key objective is split between the NSA (who want you *not* to kill the station master) and the JBA (who want the complete opposite). The temptation is to go rogue and murderise everyone (yes, we did) but it'll swing your trust meter away from the NSA and punitively limit your supply of weapons later on. See, it's all about karma. Hopefully later levels will also vary the game's colour palette from its usual blacks and blacker blacks. Because if there's one criticism of *Splinter Cell* it's that it's still too bloody dark. ■ **GW**


The prison breakout sees Sam on a mission with none of his special-ops paraphernalia

monitor — PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine UK

WE QUITE LIKE MOODY SAM FISHER, and the 'moral choices' element actually succeeds in varying the action sufficiently to make this more than just another sequel. Next month: the multiplayer mode

HOT OR NOT

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

ETA 3 months
Nov 2006

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PUBLISHER SEGA | DEVELOPER SONIC TEAM | WEBSITE HTTP://PHANTASYSTARUNIVERSE.COM

PHANTASY STAR UNIVERSE

ONE FOR THE PHANBOYS...

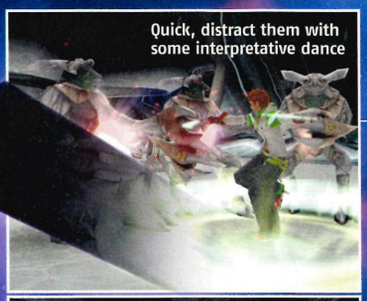
Our last visit to Sega's sci-fi RPG smorgasbord involved trawling around inside ominous techno-corridors, cursing our inability to speak Japanese. This time, we're exploring the surface of a planet – all autumn leaves, rocky outcrops and angry crab monsters – on a mission to save some chick called the 'divine maiden'. Fortunately, this time everyone speaks proper English like what the Queen does. We find her making quasi-sexual cooing sounds (the maiden, not the Queen) while being attacked by some bat-like beasts.

GALAXY QUEST

The real-time combat is mostly as satisfying as hoped. There are numerous weapons, ranging from an electro-scythe that unleashes enormous ice cubes, through a spread-shot rifle to a pair of cybernetic boxing gloves. Most versatile, though, is the pistol and laser sword combination. Hold R1 to point the gun and ⓞ to fire, but if the creatures get too close you can smoothly switch to sword combos. Things get more problematic with a boss encounter against an even bigger flying monstrosity. The camera only rotates on the horizontal axis (you can't tilt it like *Hitman: Blood Money*) which makes getting a bead on the bugger tricky as it flaps around. Also, you can't really aim your projectile weapons into the air. You can click the right stick to enter a first-person mode, but it's *real* clunky. Eventually the beast goes down in a flurry of laser fire, but it hasn't been the buttery smooth experience we'd hoped for. The fighting works better against multiple smaller opponents, where dodging and counter-attacking soon becomes second nature.

So far, we've still only seen the story-based single-player mode. Outside of cut-scenes, which are fully voiced, the characters talk using comic-style speech and emoto-bubbles. These will also be used for online play, but it's unclear whether the game will offer headset support. In previous incarnations Sega didn't offer the feature in order to prevent players ruining the vibe by discussing the footy rather than pretending to be interstellar adventurers. ■ TC

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK hands on



Quick, distract them with some interpretative dance

Ethan scuffs his feet on the floor to build up a big static charge... then KABLAM!

monitor — PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

SOME KINKS TO SMOOTH OUT, but the action-heavy focus and lush art design keep *Phantasy Star Universe* hovering at the top of our most-wanted RPGs pile

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN

The spread-shot rifle lets you target multiple enemies

The combat all takes place in real-time, and is surprisingly zingy for an RPG

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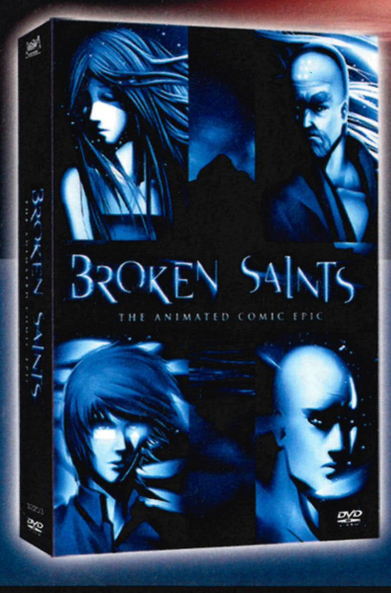

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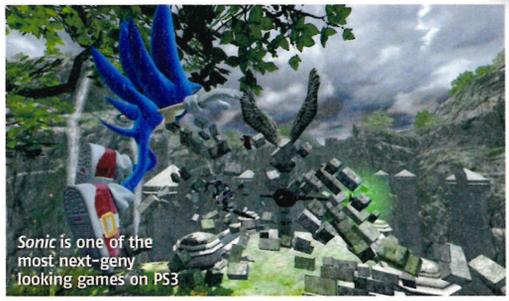
PUBLISHER **SEGA** | DEVELOPER **SONIC TEAM** | WEBSITE **HTTP://SONIC.SEGA.JP/SONIC**

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

It's on PS3

NEW ABILITIES: ARMAGEDDON, SLAUGHTER OF INNOCENTS

Sonic's a killer, with the blood of thousands on his paws. Because of him, countless lives have ended. Or at least that's what new character Silver The Hedgehog thinks. It turns out that the telekinetic traveller from the future believes Sonic to be the 'Iblis trigger', the harbinger of a cataclysmic disaster in the future. It's the reason Silver has travelled back in time, to stop Sonic causing the catastrophe – apparently during the blue 'hog's attempts to rescue a kidnapped princess from the 'Mwa-ha-ha-ing' Weight Watchers failure, Professor Robotnik.


Sonic is one of the most next-geny looking games on PS3

THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST

Sega's hoping this will be a return to form for the series, after some lean years. Confirmed playable characters include Sonic, Silver and 'one more strike and you're out' Shadow, and there are more rumoured. Each has unique skills that enable you to play levels differently, freeing you to access different paths and reach new areas. Sonic has his speed, Silver his spoon-bending psychic powers and Shadow uses a bloody great rocket launching Humvee. Possibly pumping out Westwood's *Ride With The Big Dawg* as he opens fire. (For us, Shadow is to Sonic as Poochy was to Itchy & Scratchy.)

It's Sonic's levels that have us the most excited though. Like the classic early games, it's all about running *really* fast. And there are numerous ways to max out your speed, including *WipEout*-style boost pads, springboards and impossibly taut ropes to twang off. Successfully keeping your momentum up, and burning through the level like a streak of blue lightning, is all about timing your jumps and hitting all the vital ramps and pads for a hit of extra speed. It's part platformer, part racer. The gold rings you collect are also important. The more rings you have, the faster Sonic goes. The same rings also boost Silver's mental powers, although how they might affect Shadow's heavily armed Chelsea tractor is yet to be revealed.

The Luton bypass Gatso clocks Sonic at 340mph in a 30mph zone

That's the healthy glow of a psychically charged hedgehog

HOGGING THE LIMELIGHT

Adding even more potential is Sonic's surprisingly vicious homing attack. This is an airborne spinning assault, which requires *very* careful timing. Get it right and you'll have Sonic bouncing merrily from one mechanical enemy to the next in a cascade of exploding robot pieces. Cock it up however and you'll just end up flinging the spiky one down the nearest bottomless chasm. This method of attack can also be used to reach unexplored, tricky-to-access areas by bouncing through the air, from one flying enemy to the next.

In contrast to Sonic's rapid-fire racing, Silver's approach is far more cerebral. He might not be able to move as fast but he can use his telekinetic powers to fly and get to previously unreachable platforms. He can also throw crates, boulders, cars and other objects as weapons. Best of all, by holding out a paw he can halt projectiles and missiles in mid-air – *Matrix*-style – before throwing them back at his enemies. It's a totally different feel to Sonic's eye-watering pace, but no less enjoyable. We particularly like the believable sense of weightiness of the objects you levitate.

It's been a while since a *Sonic* game got us any kind of excited, but this is rapidly curing our apathy. It's hard not to be impressed when Sonic stands stoically, spines rustling in the breeze, surveying the multi-tiered landscape ahead. And it looks even better at full tilt. Environments blur as you try to catch the all-important speed boosts without sending Sonic falling to his doom. Pinging swiftly from surface to surface and wall-running along the sides of waterfalls are more of the highlights on offer. And the fact that Silver provides an utterly different but equally enjoyable challenge is encouraging. Let's just hope Shadow doesn't mess it up and reverse over them in his SUV. ■ **LH**

This is the future. It's broken and it looks like Sonic's to blame

monitor — PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK

SONIC'S WARP SPEED ACTION is the highlight of this tempting PS3 prospect, but Silver's mental gymnastics are also great fun in their own right. Finally, this really could put Sonic back on top

HOT OR NOT?

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

Shadow's back, this time driving a jeep. Boo Shadow whenever you see him

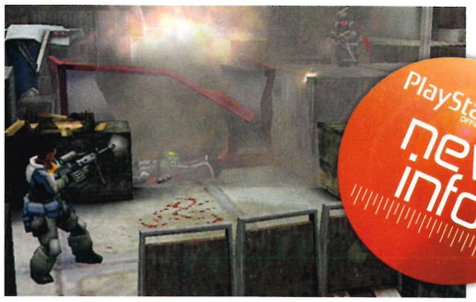
Silver's not evil but he thinks Sonic's the bad guy

ALSO 3 MONTHS AWAY...

PUBLISHER **SONY** | DEVELOPER **GUERRILLA GAMES**
WEBSITE **WWW.KILLZONE.COM**

KILLZONE: LIBERATION

NO SIGN OF THE PS3 VERSION? NO PROBLEM



Forget *Vice City Stories*. *This* is the most exciting game on PSP. Okay, we've been here before with the hype – but the new third-person view works superbly on handheld, giving the relentless slaughter a far more tactical edge. Careful use of cover while issuing orders to your teammates is crucial to avoid a messy, bullety end. We can also confirm that Rico (heavy weapons doughboy) and Luger (sexy sniper) will return to battle alongside the original hero, Templar. One new addition to the team is Evelyn, a rescued weapons researcher. On the Helghast side there are the new attack dogs you can see here, and we've also seen a massive cyborg Helghan trooper. There are a few new plot details as well. It all centres on a massive Earth counter-offensive to cover an evacuation of the civilian city Rayhoven. New bad guy, General Metrac, is partial to taking prisoners, so it's up to you rescue them, hence the title. ■ LH

To the Helghan attack dogs you're just a big meaty chew toy

The multiplayer battles are the best we've seen on PSP

HOT OR NOT?

You'd need *actual* flames to make this any hotter

TEPID | WARM | HOT | BOILING | MELTDOWN

Yes, that is a missile, and no, it won't miss

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK hands on

It's okay folks, he's fine! [Whisper] Someone call a paramedic

The next-generation will be... *shiny*

PUBLISHER **SEGA** | DEVELOPER **PSEUDO INTERACTIVE** | WEBSITE **WWW.SEGA.COM/GAMES/GAME_TEMP.PHP?GAME=FULLAUTO2**

FULL AUTO 2: BATTLELINES

OR 'CAR WARS: A NEW HOPE'

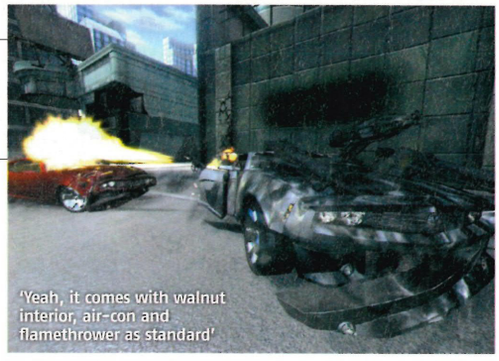
Full Auto 2 is the latest game to make the not unreasonable assumption that if people like games with cars, and they like games with guns, then they're bound to love a game that combines cars with guns. The high concept pitch is *Burnout* meets *Black*, where literally *everything* can be wrecked. Walls, cars, bus-shelters, more cars, trees – even entire buildings can be brought down if you hammer enough explosive rounds into them.

The apocalyptic level of destruction isn't just there to showcase the next-gen technology, either. Nailing opponents with rockets, machine guns or any of the other 20 weapons is the quickest way to get into the lead. And as in *Black*, the destructible scenery isn't just pretty to look at – all that demolition serves a purpose. It works in two ways: the first is using your ordnance to blow holes in buildings and walls to carve out car-shaped holes to squeeze through. Think of it as 'Do It Yourself' shortcuts. The second and potentially more entertaining option is using your armaments to break off slabs of scenery to take out opponents. This means collapsing bridges onto their roofs, exploding tankers as they drive past or sending a well aimed rocket into the side of a building so the whole structure slides down and crushes them like bugs. Stupid bugs!

But what's to stop them pulling the same trick on you? *Full Auto 2* will feature something called Unwreck, a similar time-bending capability to the *Prince Of Persia*'s Rewind skill. It lets you replay events to avoid being wiped out by careless driving or a missile up the exhaust pipe. Ironically, you'll be able to fill your Unwreck meter by smashing up the scenery, meaning you stand the best chance of surviving a race if you drive like a mentalist.

Check the heat shimmer on the flames. It burns, it *burns*!

At 30mph, most crashes kill. At 120mph, *this* happens


'Yeah, it comes with walnut interior, air-con and flamethrower as standard'

FULL TILT

We already know that PS3 will pump out some of the most beautiful shattered glass and crumbling brickwork known to man, but Sega's product manager, Michael Gallo, tells us that the team is also planning to make good use of the tilt-sensing pad. "We're wary of overusing it..." he commented, "...but we think we have a nice, natural way of implementing it". Hoping to unearth some solid details we suggested one obvious use for the pad would be to aim your weapons while driving. Gallo answered "Sometimes the obvious answer is correct! We've got a couple of ideas, and we'll let everyone know what they are in the coming months." Sounds like a goer. Our cheque's probably already in the post...

Another PS3 feature that *Battlelines* will make use of is enhanced online support. Multiplayer was a massive part of the Xbox 360 original and once again, Pseudo Interactive is keen to push the online part of the game hard. An all-new Arena mode has been confirmed, enabling eight players to slam their vehicles around any of the game's circuits. Think *Twisted Metal: Black*, only with better weapons and the constant danger of giant, concrete slabs smashing through your sunroof. ■ **AH**

monitor PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK

THE IDEA OF BEING ABLE TO SMASH UP whole square miles of city is cool. This could be the perfect racer for early PS3 owners craving *Burnout*-style crashes over the straight-laced racing of *Ridge Racer 7*

HOT OR NOT?

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

It's on PS3

ETA 3 months
Nov 2006

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS | DEVELOPER EA BLACK BOX | WEBSITE NFS.EA.COM

NEED FOR SPEED CARBON

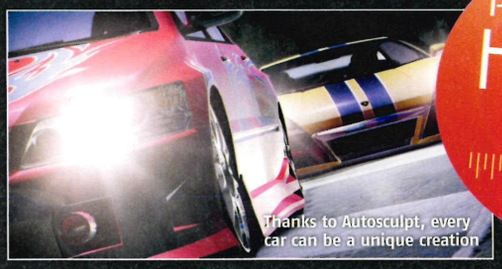
CANYONS, CREWS AND... MELTING CARS?

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK hands on

EA likes a buzzword, and the one it's bandying around for its 2007 line-up is 'friends'. *Tiger Woods* is team-based (he won't play with Faldo, mind), *Sims 2 Pets* is all about the furry kind, and the lads in *Army Of Two* seem to be, you know, *special* friends. Out on the street, 'friends' translates as 'crew' – the major new gameplay feature in *Need For Speed Carbon*.

When you take to the road you're no longer alone, your crew will also come along for the ride: a blocker, who operates as a battering ram, clearing rival drivers out of your way; a scout, who drives ahead and radios back shortcuts and hazards, and a drafter, who cuts in front of you to create a slipstream – a tactic you'll be used to if you've played *Burnout*. Other crew members make up your pit crew, modifying body parts, tuning your engine and bribing the law when they make an appearance.

Hiring a 'Fabricator' opens up *NFS*'s new Autosculpt function, which we wrote down in our notes as 'car melt'. Via a series of sliders you can manipulate the shape of each body part in minute increments, the effect being that the car morphs and 'melts' into a uniquely-contoured shape. In the current version there are only three cars to sculpt, making the effect slightly underwhelming. Lengthening the bonnet a few inches and lowering the roof might well make the car unique, but to the naked eye it's negligible. We want to be able to stretch the bonnet into a huge beak and pull the roof up into a shark fin. Maybe that's just us.



Thanks to Autosculpt, every car can be a unique creation

ESCAPE THE CITY

While much of the racing is done around familiar city streets in one of three car classes (muscle, tuner and exotic) the big hook alluded to in the title is the canyon races. As we pointed out a few months back, the '*Carbon*' referred to in the title is Carbon Canyon, near LA, famous for its illegal road races. It's on these winding mountain roads that the racing takes on a riskier, illicit feel. The race dynamic has changed. It's all about points now, rather than just coming first. Racing over two legs you start off chasing and then leading – the idea is you get points for catching up with your opponent when chasing, or losing them when you're leading. A humiliating instant win is also possible if you put enough ground between you and your opponent for longer than ten seconds. The danger comes when you push your car beyond your ability to tame it, and then plough through a barrier and off a cliff.

Anyone who's played *Underground* and *Most Wanted* will feel instantly familiar with the PS3's handling model (arcadey, forgiving, umm, *slidey*?) but one area that's been updated is braking. It might be a consolation for the lack of rumble (yeah, we missed it) but the brakes are now far more responsive. Combine that with the murderously difficult to drive muscle cars and you've got V8 beasts that are virtually impossible to keep in a straight line. Of course, you could use this to your advantage in the reintroduced (and slightly more accessible) Drift mode, where knife-edge slide control earns you points.

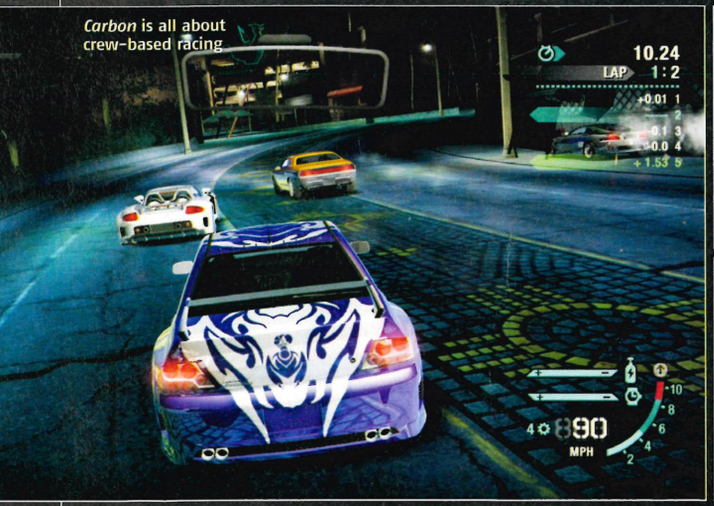
If we could change anything, it would be the game's obsession with night-time racing. While it's undeniably cool to screech around pitch black canyons, scouring the narrow ribbon of asphalt with your headlights, the darkness is relentless. A few day-to-night transitions would enhance the *Carbon* experience no end. Go on, surprise us... ■ GW

monitor — PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK

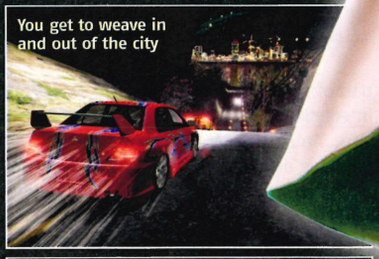
AS ALWAYS, NEW *NFS* is just different enough to make it worth a look. With its canyons and crews, *Carbon* brings some innovation, but it's not exactly a revolutionary PS3 launch title

HOT OR NOT?

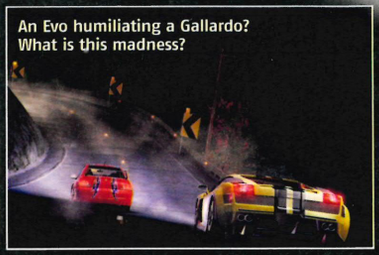
TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN



Carbon is all about crew-based racing



You get to weave in and out of the city



An Evo humiliating a Gallardo? What is this madness?

Say a breathless hello to the new face of Need For Speed, Saw II's Emmanuelle Vaugier

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1 NEVER BE ALONE AGAIN!
The game stars a brace of private military contractors called Salem and Rios – your typical zero-bullshit arse-kickers, whom governments call in to complete shady missions. Yes, they do look a bit like gay barmen on a paintball day.

PUBLISHER EA | DEVELOPER EA MONTREAL | WEBSITE WWW.EA.COM

ARMY OF TWO

STOP! COLLABORATE AND LISTEN...

Sometimes we feel completely out of step with our fellow games hacks. And not just because we're able to walk past comic shops without squealing in delight and rushing in to look for Swamp Thing rarities. Case in point: *Army Of Two*. We came away from the game's unveiling earlier this year all smiles and high fives. But the rest of the press corps seemed less impressed, nit-picking about whether the revolutionary co-op play will actually work or grumbling about its macho tendencies. Listen up, bed-wetters: until such time as games can accurately mirror complex human emotions and interactions, it's going to be about shooting stuff. Preferably in ever more inventive ways. And on that count *Army Of Two* over-delivers brilliantly. To prove the point, here are seven reasons why we think it's going to rock PS3's balls clean off. ■ TC

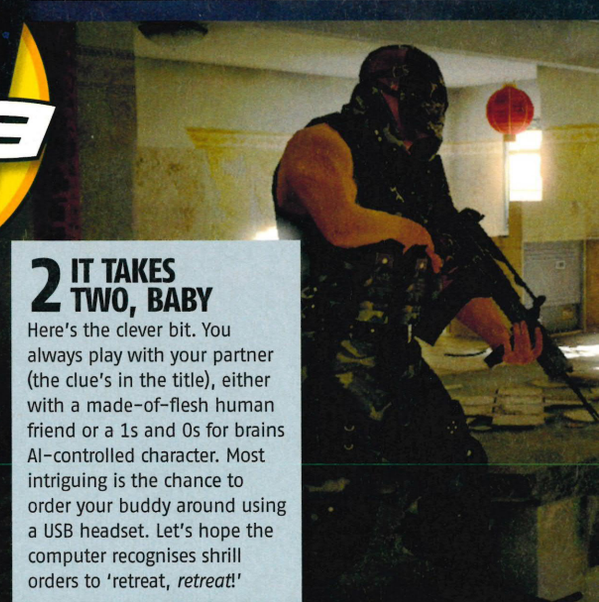
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK new screens

monitor — PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

STRONG GRAPHICS, INNOVATIVE GAMEPLAY and manly like watching prime-era Arnie films with your dad a while eating a curry so stern that the poppadoms are soggy with tears. This, obviously, is a good thing

HOT OR NOT?

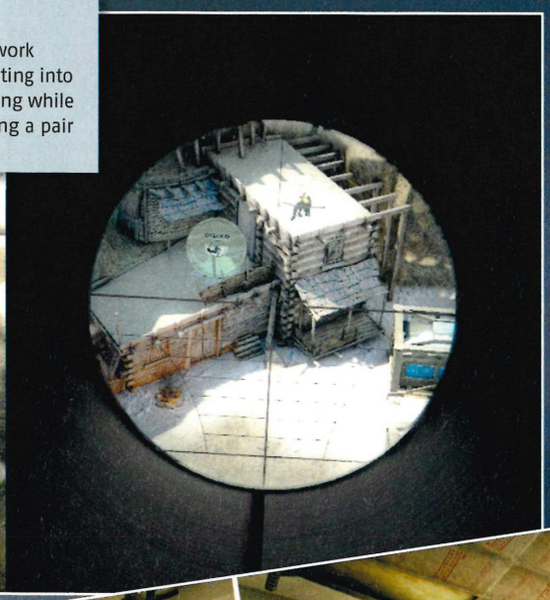
TEPID	WARM	HOT	BOILING	MELTDOWN



2 IT TAKES TWO, BABY
Here's the clever bit. You always play with your partner (the clue's in the title), either with a made-of-flesh human friend or a 1s and 0s for brains AI-controlled character. Most intriguing is the chance to order your buddy around using a USB headset. Let's hope the computer recognises shrill orders to 'retreat, *retreat*!'

3 DOUBLE UP

Several key gameplay features only work when performed in tandem, like parachuting into a hot landing zone with one player steering while the other shoots, or simultaneously sniping a pair of guards to avoid triggering an alert.



4 BEST! WATER! EVER!

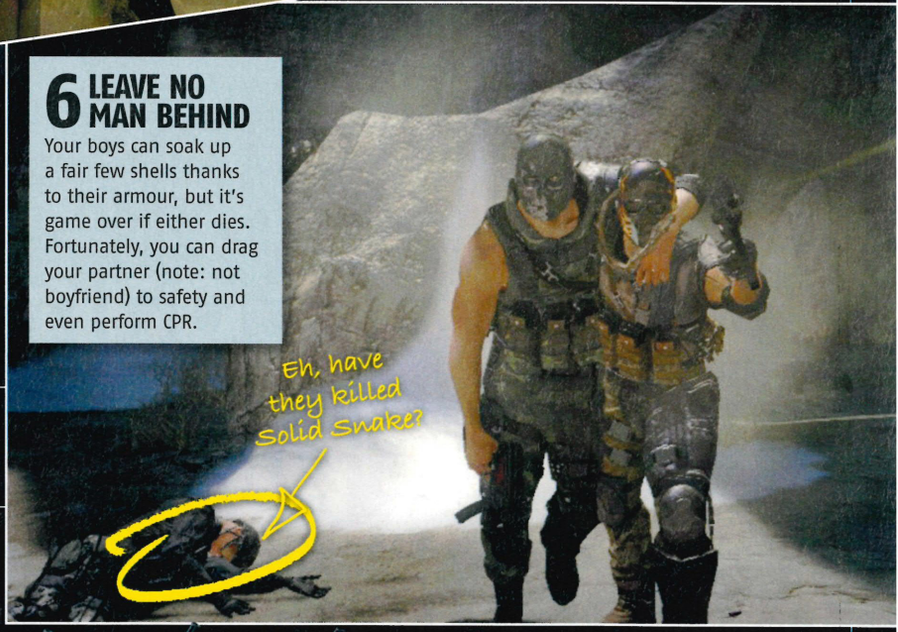
Seriously, it is.

5 I WANNA HOLD YOUR HAND...

...but not in a homoerotic way. The environments have been designed so Salem and Rios will have to help each other past obstacles, much like the co-op missions from *Splinter Cell Chaos Theory*.

6 LEAVE NO MAN BEHIND

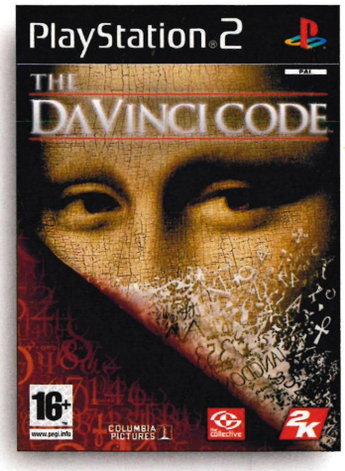
Your boys can soak up a fair few shells thanks to their armour, but it's game over if either dies. Fortunately, you can drag your partner (note: not boyfriend) to safety and even perform CPR.

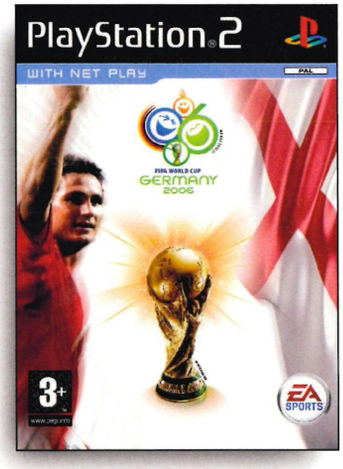


7 DESIGNER DEATH

Pimping cars is *soooo* 2005. Now it's all about customising your 'widowmaker' with new clips, grips, sights and silencers. (*Hitman: Blood Money* did the same sort of thing brilliantly.) Our favourite is the underslung shotgun, for close-quarters work.

£29.97





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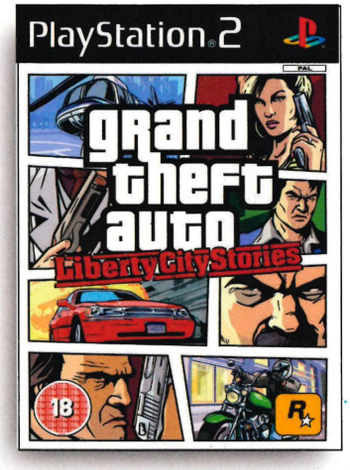
Out now



£29.97

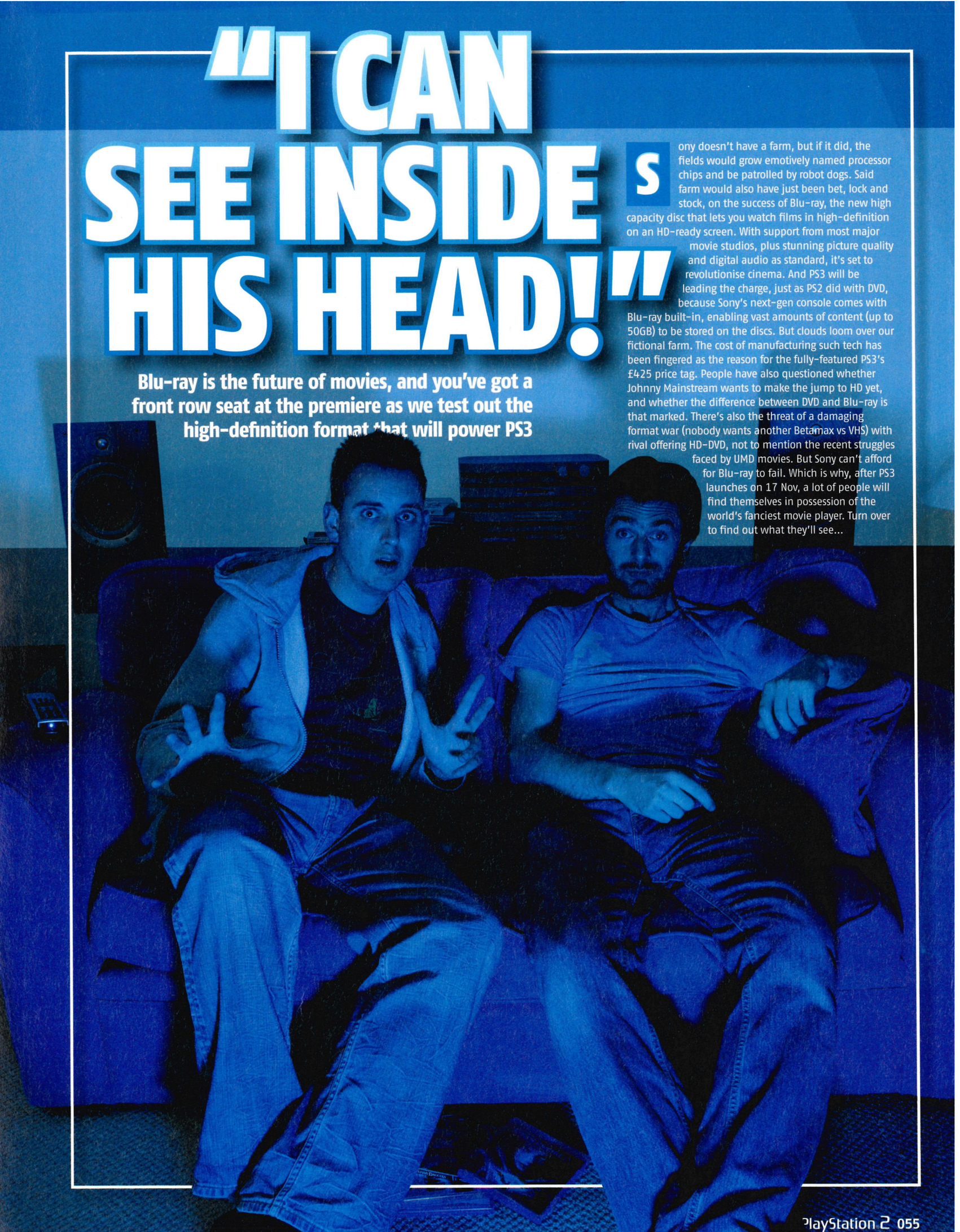
PS2 chart games at great prices. Available at Tesco.

TESCO | Every little helps

"I CAN SEE INSIDE HIS HEAD!"

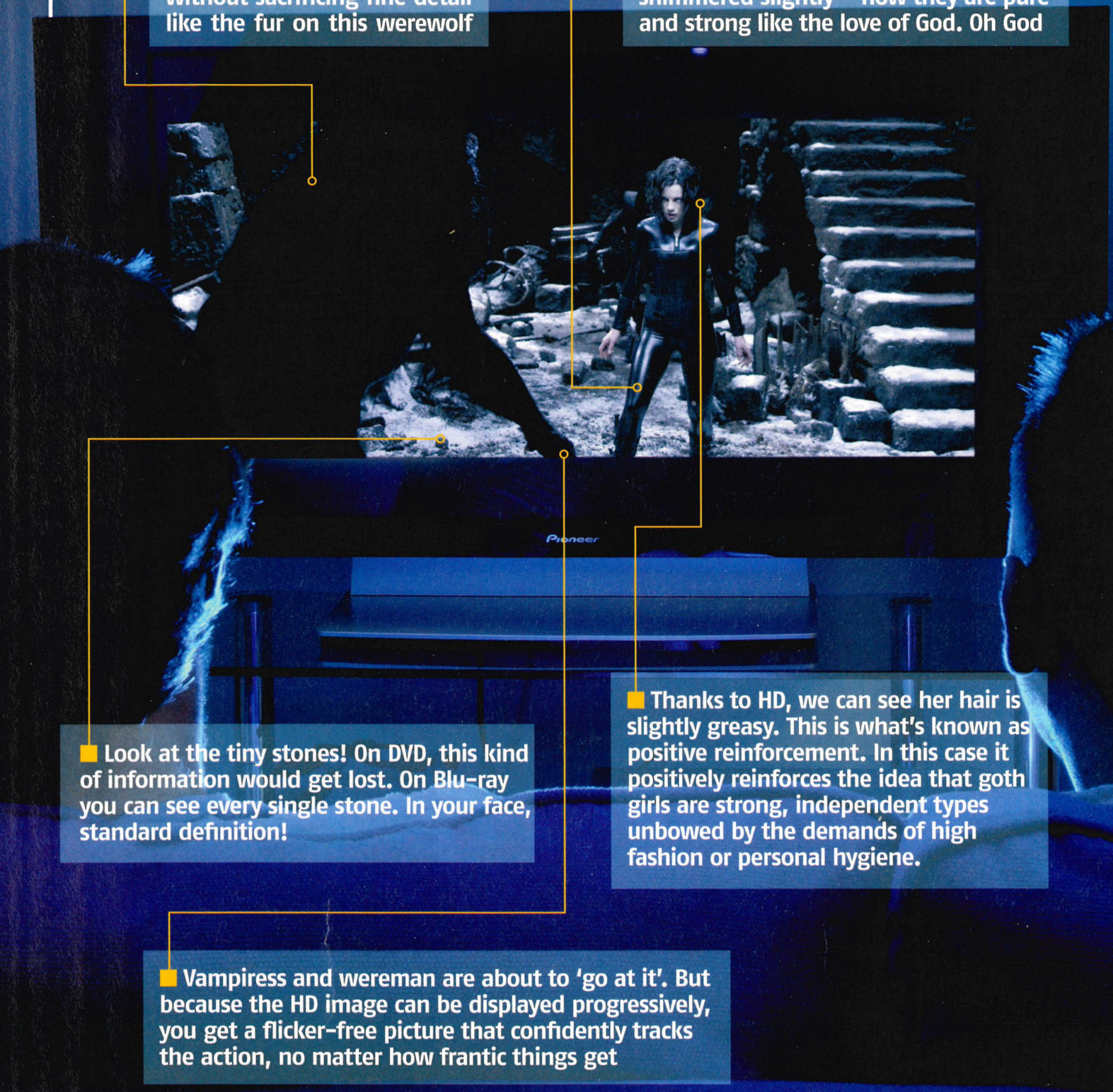
Blu-ray is the future of movies, and you've got a front row seat at the premiere as we test out the high-definition format that will power PS3

Sony doesn't have a farm, but if it did, the fields would grow emotively named processor chips and be patrolled by robot dogs. Said farm would also have just been bet, lock and stock, on the success of Blu-ray, the new high capacity disc that lets you watch films in high-definition on an HD-ready screen. With support from most major movie studios, plus stunning picture quality and digital audio as standard, it's set to revolutionise cinema. And PS3 will be leading the charge, just as PS2 did with DVD, because Sony's next-gen console comes with Blu-ray built-in, enabling vast amounts of content (up to 50GB) to be stored on the discs. But clouds loom over our fictional farm. The cost of manufacturing such tech has been fingered as the reason for the fully-featured PS3's £425 price tag. People have also questioned whether Johnny Mainstream wants to make the jump to HD yet, and whether the difference between DVD and Blu-ray is that marked. There's also the threat of a damaging format war (nobody wants another Betamax vs VHS) with rival offering HD-DVD, not to mention the recent struggles faced by UMD movies. But Sony can't afford for Blu-ray to fail. Which is why, after PS3 launches on 17 Nov, a lot of people will find themselves in possession of the world's fanciest movie player. Turn over to find out what they'll see...



THE BLU-RAY DIFFERENCE

Treat your eyeballs to an HD film and this is what you get



■ Blacks are rich and solid, without sacrificing fine detail like the fur on this werewolf

■ Extra resolution means smoother, flowing lines. Previously, Beckinsale's thighs might've lacked definition or shimmered slightly – now they are pure and strong like the love of God. Oh God

■ Look at the tiny stones! On DVD, this kind of information would get lost. On Blu-ray you can see every single stone. In your face, standard definition!

■ Thanks to HD, we can see her hair is slightly greasy. This is what's known as positive reinforcement. In this case it positively reinforces the idea that goth girls are strong, independent types unbowed by the demands of high fashion or personal hygiene.

■ Vampiress and wereman are about to 'go at it'. But because the HD image can be displayed progressively, you get a flicker-free picture that confidently tracks the action, no matter how frantic things get

BLU-MOVIES IN YOUR LAP

The world's first Blu-ray player is Samsung's BD-P1000, which launched recently in the US with a $999 price tag. (Which partly explains Sony's 'PS3 is a bargain!' comments.) But rather than risking Customs impounding our new toy, we opted for plan B, in the shape of Sony's new Vaio AR11S laptop (£2,000 from www.sonystyle.co.uk). It's the first laptop to contain a Blu-ray player and burner, and comes equipped with an HDMI output, enabling us to hook it up to our 43" Pioneer plasma HDTV. The dedicated WinDVD Blu-ray player appears as part of the Windows Media center and can be operated from the comfort of your armchair via the remote control that comes bundled with the AR11S. The scarcity of 1080p compatible screens (1080p being the highest possible HD-resolution currently possible, and one of Blu-ray's main selling points) meant that we watched the movies we'd bought in either 720p or 1080i. However, we're planning to head down to our local AV emporium to check out how 1080p content looks on their new plasma next month. (Likely answer: sharp like sushi knives.)

TWO THUMBS UP?

Our first impressions of watching cinematographs in HD

SAW

A dark film, both thematically and literally – but Blu-ray deals with everything thrown at it. Detail is clear in low-lit scenes, and when the strip lights go on, the image is astonishingly sharp. We'd say beautiful, if not for the fact that much of the movie's set in a squalid murder dungeon. Reasoning that there wasn't a lot of fast motion, we watched it in 1080i for extra resolution, with the 1.85:1 aspect ratio filling our 43' plasma to bursting. Colour separation over HDMI is stark and bold, particularly noticeable when blood pools on the white tiles. Standout moment: the camera panning over the corpse in the middle of the room, revealing his ruined skull in all its high-def glory. It's so detailed, you can pick out individual hairs in the mess. "I can see inside his brain," muttered George. And he was absolutely right.

HOUSE OF FLYING DAGGERS

Looked gorgeous enough on DVD, and if we're honest, the improvements offered by Blu-ray are less obvious here than with other discs tested. Picture quality is obviously dependent on the source material, and in this case the result is a fine patina of grain on the image. Nonetheless, scenes such as the 'echo game' – in which Ziyi Zhang's dancer beats out a rhythm from the centre of a circle of drums using her flowing sleeves – look astonishing. Movement is creamy smooth, and the detail in her costume and the background is never muddled. Also superb is the scene in the bamboo. It's a feast for the eyes and ears – with incredible fidelity as the bamboo splinters in slo-mo, and meaty thumps and thwacks delivered in 5.1 surround sound over HDMI.

HITCH

Glossy rom-coms aren't the most obvious genre to test high-end AV kit, but the close-ups let us examine the complexions of A-listers in minute detail. Rumours that HD will create a nightmare for make-up artists prove exaggerated. You can see individual pores on their skin, but beyond slight crow's feet around Will Smith's eyes and a charming mole on Eva Mendes' left cheek, both stars look as glittery as ever. Also impressive are the rich colours during the bustling restaurant scenes, and the fine spray of water from Hitch's jet-ski. (Dating hint: if you're taking a girl down memory lane, make sure said lane isn't inhabited by evil criminals.)

UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION

The film might be lousy, but feel the quality of the transfer. Blacks are deep and lustrous, with no sign of digital artifacts (blocky glitches that occur when images are compressed) despite the high contrast lighting. Check out the glinting swords in the medieval flashback, or the shine reflected by Beckinsale's rubber-coated arse. We watched in 720p, so there'll be another hike once it's running in 1080p. Most impressive is how smoothly motion is tracked during action scenes. How smooth? Allow us to refer you to that arse again.

THE FUTURE SMELLS LIKE COCONUTS!

That's what the Blu-ray recordable disc we were sent smelt of! Seriously! To be precise, Ambre Solaire suntan lotion – sweet, oily and coconutty. Maybe it's the ultra-hard Durabis coating? Maybe it's toxic? Who cares, it smells better than a DVD

THE BIG PLAYERS

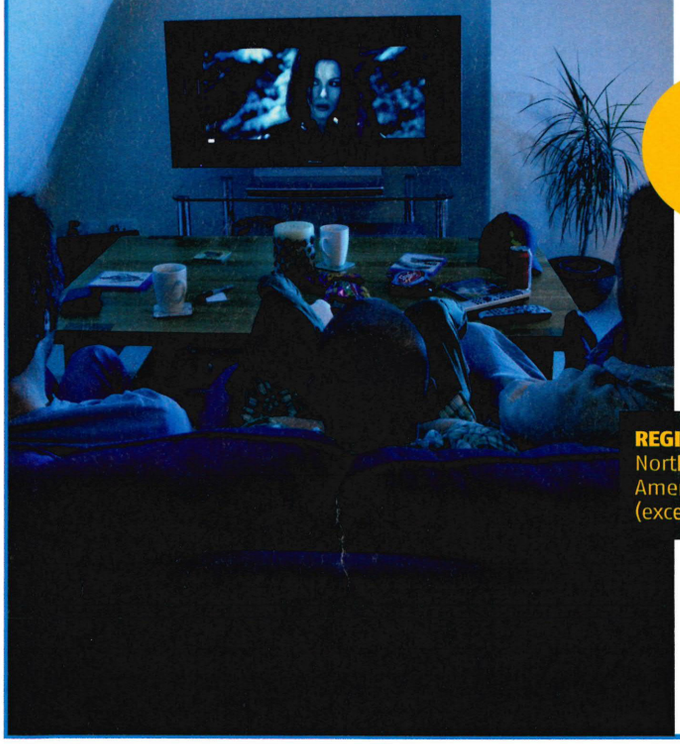
Here are the first three standalone Blu-ray players due in the UK this winter. That sound? Your wallet screaming

SAMSUNG BD-P1000 (US PRICE) $999.99

After Sony decided to delay its Blu-ray player until late October, the Sammy became the first standalone unit to hit US shops. As first in, we assume that in 12 months time it'll seem a bit basic. Aside from looking sexy, it features an '11 in 2' multi-format memory card slot that lets you view pictures and movie clips stored on your camcorder or digital camera. You can also 'upscale' the resolution of your existing DVDs to 1080p, although there's some debate on the geek forums as to whether this really results in a significantly better picture.

THE BIG BLU QS

Out-geek anyone with our guide to how the magic works



1 WHY CAN BLU-RAY HOLD SO MUCH MORE DATA THAN A DVD?

First and foremost it's down to the laser used to read the disc. Blu-ray discs are read using a blue-violet laser which operates at a wavelength of 405nm compared to DVD which uses red lasers at 650nm. In plain English this means the 'spot' that a blue/violet laser can be focused on is substantially smaller than that of a red laser, allowing more information to be stored in the same area. Because of the way Blu-ray discs are constructed (the data is very close to the surface) early prototypes were found to be prone to damage from dust and scratches. Initially, they were housed in cumbersome plastic caddies for protection (a bit like a UMD or MiniDisc) but the Blu-ray consortium responsible for its development decided this could hinder their appeal. A special ultra-hard coating called Durabis was developed which, according to a Samsung spokesperson, means Blu-ray is resistant to a good scrubbing with wire wool. We'll be the judge of that.

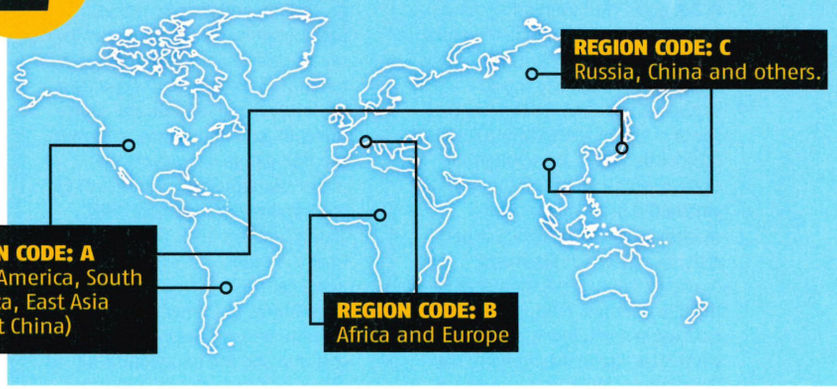
Another factor in Blu-ray's high storage capacity is the 'codec' used to compress the movie data onto the disc. Blu-ray players are required to decode MPEG-2 (the standard used for DVD) plus two newer, more efficient codecs H.264 and VC1. Essentially, these 'codecs' are used to squash the raw movie files into a format small enough to fit on the disc. Typically, using MPEG-2 you can fit two hours of high-definition footage onto a regular Blu-ray disc, while H.264 and VC1 allow for double that. Clearly, using the MPEG-2 option, this leaves very little space for the disc to carry extra content, suggesting dual or triple-layer discs will soon become the norm.

ANYTHING ELSE?

Another key difference between Blu-ray and DVD is the way menu systems, subtitles and other interactive content is created on the disc. On DVD the system was quite primitive, basically using small looping movie files, but Blu-ray will use a cross-platform software environment called BD-Java (the type used to make websites rather than coffee). This allows the Blu-ray disc to access the Internet to add extra content like subtitle languages and other features not included on the original disc. It will also facilitate the creation of funkier menu screens. Yes!

2 ARE BLU-RAY DISCS REGION ENCODED?

Yes, but not in the same way that DVDs are. These are the new codes:



3 CAN YOU PLAY DVDS AND OTHER DISCS IN A BLU-RAY PLAYER?

This will be down to individual manufacturers to decide, but the first wave of standalone Blu-ray players offer backwards compatibility with CDs and DVDs, so we fully expect that to remain the case. The PS3 will also offer full compatibility with PS2 games, DVDs and other mainstream disc formats. Interestingly, electronics company JVC is working on a Blu-ray disc that will contain both a DVD version and a Blu-ray version of movies on the same disc.

SONY BDP-S1 (US PRICE) $999.99

Like the Samsung player, the feature list for the Sony player is pretty lightweight but it gets top marks for its fancy blue glass panel. Features wise, it's much the same as the Samsung – although the delayed release date should mean that the Sony player can take advantage of the planned improvement to the HDMI standard (check out http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HDMI) due to come into effect towards the end of the year. The BDP-S1 can also play DVD/DVD+R/+RW formats, MP3 files, and display JPEG images. But chances are, so can your current DVD player.

PIONEER BDP-HD1 (EXPECTED PRICE) £899.99

This is part of Pioneer's Elite series, and that's exactly what the price is. Again, it'll upscale your DVDs and looks every inch a serious piece of high-end home cinema kit. Otherwise there's little to differentiate the three in terms of features. The best argument for buying this player is its companion screen: the top-of-the-range 1080p Pioneer plasma PDP-5000EX (£6,000), which is the only true 1080p TV in the UK at the moment. They make a handsome couple.

4 HOW LONG BEFORE I SEE BLU-RAY DISCS BEING SOLD DOWN THE CAR BOOT SALE?

The DVD piracy debacle has led the major movie studios to invest heavily in ensuring the next-generation of disc media is locked up like a Supermax prison. The result is a slew of officious sounding systems and acronyms.

BD+

This is the copy-protection system which, if cracked, can be updated on subsequent discs. With DVD, once pirates had cracked the copy protection, all other DVDs could then be ripped. The ability to change the 'keys' used to encrypt Blu-ray means this could never happen on the next-gen disc.

SPDC (Self-Protecting Digital Content)

This is the funny one – first reports suggested pirated discs would cause the unsuspecting copyright thief's Blu-ray player to CATCH ON FIRE. In fact it looks like it will just disable players judged to be using 'bad discs' in some way. Probably not with fire.

ROM-Mark

This is a watermark put on legitimately copied discs. Any ROM-producing device (a burner for example) will be able to detect a watermark and refuse to make a copy of it. Car boot pirates will hate this.

ICT (Image Constraint Token)

Perhaps the most controversial system, this is in place to prevent Blu-ray appliances outputting on unencrypted interfaces. Essentially, this means the output of a Blu-ray movie is limited to a ropey 960x540 resolution if the devices in question don't support HDCP (High-bandwidth Digital Content Protection). This caused questions to be raised over the PS3's Blu-ray capabilities when it was noticed the cheaper 20GB version has no HDMI port (the connection that utilises HDCP). Sony subsequently revealed a high-definition signal would still be viable with a component cable as it has no plans to down-convert using ICT. Similar statements have been issued by the major Hollywood studios conveying their lack of support for ICT. For now at least, movies will play in sexy high-def on either type of cable.

5 720p, 1080i, 1080p... WTF?

These represent designated high-definition video modes. The current standard being offered for HD-ready TVs is 720p and 1080i. There are currently very few TVs available that can display 1080p – which is the maximum HD resolution, and is supported by Blu-ray discs. Those TVs you can buy are prohibitively expensive (£6,000+). The good news is that 720p is perfectly adequate and gives an image noticeably sharper than DVD's. The key differences between these modes are screen resolution and the way the picture is created. 720p, for example, refers to a mode with a horizontal display resolution of 1,280 dots and a frame resolution of 1280 x 720 (just short of one million pixels). The 'p' is short for 'progressive', which means one whole frame of a movie is updated at a time creating a very stable image. 1080i uses more pixels but is 'interlaced'. This means only half the frame is updated at a time. This is visible in standard definition TV (which is interlaced) if you take a photo of the TV; the resulting image shows two frames merged into one.

6 HOW MUCH DO BLU-RAY PLAYERS COST AND WHEN CAN I GET ONE?

The Samsung BD-P1000 is currently on sale in the US for $999 (£550) but currently no price or release date has been set for a UK launch. However, select audio visual retailers are listing Blu-ray players in the £800-900 region with an estimated arrival of September, making the £425 PS3 seem like a proper bargain.

REX FEATURES

7 MORE LINES MEANS BETTER, YES?

The thinking is that 1080i is better for watching stuff with minimal movement, as interlacing can cause slight flickering when viewing fast-moving images like sport. To the naked eye, though, there's little noticeable difference between the two. 1080p, which the PS3 will be capable of outputting, will be the superior option but due to the large amount of data it shifts around, the only way to view 1080p movies is from a Blu-ray disc. No TV companies have plans to broadcast in 1080p. Sky HD, for example, broadcasts in 1080i and 720p.

8 WHAT WILL I BE ABLE TO WATCH MY BLU-RAY DISCS ON?

Any HD-compatible TV will be able to display Blu-ray movies at 720p or 1080i, but if you're after full 1080p playback it's going to cost significantly more. Always check that the set you want to buy is badged with the HD-ready logo, as what seems like a bargain could be an unscrupulous retailer trying to offload non-HD flat panel screens to confused punters.

THE OPS2 VERDICT

In all honesty I've been a bit of a HD cynic, mainly because I resent the idea of being forced to spend more money on a new TV and disc format when my DVD player and old-school TV work very well already. However, having watched a few Blu-ray discs on a quality plasma I can certainly appreciate the difference. The bottom line is the image is tangibly clearer and more stable, and edges of objects and people are better defined. If you want to see the lines on Will Smith's face then Blu-ray lets you.

George Walter, Disc Editor

As the mag's biggest techno whore, I'm willing to pay stupid money for any improvement in picture quality and was pretty much sold on Blu-ray already. It's clear from what we saw that there is a real step-change in clarity, but it'd be naive to expect the same difference as you got when upgrading from VHS to DVD. The key for me, though, is that Blu-ray movies are just the glacé cherry on PS3's gaming cake. It's not a case of replacing your DVD collection, because the PS3 will still play them too. But when you come to buy new movies, PS3 owners are naturally going to choose the sex-o-ramic Blu-ray version. And that's why the haters are wrong, and Blu-ray won't be another Betamax. Promise.

Tim Clark, Editor

It definitely looked sharper than DVD, but I'm not sure if that's to do with Tim's mahoosive telly rather than the switch in format. Can't wait to see some movies that have been filmed digitally with HD in mind. Reckon a high-speed action flick like *The Fast And The Furious: Tokyo Drift* on Blu-ray will look trick as fook. Shame the plot will still be rubbish though.

'Gangsta' Al Wardle, Deputy Art Editor

PUBLISHER: EA **PLATFORMS:** PS2, PSP **RELEASED:** 29 SEPTEMBER

WORDS: BEN WILSON

Another year, another *FIFA*. Think *Pro Evo* will give it a whipping? We're not so sure. Thing is...

THEY'VE FIXED THE BALL!

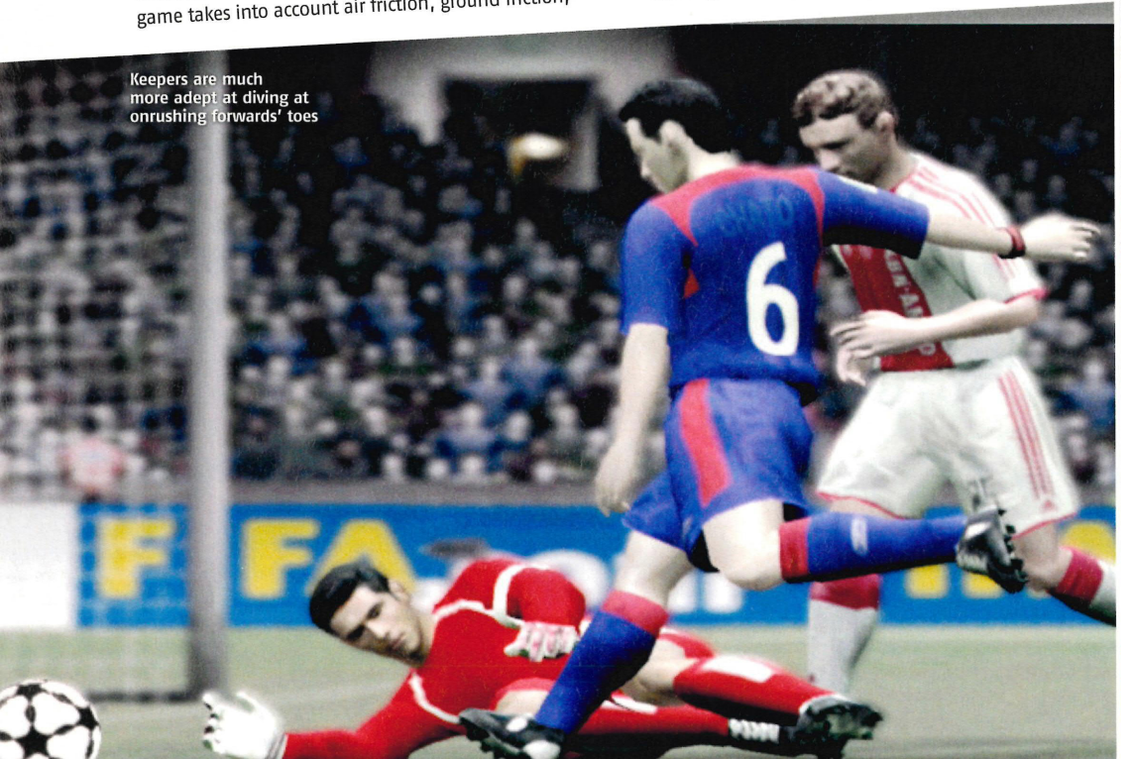
FIFA 07

That's right, Wayne, just pretend it's Ronaldo's tear-slicked face

Advanced maths wasn't our strongest subject at school, so we're a little surprised to be sat in a Vancouver development studio on a stifling hot summer's morning learning about algorithms and vectors. But there is method to the numerical madness: it's all about *FIFA 07*'s new ball physics – the biggest change to the series in years. See, the ball's direction is no longer determined by a series of pre-set animations. Instead, every time you touch the ball the game takes into account air friction, ground friction, bounce friction, skidding friction, sidespin, backspin, topspin and reverse swing. Wait, wrong sport. Point is, the ball now ricochets off knees, goalposts, keepers' fingertips and advertising hoardings at angles that look completely lifelike. The days of the ball sticking to players' feet like used gum seem to be gone for good.

From this new feature, everything else flows. The accuracy of shots and headers is now dependent on a mixture of timing and the direction your player is facing. This might not seem a major innovation given that *PES* has done something similar for years, but EA had to incorporate it to reach the next level. And with a new attitude – where making a simple, playable football game is more important than banding around buzz words – they're in an unusually strong position to do so.

Despite a history of false dawns (critically, at least – the game still rules the sales charts mercilessly) this year's *FIFA* is shaping up beautifully. The developers have drawn on the many improvements made by *2006 FIFA World Cup* (made by a separate team within EA Canada) and



Keepers are much more adept at diving at onrushing forwards' toes

It's licensed up the wazoo, as expected, and there are tons of tricks to discover

A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF *FIFA*

Wondering how EA turns around its footy games so quickly? Here's the answer...

EA Canada, home of the *FIFA* games

SEPTEMBER 05
While *FIFA 06* gets its final approvals, production staff meet daily for brainstorms on *FIFA 07*. Various staff join from the *FIFA Manager* project based in Germany.

OCTOBER 05
Team analyses early *FIFA 06* sales, then discuss possible changes. The idea of adaptive fan reactions is raised. Work on the first playable build starts.

NOVEMBER 05
Technical plans for new concepts are put together, and there are discussions on how to improve kits. Some stadiums are imported from *2006 FIFA World Cup*, as are that game's player lighting effects.

DECEMBER 05
At this point, some 90% of the game's design is locked down. Amendments to its vast database (like transfers and new teams) begin. Audio team suggest curry but programmers overrule and opt for Chinese.

JANUARY 06
The first playable build is finished, and the pre-production stage of development ends.

FEBRUARY 06
Production begins, as does the war on bugs.

MARCH 06
The team makes constant amendments, and the results of the January transfer window are added to the database.

APRIL 06
Plans for online interactive leagues are put into place and development on them begins. The idea of online rivalries is also introduced. Pizza ordered.

MAY 06
Weekly testing of the interactive leagues begins. The production stage ends and fine tuning *FIFA 07* begins. The team also begin importing next season's new kits.

JUNE 06
FIFA 07 is now close to completion. *OPS2* becomes the first mag in the world to play it. Burgers all round.

Our Ben, pockets bulging with stolen EA stationery

JULY 06
The game goes to beta: from this stage only bug fixes and database amendments will be made.

AUGUST 06
5,000 volunteers test interactive leagues. More kits are added; there are now 1,200 in total. Final release plans are made.

This is the only chance you'll get to see Little Mickey before Christmas

dragged these back across to the main *FIFA* series. Passing and through-balls now feel totally natural. There's a slight whiff of AI assistance when you're knocking the ball around, but it enhances the way the game flows unobtrusively. For instance, Rio Ferdinand will seldom misplace a pass to John Terry across the England back four, regardless of how hard you push ⊗. This means you worry less about making sure every pass reaches its planned destination and more about looking for intricate ways to unlock the opposition. And as the pace of the game is slightly slower than in *World Cup*, you have more time to read the game and react to the movement around you.

Another notable improvement is set-pieces, something neither *FIFA* nor *PES* has ever quite managed to get right. In addition to pushing ← and → to add curl, ↑ now adds topspin to the ball, while pressing ↓ adds backspin. The end result is the ability to stick a cross onto the head of your centre forward and arrow Exocet-style free kicks into the top corner. It's such an effective system that the development team are talking about toning it down a little because, once mastered, it's easy to pull off every time – meaning there's a danger that matches could degenerate into who wins the most set-pieces.

If you've already skipped ahead to our *Pro Evo 6* preview on page 68 you'll know our main criticism is the dodgy keepers. (Bear in mind we're playing a comparatively old version, which Konami insists will be fixed, though.) Nonetheless though, right now the keepers in *FIFA 07* are markedly better. In previous *FIFA* games, the direction of the ball after the keeper touched it was determined by the save animation. Now it's completely context sensitive. (Again, all down to the ball physics.) We saw them pull off brilliant one-handed tips over the bar and dive full stretch to pluck the ball out of the air just as we were ready to leap around celebrating. These keepers also make mistakes when put under pressure. There's no invisible forcefield on crosses here; it's possible to challenge them in the air and force them into an error.

Indeed, going up for high balls has become one of the most fun parts of *FIFA*. The main reason for this is the ability to jostle while the ball is in the air. When challenging for a cross or long goal kick, you're able to nudge your opponent (and improve your position) simply by moving the analogue stick in his direction. In two-player mode it's easy to get carried away and tussle one another out of the path of the ball – not a good thing if you're the last defender and there's an opposition striker waiting to run onto the loose ball. These mini-battles are another element of *FIFA* that feels natural almost instantly.

IT'LL BE EMOTIONAL

One of *FIFA 07*'s more groundbreaking additions is an 'emotion engine' (okay, we take it back about the buzz words – didn't Sony patent this one ages ago anyway?) where home and away fans react differently to everything that happens on the pitch. Take a match we played as Chelsea against Manchester United. Early on, Ruud van Nistelrooy poked United ahead, and one corner of Stamford Bridge erupted. At half time, as Lamps and co trudged off, the home fans booed. But new Blues signing Andriy Shevchenko equalised shortly after half time, before a Michael Ballack brace put Chelsea 3-1 up. Now the home fans were cheering every pass and, in response, we tried to pull off Joe Cole's signature backheel cross. Certain signature tricks – Cristiano Ronaldo's backheel stepover being another example – will only be available when the crowd are buzzing. Not realistic, perhaps, but at least it will stop flash players trying them constantly.

Off the pitch, the online features have been expanded to include something called interactive leagues. Every weekend during the football season, you'll be able to play your real-life side's corresponding fixture, and the game will take every result and collate it into a league table. So if 500 people play West Ham vs Arsenal and West Ham get 300 wins, the Hammers receive the three points. In

Check out Roo's face. It's a picture of concentration – and on PS3, all the players will be able to emote like never before. You'll see them bickering, looking crestfallen after bad misses, and mouthing naughty words to mercurial Frenchmen. Maybe.

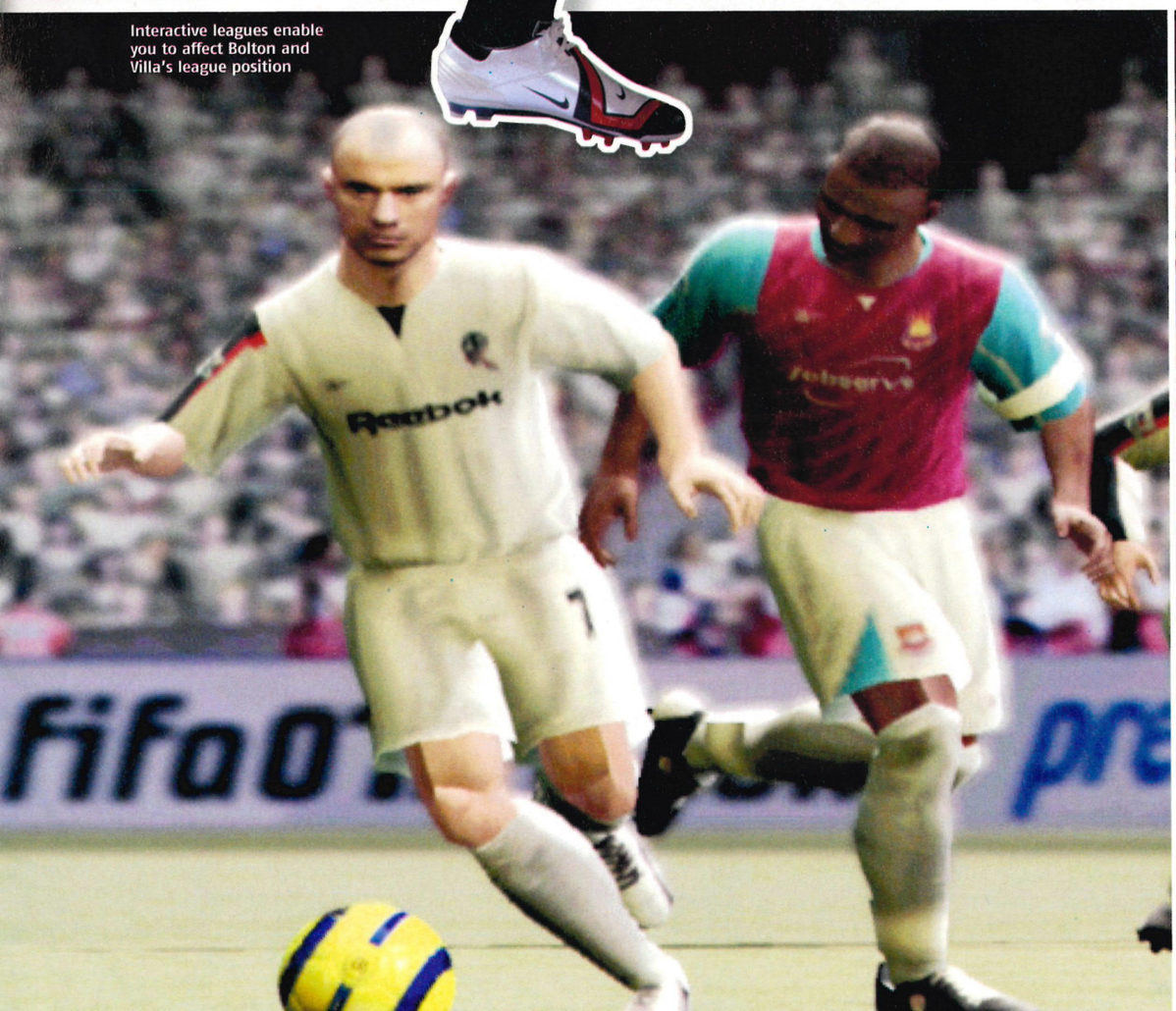
Now that EA has nailed the ball physics, expect to see the team turn its attention to the physicality of the players. Building on the jostling element in *FIFA 07*, you can look forward to more shirt pulling, shoulder-to-shoulder challenges and muscular strikers holding up the ball.

In addition to planting their feet on the pitch realistically, you'll also notice players using the instep, outstep, and the bridge of their foot to strike the ball. So expect to be able to hit a much greater variety of shots.

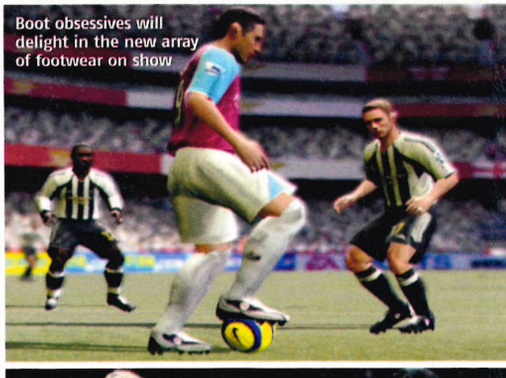
WHAT ABOUT NEXT-GEN?

EA hasn't confirmed any footy games for PS3 yet, but that's like a weatherman saying he can't confirm the sun will come up tomorrow. We did however see some of the 'Authentic Athletic Performance' technology that will be used for next-gen *FIFA*. Players no longer look like they're floating across the pitch; instead, a new 'foot planting' technique enables them to tread like they would in real life, placing their toes on the turf before their ankles come down behind. Players can react to any number of objects in real time – like frowning at a hated opponent, concentrating on the ball, or smiling at Cheryl sunning herself up in row Z. Most importantly, the recurring problem of button presses setting off animations that can't be cancelled has been eliminated. The PS3's extra processing juice means *FIFA 07* can instantaneously cancel an animation and switch to a new one. So no more swearing as a player dives in for a tackle you asked him to do 10 seconds ago.

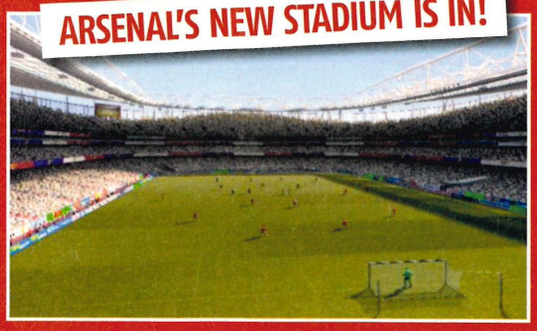
Interactive leagues enable you to affect Bolton and Villa's league position



Boot obsessives will delight in the new array of footwear on show



ARSENAL'S NEW STADIUM IS IN!

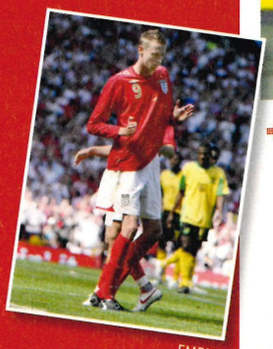


WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

• Peter Crouch's robot dance is definitely in. We've seen it. It looks hilarious.

• The Turkish league has been added, enabling you to play as Galatasaray, Fenerbahce, and the mighty Gaziantepspor.

• A new shot type – activated by holding down L2 and pressing ◎ – enables you to curl the ball towards the corner of the goal. We found it 'a bit fiddly', but the idea's a good one.



EMPICS

• Season mode now features player growth and development. Clearly, someone's been playing *PES*'s Master League.

• You'll now be able to take your Manager Mode game on your travels using PSP. Simply download the data via USB, play as many games as you like, then port it back over to the PS2 and pick up where you left off.

Keepers use any body part possible to deflect the ball clear. Yup, even *that* one

addition, you can try to get one over on one of your club's bitter rivals – so if you're a Liverpool fan and Wigan are playing Everton, you can take charge of the Latics in the hope of denting your rivals' title hopes. The English Premiership, German Bundesliga, French Ligue 1 and Mexican Primera Division (for the yanks, apparently) are the four interactive leagues included in *FIFA 07*.

It's an innovative idea, and assuming it works another feature that will help differentiate *FIFA* from *Pro Evo*. Which brings us again to the all-important question we always end up asking: will this *FIFA* be better than *Pro Evo*? Speaking as Pro Evo diehards, we're so committed to the all-important feel of that game, that we're unlikely to ever shift allegiances. But what's important is that the new *FIFA* doesn't feel like an inferior imitation of *Pro Evo*; it's a different, exciting game in its own right – and one that plays to its own strengths: official licences, instantly accessible gameplay, sky-high production values. We don't mind admitting that this is the first *FIFA* in yonks that's had us actually looking forward to the next game, and the next... A genuine title race? Roll on the new season.

The presentation is classy as ever

"*PRO EVO* IS THE BEST THING THAT'S HAPPENED TO *FIFA*"

FIFA 07 producer Joe Booth explains how he transformed the series - and where it's going next

This *FIFA* feels notably different from *PES*. Was this a direction you took deliberately?
We didn't go out to analyse *PES* and improve on specific areas, we just went out to make a game we enjoyed playing. I think *Pro Evo* is the best thing that's happened to *FIFA* because it's challenged the organisation here to be better. To say we have the best competitor critically is a blessing because it means we're able to focus and get resources to improve our game.

Did you set out to make the best football game or the best-*selling* football game?
They go hand in hand. We're one of the few entertainment industries where there's a strong correlation between quality and sales.

Is developing on PS2 more difficult when you know that PS3 is just around the corner?
No. The way I approached it was to find people who were young, hungry, wanted to work on current-gen, and loved football. I think that's worked. Next-gen developers are having to do engineering that will last six or seven years, whereas we can be more experimental because our technology is stable.

How does the PSP affect your plans?
It goes hand in hand with PS2. We have a team working on the PSP product, and we meet with them every week to discuss how the Manager mode feature will work across platforms. I don't know that it will ever be the case that in the mass market everyone will want both PS2 and PSP versions, but there is a subset of our audience who will want that experience.

One regular criticism of past *FIFA*s is that you don't notice the difference in quality between good sides and poor ones. How have you changed this?
In previous years the difference in class has been down to the gamer's skill, whereas we've pushed more towards the game's attributes being taken into account. If you control Accrington Stanley or Rotherham against Chelsea you'll see a big difference between the teams now.

Keepers have improved greatly this year. Was that an area you identified as a problem early on?
Yeah. If you get the goalkeepers wrong you really notice it and feel cheated. It pulls you right out of the experience. So it's a huge area of focus and something we spend a lot of time on.

How about defensive AI? How have you changed that? You used to be able to drive a bus between the centrebacks.
Yes, it's a lot stronger this year. You have to get the balance right. The hardcore player might want it to be difficult to score, while the casual gamer might want the instant gratification of scoring. I think this is the hardest *FIFA* to score in on PS2.

Do you react to feedback from fans and critics?
Yes. I learn as much talking to my 14-year-old nephew as I do from talking to the *FIFA* Interactive Player Of The Year. A good idea can come from anywhere. I don't think it's not obvious what we need to do, the challenge is how to get there, and you don't necessarily get the innovation from consumers. Our job is to project where football will be in three to five years time and make steps towards that. ■

PUBLISHER: SEGA **PLATFORM:** PS3 **RELEASED:** 2007

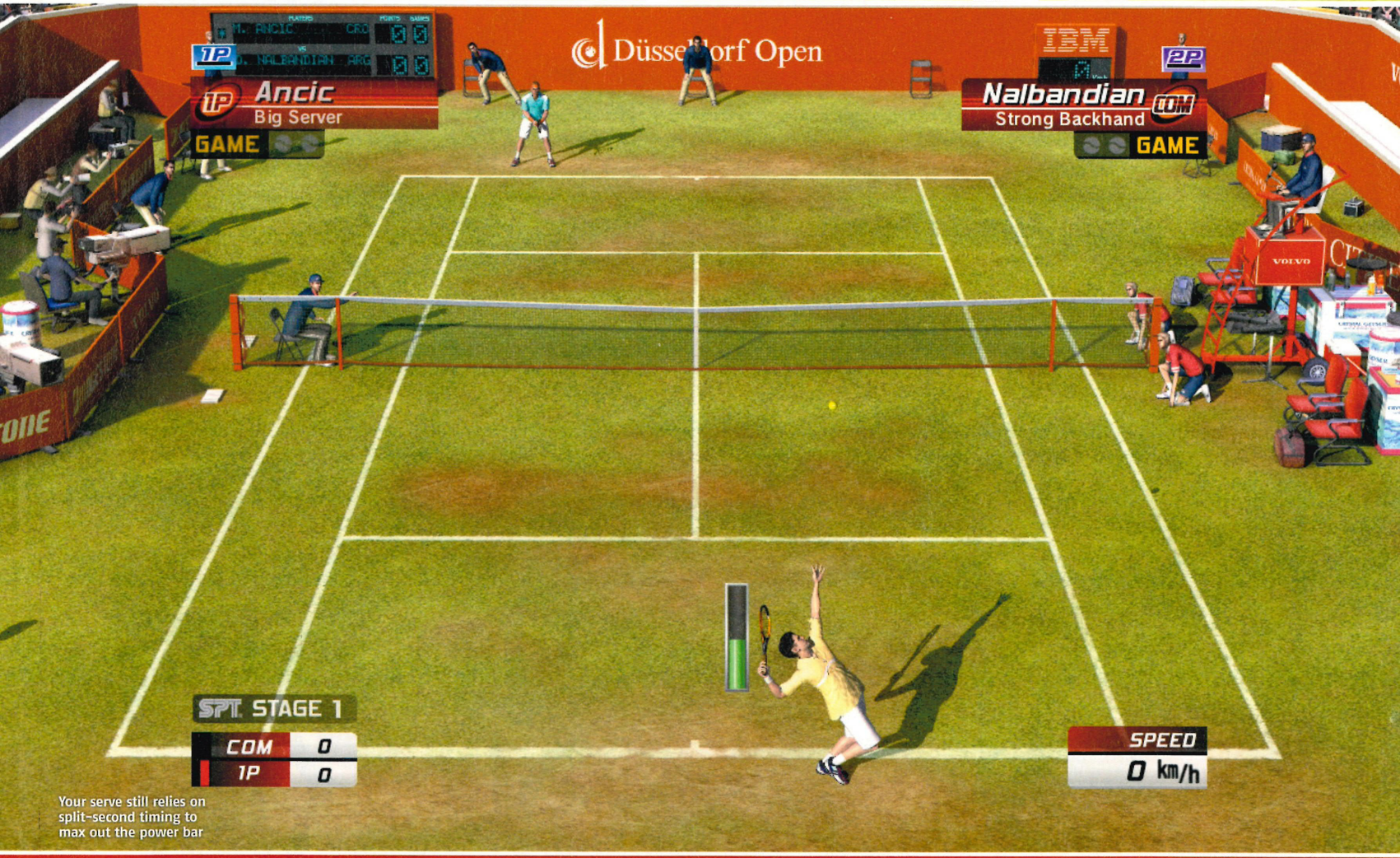
ADVANTAGE PS3!

VIRTUA TENNIS 3 SERVES UP A NEXT-GEN ACE

Your first reaction to Sega's debut next-gen sports game was probably a shrug. Of *course* it looks prettier. Of *course* you can see Sharapova's thighs quivering slightly after a particularly strenuous rally. But shouldn't we demand more? Shouldn't the gameplay be reinvented, too?

Erm... nope. *Virtua Tennis* had the sport nailed from the start. It's simple but deep, and most importantly, ultra-competitive. Which is why, barring the addition of online play, it's almost unchanged on PS3. And we reckon there's nothing wrong with wanting to play a prettified version of one the true classics.

After his last ball landed in next door's garden, Taylor Dent was forced to play pretend tennis



Your serve still relies on split-second timing to max out the power bar

NEW TO THE GAME Two of the latest players confirmed for *Virtua Tennis 3*

JAMES BLAKE

WORLD RANKING: Sixth

A 28-year-old American with a devastating forehand. He first came to prominence challenging world number one Lleyton Hewitt at the 2001 US Open. He once broke his neck during a 2004 training session but managed a full comeback for the 2005 US Open, defeating number two seed Rafael Nadal, before losing to Andre Agassi.

RAFAEL NADAL

WORLD RANKING: Second

One of only three teenagers to reach the number two rank (the others being Boris Becker and Björn Borg). Now 20 years old, this Spaniard has a fearsome topspin shot and almost unlimited reserves of stamina, winning him an advantage in lengthy matches. At the time of writing he holds an unbroken 60-match clay court winning streak.

Plenty of greenery, but thankfully no high-tech PMCs

MATCH POINT

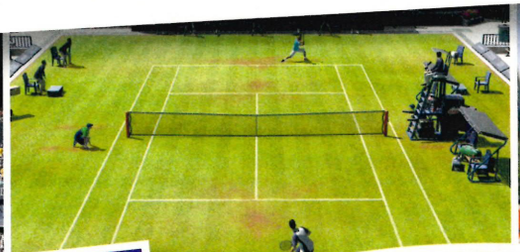
Once you've got over the sheer amount of graphical horsepower trotting around on Sega's centre court (just wait until you see it in motion) it's time to reacquaint yourself with the deceptively simple controls. *Virtua Tennis* is a true test of timing and tactics, rather than having to memorise button combos or wrestle with novelty 'game-breaker' moves. As with previous incarnations of the series, everything is controlled using just three buttons – topspin, slice or lob. Their effectiveness is dependant on how you time your racquet stroke. Tapping a button at the last second, just before the ball hits the strings, creates a gentle, angled shot. While holding the button down for as long as possible enables you to smash the ball back over the net with real venom. *Virtua Tennis* is genius because it mirrors its chosen sport so perfectly, in the sense that you win by intelligently mixing up your shots and court position so as to wrong-foot your opponent.

Core gameplay aside, there are some interesting additions. The Career mode, for example, has been totally revamped with fully customisable characters and a new World Tour mode that sees you entering real-life tournaments like the Milan or Barcelona Open. There's also new training modes to bring your sausage-fingered attempts to smack the ball accurately up to Federer levels of finesse. And there's a new challenge mode, enabling you to earn cash to blow on new gear and equipment. Adding to the previous, less than serious mini-games – walloping cartoon fruit in *Virtua Tennis World Tour* on PSP for example – are more realistic tests of talent that help develop your character. Like striking four lob shots in a row or hitting specific targets on-court as they're called out. It's training that will certainly come in handy if you're going to avoid despondent trudges back to the changing rooms during the new online matches.

PS3 HAS THE EDGE VISUALLY IN COMPARISON WITH XBOX 360

Virtua Tennis 3 is a glorious summer barbecue of a game. Playing it makes you smile, and there's considerably less chance of chucking your guts up two hours later. And as we've possibly already mentioned, it looks a-mazing – with one Sega boffin telling us that PS3 has the edge in a side-by-side comparison with Xbox 360. The impressive roster of courts from around the world are brilliantly detailed and bustling with excited spectators. And each of the top pros on offer – names like Roger Federer, Andy Roddick and Tim 'not now, not ever' Henman – have an extensive range of detailed facial and body animations. Not only do they take shots, dives and serves with alarming realism but they react convincingly to every point they win or lose. But underneath all the impressive layers of next-gen gloss is a game that's doesn't really need to show off. When it's done this well, the simple pleasure of ball against racquet is fantastic entertainment in its own right.

The game looks even lovelier in instant replays



UUURRGGHHAAH!

Recorded at 101.2 decibels, Maria Sharapova's grunting is loud. But how loud? Here are five things the shouty Russian tennis pro could drown out

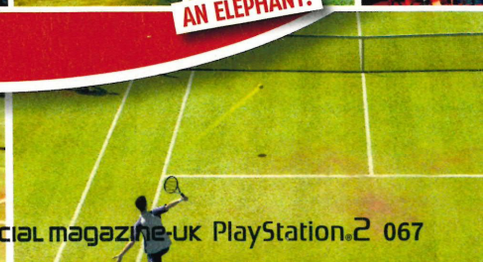
A CHAINSAW!

A CRYING BABY!

A WW2 FIGHTER!

AN ELEPHANT!

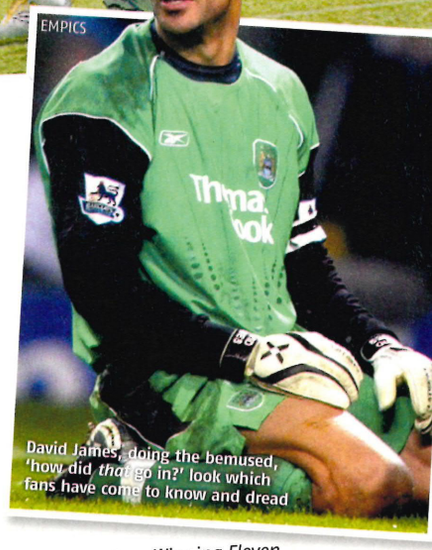
A ROCK BAND!



PUBLISHER: KONAMI **PLATFORM:** PS2 **RELEASED :** OCTOBER

Stevie G plays better than ever, despite his odd new nose job

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6



EMPICS

David James, doing the bemused, 'how did *that* go in?' look which fans have come to know and dread

Dodgy keepers spoiling the beautiful game?

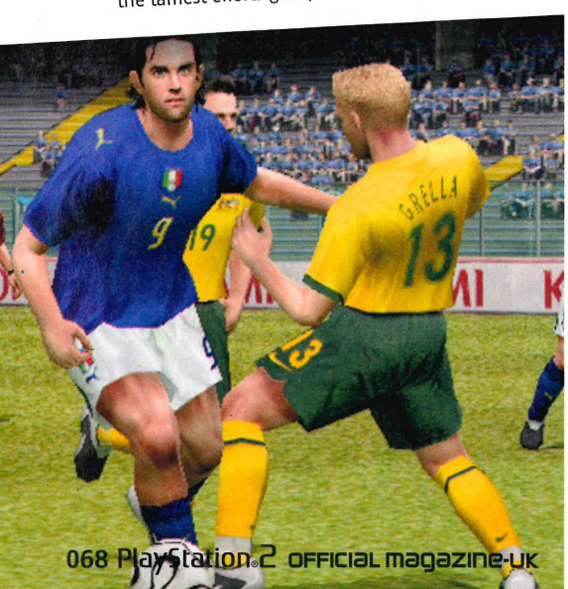
Football is all about the bitter recriminations. We savour the protracted autopsy that accompanies each somehow more inglorious failure. And it doesn't matter how ineptly 'our brave boys' played, what really counts is having a universally agreed scapegoat for the pub pundits to slate. (Bent refs, clueless managers, cheating winkers.) Part of *Pro Evo*'s beauty is that, what with it being a videogame and all, you only ever really have yourself to blame. Face it, there's not much point crying over offside decisions presided over by infallible computerised linesmen. The problem is, this isn't quite the case with *Pro Evo 6*. And our angry finger is pointed directly at the keepers.

In some ways, they're much improved – rushing out of the box to save with their feet, diving to palm shots around the post and distributing the ball much better thanks to the new throw animations. But it all goes David James-shaped if you shoot directly at them. Even the tamest efforts get spilt like a drinks tray on a speedboat, invariably resulting in an easy tap-in for a poaching striker, or – worse – the ball trickling into the net. At first we were furious, howling at the screen. Now we just sort of shrug, in a 'that's not a proper goal, so I'm not even going to feel bad about it' kind of way. The result is that both players end up pinging shots in from unlikely angles, looking for the keeper to mess up.

OLD UNSAFE HANDS

Obviously, this *has* to be sorted, and the good news is that Konami is already working on it. 'Trust Seabass', was the message when we contacted Konami. And we do trust the company's footy supremo, because dodgy keepers aside, *Pro Evo 6* is majestic. The balance between dribbling and passing is near perfect, enabling you to really mix up play, crafting flowing moves full of clever lay-offs and sudden changes of pace. At its best, it's reminiscent of the Argentina versus Serbia and Montenegro match. When we first played the game (then, its Japanese incarnation, *Winning Eleven 10*) we were astonished by how much quicker it seemed than *PES5*. Four months on, we don't notice the speed. It just feels right – smooth, responsive, elegant. Which makes the unreliable stoppers all the more annoying.

There's another fix that's required, though. The shooting system is largely the same as last year – meaning the emphasis is on body shape as you strike the ball – but there's an unwelcome tendency to fluff the simplest chances. (Older readers: think Ronny Rosenthal's calamitous open-goal miss.) The occasional clanger is fine – we've all spent Saturdays watching millionaires shank sitters – but it happens unrealistically often in *PES6*. So, work to do for our favourite footy game – particularly given the progress made by *FIFA*. But we're talking about minor tweaks, rather than major surgery. *Pro Evo*'s continued brilliance remains the surest thing this side of Shevchenko 'posing questions' for the Watford defence.



Spain is one of nine officially licensed international sides

Players shift their weight realistically when curling shots towards goal

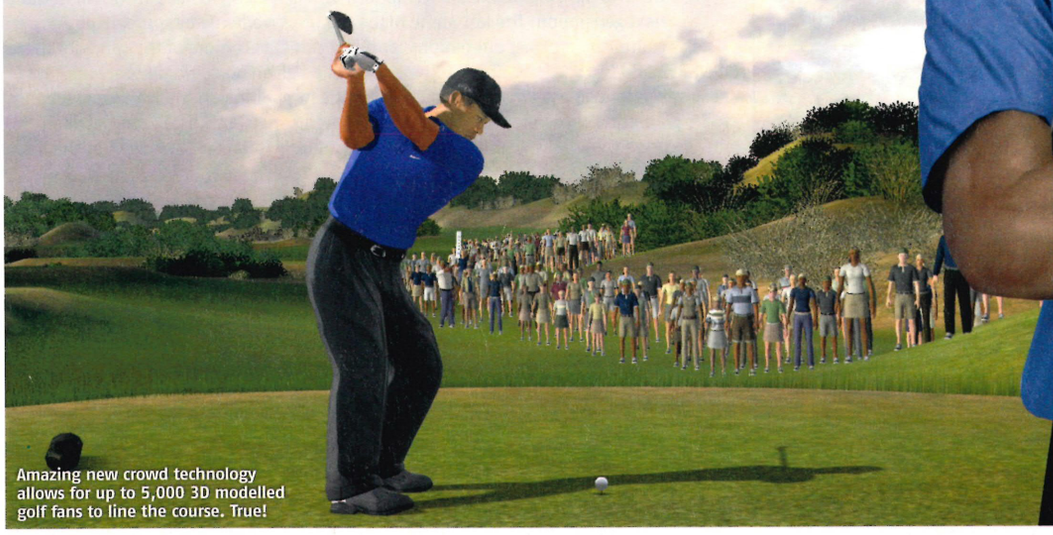
The swerve-tastic Adidas +Teamgeist World Cup ball is included

Iker's one of the better keepers, but still prone to big mess-ups

TIGER WOODS 07

Well done Tiger, you're officially the most next-gen sportsman in the world. EA's Universal Capture (UCAP) has been used to record every perceptible motion in Tiger's body and face – and it's a proper showstopper. When he smiles or grimaces or flicks the ball up on his club it's like the PS3 is winking at you. In fact, EA is so proud of the exemplary likeness, it's incorporated a new picture-in-picture mode that relays his emotion-laden face as the ball flies through the air. Tiger's surroundings now use a more muted, naturalistic palette for grass and foliage and constantly shifting clouds cast shadows on the fairway. Even the on-screen display has been tidied up to allow the TV-style presentation space to breathe. Elsewhere, a new aiming system uses a ring-shaped marker, indicating the area your ball could end up in, the ring changing size depending on club selection and player skill – do you risk the inaccuracy of a driver over the reduced distance yet precise aiming of a long iron? Meanwhile, over on PS2, *07* introduces team-based gameplay culminating in a Ryder Cup-style tournament against Tiger and his men in new course addition, The K Club.

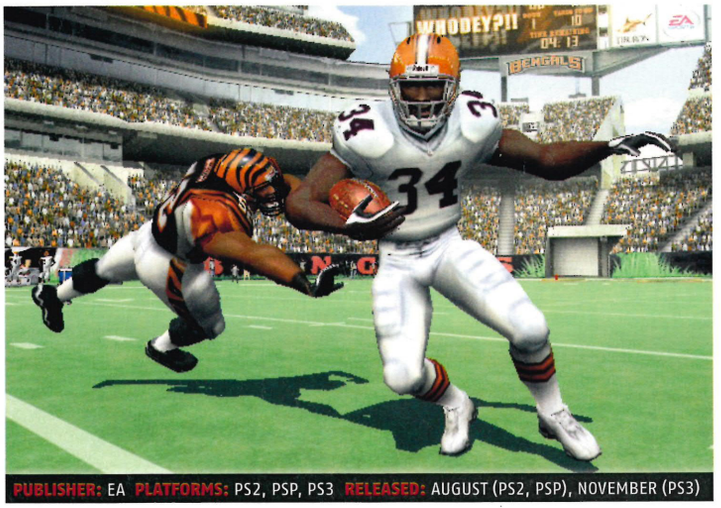
PUBLISHER: EA **PLATFORMS:** PS3, PS2 **RELEASED:** NOVEMBER



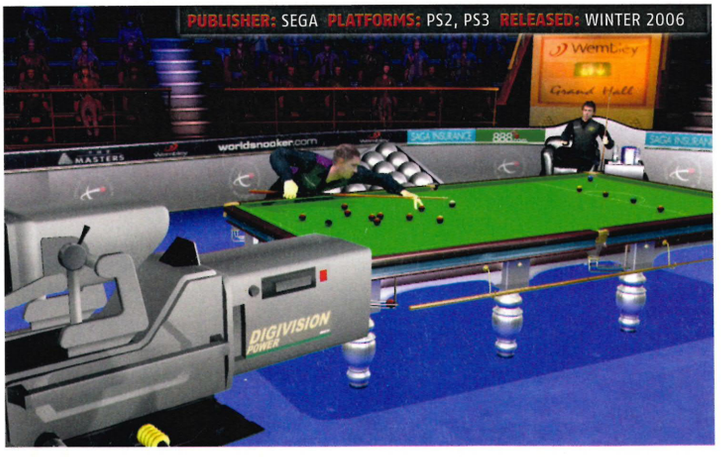
Amazing new crowd technology allows for up to 5,000 3D modelled golf fans to line the course. True!

MADDEN NFL 07

Cherished by stateside gridiron nuts, PS3 *Madden* would sell by the lorryload even if it only featured a roster update and slightly shinier graphics. (As *Madden 06* on Xbox 360 proved.) While the *07* instalment will inevitably feature the latest draft picks and star players, it's much more than just an update. Particular focus has been placed on the running game, to balance out the age-old problem of passing being a much more effective means of scoring. You're now able to switch control between team members while attacking (rather than just controlling the man in possession) in order to block opponents and help him break through the opposition. The other major change has come off the pitch, where interactive 'mini camps' enable you to improve your players on an individual basis using mini-games like bench pressing and short sprints. This promises to add further depth to the already gargantuan Franchise mode, and to say we're a bit excited is an offensive linesman-sized understatement.



PUBLISHER: EA **PLATFORMS:** PS2, PSP, PS3 **RELEASED:** AUGUST (PS2, PSP), NOVEMBER (PS3)



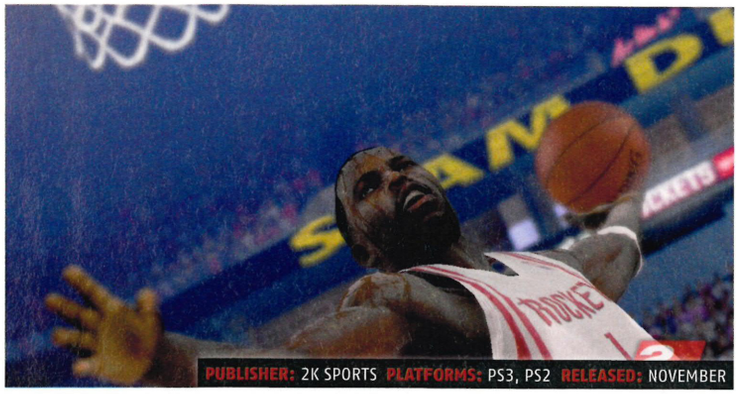
PUBLISHER: SEGA **PLATFORMS:** PS2, PS3 **RELEASED:** WINTER 2006

WORLD SNOOKER CHAMPIONSHIP

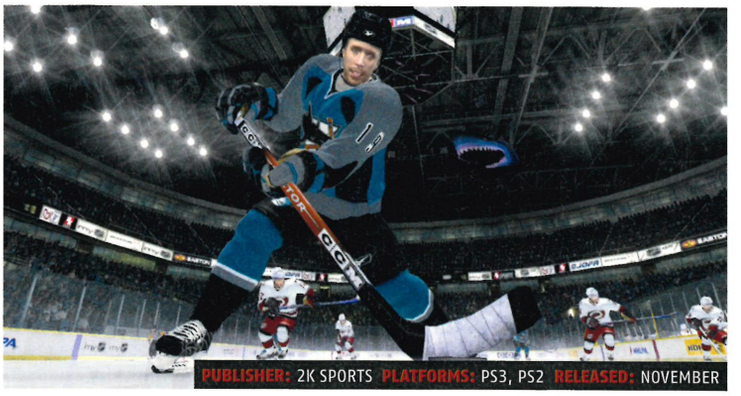
We don't reckon *World Snooker Championship* is going to stretch the power of the PS3, but we're still looking forward to spending quiet evenings chalking our digital cues and listening to the muted thunk of balls rebounding off the cushion accompanied by the occasional cough from the hushed crowd. Why? Because it's being handled by the same developer as the previous *WSC* games, Blade Interactive – and those boys know their snooker. This means the basics (ball physics, commentary and presentation) are certain to be spot on. The Pool side of the game will see the most new features, with the introduction of real-life stars and tournaments. They'll join the 104 snooker players and ten official tournaments already in place. The previously limited create-a-player system has also been given a significant overhaul, so you can now turn your own likeness into a shiny-skinned, next-gen sticksman.

NBA 2K7

Featuring insanely in-depth sim options and fantastically smooth animations the *NBA 2K* series has long been the true hoops fan's game of choice. The *Pro Evo* of basketball, if you will – only with a full roster of licences. And this year enthusiasts are in for a serious treat as the series makes the crossover to PS3. *NBA 2K7* is going high-def, so we're expecting eerie likenesses of the NBA's stars – extra shiny sweat, flawless ball and clothing physics, and the look of supreme arrogance on Kobe's face as he carries the Lakers to the playoffs again.



PUBLISHER: 2K SPORTS **PLATFORMS:** PS3, PS2 **RELEASED:** NOVEMBER



PUBLISHER: 2K SPORTS **PLATFORMS:** PS3, PS2 **RELEASED:** NOVEMBER

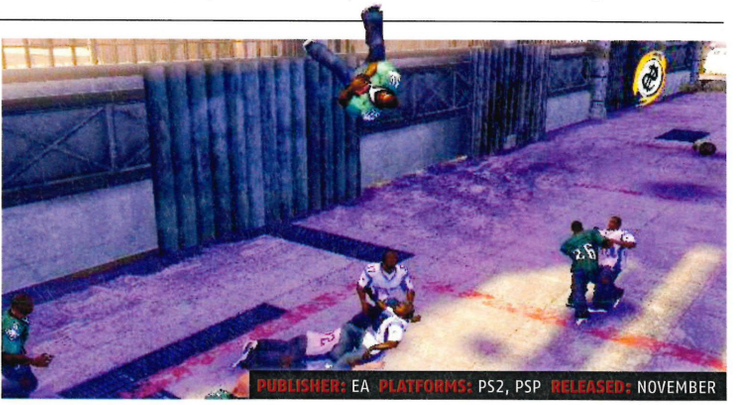
NHL 2K7

NHL 2K is the king of console ice hockey, and is looking to keep its crown in the next generation. The last game made big improvements by sprucing up keeper controls and player animations, and you can expect more of the same for the new PS2 and PS3 versions. The stadiums have been given an overhaul too, and now each spectator will react independently to what's happening on the ice. Hopefully the PS3's graphical firepower will mean that when fights inevitably break out between meatheaded Canadians, you'll be able to pick out individual teeth wedged in the ice.

STACKED WITH DANIEL NEGREANU

There seems to be a new poker game on PS2 every month, but believe us, *Stacked* is the daddy of the card sharks. Featuring pro player Daniel Negreanu this one is more masterclass than game. It has over 45 minutes of video footage featuring the man himself, and AI so devious that it'll learn your weaknesses and figure out ways to exploit them. [What, booze and women? – ed.] It'll also tell you about its moves to help you become a better player – but only after it's taken the kids' college fund.

PUBLISHER: EIDOS **PLATFORMS:** PS2, PSP **RELEASED:** NOVEMBER



PUBLISHER: EA **PLATFORMS:** PS2, PSP **RELEASED:** NOVEMBER

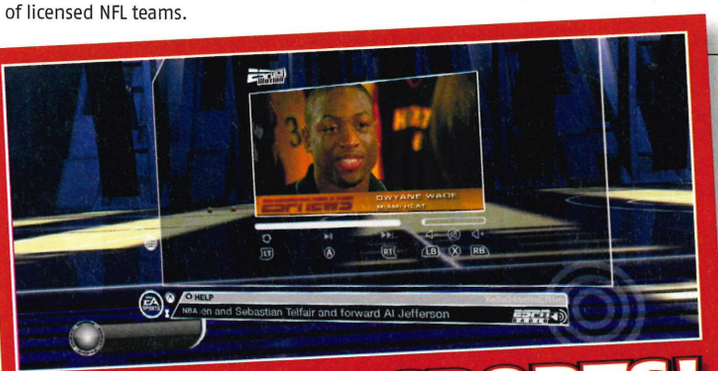
NFL STREET 3

Stop making that face. EA's urban American footy franchise is more fun than you assume. This year's model focuses on aerial moves. You can jump off walls as per *NFL Street 2*, but now you can also use random parts of the scenery (barrels, crates, bins) to launch your player over tackles. Gamebreakers have been bulked up too, and now you can execute defensive moves such as long-range interceptions and last-ditch covering tackles. There's also a couple of new mini-games and a fresh career mode called Respect The Street, which sees you squaring off against a full complement of licensed NFL teams.

LMA MANAGER

This year's instalment of *LMA* is about evolution rather than revolution. Many of the changes are cosmetic, with the game undergoing a complete reskin, and new grounds such as Wembley and the gunners' Emirates Stadium included. There are *some* gameplay tweaks: the training model has been completely reworked so that you can assign individual drills to specific players and host training matches, while new custom tactics enable you to play like '70s pass masters Liverpool, or hoof-the ball up to the 'big man' like, erm, '00s Liverpool.

PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS **PLATFORM:** PS2 **RELEASED:** SEPTEMBER



FEED ME SPORTS!

Who says Electronic Arts never innovates? Its new mega-deal with ESPN is undoubtedly the result of its financial muscle, but it's trailblazing a feature that will become commonplace in the 'always on' networked world of the next generation. The concept is simple: ESPN appears as an option in the menu of EA Sports games. Select it and a series of media feeds (press releases, news stories, radio shows and TV clips) appear that can be downloaded and played within the game environment – even during the game action. The first title this will appear in is *NBA Live 07* on 360, but the system will also be used in PS2 titles (as long as you have an online connection) and on PSP and PS3. It's yet to be announced what kind of content will be offered for the UK games (ESPN has a heavy American sports bias) but a live Soccernet feed (the site is owned by ESPN) in *FIFA 07* surely can't be out of the question.

PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS PLATFORM: PS2 RELEASED: MARCH 2007

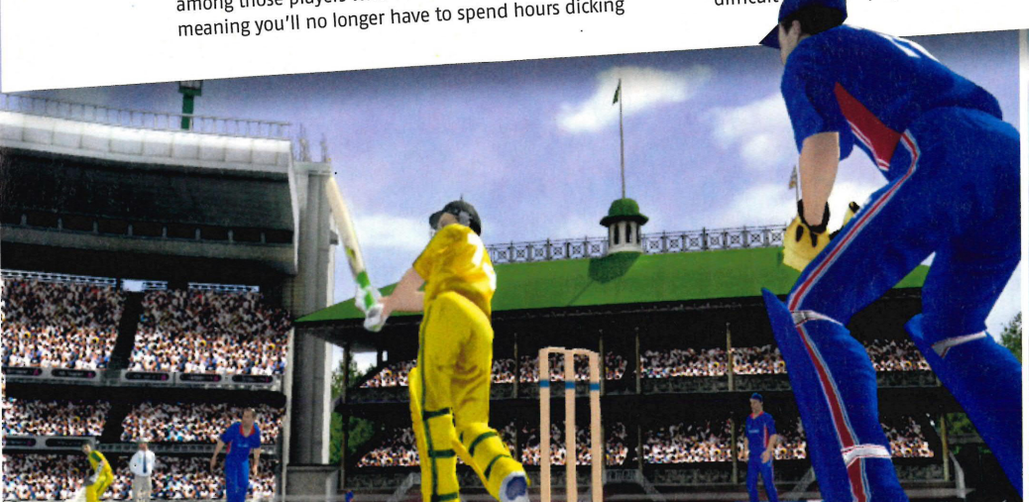
The ball now scuffs up after prolonged bowling. Or interference using a set of keys

BRIAN LARA INTERNATIONAL CRICKET 2007

Last year's smash is back at the crease

If one thing marred *Brian Lara*'s otherwise glorious return to the land of games last year, it was a glaring lack of authenticity. Only the World Cup and Champions Trophy mode in *BLIC 2005* featured real player names, and even then the rosters were two years out of date – with the England side still featuring long retired former captains Alec Stewart and Nasser Hussain. To counteract this problem, *Lara 2007* – released to tie in with next year's World Cup in the West Indies – will feature hundreds of real player likenesses. Andrew Flintoff, Ricky Ponting, Muttiah Muralitharan and Mahendra Dhoni are among those players who've already been signed up, meaning you'll no longer have to spend hours dicking around with the editor before you can get started. All eight of the Caribbean's World Cup stadia will also feature.

There are improvements out on the pitch too. Instead of staying glued to the crease, you can now advance down the wicket in order to attempt that big slog for six; you'll also be able to sneakily sweep spin bowlers. Fielder reactions have been improved so that slips now take amazing reflex catches like that legendary Andrew Strauss effort against Australia, and the ball now degrades over time – making Matthew Hoggard's reverse swing especially lethal. Also promised is more wear and tear on the wicket itself, so Shane Warne's mix of leg spinners, flippers and googlies will be even more difficult to play over a five-day test match. Great! ■



Lara on his way to *another* double ton against England

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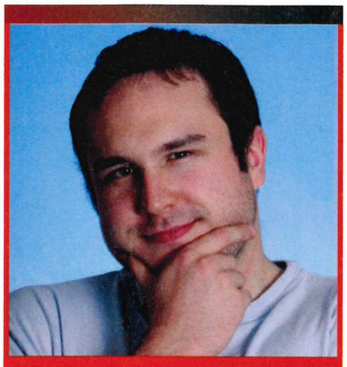
review

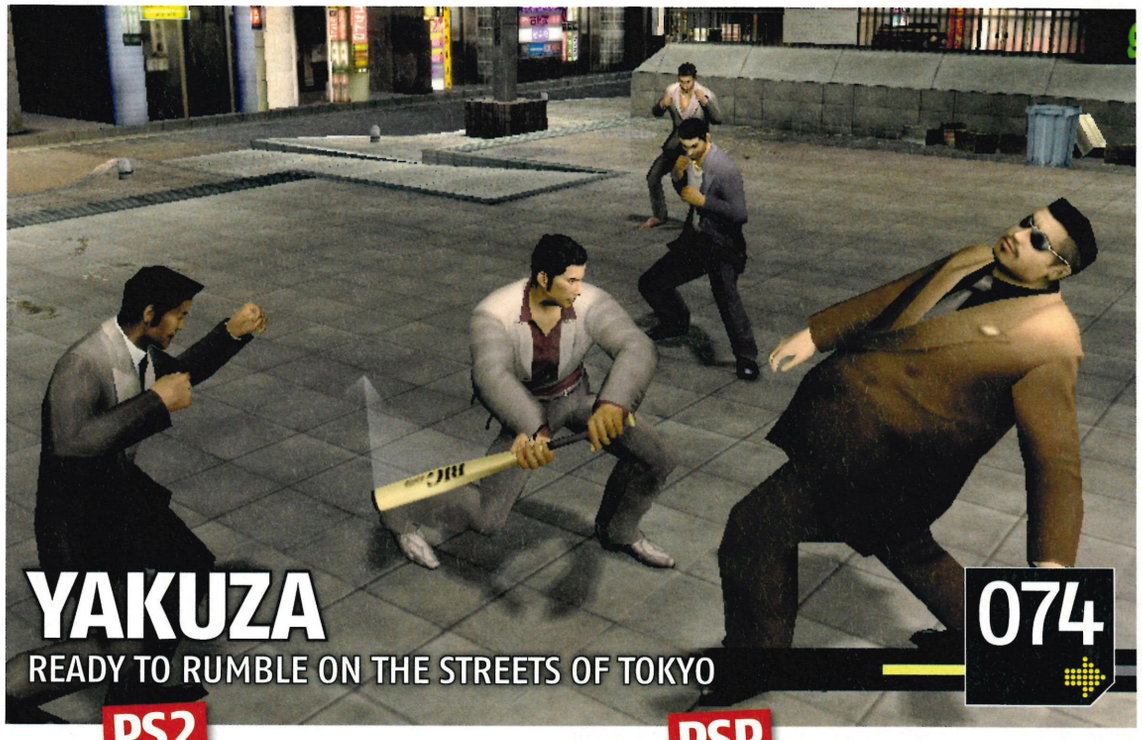
THE ONLY REVIEWS SECTION YOU CAN TRUST – AND THAT'S OFFICIAL



It's been an odd summer for games. With most developers working flat-out on PS3 titles – while trying to catch glimpses of the World Cup and Wimbledon – there have been few big-name releases to rival offerings from earlier in the year like *Black*, *Tomb Raider: Legend* and *Hitman: Blood Money*. But it's August now and the annual Christmas blowout is just four short months away, meaning the battle for your cash is about to begin all over again.

In fact, the big games are already starting to arrive. First to wade in with fists flying is *Tekken: Dark Resurrection*, and if every major pre-Yuletide release is as good as this one, then we're in for a cracking time. Find out exactly why every PSP owner must own this game in our review, which begins on page 80.

Ben Wilson,
Games editor



YAKUZA

READY TO RUMBLE ON THE STREETS OF TOKYO

074

PS2

085 **REAL WORLD GOLF 2007**
Gametrak's revolutionary/gimmicky controller returns for more imaginary ball-pinging fun

085 **LET'S MAKE A SOCCER TEAM!**
The name's close to genius, but can this quirky management sim compete with the likes of *LMA*

088 **CARS**
Disney's big summer movie motors onto PS2, with surprisingly playable results

089 **SINGSTAR ANTHEMS**
Any game featuring Bonnie Tyler's *Total Eclipse Of The Heart* simply cannot fail

090 **PROSTROKE GOLF: WORLD TOUR 2007**
Authentic putt-a-thon or proverbial pile of?

094 **PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: THE LEGEND OF JACK SPARROW**
You'll need some strong rum to stomach this

PLUS

094 PANZER ELITE ACTION
095 THE ANT BULLY
095 QUEST FOR SLEEPING BEAUTY
095 SWORDS OF DESTINY
095 CLASSIC BRITISH MOTOR RACING
095 LONDON TAXI: RUSH HOUR
095 21 CARD GAMES

PSP

080 **TEKKEN: DARK RESURRECTION**
Veteran fighter makes spectacular handheld comeback. We've missed you, Heihachi

084 **PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST**
Scurvy-free fun, best played with an eye patch

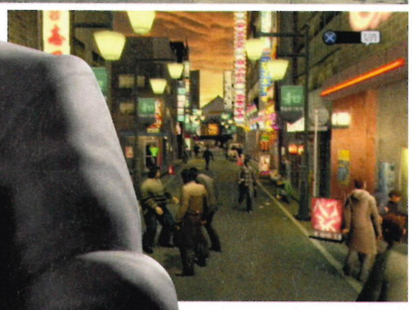
083 **GITAROO MAN LIVES!**
Japanese cult hero button-taps his way onto PSP, but is he just as cool in miniature?

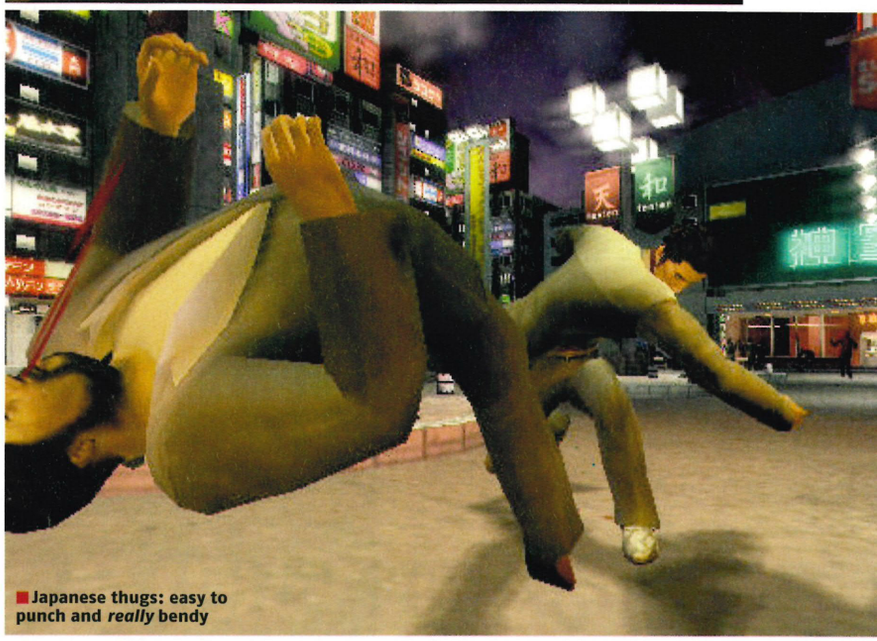
089 **CAROL VORDERMAN'S SUDOKU**
Ubiquitous *Countdown* she-devil presents commuter-pleasing puzzle game

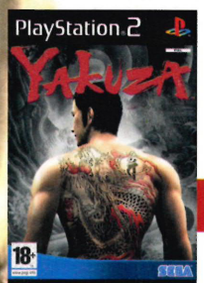
092 **GANGS OF LONDON**
Can this *The Getaway* spinoff swear its way to success

094 **FORMULA ONE 06**
Palm-sized Schumi's still as miserable (and annoyingly good) as ever

This area is based on famous Tokyo shopping district, Shibuya




Japanese thugs: easy to punch and *really* bendy



YAKUZA

Tokyo, tattoos and ten billion missing Yen

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SEGA
DEVELOPER SEGA
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT 15 SEPTEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM/EN/GAME/273.HTM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES
ONLINE NO

AT A GLANCE
A violent action RPG following a former gangster as he drop-kicks his way through the Japanese underworld to track down a missing friend, save a girl and find a misplaced fortune.

The back alleys of *Yakuza*'s fictional Tokyo district offer plenty of distractions. When you're not following the story – a tale of gangsters, revenge and a massive pile of missing cash – you can wander the streets, doing whatever you want. Do you blow your Yen in a casino, or hit some home runs at the baseball batting range? You could buy a burger to boost your health, then flash the cash at a hostess bar where you pay 'top Yen' for 'professional' female company. No funny business, though – just chatting, flirting and ¥300,000 bottles of champagne.

The *Grand Theft Auto* comparisons are obvious. You play a career criminal tackling non-linear missions with a freedom to explore a bustling city in-between objectives. There are mini-games, side quests and hidden packages to discover (in this case, keys used to reclaim random objects from lockers). Then there are *Daily Mail*-baiting levels of sex and violence. People are shot, beaten, thrown in the river with cement footwear, and get their fingers chopped off. One plot element even touches on teenage prostitution – an area that even the mighty *GTA* would think twice about, before deciding that's

THERE ARE *DAILY MAIL*-BAITING LEVELS OF SEX AND VIOLENCE

it's up to its neck in enough hot coffee already and steer clear.

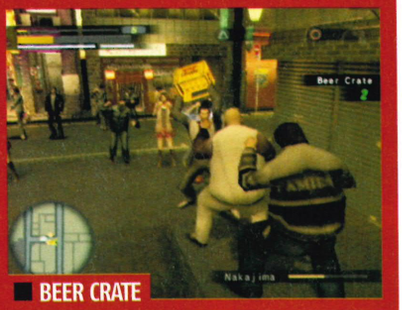
ONCE UPON A TOKYO

At the heart of the story is Kazuma and his friend Nishiki – both Yakuza soldiers in the Tojo Clan – and their friend, a girl called Yumi. The three of them are bonded by a shared childhood at the local orphanage. Kazuma is on

HIT ME WITH YOUR...

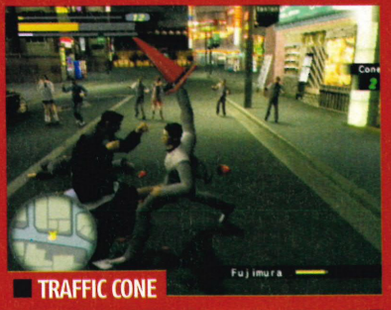
...whatever comes to hand first. *Yakuza* is full of weapons. These are our faves

UMBRELLA



BEER CRATE

STREET SIGN



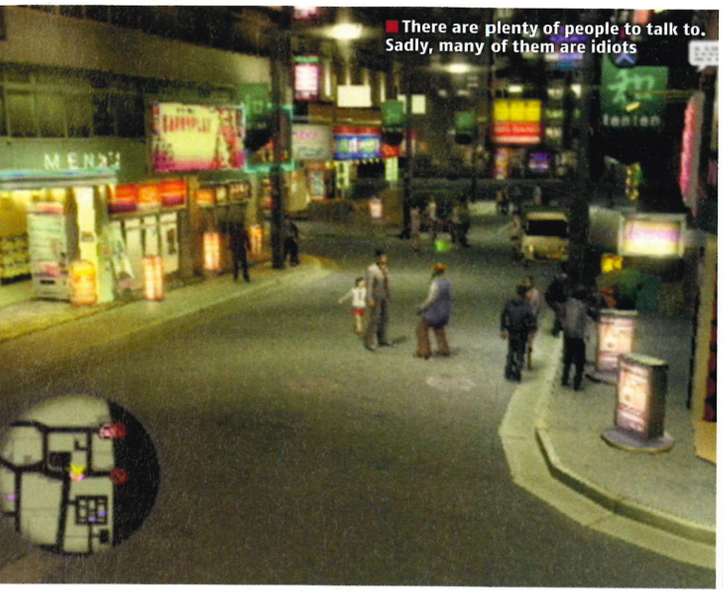
TRAFFIC CONE

BICYCLE

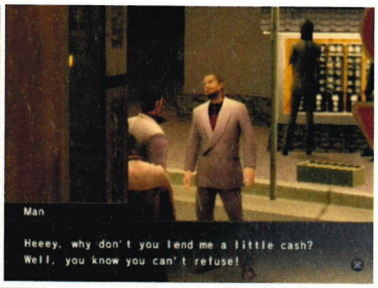
GOLF CLUB

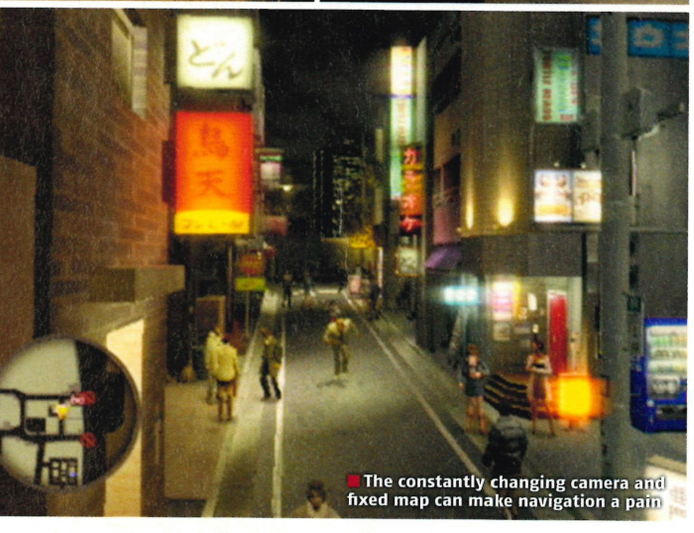
the verge of starting his own Yakuza family (the equivalent of being 'made' in the Mafia) and life is looking peachy. Right up until the point where their boss, Dojima, decides he wants to have some fun with Yumi. And, as the all-powerful head of the Family, he doesn't need to ask her permission first. Nishiki tries to save Yumi, but it all goes wrong and he ends up blowing Dojima away. To protect his friends, Kazuma takes the blame all by himself and goes to jail. Ten years later, having just emerged from prison, he returns to Tokyo and discovers that, actually, things *can* get worse.

To start with, Kazuma is now a despised traitor to the Yakuza. No one else knows what happened the night Dojima died and, as killing your boss is frowned upon in most


There are plenty of people to talk to. Sadly, many of them are idiots

Upgrade your abilities to access new, invariably more violent, moves



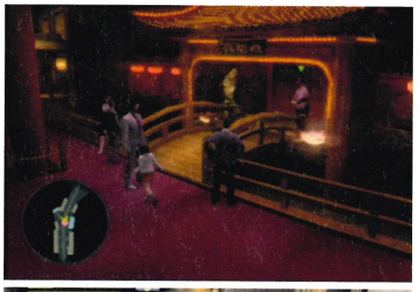

The constantly changing camera and fixed map can make navigation a pain

AS THE EVENTS UNFOLD, IT SOON BECOMES OBVIOUS THAT THIS IS A VERY JAPANESE TAKE ON THE OPEN-ENDED CRIME GENRE

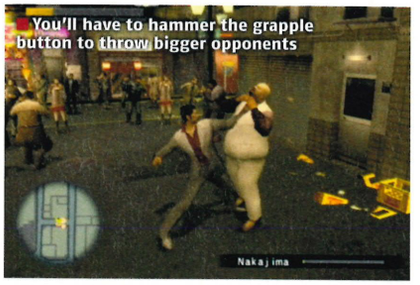
organisations, everyone is out to get him. On top of that, Nishiki has gone all evil and is now the scheming boss of his own Yakuza family. Finally, Yumi has disappeared along with *all* the Yakuza's money – ten billion Yen (nearly 90 million dollars, in case you were wondering). As the plot progresses, a mysterious child called Haruka also arrives on the scene, claiming to be the daughter of Yumi's sister. Somehow, she's a crucial link to the missing money...

TURNING JAPANESE

As the events unfold however, it soon becomes obvious that this is a very Japanese take on the open-ended crime genre. Rather than an action-based adventure, this is really a role-playing game. You explore, level-up and talk to an ever-expanding cast in order to trigger the next cut-scene or objective. The combat *is* real-time, but it mainly consists of random battles imposed on you as you wander around. You can be set upon with little or no warning, often several times in as many minutes. And yes, it can be *really* annoying when you're only trying to cross the road. Each attack also transports you away from the Tokyo streets. You appear in a separately loaded, enclosed 'arena level', where the single gangster, drunkard or street punk that challenged you magically turns into a six or seven-strong gang.



Fill your Heat bar and you can take out most enemies with a single blow



You'll have to hammer the grapple button to throw bigger opponents

Fortunately, the fighting sections provide some brilliantly vicious entertainment. There's a simple combo-based fighting system, which uses some properly nasty attacks – like stamping a man's head into the Tarmac or drop-kicking them in the guts while they're on the floor. There's also a range of objects to crack a few ribs with, and planks, tables, pipes and bicycles are just some of the impromptu weapons you can use and abuse. As you win fights you gather experience points, allowing you to unlock new abilities, increase your health and so on. It's not a complex levelling-up system, though – you can't choose the upgrades you want. Instead you just unlock the next available move or power up. But it does keep the combat fresh as you continue playing.

YOU TALKIN' TO ME?

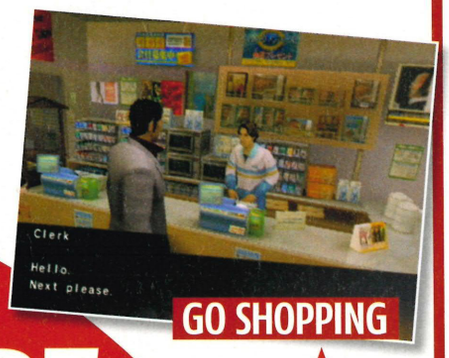
In vintage RPG style, there are pages of text to wade through between punch-ups. While Sega has made a big fuss about the voice talent – Mark Hamill, Michael Madsen and Rachael Leigh Cook – the vocal work is confined to the cut-scenes. Everything else – chunks of plot, mission objectives and other nuggets of information – is revealed by pressing ⊗ repeatedly to flick

TOKYO, A ROUGH GUIDE

So what's a Yakuza to do in the big city?

BUY WEAPONS

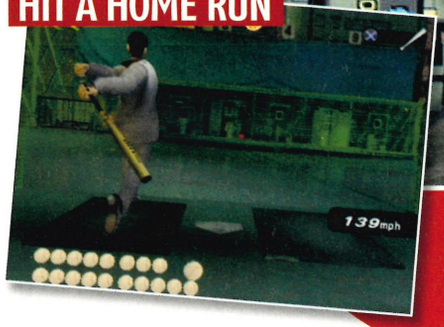
CHAT UP GIRLS



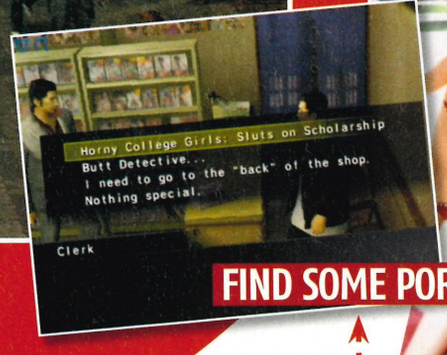
GO SHOPPING

VISIT THE ARCADE

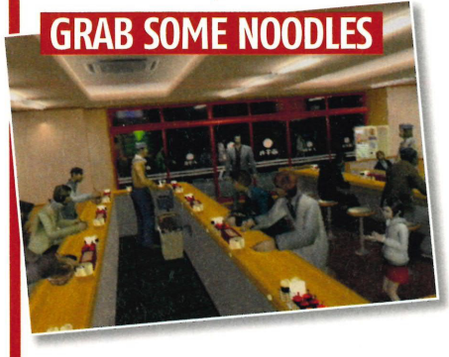
HIT THE CASINOS

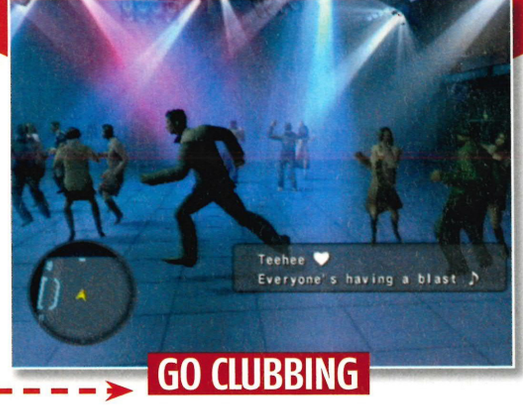


HIT A HOME RUN

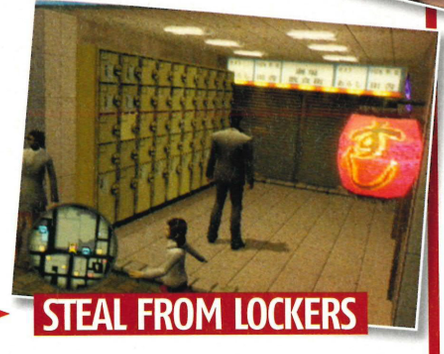


FIND SOME PORN!


GRAB SOME NOODLES



GO CLUBBING


STEAL FROM LOCKERS

Not the best place to bring a ten-year-old

The fights take place in specially loaded arenas

This is the gang boss, Dojima, whose murder puts Kazuma behind bars

though reams of text. Even moving around the city causes swarms of speech bubbles to pop up. Not only does it feel old-fashioned but there's a limited repertoire. In fact, it's entirely possible to find your way around by following familiar phrases that regularly occur in the same area. Anyone tempted by the promise of a *GTA*-style free-roaming action should be wary that

YAKUZA IS AN EASTERN RPG AT HEART, BUT IT IS AN ENJOYABLE ONE

this is really a very Eastern old-skool RPG at heart. But it is an enjoyable one. There's plenty to do, with assorted mini-games, activities and side missions to discover. But they vary in quality, exposing a limited range to the game as a whole. Most problems are solved by fighting – like helping the owner of a fast food restaurant threatened by a gang, or a woman who needs her stolen handbag recovered.

CHASING THE DRAGON

When the game does try to move away from the 'explore and beat stuff up' template, it usually falls down badly. A good example is a stealth level that involves infiltrating a funeral. You have to avoid black-suited guards in a crowd full of black-suited mourners and there's no clear indication of when you can, or can't, be seen. And while some of the mini-games, like the baseball range and casino, are fun, others most certainly are not. For example, chatting to the hostess ladies simply consists of guessing the answers to questions in an attempt to make them like you. Something that's only ever fun when it involves, you know, *real* girls.

With such a range of completely different gameplay styles on offer, it's no surprise that *Yakuza* can vary hugely in quality. But the main story is its strongest feature by far. It's a schlocky but gripping tale of violent betrayal and criminal power struggles, with some brutally rewarding combat thrown in.

There are also plenty of quirky touches. It must be a Japanese thing, but the people you fight offer presents as an apology once you've defeated them. We'll never get used to being given 'an expensive umbrella' or 'French Perfume' by a man who was trying to stab us seconds earlier. But *Yakuza* also infuriates. Scouring the city for the only shop that sells dog food is not a mission we'll remember fondly.

It can just as equally surprise you, though. An encounter with a shotgun-wielding transvestite stripper springs to mind, as does the owner of a 'special' DVD shop, who constantly tries to tempt you in with packets of free tissues. In the end, these inconsistencies prevent *Yakuza* from achieving classic status, but it does make for a consistently interesting, if flawed, slice of Tokyo criminal life. ■ **Leon Hurley**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	06	Decent lead characters, terrible pop-up
Sound	06	Cod rock and looping background effects
Gameplay	07	Good adventure, average mini-games
Lifespan	08	A big game with plenty of diversions

No threat to GTA, but it's not meant to be. Instead it's an absorbing role-playing adventure with plenty to keep you busy

7/10

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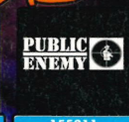

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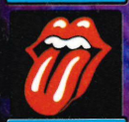
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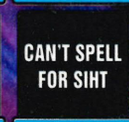

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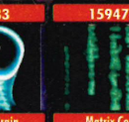
ANIMATIONS

156376 Spinning Mine

159533 Homer's Brain


159470 Matrix Code

156365 Lightning

156021 Running Bones

154855 Daddy's A Designer

RINGTONES

CHART	TRUE	FULL MP3	POLY
Smile	153062	153070	151714
Hips Don't Lie	157856	157968	151678
In The Morning	153063	153071	151715
Maneater	157846	157851	151673
Last Request	153158	- - - - -	151721
I Wish I Was A Punk Rocker	157603	157608	151661
Buttons	157950	157965	151708
Sexy Love	153061	153069	151713
World, Hold On	157954	- - - - -	151712
She Moves In Her Own Way	157951	157966	151709
Monster	157869	157880	151687
Valerie	157949	157964	151707
Mas Que Nada	157878	157889	151696
Supermassive Black Hole	157947	157962	151705
Voodoo Child	153160	- - - - -	151723

REAL SOUNDS	REAL
Clint - Do You Feel Lucky Punk?	158015
Ferris Bueller - Life Moves Fast Speech	158017
Italian Job - Blow the Bloody Doors Off	158040
Bo Selecta Michael Jackson - Shaamone	158047
Pulp Fiction - Path Of The Righteous	158051
Formula 1 Cars	158053
Police Siren	158065
Monkey Going Nuts	158080
Car Alarm	158094
Car Horn	158095
Car Wheelspins	158096
Houston We Have A Problem'	158109
Chopper Motocycle - Very Throaty	158117
Police - 'Come Out With Your Hands Up'	158118
Full Metal Jacket - 'You're SO UGLY'	158124
Dukes Of Hazzard - General Lee	158135
The Ateam intro	157169
London Underground	157174
Catchphrase Buzzer	157175
Pulp Fiction - Whats Fonzi Like	157879
Aliens - Game Over Man	157921
Happy Gilmore - Go Home Ball	157923
Scarface - Say Hello To My Little Friend	157924
The Shining - Heres Johnny!	157925
Coyote Howl	158070
Dolphin	158072
Donkey	158073
Elephant	158074

TALKING TONES	REAL
Basil Fawlty	158396
Beavis And Butthead	158397
Daffyd - Little Britain	158406
Dastardly And Mutley	158407
Foghorn Leghorn	158414
Kenneth Williams	158424
Krusty - The Simpsons	158426
London Gangster	158427
Ozzy	158448
You Muppet	158474
Wise Chinese Man	158472
Vicky Pollard - Little Britain	158468
Asian Taxi	157168
Darth Vader	157300
Godfather	157304
Gollum	157305

WARNING TONES	REAL
Bunny Boiler Alert	157182
Dickhead Alert	157184
Fatboy Alert	157186
Ginger Alert	157187
Nutter Alert	157192
Your Dealer Alert	157195

SHOCKER VIDS!

154339 Nasty Surprise!

154796 Nice Sunset Then...

154795 Look Closely

154128 Shock Horror!

154797 Look Closely

154800 Nice Scenery...

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52 Walk Of Fame

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154629 The Scorpion King

154570 Platoon

154565 Midtown Madness 3

154639 Total Overdose

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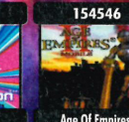
155349 Destroy All Humans

155354 Juiced

155358 Dance Nation



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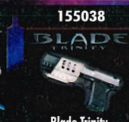

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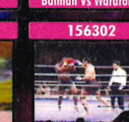
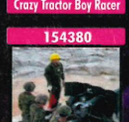
154381 Crazy Dog

159473 Big Bear Fight


156302 Kick Boxers Big Break

154131 Office Fun

154337 Funny Idiot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Bertie has been living rough since *Tekken 4*. That doesn't stop Lili giving him a shoeing, though

TEKKEN: DARK RESURRECTION

gold
PlayStation 2 official magazine-uk

PSP

PSP comes out fighting

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER NAMCO
PRICE £34.99
OUT 1 SEPTEMBER
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT YES
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS YES

AT A GLANCE

The *Tekken: Dark Resurrection* coin-op comes to console, and it's a PSP exclusive. New fighters and character customisation make it a formidable handheld bruiser.

PS2's six-year existence has thrown up many great games, but only a few will go down in history as truly landmark titles. *GTA III*, for instance, completely changed the way in which developers thought about free-roaming environments, *Pro Evolution Soccer* revolutionised console footy, and *Burnout* injected new energy into the increasingly stuffy racing genre. To date, though, the PSP hasn't been so lucky. It's ushered in a handful of essential buys like *Lumines* and *Liberty City Stories*, but nothing especially groundbreaking – until now.

PUT SIMPLY – IT'S A GAME THAT EVERY HANDHELD OWNER MUST HAVE

Tekken: Dark Resurrection comes out with both arms windmilling, determined to spark out every other handheld fighter. It's a game that steps out of the shadow of its PS2 predecessors and marks a turning point for PSP gaming. Put simply – it's a game that every handheld owner must have. Not just because it's the first proper 3D beat-'em-up on PSP (we don't count the button mashing of *Def Jam* or *SmackDown Vs Raw*, however fun those games may be) but also because it imbues the *Tekken* experience with a new lease of life, making it more immediate and vital than ever before.

Pre-fight cut-scenes show off the game's stunning visuals

It's all to do with how you play the game on PSP. On PS2 you felt far away from the action, which robbed impact from the flurry of ten-hit combos launched by your opponent. On PSP it's all right there, in your hands and almost literally in your face. As your fingers flash across the PSP's pad and buttons you have eyes for only one thing: the screen's stunningly sharp and brilliantly colourful brutality. Nothing enters your peripheral vision. No matter where you are, your only obsession for the 60 seconds it takes to batter Lili into submission is *Tekken: Dark Resurrection*.

The minuscule loading times between bouts means the scope to keep playing 'just one more match' is huge. We timed this against the PS2 version of *Tekken 5* and it's quicker on PSP. It plays at a super-swift pace, too. Fighters throw punches and kicks in a blur, yet you never lose track of what's going on, meaning it rarely degenerates into a button-bashing marathon.

Backdrops are pretty as expected and moves land with real impact

Latex offers greater movement, apparently

DESIGNER *TEKKEN*

New anime costumes exclusive to *Dark Resurrection*

Once you've mastered new characters Lili, Serge and Armor King, there's plenty of fun to be had with the more familiar faces in the *Tekken* universe, thanks to a new set of anime costumes for each fighter. As well as our faves featured below, there's also Raven's psychedelic ninja outfit and Yoshimitsu's decaying Samurai armour – which comes complete with arrows wedged into his body. Fabulous.

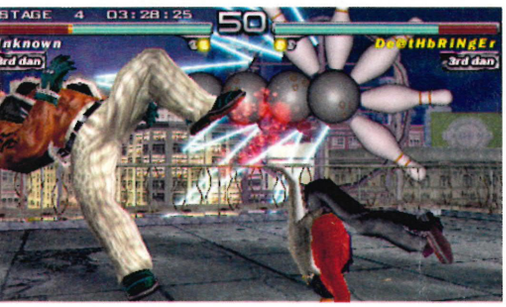
Ling Xiaoyu dressed like a beautiful pastel-furred bear

Heihachi pulls shapes in his ghetto-glam new tiger stripe ensemble

Schoolgirls fighting. Entirely acceptable, and in some ways noble

Enormous pink panda, with child's doll and rucksack. Still fair game

All the arcade version's movies are crammed onto the UMD



Animation is seamless and the vast range of combos are timed to perfection. Initially, we worried the PSP's D-pad just wasn't suited to beat-'em-ups (it was the only flaw in the very nearly perfect *Street Fighter Alpha 3 Max*) but *Dark Resurrection* overcomes this potential obstacle easily, because the emphasis is on tap-tap movements rather than rotations.

EXTENDED PLAY

Out of the arena *Dark Resurrection* offers several new additions over the coin-op, which helps prolong the single-player lifespan. A new Dojo mode introduces a ranking system similar to *Virtua Fighter 4*. After every fight you're awarded points based on your skill. As an extra incentive, you can upload your ranking to the

Side-step to counter your opponent's attacks

Blanche, aka Nina in Dojo mode, gets a face-full of boot

Namco website to see how you stack up against other players. Better, you can download other players' rankings, which the game then converts to AI for you to fight. *Dark Resurrection* doesn't feature Infrastructure play, so these downloaded 'ghosts' are the only way to fight against the best players Japan and America have to offer. Of course, you can play over ad-hoc against a friend and also GameShare too, if said friend is a cheapskate with no copy of their own. Even missing the full online experience, there's so much to do that you'll still get masses of life out of this.

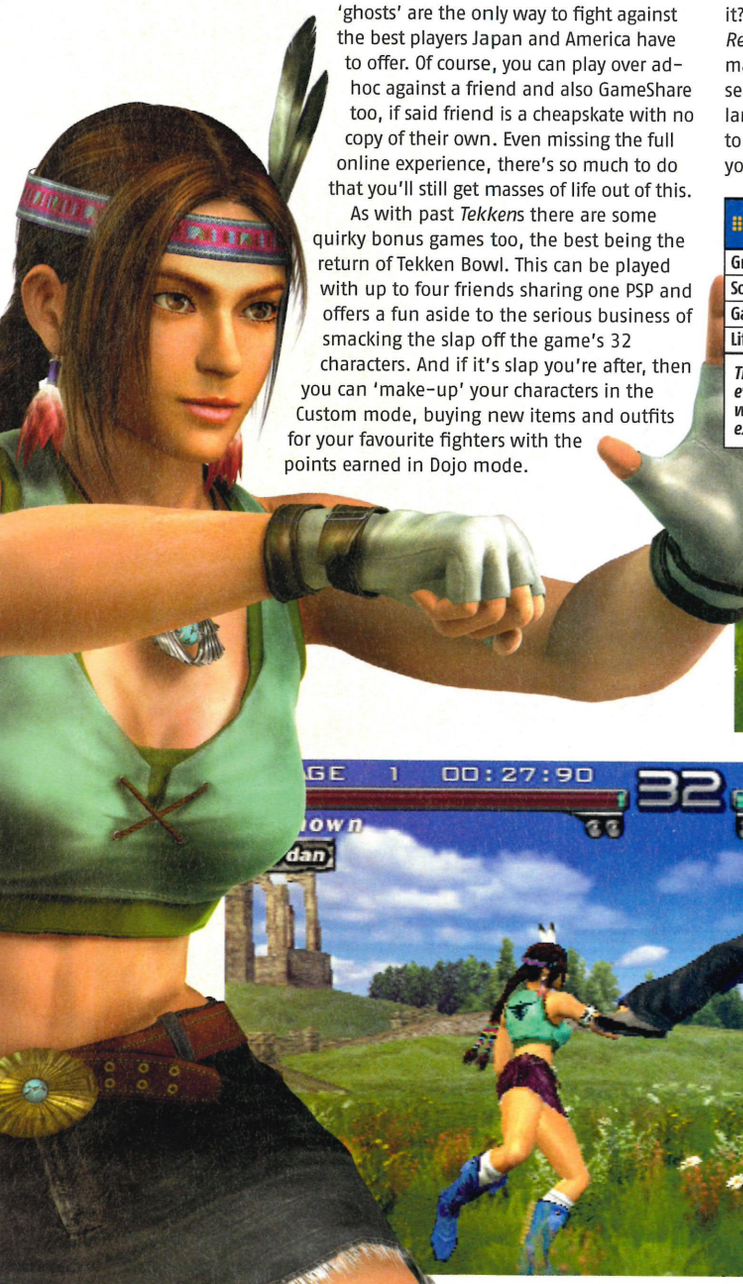
As with past *Tekkens* there are some quirky bonus games too, the best being the return of Tekken Bowl. This can be played with up to four friends sharing one PSP and offers a fun aside to the serious business of smacking the slap off the game's 32 characters. And if it's slap you're after, then you can 'make-up' your characters in the Custom mode, buying new items and outfits for your favourite fighters with the points earned in Dojo mode.

Some may bemoan the lack of Infrastructure multiplayer, others that it's 'just another *Tekken*', but ignore them. Here's a test: punch yourself in the stomach. Go on. Makes you feel all light-headed, dizzy and breathless, doesn't it? Well, that's what every fight in *Dark Resurrection* makes you feel like. And, masochistic though it may sound, it's a sensation you'll grow to love. This is the first landmark game on PSP, and one that you *need* to own. After all, you can't go around punching yourself in the stomach forever. ■ **Ian Dean**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	10	Colourful, smoothly animated and detailed
Sound	09	Top techno, rock and orchestral anthems
Gameplay	09	This betters its PS2 counterparts
Lifespan	10	Two-player is timeless. Dojo adds depth

This will feel fresh and immediate even to those whose* Tekken*-love was waning. It's engaging, exceptional and essential

10/10



Even the trickier combos are easily accessed on PSP

URBAN OUTFITTERS

"But I was going to wear pink Latex to the party!"

Old characters return in *Dark Resurrection*, as do two brand new brawlers, the cheap-combo-heavy Lili and the trickier, more technical grapple-based Serge Dragunov. At fans' request, Armor King also makes it back into the *Tekken* roster. Whether new or old, no character will ever look the same again thanks to the new Custom mode. Using points awarded from fights you can buy hats, jewellery, new costumes and even change fighters' skin colour. What's more, take on a friend over WiFi and you can win his points, and he can nab yours.

Dragunov isn't afraid of groin strain

A funky looking Devil Jin finds a new way to fly

Procreate now, Panda, or it's punching time

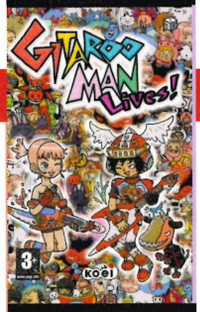
Lili learns the true meaning of 'hardwood'

Paul takes one in the swingers

Like being inside Pete Doherty's head

The game's packed with drama. Incomprehensible drama, but drama nonetheless

PSP



GITAROO MAN LIVES!

Mad like seagulls, but also one of the finest games on PSP

bronze
PlayStation 2 official magazine-UK

DETAILS

PUBLISHER KOEI
DEVELOPER INIS
PRICE £24.99
OUT 1 SEPTEMBER
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

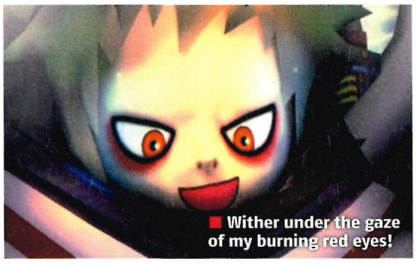
AT A GLANCE

A surreal rhythm action game that originally appeared on PS2, but has now been released with two new songs and a brand new co-operative mode on the PSP.

We're chewing over the knotty issue of whether or not you should actually buy this. It's original, it's vibrant and it's colourful, but it's also a near-direct port of an old PS2 game, very, very short and a bit Japanese. So we're sat here, grimacing at the screen, trying to review it as impartial arbiters of what makes a game worth splashing £25 on, rather than the blinkered *Gitaroo Man* apologists we really are.

It's a rhythm action game, much like *Parappa The Rapper* or *Space Channel 5*, but infinitely better than both. While a lot of these games require little more than endless button-prods in time with some music, *Gitaroo Man*'s system is much more interesting. You *do* have to prod buttons in time to the music, but you also have to 'hold' each note in the song by tilting the analogue stick. On its own this might sound a bit complicated and pointless, but when the music plays and you're hitting every bar in time and bending notes with the stick, you feel like you're actually playing the song, even though all you're really doing is following prompts like a research chimp.

It's the songs that really make the game. Performed by an obscure Japanese rock band called COIL, the game's soundtrack is a mix of thrash metal, drum and bass, reggae, samba, rock 'n' roll and hyperactive dance music. The game's sort of like a musical beat-'em-up – Gitaroo Man has to battle a series of instrument-wielding monsters by exchanging audio blows – and the difficulty of the enemy depends on the kind of music they play. For example, the soul bee plays an easier, slower number, while the xylophone skeletons (bear with us here) let rip with a Latino rock track that's so fast it makes your fingers sizzle.

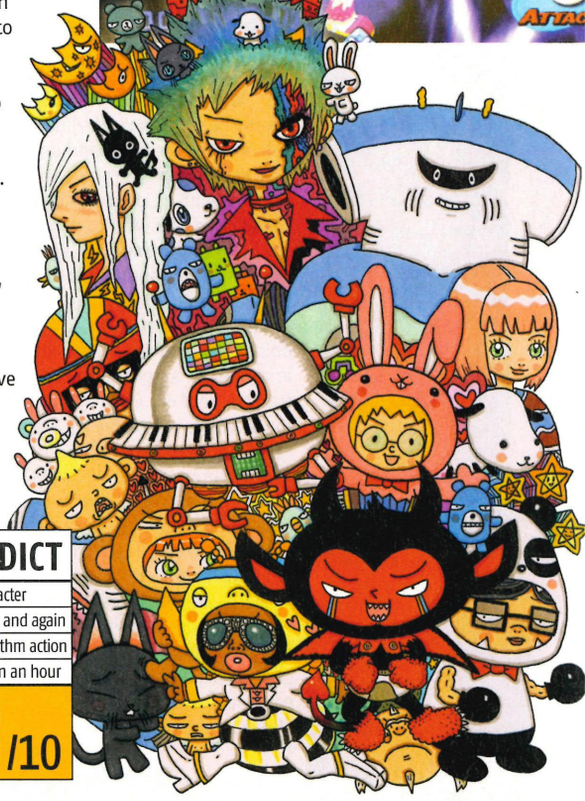

Wither under the gaze of my burning red eyes!

GUITAR SUPERHERO

Each song is split into different stages. In Charge mode, you tease out funky licks to increase your health bar, then in Attack mode you increase the pace and send electrical bolts flying from your guitar to harm the enemy. Then Harmony mode begins. This is a rousing outro to the song and the finishing blow to your foe. Blasting evil with a squealing solo is as satisfying as gaming gets.

KOEI released this on PS2 years ago but it barely made a dent on the charts, so chances are you've never played it before. In which case, you should definitely buy it for your PSP. For those who do have the console version, they've added two brand new songs and co-operative play over WiFi, but the single-player mode is identical, so think carefully before you part with your 25 sheets. ■ **Andy Kelly**

There are easier ways to kill a bee with a guitar



PlayStation 2 official magazine-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	08	Colourful, stylish and full of character
Sound	09	Catchy songs you'll listen to again and again
Gameplay	08	Hard, but a fresh approach to rhythm action
Lifespan	05	If you're good, you can finish it in an hour

A glorious soundtrack and a fresh approach to the rhythm action genre makes this a winner – it's bloody hard, mind

8/10

LOST THE PLOT

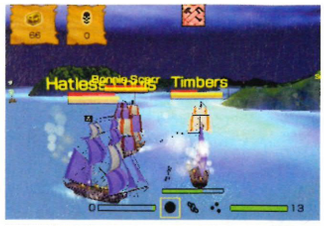
Gitaroo Man's story explained to the best of our ability

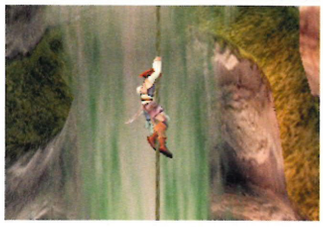
Your name is U-1 and you're rubbish with girls. That's the motivation behind Gitaroo Man and the reason you're locked in musical combat with sharks, robots and skeletons.

One day, the girl you fancy is stolen away by the school bully and you slump home depressed to listen to The Cure and write awful poetry.

Then, for no reason we understand, your dog turns into a robot and teaches you how to play a magical space guitar – the Gitaroo – and you go on a quest to save the world.

Look, it barely matters to the overall game, but the cut-scenes are excellent in a cheesy, 'this makes about as much sense as circular Sudoku' kind of way.

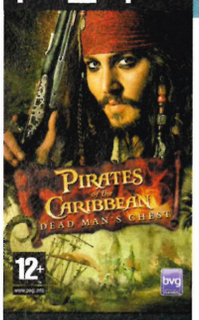




"Light, wait and run. No, run, wait and light. No..."

Combat usually descends into frantic button-mashing

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST



Like Keira Knightley, a little flat

DETAILS

PUBLISHER BUENA VISTA GAMES
DEVELOPER AMAZE ENTERTAINMENT
PRICE £29.99
OUT NOW
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

AT A GLANCE

Captain Jack is back and on a quest to avoid damnation in Davy Jones' locker. Cue swashbuckling sword fights, fiendish puzzles and vicious traps à la *Prince Of Persia*.

At the outset of *Dead Man's Chest* it's revealed that Captain Jack Sparrow owes a debt to the demonic Davy Jones, who roams the seas aboard haunted galleon, The Flying Dutchman. It's just like the movie, see. That debt is Jack's immortal soul and he isn't especially keen to give it up. So, across 11 levels, beginning on a cannibal island and climaxing with a life or death battle against huge sea monster The Kraken, it's your job – playing as Jack, natch – to squirm out of the deal.

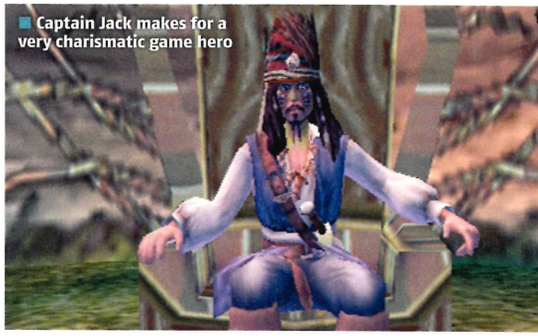
Annoyingly – and to be honest, we're tired of saying this about officially licensed tie-ins – doing this requires precious little intellect or imagination. A fresh wave of baddies appears, ready to be slain, every five seconds or so, but the methods of introducing them to the slicey edge of your cutlass are few. Normally, you simply hammer ⊗ until they're almost dead, before tapping ◎ to administer a gory finishing move. Unless, of course, your enemies are armed with *two* swords, in which case you have to attack them with ◎ and finish them with ⊗. That's as varied as it gets.

When you're not hacking up gimps you'll be avoiding traps and using ropes to swing over gaps. Irritating puzzles must be solved to access new areas and they're straight off the first page of the adventure game handbook – pull levers in some random sequence to open a door, step on platforms in the correct order to open another door. It's all been done before – *a lot* – and the fact that this is a PSP offering doesn't make its lacklustre adventuring any more palatable or forgivable.

A BOTTLE OF BUM?

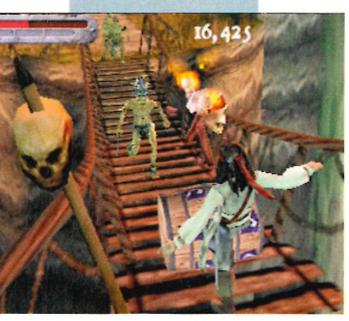
Alongside the dull hacking combat, the puzzles and exploration just hammer home the complete lack of spark in the main game. But there are two redeeming features which will prevent you consigning this to the deep at the first available opportunity. The first is its swashbuckling hero. Voiced with a spot-on impression of Johnny Depp's drunken-sailor slur and animated with his trademark dazed swagger, the main character looks like he's jumped straight out of the movie. Because of this it's usually worth persevering simply to discover what will happen to our eccentric hero next – he's *that* engaging a lead character.

The other plus here is the excellent mini-games available as part of the multiplayer Ship Battle mode. Taking their lead from highly lauded PC offering *Sid Meier's Pirates*, they're a series of sea battles which can be played against the AI or up to three of your mates, across ten environments. This deathmatch-at-sea inclusion


Captain Jack makes for a very charismatic game hero

is something that's never been done before on PSP, and its spot-on execution means you'll get plenty of life out of the game, regardless of the main adventure's flaws. ■ **Lee Harrrrrrrrrt**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT
Graphics	07 Detailed backgrounds, great characters
Sound	08 Great music, spot-on Captain Jack quips
Gameplay	05 A poor man's *Prince Of Persia*
Lifespan	07 11 big levels plus great multiplayer options
Predictable and repetitive adventuring that's rescued by an engaging lead character and excellent mini-games	6/10



SHIP HAPPENS

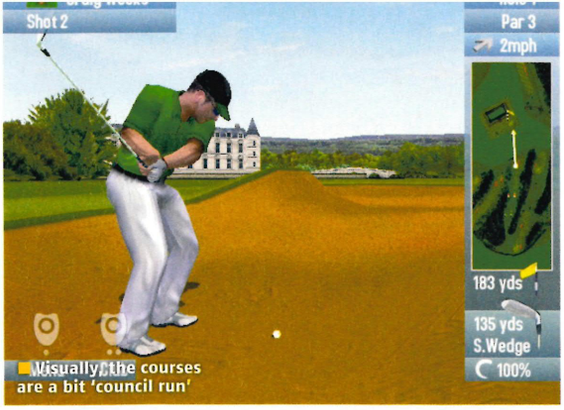
Is *Pirates'* Ship Battle a contender for the best PSP multiplayer mode? Aye, aye

SHIP SHAPE
Before you can set sail in *Pirates'* brilliant WiFi deathmatches you need to choose a vessel. Will it be sloop, brigantine, fluyt, frigate or galleon? Each has a special ability, weapon or strength. We went for the frigate, with its tight turning circle.

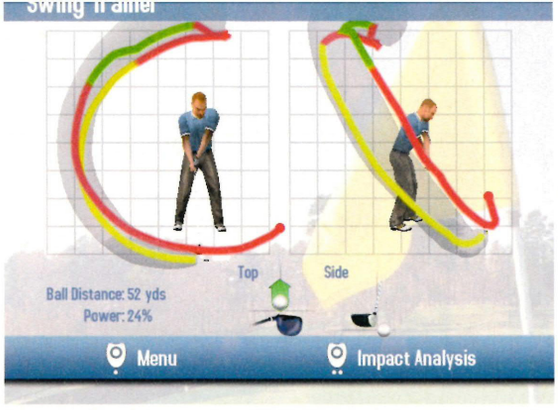
CANNON FODDER
You then set sail, hunting up to three other players. You've got cannons to port and starboard with multiple salvo types, but they require reloading between pops, forcing you to manoeuvre like crazy to avoid getting hosed between shots.

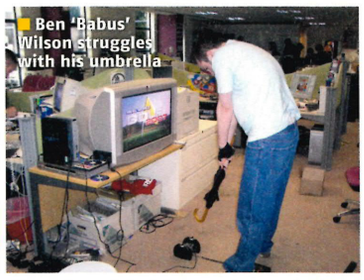
A BAD CASE OF THE SQUIDS
You also get a series of nautical power-ups that range from sail and hull repair (yawn) to the brilliant Summon Tornado, Golden Cannon, and Summon Kraken which unleashes the movie's gigantic, cursed calamari on your foes.

ROGER THE CABIN BOY
Best of all, once you've softened up the scurvy dogs, you can fight to board 'em via a button-hammering mini-game. Add Last Man Standing, Timed, and Plunder The Flag variations and you're all set for hours of top piratical fun.



Visually, the courses are a bit 'council run'




Ben 'Babus' Wilson struggles with his umbrella

REAL WORLD GOLF 2007

Gametrak takes another swing at success

We've only been playing *Real World Golf 2007* for approximately 12 minutes, yet we've already broken one of the office bins, twanged a shoulder muscle and drawn looks of disapproval from our PC mag neighbours. (Who spend each night squealing at the latest 'hilarious' piece of emergent gameplay in *World Of Warcraft*, so we discount their opinion immediately.) Such is the mixture of pleasure and very real pain brought about by Gametrak's latest offering.

Just in case you missed the first one, here's a brief recap: rather than using a standard PS2 joypad, you wear a pair of golf-style gloves attached to a gadget containing swing-registering motion sensors, which is connected to your PS2 via USB. The game comes with a mini club for extra authenticity, but it's a bit crap, so we've also tried golfing with an HB pencil, umbrella, and the *OPS2* office mascot – an inflatable shark named Mr Bitey – with varying degrees of success. (For the record, it was the umbrella that broke the bin.)

Your type of pretend club isn't nearly as important as your body shape. Before each shot, it's essential that you position your feet correctly either side of the Gametrak, lean forwards, and line your hands up with an imaginary ball – just like a real golfer would. It's then simply a case of shifting your weight and swinging straight through the imaginary ball. (Really, the Gametrak's motion sensor.)

There's a handy swing trainer to help you to do this, but it still takes real effort to get good at it. One slightly mistimed swing will send your ball arrowing straight towards the nearest water hazard. In one amazing exhibition of crapness, we even managed to hit a shot *backwards*.

Despite its efforts to emulate 'real' golf, this is more knockabout fun rather than a legitimate sim. But given that *Tiger* already has the sim side of things sewn up, that's no bad thing. With a total of 15 courses for you to batter your way through, there's loads of longevity (and laughs) if you play this with mates. Just make sure you've stocked up the fridge before you invite them round. A few liveners should take the edge off the pain caused by those inevitable shoulder injuries. ■ **Ben Wilson**

DETAILS

PUBLISHER IN2GAMES
DEVELOPER IN2GAMES
PRICE £29.99 (£49.99 WITH GAMETRAK)
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.IN2GAMES.UK.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO
PERIPHERALS GAMETRAK

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine UK VERDICT

Graphics	07	Slightly bland set of courses
Sound	07	Inoffensive commentary from Peter Alliss
Gameplay	07	Amusing, but lacking depth
Lifespan	07	Got mates? Then get 'em round

You'll still look like a prat playing it, but more courses and superior putting make this an interesting alternative to **Tiger Woods**

7/10

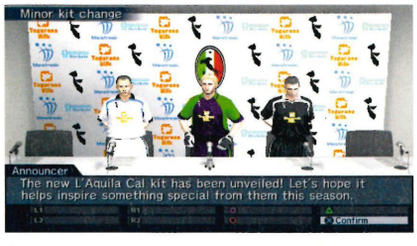
Not even real-named Spaniards can rescue this

The football on offer is sub-Hackney Marshes

LET'S MAKE A SOCCER TEAM!

On second thoughts, let's not!

From the moment your prospective secretary tells you that she likes muscular men and dislikes crabs, to noticing that the 'Nottingham' club badge looks like your old chap, *Let's Make A Soccer Team!* keeps the big laughs coming. Sadly, as far as being a decent football management sim, the joke's on anyone that buys this.



We've no problem with the well-displayed tactics screens, or the game's basic premise: you're in charge of a club that started 15 years ago but is only now ready for a crack at the big time. Regardless of the team you pick, your first task is to win a set of play-offs and, in doing so, gain promotion to the second tier of whichever country you're playing in. There are six nations to choose from and, as in *Pro Evo*, all Dutch, Italian and Spanish clubs are licensed. But lose the play-offs and it's game over, just like that. And unfortunately, the incentive to go back and start again isn't high because the matches themselves are *appalling*.

Watch in 3D and you'll be left incredulous, as 22 badly animated men do incomprehensible things like pass the ball to the opposition's goalkeeper or dribble right off the pitch. Switch to 2D and you can look on open-mouthed as a set of small cartoon moles nudge an oversized ball around to some jaunty, Ceefax-style keyboard Muzak. The game sells by the terrace-load in its native Japan, but whatever it is that they love about the game has been hopelessly mangled in translation. ■ **Ben Wilson**

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SEGA
DEVELOPER SEGA
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT 25 AUGUST
WEBSITE WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO

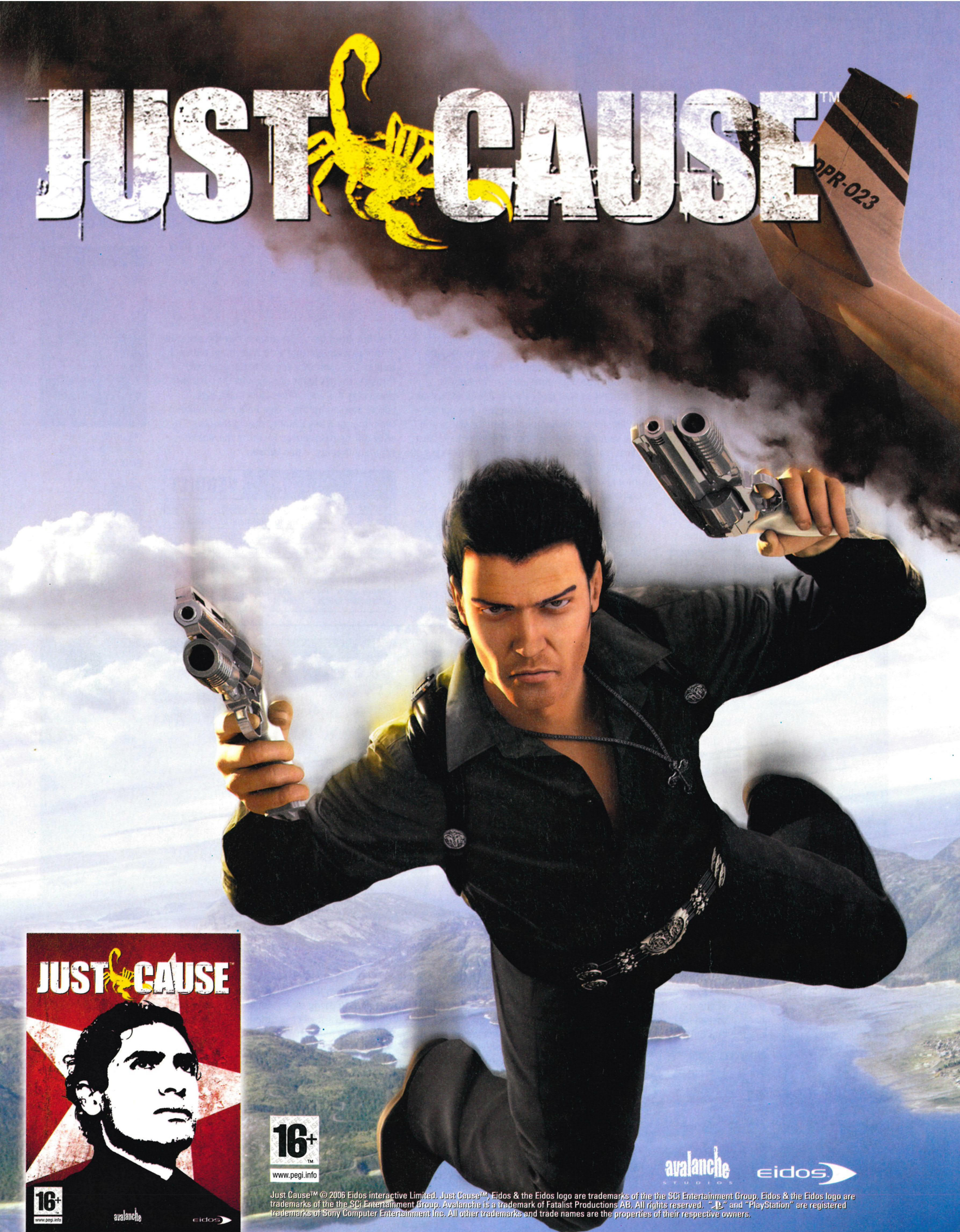
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK VERDICT

Graphics	05	Clear text but badly animated matches
Sound	04	Soft jazz drum 'n' bass = ouch
Gameplay	06	Easy to get to grips with...
Lifespan	03	...and just as easy to bin

A cute idea for a management sim that contains stacks of accidental humour, but is let down by a colossal mess of a match engine

4/10

JUST CAUSE™



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www.pegi.info

avalanche STUDIOS eidos

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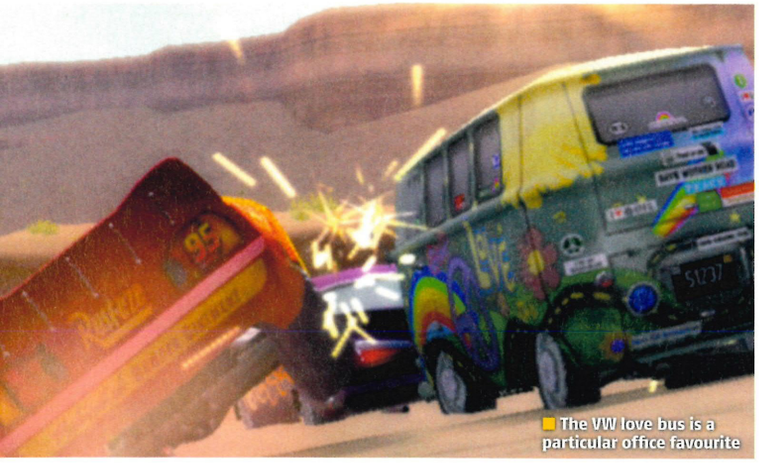
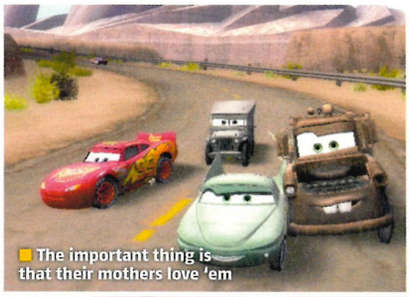
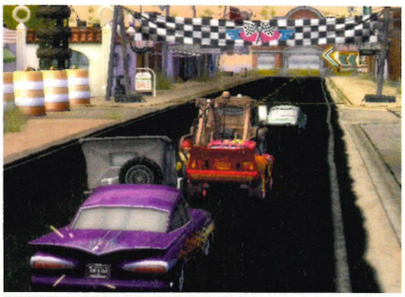
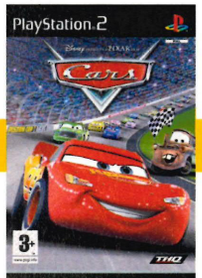
DPR-023
PlayStation 2


The VW love bus is a particular office favourite


The important thing is that their mothers love 'em



Here's the not-very-riveting Piston Cup in action



CARS

Pixar's latest is a treat for pre-schoolers

DETAILS

PUBLISHER THQ
DEVELOPER RAINBOW STUDIOS
PRICE £34.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.THQ.CO.UK
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES
ONLINE YES

AT A GLANCE

As you'd expect, *Cars* is a racing game based on Pixar's latest animated film and featuring the cast of the movie, in which you play as racing hotshot Lightning McQueen.

The sound made by the *Cars* PS2 game is very much like that of a train hurtling towards Keanu Reeves in a virtual underground station; 'the sound of inevitability'. It wasn't so much a matter of whether there would be a game based on the latest kiddie blockbuster, but how many minutes interest we could wrench out of the thing when it arrived.

Happily, in the case of *Cars*, the answer is a fair few. Opting for the no-brainer approach, developer Rainbow has taken the major characters and events from the film and built a racing game around them. You play for the most part as Lightning McQueen, a young racer who finds himself in a backwater town called Radiator Springs while on the way to a major competition.

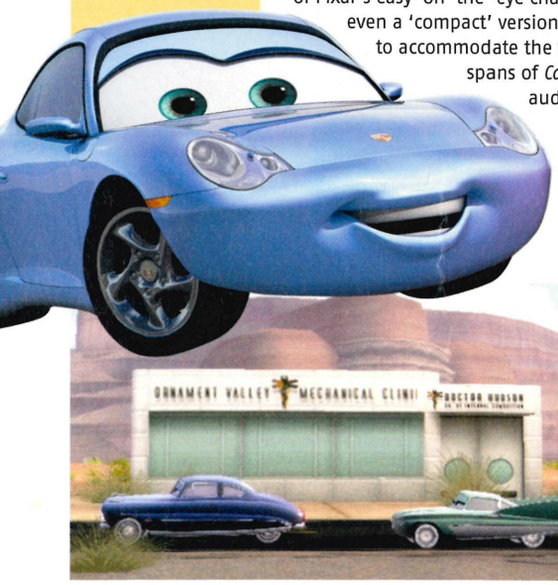
GREASED LIGHTNING

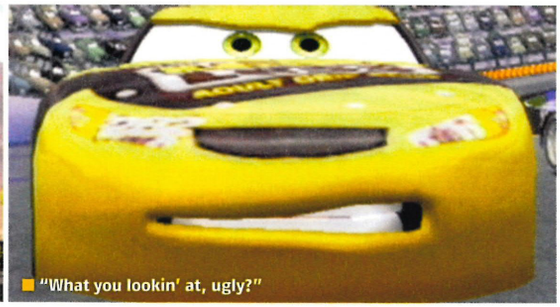
In the film, Lightning then discovers, through his relationship with the inhabitants of Radiator Springs, the meaning of friendship and the value of being 'nice'. In the game, the town serves as the central hub of the story mode – you select races, mini-games and customisable options by driving to the appropriate location and entering a menu. It's a child-friendly route into an 'open-world' setting, populated by the welcoming mugs of Pixar's easy-on-the-eye characters. There's even a 'compact' version of the story mode to accommodate the fleeting attention spans of *Cars*' younger audience.

The racing is also clearly designed with the younger gamer in mind. Loose and arcadey in its approach, the driving is forgiving of mistakes and crammed with bonus-earning novelty features like tilting, jumping and power-sliding. Using these during races is fun, but offers limited practical benefit. Cornering in particular is a pain, mainly because the power-sliding doesn't really work in the way most of us are used to. Rather than a controlled drift, into which a player can accelerate or brake, here it's more of a staggered, sharper turn, which is difficult to sustain and not very useful.

The game is at its best during the road races, which take place on the dust-and-desert tracks in and around Desert Springs. The sun-baked courses are varied and engaging, and there's a stirring sense of speed and momentum when you get going. Less exciting are the Piston Cup events – a Nascar-like series on an oval circuit – that dominate the story. With the fairly unchallenging gameplay, lapping a featureless course over and over struggles to entertain.

Cars is bright, accessible and playable enough that Pixar obsessives might want to take a look, but it's obviously been crafted with the junior gamer in mind. But unlike most movie tie-ins, it doesn't treat its rosy-cheeked audience with contempt. **Nathan Ditum**




"What you lookin' at, ugly?"

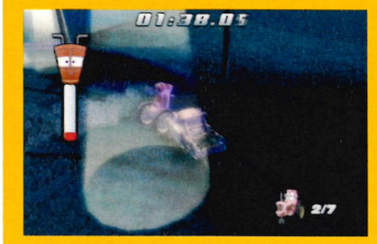
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	07	A decent stab at nailing the film
Sound	06	Dull music but ace voices
Gameplay	06	Simple and fun, but for nippers only
Lifespan	07	There's plenty to unlock

Squarely aimed at young gamers, but Cars provides more fun than most kids titles – this is a welcome step in the right direction

7/10

IT'S A MINI ADVENTURE

Some of *Cars*' finest moments come from the mini-games. Here's the best ones



TRACTOR TIPPING

A great game based on cow-tipping (bizarre urban myth about, er, tipping cows over). This time though, the cows are tractors, and you have to sneak past spotlights and a combine harvester to startle them.

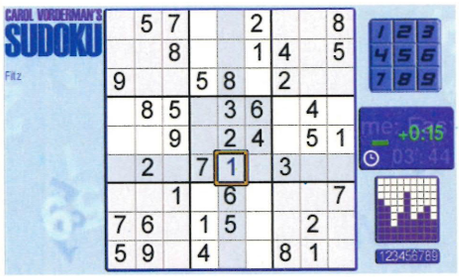
SARGE'S BOOT CAMP

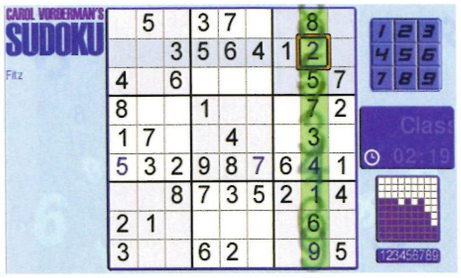
This is a cracking assault course-style event. You need to avoid various obstacles – barriers, tyre walls, bridges – using the jump, power-slide and tilt controls. Great use of otherwise redundant features.

LUIGI TO THE RESCUE

Cruise 'n' collect game, in which mechanic Luigi bombs around Radiator Springs picking up tyres and hub caps within a time limit. Decent, if not quite as strong as the others.

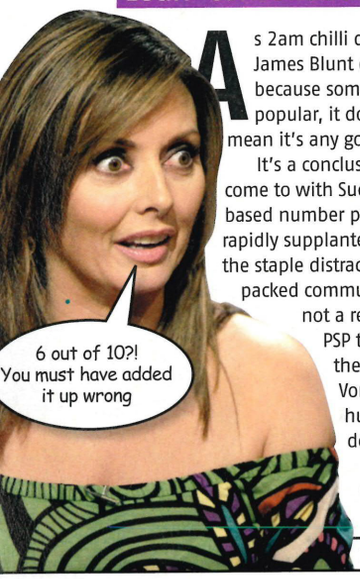
■ This is what androids dream of, as opposed to electric sheep





CAROL VORDERMAN'S SUDOKU

Loan-consolidating daytime MILF flogs grid-based puzzles to the masses



As 2am chilli doners, Nazism and James Blunt demonstrate, just because something's hugely popular, it doesn't necessarily mean it's any good.

It's a conclusion you could also come to with Sudoku. The grid-based number puzzling craze has rapidly supplanted the crossword as the staple distraction diet of cattle-packed commuters, and if that's not a reason to give this PSP title a wide berth, the presence of Carol Vorderman as its human face doesn't do it any favours.

Pity, because while Sudoku will likely strike 'meh' into the hearts of most gamers, as a brain-tickling puzzle it *is* addictive as hell. What's more, this is as solid a videogame incarnation of the craze as you're likely to get. And it does this by making it as un-videogamey as possible.

Instead of *Lumines*-style lightshows, you get helpful aids like subtle markers that light columns and rows as you figure out moves, the option to leave 'pencil marks' showing the possible numbers for empty squares, and a graphic that breaks down your completion status. And while all but six of you will have stopped reading by now, those with Sudoku habits will be salivating like butchers' dogs.

Throw in hints and tutorials from Vorderman, two-player WiFi battles, and a modest range of single-player variations on the game – including Three Strikes And You're Out, Beat The Clock and Perfection – and this is an absorbing, if one-note, puzzler. ■ **Paul Fitzpatrick**

REX FEATURES

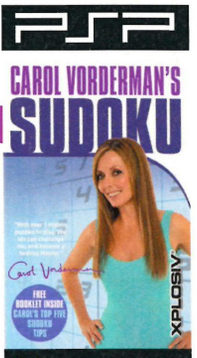
■ Ms Vorderman, are you trying to seduce us?

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK VERDICT

Graphics	07	Minimalist but clear, and that's all you need
Sound	05	Simple and almost entirely forgettable
Gameplay	06	It's Sudoku and therefore horribly addictive
Lifespan	07	There's a lot here, but only fans will care

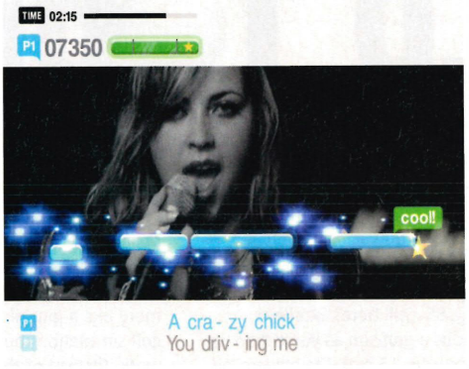
Rejecting flashy production in favour of appropriate use of the hardware's tech, **Carol's Sudoku** *is a strong PSP showing for the craze*

6/10



DETAILS

PUBLISHER XPLOSIV
DEVELOPER XPLOSIV
PRICE £19.99
OUT NOW
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO



■ **Embrace your inner diva by belting out these camp classics**

SINGSTAR ANTHEMS

Once upon a time I was falling in love, now I'm only falling apart...

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER SONY
PRICE £39.99 (WITH MICROPHONES) £19.99 (STANDALONE)
PLAYERS 1-8
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.SINGSTARGAME.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO
PERIPHERALS 2 MICS, EYETOY CAMERA

Calling it *SingStar Gay* would be politically incorrect and *SingStar Men Who Like To Moisturise* too unwieldy, so instead we get *Anthems*, the campest thing you can buy for your PS2 this side of a little sailor's hat. Of course, it won't *only* appeal to spenders of the pink pound. (The other demographic being the hen parties who patrol our local Vodkatorium.) Miraculously, we managed to lure actual women back to the flat. Let the reviewing commence!

Surprisingly, singing karaoke on PS2 now feels so comfortable that we no longer feel the need to get banjaxed on cider before firing it up. But obviously, it doesn't hurt either. As with all previous *SingStar* games, enjoyment is utterly dependent on how much you like the 20 tracks on offer. (As opposed to the 30 offered by *Rocks!*, which immediately seems a bit tight.)

The roster is a mixture of genuine classics like Dead Or Alive's *Spin Me Round (Like A Record)* and Donna Summer's *I Feel Love* plus more modern 'you go girl' efforts, like the Pussycat Dolls. The guiltiest pleasure is Bonnie Tyler's immense *Total Eclipse Of The Heart*. It's the anthem to end all anthems, astonishingly hard to sing, and worth the price of admission alone.

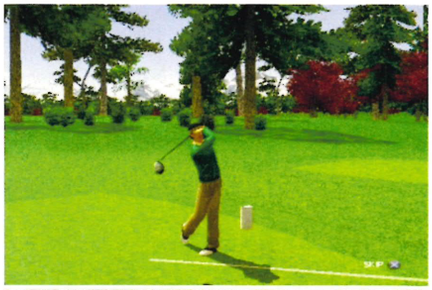
With the right people, *SingStar* remains one of the most joyous experiences offered by PS2. Annoying then, that the scoring system *still* hasn't been sorted. In the battle mode it's often clear that one player has sung better than the other, but the game favours whispery, constant noise over passionate, confident performance. Hopefully this can be fixed in time for the PS3 version, when you'll be able to download tracks iTunes-style. Note to Sony: we'll pay top dollar for Springsteen's *Thunder Road*. ■ **Tim Clark**

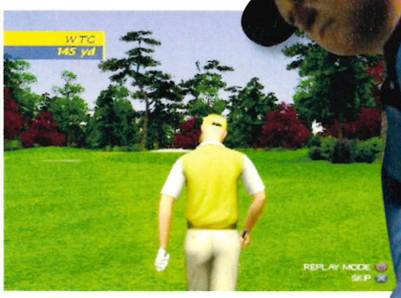
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK VERDICT

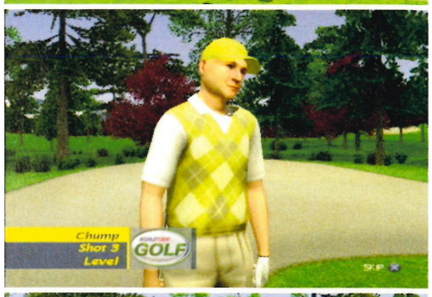
Graphics	08	Same clean design as ever
Sound	07	[Listens carefully] Yup, that's Charlotte Church
Gameplay	08	Best played with sexy friends
Lifespan	06	You'll hammer all 20 tracks in a session

Kinks in the scoring are starting to grate and the track listing isn't for everyone, but it's still after-pub gaming at its very best

7/10







PROSTROKE GOLF: WORLD TOUR 2007

It's all in the wrist, apparently...

DETAILS

PUBLISHER OXYGEN INTERACTIVE
DEVELOPER GUSTO GAMES
PRICE £34.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT 18 AUGUST
WEBSITE WWW.PROSTROKEGOLF.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO

AT A GLANCE

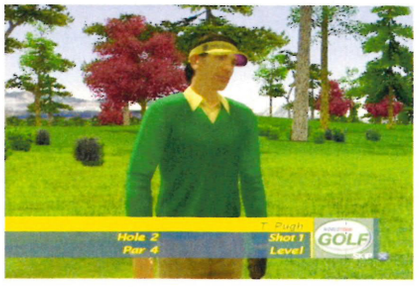
A serious golf sim for serious people, *ProStroke Golf* is the stuffy, no frills alternative to the increasingly wacky *Tiger Woods* series.

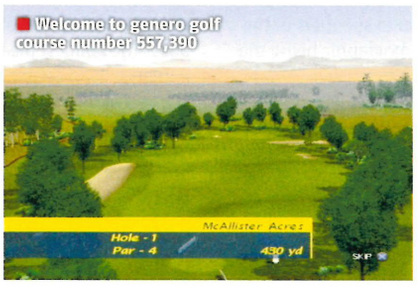
For anyone wondering where *ProStroke Golf* has mysteriously appeared from, it's the new name for *World Tour Golf*. And it's not to be confused with *Real World Golf*, the Gametrak offering which you'll find reviewed on page 85. Still here? Excellent.

This is as serious a golf sim as you'll find on PS2. The roster includes 15 real-life players, all of whom look accurate enough, but seem to have had any trace of personality removed – responding emotionlessly even after sinking monster putts. Fortunately, their playing styles have been impressively replicated. Each golfer has unique strengths and weaknesses and, refreshingly, you never get the impression that they're infallible. They make duff shots, end up in bunkers, and occasionally plunk their balls into water hazards.

Much has been made of the game's supposedly groundbreaking ProStroke swing system, which introduces the idea of transferring your weight during each shot to provide a greater feeling of control. In practice, it feels more like a gimmick than a true revolution in golf simulation, but that's not to say it doesn't work. Instead of the *Tiger Woods* method of pulling back on the analogue stick, then pushing forwards to make a shot, you pull the right analogue stick horizontally to make the swing, and shift the left stick in the same direction to shift your weight. Get it right and you'll slam the ball much further than you're used to on other golf titles, but get it wrong and you'll slice your shot into the trunk of a nearby oak. Still, it's unquestionably unique – there's a really satisfying feeling of achievement when you've mastered it and begin scoring birdies, and, when you're really skilled at it, the odd eagle.

When it comes to visuals though, the two games are much further apart. *ProStroke*'s courses are functional blobs of green and brown, with the odd pixelated tree chucked in for good measure. Compared to the lush, detailed courses on show in *Tiger*, these look like the sort of courses that have chavs strolling around, sipping cans between approach shots. After a few hours of serious slog through a variety of identikit fairways, you'll be desperate for a touch of colour. Even using the functional level editor, it's difficult to make such vapid environments look much more welcoming.





IN THE ROUGH

ProStroke Golf's presentation is equally lacking. And in something as vanilla as a golfing sim, that's pretty inexcusable. Take the player creation options: all you have to choose from are eight samey character models, a handful of tasteless Pringle-style jumpers and a selection of caps. We're not asking for handlebar 'taches and cowboy hats (*although*...) but a few alternative body shapes would have been a start.

There's no scope for uprgrading your golfer's skills, either. While this means that you're ready to take on the pros from the start, it doesn't encourage you to develop your career from one

STROKE ME

Four things we liked about *ProStroke Golf*

MORE CONTROL

Slow-mo swings and fiery balls are a bit passe. If you're serious about your pitching and putting *ProStroke*'s weight transfer system will be a real boon. If not, we suggest sticking with *Tiger*.

SEE YOUR FEET

Real immersion in games is tricky to achieve, but *ProStroke* manages it by showing you a first-person view for every shot you take. You can even look up to check for potential obstructions to your shot.

CONVINCING OPPONENTS

Too many sports games are hampered by robot-like opponents – athletic machines that never drop a pass or miss a goal. In *ProStroke* each opponent is human. They'll slice shots and pump balls in the bunker.

BIG NAMES

It may not have the uber-celebs that *Tiger Woods* offers, but *ProStroke* still has some big names. Sergio Garcia, Mark O'Meara, and Justin Rose (among others) are all in there.

■ You'd look gripped with angst in that jumper too

■ He'd fallen for the old elasticated golf-ball trick again

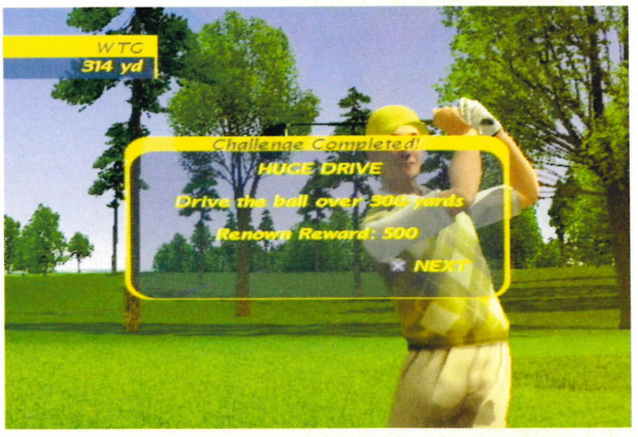
IN ITS RUSH TO BE THE INSIDER'S SIM OF CHOICE, IT FORGOT ABOUT THE LITTLE EXTRAS

year to the next. You can collect 'Renown' points for pulling off powerful drives and hitting the green early, but all these enable you to do is enter the advanced tournaments. Win a tournament and you'll be treated to a fistful of cash, but don't think that means you'll be able to go on a spending spree: there is literally nothing to buy in *ProStroke Golf*. No extra clubs, no vibrant tank-tops, no lucky watches. Having a no-nonsense attitude is all well and good, but in this case it means there's no real incentive to amass a big bank balance.

BUNKER MENTALITY

Another concern is the commentary. Golfing legends Sam Torrance and Ian Baker Finch provide play-by-play, and while their witterings are inoffensive, they're also undeniably boring. More excitement could have been drummed out of a Speak And Spell. Much like the golfers on the green, the voice-over men go about their business with a passionless professionalism, delivering a single hard fact every time you play a shot. "Not what he wanted there", and "I dare say he won't have too many complaints about that one." We'd pay good money just to hear Torrence say "Christ, you've ballsed that one up good and proper, haven't you?!" but there's more chance of Wayne Rooney and Cristiano Ronaldo applying for a civil partnership together.

The absence of any notable gloss prevents *ProStroke Golf: World Tour 2007* from reaching the top tier of sports games. It's technically sound, but in its rush to become the insider's sim of choice, it forgot to include all the little extras that could have made it essential. A decent effort, and committed PS2 golfers will want to check out the weight-shifting system, but for us, *Everybody's Golf* and *Tiger Woods* still rule the greens. ■ **Andy Hartup**



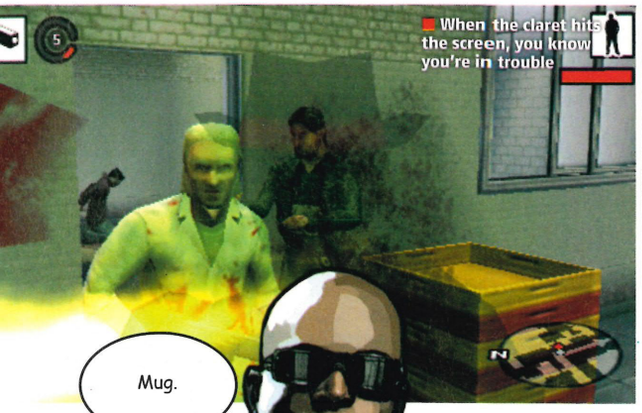
■ Increase your Renown rating by demonstrating your silky golf skills. This means slamming some 300+ yard drives, or hitting pin-point approach shots

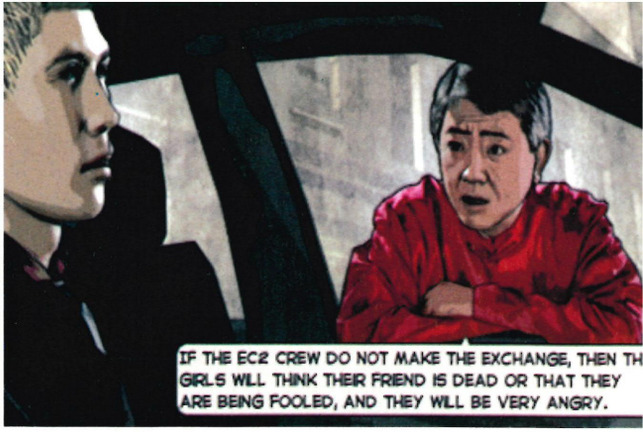
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK	VERDICT	
Graphics	05	Green as far as the eye can see
Sound	06	Accurate if uninspired commentary
Gameplay	08	Great simulation and AI behaviour
Lifespan	06	Plenty of tournaments, but a bit samey

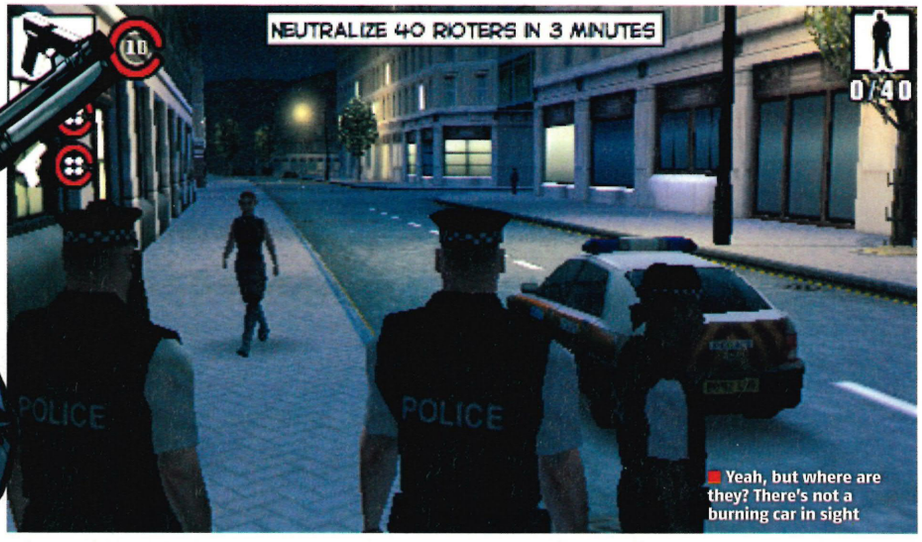
A decent attempt to snaffle the crown away from King Woods, ProStroke Golf is let down by its lack of rewards and features

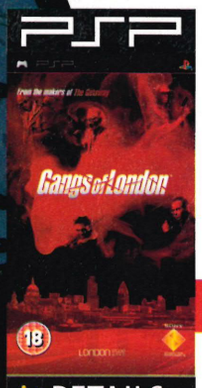
6/10

■ "No, sorry, my back's given out"









GANGS OF LONDON

We're tired of London, and tired of life...

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER LONDON STUDIO
PRICE £34.99
OUT 1 SEPTEMBER
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

AT A GLANCE
Crime-themed romp set on the streets of London, from the team who made *The Getaway* series on PS2. Control gangs of various ethnic origin in your bid to rule the capital's underworld.

The list of clichéd stuff we'd like to ban from videogames grows on a daily basis. If we never see a 'shootout at the docks' level again, it won't be a day too soon. We're also fed up with cack-handed stealth missions, bio-weapons falling into the hands of terrorists, being forced to collect stuff, and the word 'Street'. And 90% of *Gangs Of London* – a game that deals almost solely in clichés and stereotypes – can be added to that list.

Imagine Barbara Windsor and Ray Winstone eating jellied eels on the West Ham pitch while Shane Richie plays piano in the background. That image of Cockney life isn't even half as clichéd as some of the stuff on offer here. The titular gangs are engaged in a brutal and constant turf war. Missions see you protecting scrap yards and car lots from rivals trying to nick hubcaps and broken carburettors, and have names like 'Passport To Pussy'. Every character swears at every opportunity. It feels like Guy Ritchie directing *EastEnders*, which is to say simultaneously violent and depressing.

FAMILIAR SIGHTS

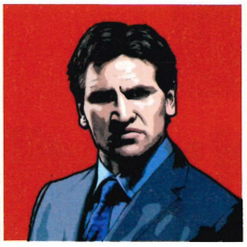
The main game consists of a series of driving and shooting missions, which can be played from various perspectives. For instance, if you don't fancy taking charge of the main gang, there are five alternative outfits to control – take a look at 'Most Wanted' for the lowdown on each. The trouble is, you're still dealing in clichés, only this time it's the types of mission on offer that are generic – snatching diamonds, escaping from a botched job, and numerous other tasks borrowed from a stack of other, better crime games.

But the trite missions aren't even the biggest stumbling block. That honour is reserved for *Gangs Of London*'s irksome and old-fashioned control system, which showcases the PSP at its worst. It harks back to the bad old days of *Tomb Raider* and *Resident Evil* on PSone, where you turn on the spot before pushing forwards to move. It's so convoluted and cumbersome that it quickly becomes a pain in the Häagen-Dazs. There is a handy lock-on feature that makes staying alive marginally easier, but even then the

MOST WANTED

Your quick guide to the people whose pints you definitely don't want to spill...

TALWAR BROTHERS
The brothers like to do business at the end of an M16, or with the kind of personal touch a razor blade allows. They're good with a gun but lack stamina in a fight.



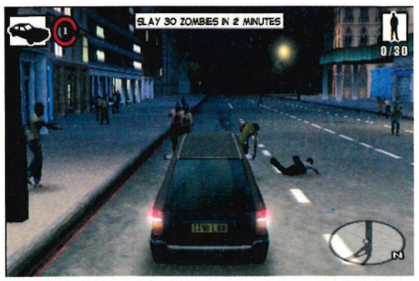
STEELE ASSOCIATES
A mysterious new London gang who value sharp suits and BMWs, but aren't afraid to muck in when it matters – think Martin Kemp, cocktails and violence with a smile.

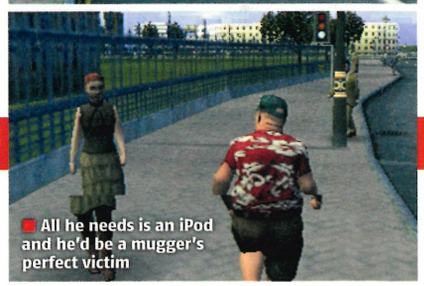
MORRIS KANE FIRM
Morris offers an old-skool cockney attitude that places aggression and stamina above pace. The man himself likes shotguns, Capris and the wallopy end of baseball bats.

EC2 CREW
One of the toughest gangs in the game, the EC2 Crew rock hoodies, trainers and Uzis. Annoy them enough and they'll turn to sledge hammers to finish the job.

WATER DRAGONS
Good drivers who can escape most 'jobs gone wrong' with little effort. Out of their motors, these boys are quick but inaccurate, preferring scattershot AK-47 bursts.

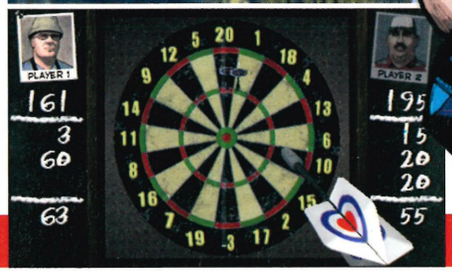
ZAKHAROV MAFIA
Tough and aggressive, the Russian Mafia brings some East European technology to the party, with sub-machine guns and people carriers.





All he needs is an iPod and he'd be a mugger's perfect victim

In Tourist mode you get to snap various London landmarks



IT ALL FEELS LIKE GUY RITCHIE DIRECTING AN EPISODE OF *EASTENDERS*

system gets confused when you're faced with a bustling screen of targets, almost always locking onto the least appropriate.

RISK SAVES THE DAY

Thankfully, there is a saving grace in the form of *Gangs Of London*'s mini-games. Leave the foul-mouthed story mode and you'll find a whole world of throwaway fun on the streets of London. The main one you'll hop to will be the turn-based Gang Battle mode, played out on an interactive map of the city. You move your gangs around to reinforce areas and invade rival territories, with your ultimate objective being to control the entire city. It's essentially *Risk* for four players over WiFi, and if you can find three other PSP-owning mates, it's brilliant fun.

Equally good are the free-roaming modes. These are a series of simply designed, yet well executed mini-games that range from outrunning the police on the London streets, to slaughtering lots of people in a set time limit. The *28 Days Later* mode (called 'Four Weeks Later' here, but clearly influenced by the movie) is the crowning glory as you rush around blasting the heads off hordes of zombies (see 'Three-Play'), while the pub games on offer – darts, skittles, pool and an arcade game based on mobile phone favourite *Snake* – are also well conceived.

We're loathe to recommend a title where the only thing going for it is its mini-games, but those who do invest in *Gangs Of London* won't be at all disappointed in these areas. However, those of you looking for an enthralling, free-roaming crime game will obviously be infinitely better served by *Vice City Stories*. This simply isn't our cup of Rosie. ■ **Ian Dean**

PlayStation 2 Official Magazine-UK VERDICT

Graphics	07	Recognisable landmarks but lacks real detail
Sound	06	There's a story in-between the swearing
Gameplay	06	Patchy but saved by the decent mini-games
Lifespan	07	The extras will have you hooked

A strong idea let down by poor controls and lack of originality. The mini-games go some way to repairing the damage, though

6/10

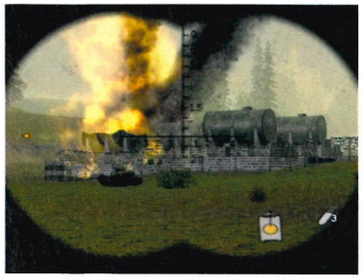
THREE-PLAY

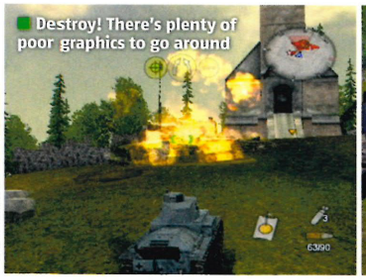
These mini-games are the best thing in *Gangs Of London*

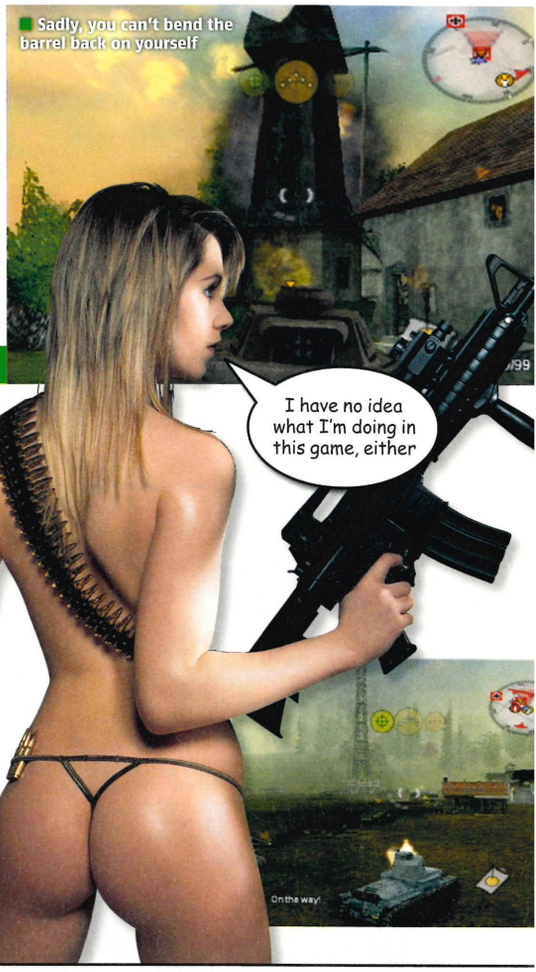
1. THE GETAWAY
Simple. You have a car, a squad of police on your tail and a time limit to survive. Later stages require a little tactical driving, as you're forced to leap from your about-to-explode-motor into fresh wheels, so knowing when to make the switch is key.

2. RIOT CONTROL
Change roles and jump into the size nines of a London Bobby out to stop the gangs for good. At first you'll pull your weapon and charge in, recklessly slaughtering the capital's gangs, but you could try and arrest them individually. It's harder, but scores higher.

3. FOUR WEEKS LATER
London is overrun with the undead and only cockneys armed with shotguns can save us all. This takes two forms: kill the requisite number of zombies before the time runs out, or rescue your boss from a fate worse than retirement to the Costa Del Sol wearing tight yellow speedos.




Destroy! There's plenty of poor graphics to go around


Sadly, you can't bend the barrel back on yourself

DETAILS

PUBLISHER JOWOOD PRODUCTIONS
DEVELOPER ZOOTFLY
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.PANZERELITEACTION.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO

PANZER ELITE ACTION: FIELDS OF GLORY

WW2 artillery battler completely tanks

For what it's worth, here's how we reckon you make a quality tank combat game: You overcome the lack of 'up-close and personal' action inherent in battles between metal boxes with cannons strapped to the roof by including a deep strategic element. That way, picking off specks on the horizon will still deliver satisfaction. You separate driving and firing and make both of them richly featured experiences that you can toggle between, letting friendly AI take charge of whatever function you're not busy with.

Unfortunately, *Panzer Elite Action* fails to adopt this or any other winning gameplay formula. It fails to engage because it only skims the surface of what makes pitting mobile artillery units against one another exciting, without exploring the unique challenges this presents. For such hefty beasts, handling feels slippery, and while the squadron command system aims to nail accessible *and* tactical, it ends up feeling too shallow. To cap it all, the graphics are smudgy and ration-era basic, revealing a shameful lack of detail if you trundle up close.

To be fair, *PEA: FOG* isn't absolutely broken, and there is some mild fun to be had if you can look beyond ho-hum production and lightweight gameplay. But then again, at £30 who's going to want to do that? ■ **Paul Fitzpatrick**

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

Graphics	05	PS2's capable of so much better
Sound	06	Fine, functional, forgettable
Gameplay	05	A decent premise hurt by dodgy tank controls
Lifespan	06	Even tank buffs won't stay the distance

Deeply average graphics and frustrating controls crush Panzer Elite's chances for glory surer than a 30-tonne tank

5/10

FORMULA ONE 06

Pixel-perfect Prix in your pocket

PSP

Certain franchises just make more sense on PSP. Invite the average gamer to a 20-hour F1 marathon on PS2, and the colour will drain out of their face faster than Alonso off the grid. However, give 'em a PSP and let them tackle the Championship in adrenaline-rich bite-sized sessions, and F1's cocktail of strategy, skill, nerve and second-shaving action comes into its own.

Of course, PSP *F1 06* rocks the latest season-specific updates, and the PS2 version's invitation to create a bespoke sim/arcade racing experience via a wealth of tweakable parameters is extended to handhelders. On the track, handling is surprisingly faithful, with a noticeable shift in grip and inertia as tyres wear and fuel dips. Add to this a great option to race PS2 gamers over WiFi, and *F1 06* is a rich addition to the PSP racing fraternity. ■ **PF**

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

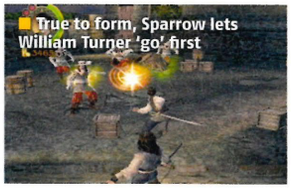
F1 on PSP works a treat, and there's a rich vein of challenging racing on offer. The option to race against PS2 players is a particularly nice touch

7/10

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER STUDIO LIVERPOOL
PRICE £34.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WIFI YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

Handling is surprisingly faithful and satisfying


True to form, Sparrow lets William Turner 'go' first

DETAILS

PUBLISHER UBISOFT
DEVELOPER BETHESDA SOFTWORKS
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.UBI.COM/UK
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: THE LEGEND OF JACK SPARROW

Pirates spin-off plunders Jack's past

Not to be confused with the (slightly) superior PSP game of *Pirates'* movie sequel, *Dead Man's Chest* (see page 84), this hack 'n' slash adventure takes a clever narrative detour into Captain Jack Sparrow's exotic past at the helm of the Black Pearl. Starting with the ghost ship attack on Port Royal from the first movie, this lightweight battler is essentially a two-hander, with Jack plus one – either AI buddy or a mate – swinging swords and generally steaming through level after level of undemanding slicing, puzzling and combo upgrading.

While the game is likable enough for a while, a large part of this is down to Johnny Depp reprising his role as the hilarious Sparrow. Take him out of the equation and it's unlikely even the biggest pirate wannabe would lift their eye patch for this. ■ **PF**

PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT

A lightweight grog and cutlass battler that only just scrapes average thanks to Depp's turn as Sparrow. Prince Of Persia does the swashbuckling action so much better

5/10

THE ANT BULLY

Spoiling everybody's picnic

PUBLISHER MIDWAY **DEVELOPER** A2M
PRICE £29.99 **PLAYERS** 1 **OUT** NOW **60HZ MODE** NO
WIDESCREEN NO **SURROUND SOUND** NO

Lucas is a bug-torturing child shrunk to the size of an insect as a punishment for his crimes. To get home, he has to live as an ant and learn the error of his ways. This might sound like an interesting idea, but the game is a totally unspectacular platforming drudge.

Almost every mission involves hitting enemy insects, or gathering things, to reach a quota. 'Collecting' and 'hitting' is the extent of the imagination on display here and it always feels like a chore. Throw in a simplified but still fiddly control scheme – unreliable automatic jumping for example – and you've got several good reasons to spend your 30 quid on something else. ■ **LH**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK **VERDICT**

All too familiar platforming action spoiled further by oversimplified, unpredictable controls and utterly dreary objectives

4/10

QUEST FOR SLEEPING BEAUTY

Don't bother setting the alarm

PUBLISHER LIQUID GAMES **DEVELOPER** LIQUID GAMES
PRICE £9.99 **PLAYERS** 1-2 **OUT** NOW **60HZ MODE** NO
WIDESCREEN NO **SURROUND SOUND** NO

The developers of this unhinged hybrid of *Pac-Man*'s maze-navigating gameplay and a classic tale of comatose royalty seem to think that young gamers are gifted enough to instinctively know what's around blind corners. Well, it's either that, or they forgot to finish the camera system. Parents, if you truly love your offspring – and despite the constant screaming at them in Sainsburys, we're assuming you do – get 'em *Stuart Little 3* or *Shamu's Deep Sea Adventures* instead. ■ **PF**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK **VERDICT**

What could have been a bit of a laugh for pint-sized gamers is reduced to a frustrating pain by a hatefully obstructive camera

2/10

CLASSIC BRITISH MOTOR RACING

PUBLISHER METRO 3D **DEVELOPER** DATA DESIGN INTERACTIVE
PRICE £19.99 **PLAYERS** 1-2 **OUT** NOW **60HZ MODE** NO

Classic British Motor Racing is definitely a whole mark out of ten less crappy than its sister title, *London Taxi: Rush Hour* (reviewed below), but this is like asserting that Jack The Ripper was less evil than Fred West.

When you're trying to race a brittle-handling relic around genero circuits against AI cars that can't even beat you to the *first* corner, you're likely to conclude that crap is crap, and get on with your life. Good idea. ■ **PF**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK **VERDICT**

Rarely has the word 'classic' been quite so abused. Shoddy AI, uninspiring cars and brittle handling. Boo

3/10

LONDON TAXI: RUSH HOUR

PUBLISHER METRO 3D **DEVELOPER** DATA DESIGN INTERACTIVE
PRICE £19.99 **PLAYERS** 1 **OUT** NOW **60HZ MODE** NO

Set in a web of anonymous, blocky streets strewn with London's landmarks, this is Sega's classic coin-op *Crazy Taxi*, apparently reworked in a code sweatshop on a budget that would just about cover a round of drinks.

We don't hate this game because it's unoriginal. No, we hate it because the graphics are Etch-A-Sketch standard and the loading times are outrageous. But above all, we hate it because the taxis' bizarre, rear-biased steering makes them handle like the bastard offspring of a forklift truck and a punctured lilo. And the deathblow? *Liberty City Stories* – complete with superior taxi missions – costs the same. ■ **PF**

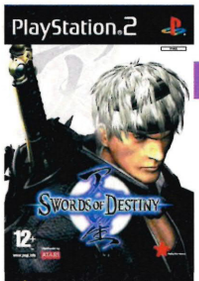
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK **VERDICT**

This* Crazy Taxi *homage is rank, and not worth £2 let alone £20. Find alternative means of transport to gaming pleasure

2/10

SWORDS OF DESTINY

Destined for obscurity



DETAILS

PUBLISHER ATARI
DEVELOPER RISING STAR
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.ATARI.COM.AU/GAMES/OVERVIEW.DO?ID=459
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES
ONLINE NO

Despite its meandering storyline about slaying demons in ancient China using magical swords, this is just *Castlevania* in (not especially attractive) Oriental clothing. It's got punishingly repetitive swordplay, a slightly disorientating camera, and annoyingly clueless waves of enemies who rise up from the ground at every turn, then stand around a lot, waiting for the merciful release of death. The most depressing thing is we've played worse.

The one innovative idea is the ability to collect enemies' swords and then combine their powers to give you greater strength and accuracy. The concept works fine, but because of the dodgy AI baddies we mentioned, you never actually feel much need to upgrade. With a little more effort invested in the basics, this could have been a decent bargain slashfest. But with the superior *Devil May Cry* games now available on Platinum, you know exactly what to do with that 20 nicker. ■ **BW**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK **VERDICT**

Action-packed* Castlevania *crib that isn't terrible, but is burdened by being overly predictable and unchallenging from the outset

5/10

21 CARD GAMES

PUBLISHER PHOENIX GAMES **DEVELOPER** MERE MORTALS
PRICE £14.99 **PLAYERS** 1 **OUT** NOW **60HZ MODE** NO

This collection represents a bitter insult to you and your PS2. It persistently manages to deal you the worst hand possible, then pipes ringtone standard (not polyphonic, mind) dirge into your ears while you're forced to squint at the screen trying to work out which suit each card belongs to. *21 Card Games* is fundamentally broken – it even managed to get the rules of Hearts wrong. That houseswife's favourite, Hearts! Honestly, this is so utterly turgid that we wouldn't even accept it as a mini-game in a below-average RPG. Deal us out. ■ **AH**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL magazine-UK **VERDICT**

Easily the lowest ebb of the card-game boom, this horrifying mess is the most joy-sapping thing we've ever slotted into a PS2

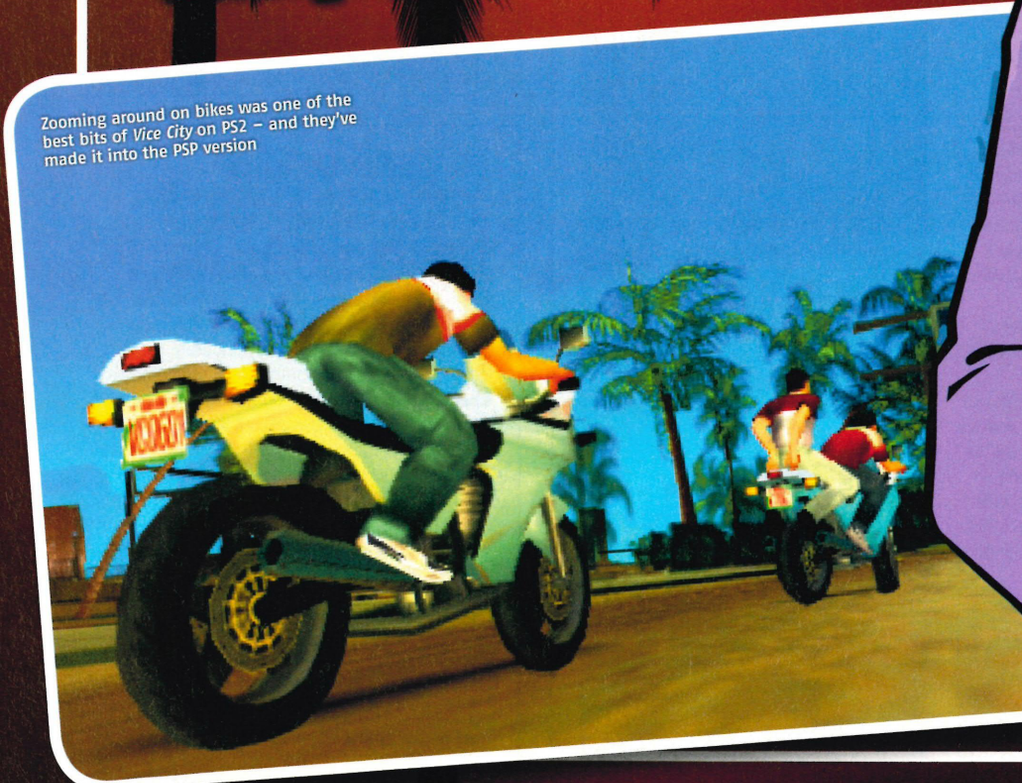
0/10

grand theft auto

Vice City Stories™

WORDS: JON HAMBLIN

How *GTA: Vice City Stories* is turning up the heat on PSP



Zooming around on bikes was one of the best bits of *Vice City* on PS2 – and they've made it into the PSP version

grand theft auto Vice City Stories

Cast your minds back to the intro sequence of *Vice City*. Getting anything yet? Okay, we'll refresh your memory. It's 1986 and Tommy Vercetti arrives in VC with a big briefcase of green. His car pulls into the forecourt of an abandoned warehouse as a helicopter lands and a man gets out with a case full of nose candy. But, before the deal is sealed, there's an ambush and the whole scene (plus most of its cast) is riddled with jammy holes...

The pilot of the helicopter is smooth talking Lance Vance, who Tommy later teams up with to build his criminal empire. But what about his partner, the unknown henchmen – AKA, that dying guy clutching his throat? Well that's Vic Vance, Lance's brother. And while his part in the original *Vice City* is a short, frothy gurgle, jump back two years and he's the perfect star for the all-new *Vice City Stories*, heading to your PSP this winter. But we're getting ahead of ourselves. Let's turn the clock back...

Wet and wild – the new jet-ski is seriously good fun

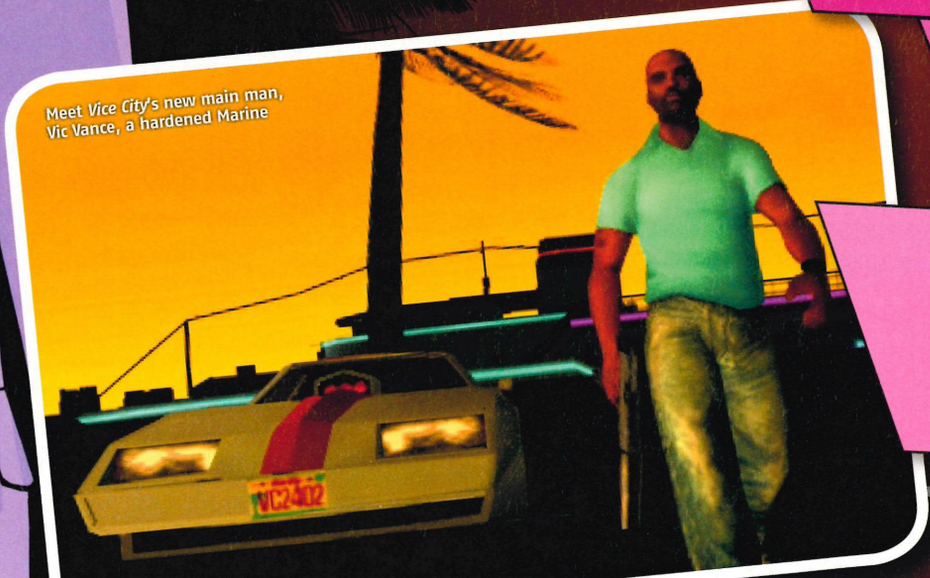
THE BROTHERS GRIM

Okay, it's 1984, and Vice City isn't quite the neon-drenched holiday destination (with the high crime rate) that we all know and love. While many of its landmarks are in place, large numbers of buildings are still under construction – little more than skeletal frames wrapped in plastic sheeting. Shady development deals are being done and as politicians argue, the rich get richer, while the poor get desperate. And occasionally, shot and run over.

Enter the Vance brothers. While Lance will be instantly familiar to everyone who played *Vice City* (not least because of his signature white suit), in *Vice City Stories* you play his older brother, Vic. He's 28. He's a marine. He could probably break your nose with a look. He's currently posted in Vice City, prior to being shipped off to the Guantanamo Bay Naval Base in Cuba, and he's a stubble-headed powerhouse, marching around in a fetching combo of dog tags and fatigues. Rockstar isn't saying why Vic ultimately rejects the army in favour of helping his naughty lil' brother out, but a new Vice City location making its debut in *VCS* might provide a clue...

TRAILER PARK BOYS

In *San Andreas*, there was a real sense of class tension, the haves and the have nots, and this carries through into *Vice City Stories*. Rockstar has hinted that the boys have grown up poor, and you start in Vice City's previously unseen trailer park. There's no word on whether you'll be able to BBQ road kill or laze about on cheap garden furniture yet, but you will be able to interact with a whole new cast of characters, most of whom will be dirt poor and have manky teeth. Eww. Given the story's emphasis on the city's construction, we wouldn't be at all surprised if evil developers trying to shut down the trailer park and evict its residents were the catalyst for the boys' misadventures.



Meet *Vice City*'s new main man, Vic Vance, a hardened Marine

SO, WHAT'S NEW?

YOU CAN FLY!
Helicopters are included this time

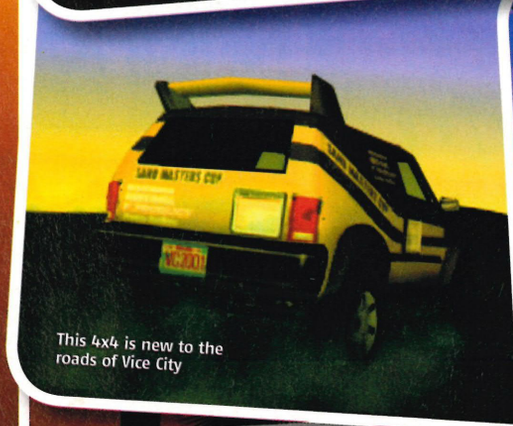
NO MORE DROWNING!
Now you can swim in PSP *GTA*

LANCE IS BACK!
The jive-talking Judas returns. But he's *not* the main character...

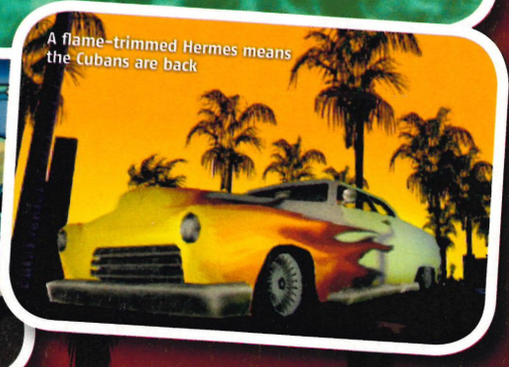
NEW VEHICLES!
Take to the ocean in the new jet-ski or hit the road in fresh motors

YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW!
Vice City Stories' new hero is a US Marine

The Infernus is our least favourite *Vice City* motor. A long wheel base makes corners a nightmare



This 4x4 is new to the roads of Vice City



A flame-trimmed Hermes means the Cubans are back

WHY *VICE CITY* WAS THE BEST *GRAND THEFT AUTO* EVER

We reckon *Vice City* is still the best entry in the series so far...

grand theft auto *vice city*

■ The Period Detail – *Vice City* captured the '80s beautifully, from the rolled-up jacket sleeves to the neon lights.

■ The Setting – Loosely based on Miami, *Vice City* evokes its hot, sticky weather and soaring crime rate perfectly.

■ The Soundtrack – Some of the greatest music ever made was from the '80s. While this is obviously a lie, there's a definite ironic thrill to be had when running someone over to the sounds of the Cutting Crew's *(I Just) Died in Your Arms Tonight*.

■ The Cast – With some of the best talent ever to feature in a game, voices were provided by the likes of Dennis Hopper, and Burt Reynolds. They even got Tubbs (Phillip Michael Thomas) from the original *Miami Vice* TV show to voice Lance.

WHERE ARE THEY THEN?

Vice City had some colourful characters, but what would they have been up to a couple of years earlier?

AVERY CARRINGTON

Most memorable moment:
The Texan property developer introduced the remote-control helicopter to *Grand Theft Auto*, and for that we thank him.

Where was he then?
Given that Vic Vance's trailer park home is due to be levelled, Avery could be leading the charge when the bulldozer moves in.

MERCEDES CORTEZ

Most memorable moment:
The sexpot daughter of Cortez, Mercedes was a right little minx. Who could forget her kind offer of a massage in 'The Job'?

Where was she then?
Mercedes was probably a sweet teenager, whose favourite Care Bear was Snog-a-Lot. Bound to get up to no good in *Stories*.

LOVE FIST

Most memorable moment:
Vice City's answer to Def Leppard starred in the superb bomb-in-the-limo mission, 'Publicity Tour'.

Where were they then?
Probably in a struggling bar band, performing covers to bored punters. They're certain to turn up in the PSP prequel.

RICARDO DIAZ

Most memorable moment:
Diaz killed Vic Vance at the start of *Vice City*. He also owned the mansion you took over – his foul-mouthed demise was priceless.

Where was he then?
Diaz had only just arrived in Vice City back in '84, so expect to see him building up his massive drugs empire.

HOT CHOCOLATE

The City itself has also had a makeover since its last outing. Not only is it bigger, it's more detailed. Buildings look cleaner, signs are at a much higher resolution, and even the palm trees look more tree-like. Pedestrians have been pimped, too. They're much more varied in appearance (the roller skating honeys return though, instantly evoking that South Beach feeling), they appear in more natural-looking clusters, and you won't see crowds all wearing the same outfits any more.

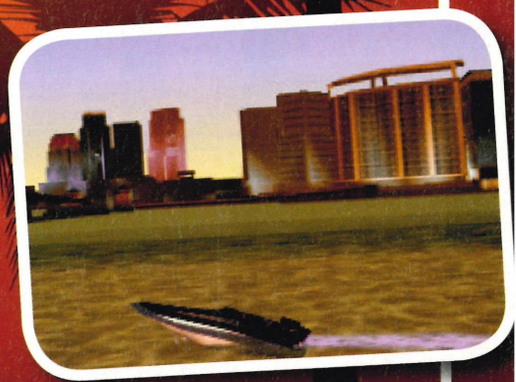
A whistle-stop tour of the *VCS* world showed some other surprises too, the most impressive being a funfair, complete with a ferris wheel (named the Chunder Wheel, in a nod to the Wonder Wheel in Rockstar's *The Warriors*). You can ride this attraction in first-person perspective – although you'll have to provide your own candyfloss.

Things haven't just been overhauled visually, as the missions are now much more varied. In one level, 'Say Cheese', Vic has to perform stunts for a chocolate commercial, *Fall Guy*-style. Beginning the shoot on a dock, Vic promptly runs to the waters edge and... leaps in, revealing a first for the *Vice City* world: swimming! He then paddles over to a jet-ski, a new vehicle making its *GTA* debut. It's a nifty thing too, with impressive translucent wake effects spilling out behind it as Vic zooms off. The water has been greatly enhanced, with a choppy-looking surface and weather now playing a big part. Being at sea during a thunderstorm say, will be a daunting prospect as you're buffeted around like a pea in a Pot Noodle – in this case, Vic has to leap a series of ramps in the city's canals. After completing his circuit, he brings the jet-ski up onto dry land and leaps onto a motorbike to continue the course.

BLUE THUNDER

The second mission is called 'Taking A Fall', and shows more of the relationship between Vic and his brother. A shipment of coke has gone missing and Lance suspects that Big Mitch Baker's biker gang has stolen it. The boys rush to their helicopter and, having had our wings officially clipped in *Liberty City Stories* (cheating aside), the chance to take to the sky now is brilliant.

Vice City looks as great from the air as it always has, and the helicopter controls smoothly. While Vic takes care of the flying, Lance looks after the shooting. It doesn't take long to spot the bikes on the road below, and Lance is soon blowing the crap out of the long-haired hog hippies. Vic has to be careful though, as there's a balance meter in the top right-hand corner of the screen. Wobble the chopper around too much and Lance is unable to aim, leaving you vulnerable to return fire.



With the hog roasting complete, Vic flies to the construction site of a large hotel, where more bikers are holed up. A cut-scene follows in which the helicopter is downed and the boys separated. Vic finds himself in the middle of the construction site, surrounded by bikers. Fortunately, he's remembered to pack the guns. After popping a few heads with a sniper rifle, it's time to absolutely, positively kill every mofo in the area, and so out comes the AK. (It is, after all, a good day.) The mission finally ends in a large room full of bikes, which explode spectacularly as they're peppered with machine gun fire. With all the bikers finally dead, Lance re-appears on a big-ass Harley. "I landed on a few soft bikers. Now I got me a new bike!" he exclaims, before jumping off a ramp into a beautiful orange sunset. Vic looks at the camera. "I don't even know why I bother sometimes" he sighs.

TO BE CONFIRMED...

While Rockstar is perhaps slightly over-confident about the prospects of this latest instalment of *GTA* ("We expect it to outsell any next or current-gen title this winter" claims an insider), there *is* a hell of a lot to be excited about. Rockstar Leeds has clearly been listening to the few criticisms that gamers had about *Liberty City Stories* – things like control issues, swimming and flying, for example – and we're sure that there are still plenty of new features to be announced. But from what we've seen already, the chance to hold the entire City of Vice in the palm of your love fist is far too good an opportunity to pass up. ■

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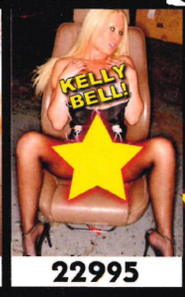

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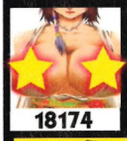
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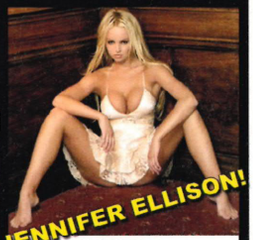

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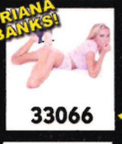

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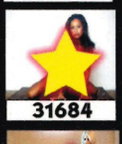
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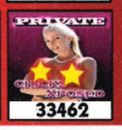

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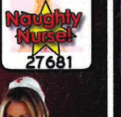

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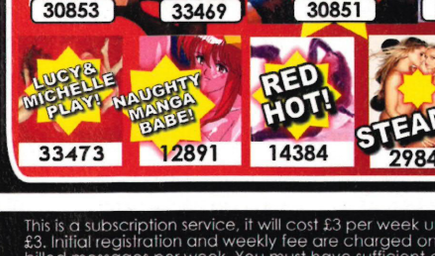

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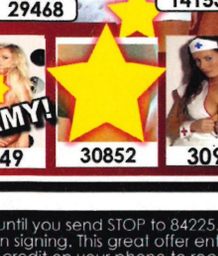

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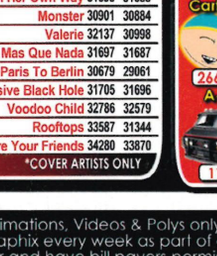
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THE AUTOMATIC	Monster	30901 30884
THE ZUTONS	Valerie	32137 30998
SM/BLACK EYED PEAS	Mas Que Nada	31697 31687
INFERNAL	From Paris To Berlin	30679 29061
MUSE	Supermassive Black Hole	31705 31696
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Cartman! General Lee Horn Stiffler!

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A-Team! Stewie! Sloth!

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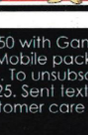
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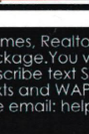
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF HITMAN

WORDS: STEVE WILLIAMS

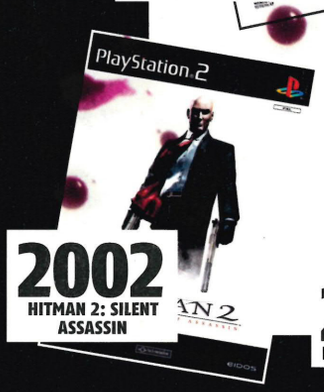
It doesn't matter if you've got a really obvious barcode on the back of your head if your victims never get to see you coming...

Hitman has become one of PS2's biggest franchises, yet it didn't even start out on Sony's machine. The original, *Hitman: Codename 47* was only ever available on PC. Did you miss anything? Not really. Though the premise – to become an elegantly tailored, ruthlessly efficient contract killer with a complex past threatening to overwhelm him as he performs his globe-trotting murderisations – was inspired, the (ahem) execution was somewhat flawed.

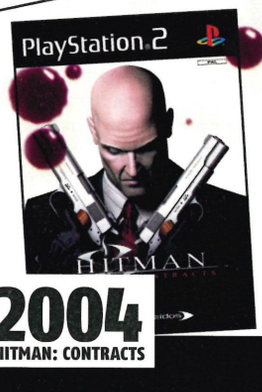
ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES

The DNA may have been laid out already, but it was the second title, *Silent Assassin*, which really nailed the formula. While most shooters are about reactions and firepower, overcoming foes in *Hitman* is more about composure, cunning and care. Care about yourself, that is, not others... And where Snake or Sam Fisher overcome their outnumbered, underdog status through high technology and hiding, 47 overcomes his with disguises and the kind of unstoppable, icy-hearted determination that could, in another life, have seen him rise to the top of the TV chef industry.

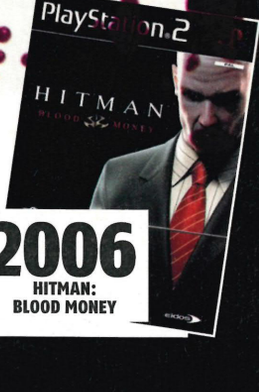
2000
HITMAN: CODENAME 47



2002
HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN



2004
HITMAN: CONTRACTS



2006
HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HITMAN

"I HATE THIS JOB..."

Mention Agent Smith and you might think of *The Matrix*, but spare a thought for the Smith who's perhaps the CIA's most inept agent. Agent 47 has to rescue him not once but *twice* in the first game, and it's all downhill from there. Though he usually has some kind of useful info, he's mostly just a liability – as most recently witnessed in the *Blood Money* mission Flatline. In this Bond-esque adventure set in a detox clinic, you can only get someone out if they're either sober or dead – and Agent Smith isn't getting sober...

Agent 47's appearance has changed a little over the years. This is the loose tie, pouty look

HITMAN: CODENAME 47

RELEASE November 2000 **FORMAT** PC

ART OF MURDER

Advertising *Hitman* has never been easy. Recent ads for *Blood Money*, showing beautiful but dead women have been accused of sexism. Most famously, the viral ad campaign for *Silent Assassin* showed people being executed for minor annoyances like queue jumping. TV ads for the same game were also pulled by US networks for "looking too real".

THE HOOK

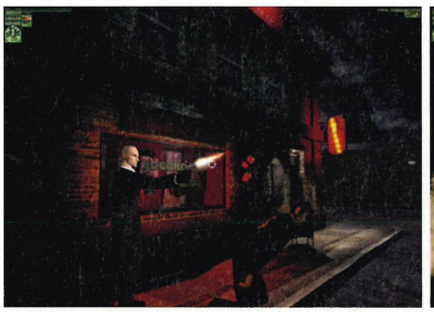
Originally the title was just *Hitman*, and it should have stayed that way. This was one of the purest game concepts for years, and deserved a title to reflect that – no need for backstory, made up political situations or any other justifications for the player to carry out whatever bizarre tasks emerged. Of course, a story could be added – and was – but it wasn't strictly necessary. You are a hitman; you do what hitmen do. Simple. Pure. And just a little bit headshotty.

THE CROOKS

Mr 47 is tasked with assassinating seemingly unrelated targets – gang leaders, gun runners, terrorists – but soon discovers that they're all in contact with each other and the whole thing smells fishy like sushi left out in the sun. Exactly who the targets are is mostly irrelevant, but it should be noted that the main guys – Lee Hong and the two Fuchs brothers – also appear in *Contracts*. In fact, the Lee Hong Assassination mission and the excellent Traditions Of The Trade are repeated wholesale in *Contracts*.

THE DRESSING UP

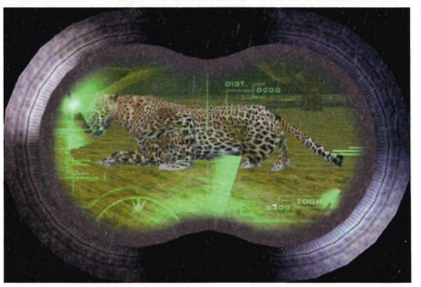
If you're going out executing, it makes sense to get dressed for the occasion. 47 is a clone, so that precludes getting dressed as his mother and attacking girls in showers – but the costume changes do offer very practical benefits. In other games capping a gang negotiator and the chief of police would involve turning the surrounding area into a cemetery. 47 takes a more subtle approach: you can climb through the toilet window, hide a gun, slot the negotiator in an alley, surrender your piece to the guards while now dressed in his silky jim jams and quietly retrieve your gun. Elsewhere you can dress as a bellboy and kill people, a soldier and kill people or a sailor and kill people. Yet, the ultimate thrill is remaining in your cool black suit, rarely breaking into a run and only killing when absolutely necessary.

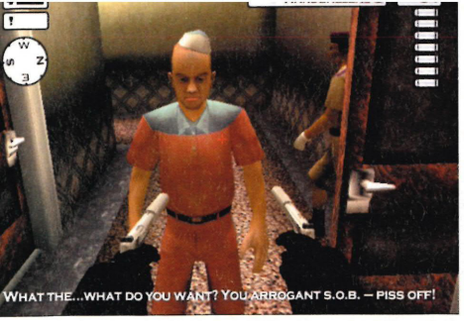


The first game had a strong Chinese flavour, with numerous triad targets to whack

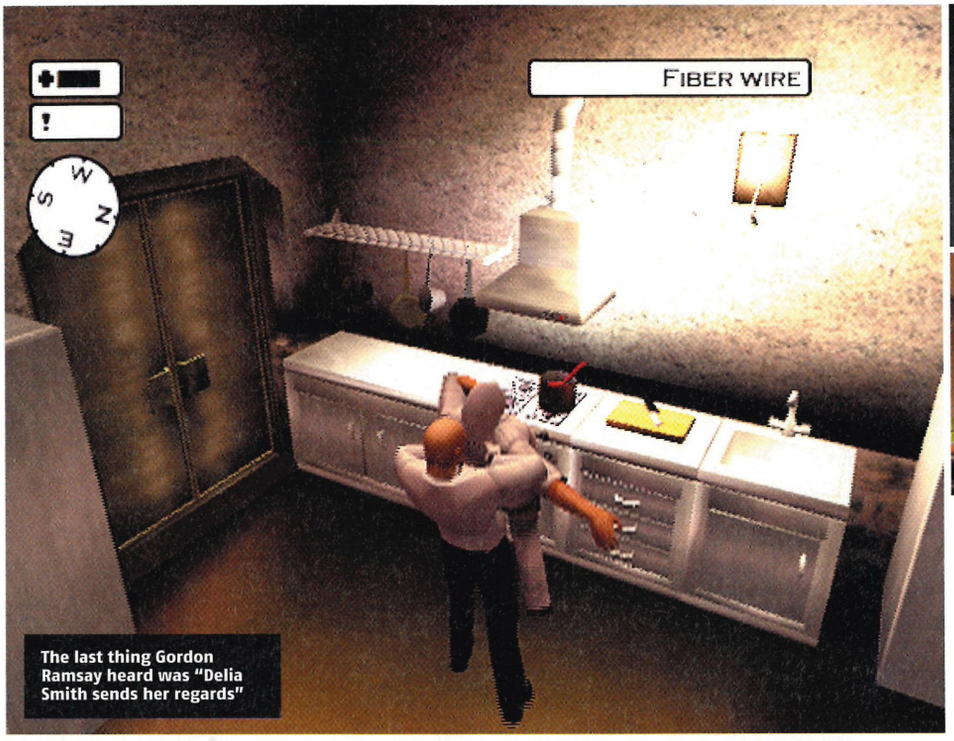
KEY MOMENT

Clearly it's the creation of 47 himself – how many other game heroes could wear a tie and still look fearsome? The bald head, the sharp suit, the black gloves... his job is slightly inhuman and, as a clone created to kill, so is he. Perhaps the only thing PS2 gamers really missed out on was the lengthy, tension-raising, totally *Day Of The Jackal* animation of 47 unpacking his gorgeously red-lined sniper case.

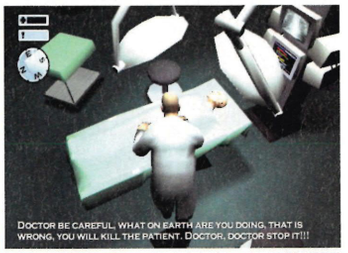




Ragdoll and blood splatter effects made every kill a gruesome triumph



The last thing Gordon Ramsay heard was "Delia Smith sends her regards"



A BRIEF HISTORY OF HITMAN

GREATEST HIT

There are many candidates for the greatest *Hitman* mission – stalking the halls of Beldingford Manor, the suburban hell of A New Life, the icy sniping and booby-trapping in Kirov Park – but the award has to go to *Silent Assassin*'s St Petersburg Stakeout. Starting on a dingy subway, you scurry through snowy streets to infiltrate a building. Once upstairs you find a suitable window for sniping into the building next door... but the genius part is that you don't know which of the generals in the meeting is your target. And you can't hurt the others. And time is running out. Haltingly, Diana, your control, reveals information on his age, whether he smokes, drinks, is bald and is right or left-handed and you narrow down the possibilities...

HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN

RELEASE October 2002 **FORMAT** PS2

THE HOOK

The sequel was the first *Hitman* to appear on PS2, and it was a vast improvement. Creators Io Interactive always characterised *Hitman* as a 'thinker/shooter', and though the term hardly caught on, the idea was spot on. This meant that, rather than following the familiar 'more guns, more levels' path of so many sequels, it got more creative. Hence one of the most exciting, authentic-feeling (in a Hollywood way – see 'Greatest Hit' panel) missions ever, plus a brilliant save system that enabled you to save anywhere, but only so many times per level.

THE CROOKS

That's not to say there wasn't more in the way of content, however. *Hitman 2* has 21 missions to the original's 12, frequently in locations far more in-keeping with the idea of a suavely dressed professional killer than the first game managed. Creeping through ships and jungles just didn't seem quite right – instead, here you're mingling with the upper classes at Bond-ish mansion parties, infiltrating corporate buildings, climbing towers to snipe targets and slotting scum as they sit in Jacuzzis. The game has its fair share of grimy locations too – sewers, bazaars, creaky Japanese castles – but mostly it makes good use of the typically civilian settings 47 seems most at home in.

THE DRESSING UP

The near-twofold increase in levels saw a dramatic rise in possible disguises, with locations including Italian mansions, Russian streets, embassy parties, ancient castles, skyscrapers, penthouses, dusty Middle Eastern towns, an exclusive hospital and an Indian city. But perhaps the most amusing costume among the huge wardrobe of waiters, cops and other uniforms is the fireman. One way of getting past the barriers in Basement Killing is to set off a smoke bomb, steal a fireman's outfit and run straight through the metal detectors unchallenged. WITH A MASSIVE FIRE AXE IN YOUR SHAKING HANDS.

KEY MOMENT

Hitman 2 introduced the rating system, which in turn allowed players to earn the Silent Assassin rating of the title – raise no alarms, leave no witnesses and kill only the target. Your reward? A pair of silenced Silverballer pistols. *Nice.* *Blood Money*'s notoriety system builds on this idea of rewarding the player for calculated, creative, but 'professional' behaviour. That said, you could also beat a Mafia don to death with his own golf club. *Nice.*

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HITMAN

WHO AM I?

Contrary to popular belief, 47 is *not* the only surviving clone created by professor Otto Ort-Meyer. He made many, and each number was actually a series, not an individual. There was only one 47, but many 48s and at least one 17 who escaped a massacre in the asylum that destroyed the others. What's more, 47 actually has five dads... the lunatics Frantz Fuchs, Pablo Ochoa, Lee Hong, Arkadij Jegorov and Ort-Meyer himself. The professor combined DNA from all these evil maniacs to create the ultimate killer. Sadly for him, it worked. 47 killed all of them in the first game.

Brotherly love *Hitman*-style as 47 say his goodbyes to 17

He's just one trigger squeeze away from a fatal piercing

HITMAN: CONTRACTS

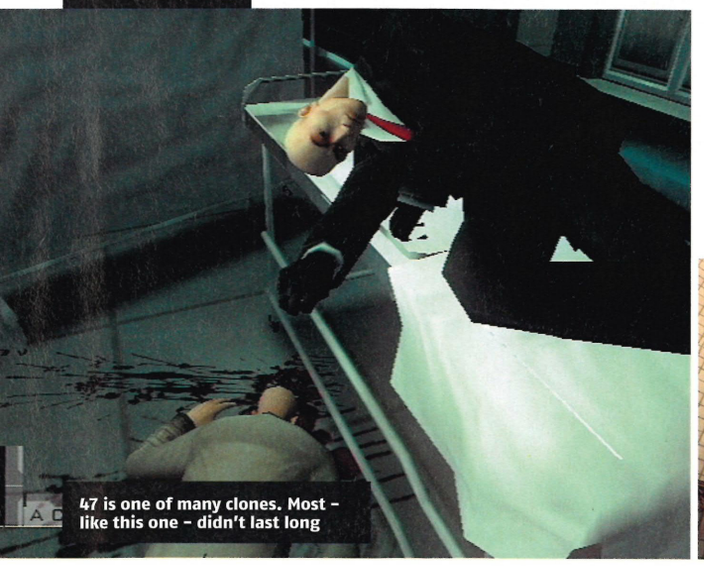
RELEASE April 2004 **FORMAT** PS2

THE HOOK

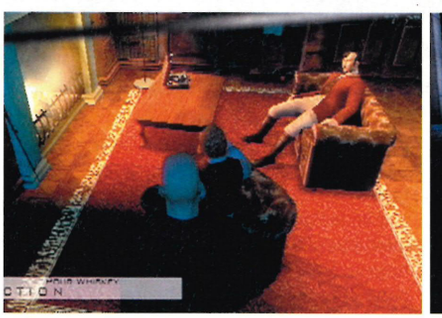
Hitman starts the game badly shot up, creeping back to his hotel room and passing out before a shadowy doctor arrives to patch him up. This allows the game to skip though 47's career, 'reliving' missions as he lies feverish and in pain. It also allowed Io Interactive to bring PS2 gamers up to speed with 47's past. And to get one last game out of the old engine, before *Blood Money*, with relatively little pain... we're being cynical, yes, but though *Contracts* is good – at times fantastic – it's undoubtedly the weakest of the series overall.

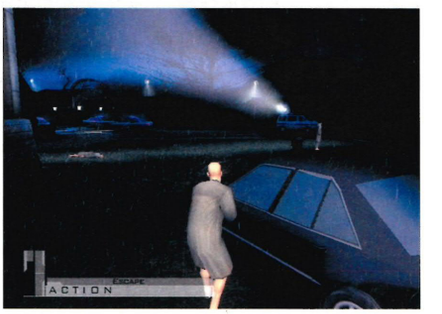
THE CROOKS

Perhaps it's a deliberate ploy to offset the calculated slayings of your character, but none of 47's targets have ever been less than deserving of death. You've never assassinated a peace activist, industry whistle-blower or anti-TV chef campaigner, for instance. However, while the first group of targets was, perhaps, the least ostentatiously evil – dodgy doctors, weapons dealers, drug lords – the bad guys in *Hitman Contracts* are baaaaaaaad. Not only your marks all criminals, but they're also frequently perverse, gluttonous and lazy as well.



47 is one of many clones. Most – like this one – didn't last long





THE DRESSING UP

Here's where it got weird. The now-with-extra-added-evil nature of your targets saw you infiltrating some incredibly weird places, such as abattoir fetish parties, opium dens, torture dungeons, English country mansions and restaurants. The mansion is weird because they hunt humans in the grounds, and the restaurant is weird because there might be TV chefs there. The variety of costumes is increased considerably – though you still can't take the strangest, nor any of the ladies' ones – but oddly enough, we really like the fur-lined parka in Siberia. A warm hitman is a happy hitman.

KEY MOMENT

Not only did *Contracts* bring players up to speed with the events of the first game – starting in 47's 'birthplace', the asylum, and reliving Hong Kong and Budapest – it also built heavily on the idea of multiple targets. With what were already expansive and detailed maps, this decision was inspired, and, more than ever before, it enforced the need to use indiscriminate violence only as a last resort. Offing the first target messily can impact badly on how the second hit (or beyond) goes. It also introduced the enormously fun idea of 'environmental' kills, where objects could be rigged to create 'accidents' while 47 watched from a distance, 'just to check it worked' while absolutely not gloating.

One of the best *Hitman* levels yet takes place at the White House

HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY

RELEASE May 2006 **FORMAT** PS2

THE HOOK

Now rocking a heavily revamped graphics engine, vastly improved animations – he doesn't look like he's Irish dancing on an icy puppet stage now – and even greater freedom, *Blood Money* concentrates fully on heavily populated civilian areas and events, such as wine tasting tours, rehab clinics, parties, weddings, Mardi Gras, river cruises, hotels and casinos. Distance kills are up considerably, as, consequently, are the number of objects that can be used to crush, poison, immolate, blow up or suffocate (snigger) for those outrageously obvious 'accidents' nobody can pin on you.

THE CROOKS

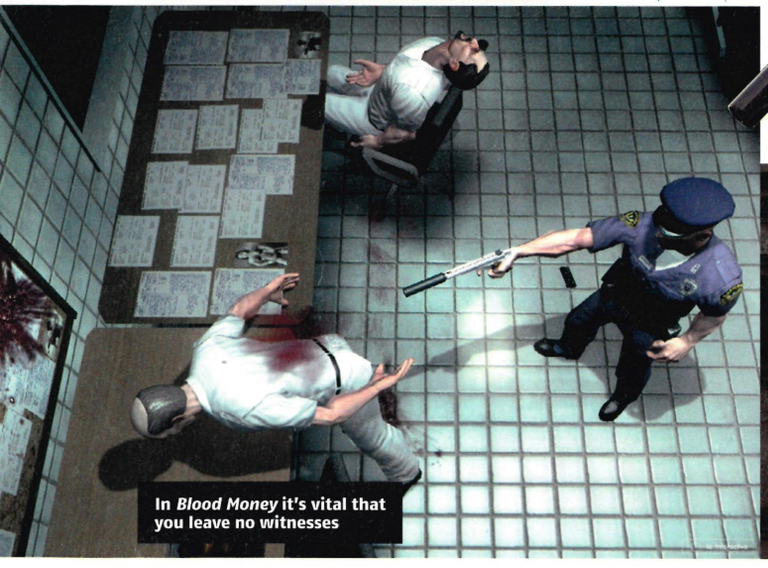
Every mission has multiple targets and objectives, plus many more ways of achieving them than in any previous game – basically, nothing added to *Hitman* over the series has been a bad idea, and *Blood Money* encompasses them all within a now heavily-tuned base. The utter perversity of your unfortunate targets is perhaps less obvious, but it's still there – these killers, terrorists and drug runners are also greedy and self-serving addicts, misogynists and hypocrites – scum through and through. Yet *Hitman* wisely avoids this year's fashion trap of 'grittiness'. In fact, its gallows humour and visual jokery make it the funniest yet.

THE DRESSING UP

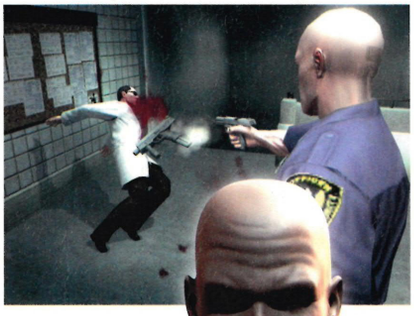
Finally, 47 gets to take some of the best costumes. There's nothing quite like walking – desperate to run, but walking and unbearably tense – through a crowd of hostiles while dressed as a giant chicken. Or as a clown. Or in a dressing gown. Or as Santa. Or a redneck. Or a Marine in ceremonial uniform. Or, as ever, while dressed in the unmissable garb of a professional hitman, stylish, dark and very deadly. *Blood Money* even rewards you for exiting the level wearing the iconic black suit, as well it should.

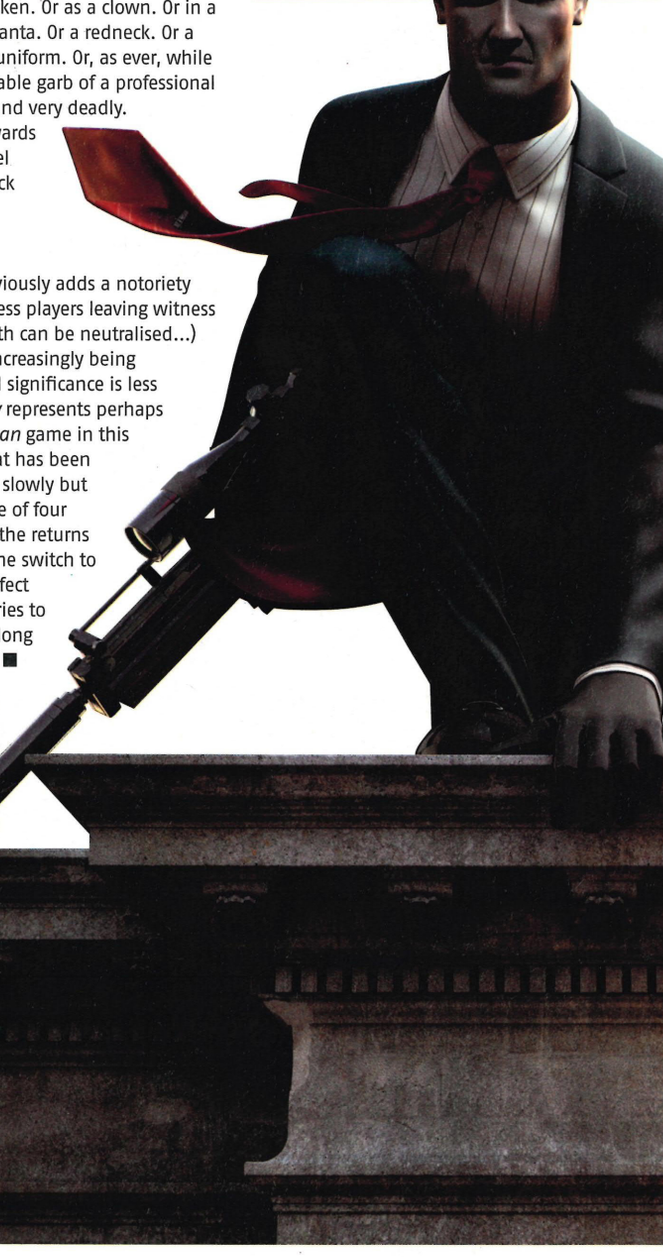
KEY MOMENT

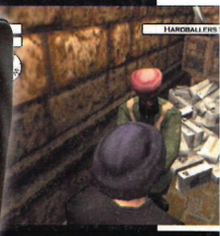
Blood Money most obviously adds a notoriety system, whereby careless players leaving witness and CCTV evidence (both can be neutralised...) will find themselves increasingly being recognised, but its real significance is less tangible: *Blood Money* represents perhaps the zenith of the *Hitman* game in this incarnation. The format has been amended and refined slowly but cleverly over the course of four games, but from here the returns will surely diminish. The switch to PS3 represents the perfect opportunity for the series to reinvent itself. Just as long as 47 keeps the suit... ■



In *Blood Money* it's vital that you leave no witnesses



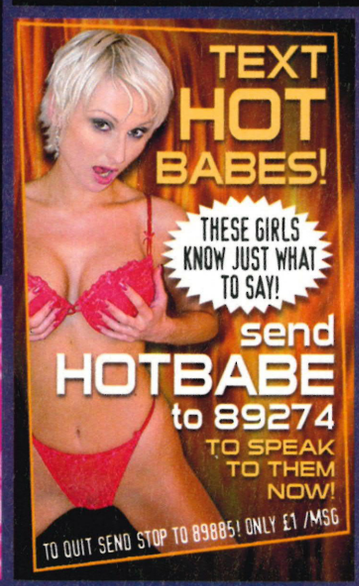


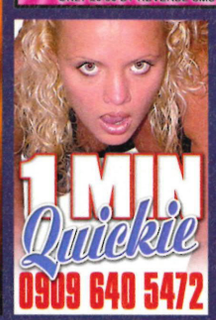


A BRIEF HISTORY OF HITMAN

HITMAN UNDER FIRE

In 2002, accusations of 'racist' content in *Hitman 2* saw it withdrawn from sale in at least two major high street chains. The complaints were made by the Sikh community and concerned several levels set in India. The missions in question portrayed a Sikh cult as a violent, criminal organisation and required the player to kill numerous turban-wearing bad guys. Furthermore, one of the buildings used appeared to be based on Sri Harmandir Sahib or The Golden temple in Amritsar in Punjab. Not only is it a holy place of pilgrimage, it was also involved in a 1984 police operation – now referred to as the Golden Temple massacre – to capture Sikh militants that saw huge civilian casualties. In response to the complaints, Eidos later altered some of the content in the game.





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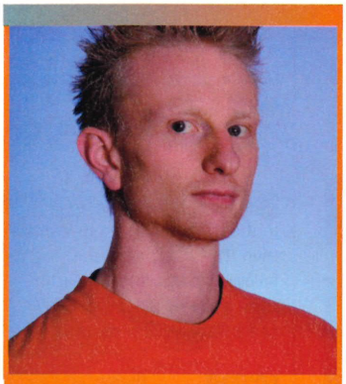
replay

TEACHING OLD GAMES NEW TRICKS



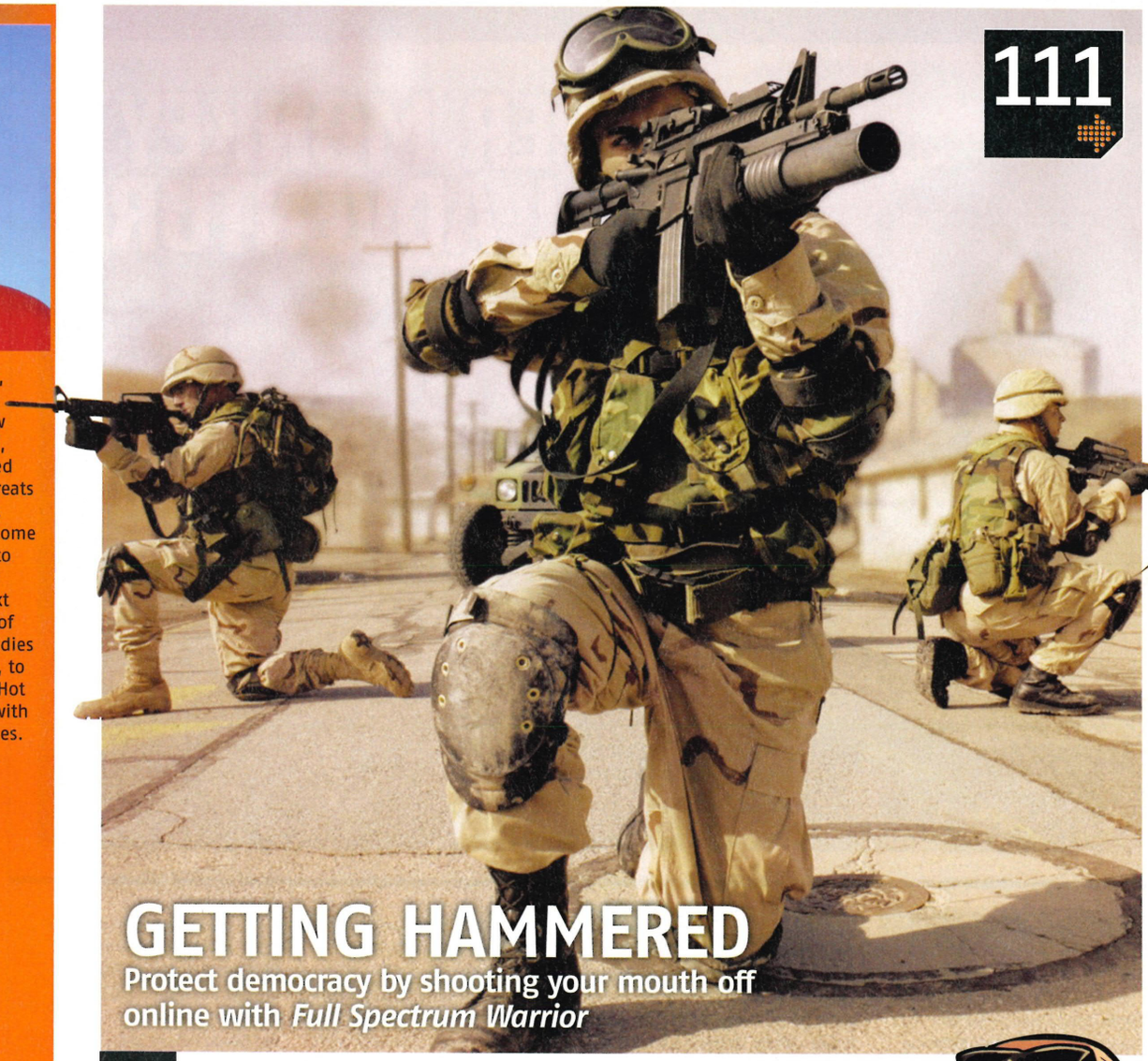
It's that part of the mag again, and, although we're rather modest types and hate to blow our own trumpets (we've tried, it sounds awful) we've gathered together some rather special treats for you in this month's Replay.

First off, we've got a handsome selection of cheats and codes to help you crack the crop of this summer's biggest releases. Next up we're giving away a fistful of exclusive *Grand Theft Auto* goodies in our Challenge section. Then, to round off, we've updated our Hot 100 to keep you up to speed with the very best PS2 and PSP games.

The things we do for you...

Andy

Andy Hartup,
News editor



111

GETTING HAMMERED

Protect democracy by shooting your mouth off online with *Full Spectrum Warrior*

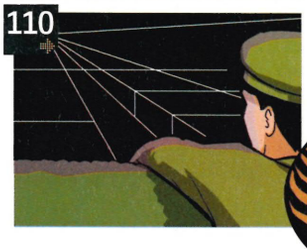
108 **CHEATS**
Piping hot codes for *Super Monkey Ball Adventure*, *The Da Vinci Code*, *X-Men* and more

110 **CHARTS**
Sate your info-lust with a rundown of the top 20, plus what some lesser periodicals have said

110 **SAVE POINT**
Humorous PS2 observations, delivered via the medium of pictures and words

111 **CHALLENGES**
Run riot in Liberty City and you could be walking away with some exclusive Rockstar goodies

114 **HOT 100**
PS3 can wait – your trusty PS2 still has plenty of life in it. Here are 100 reasons why



cheats

THIS MONTH'S COOLEST, NASTIEST AND STUPIDEST CHEATS

SUPER MONKEY BALL ADVENTURE

Enter the following codes on the 'mode select' screen to unlock the relevant levels.

Unlock all target levels: △, ○, △, ○, □, □, △, △, ○, ○, ○, ○.
Unlock all race levels: □, △, □, △, ○, □, □, ○, △, △, ○, ○.
Unlock all fight levels: ○, △, ○, △, △, △, □, □, △, △, △, △.
Unlock all cannon levels: △, ○, ○, △, □, △, ○, □, □, △, □, △.
Unlock all tag levels: □, △, △, ○, ○, △, ○, ○, △, △, □, □.

24: THE GAME

On the main menu screen hold R1, L1, R2, and L2 until a Security Clearance menu appears (this should take about ten seconds). To enter the following codes use the D-pad to move around and then hold down ⊗ to change letter by pressing left and right. Once all the letters have been changed hit □ and the code should turn orange. Exit the screen with △. Select 'Previously On 24', then select 'missions' and load your save file to access the cheats.

Password ..... Effect
ALMEIDA062 .... Get infinite ammo
BAUER066..... Get invulnerability
DESSLER072.... Unlock all missions
PALMER054 ..... Unlock all bonuses

AEON FLUX

Enter the following codes in the Extras menu from the title screen for costume cheats, or the in-game pause menu for health and ammo cheats. Words are spelt out using a military-style 'Delta, Foxtrot, Whisky' alphabet.

Title Screen Cheats (enter and select from the Cheats menu accessed from Extras in the main menu)
Code ..... Unlocks
Arms.....Revelation outfits
Bayou .....All Replay Episodes
Blur ..... War outfits
Clothes....Una, Freya & Judy outfits
Gray.....Fame outfit
Movie ..... Seed outfit
Pixes..... All slideshows
Urban ..... Seed outfits
White.....Mrs Goodchild outfit

In-game Cheats (enter and activate from the cheats menu while paused)
Code ..... Effect
Buckfst..... One-hit kills
Clone ..... Unlimited health
FUG ..... Unlimited ammo
Healme ..... Replenish health
Lcvg..... Unlimited power strikes
Trirox .....Invulnerability

BLACK

To unlock the **M249** machine gun as your default weapon, enter the following code (including dashes) as a profile name:
FG6S-WFZG-7MDP-PZGT
If you've got it right, the game will immediately ask you to enter another name.

CHICKEN LITTLE

Select Extras at the main menu then Cheat Codes. Line up these symbols to unlock the effects:
Big feet: Hat, glove, glove, hat.
Big hair: Baseball, bat, bat, baseball.
Big head: Hat, helmet, helmet, hat.
Invincibility: Baseball, baseball, baseball, shirt.
Wear sunglasses: Glove, glove, helmet, helmet.
Wear underwear: Hat, hat, shirt, shirt.

DESTROY ALL HUMANS!

Start by pausing the game, and then hold down L2 while entering the following codes:
Reset alert meter: L2, →, R2, R1, □, →.
Invulnerability: □, ○, ←, ←, ○, □.
Infinite ammo: ←, ○, R2, →, R1, □.
Infinite mind power: R1, R2, ○, →, L1, ○.

DRIVER PARALLEL LINES

In the Pause menu, go to Settings then Cheats and enter the following codes to make each cheat option appear. Use the D-pad to turn the effects on or off.

KEYSTONE .....Useless policeman
CARSHOW ..... Unlock all vehicles
GUNRANGE..... All weapons
GUNBELT.....Infinite ammo
ZOOMZOOM...Infinite nitrous boost
IRONMAN.....Invulnerability
ROLLBAR.....Indestructible cars
TOOLEDUP..... Every upgrade free

FIFA STREET 2

On the title menu hold L1 and △ and enter ←, ↑, ↑, →, ↓, ↓, →, ↓ to unlock everything.

FLATOUT 2

Enter "giveall" at the Cheat Code option in Extras to unlock everything.

FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR: TEN HAMMERS

Select Bonus Material from the main menu and enter the code **"fullspectrumpwnage"** at the cheats option to unlock all the levels. Access the levels from the Restart option.

GUITAR HERO

At the title screen enter the following codes using the guitar controller. A message will let you know if you're successful:
Give the crowd skull heads: Orange, yellow, blue, blue, orange, yellow, blue, blue.
Give the crowd monkey heads: Blue, orange, yellow, yellow, yellow, blue, orange.
Character plays an air guitar: Orange, orange, blue, yellow, orange.
Rock Meter stays permanently green: Yellow, blue, orange, orange, blue, blue, yellow, orange.

THE DA VINCI CODE

At the options menu type in the following codes to unlock their effects.

Vitruvian Man	Invulnerability
Sacred Feminine	Double health
Clos Luce 1519	Unlock all levels
Phillips Exeter	One hit kill: unarmed
Royal Holloway	One hit kill: armed
Et In Arcadia Ego	Unlock all bonuses

Play in an invisible venue:
Blue, yellow, orange, blue, yellow, orange.
Unlock everything:
Yellow, orange, blue, blue, orange, yellow, yellow.

KING KONG

At the main menu, hold L1 and R1 and press ↓, ◎, ↑, □, ↓, ↓, ↑, ↑ to activate the cheats menu, where you can then enter these codes:
Unlock all levels: **KKst0ry**
999 ammo: **KK 999 mun**
Unlock all bonuses: **KKmuseum**
God mode: **8wonder**
Start with a machine gun: **KKcapone**
Start with a revolver: **KKtigun**
Start with a shotgun: **KKsh0tgun**
Start with a sniper rifle: **KKsn1per**
Have infinite spears: **lance 1nf**
Get one-hit kills: **GrosBras**

MARC ECKO'S GETTING UP: CONTENTS UNDER PRESSURE

In the options menu, use these codes to unlock the following (re-enter the codes to switch them off):
Unlock all the levels:
IPULATOR
Unlock all the movies:
DEXTERCROWLEY
Unlock the gallery:
SIRULLY
Unlock all the skills:
DOGTAGS
Unlock your Black Book:
SHARDSOFGLASS
Unlock all the characters:
STATEYOURNAME
Maximum health:
BABYLONTRUST
Infinite health:
MARCUSECKOS
Infinite skills:
FLIPTHESCRIPT
Unlock the iPod:
GRANDMACELIA
Unlock all the legends:
NINESIX
Unlock all the Beat Down arenas:
WORKBITCH

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION REMIX

Enter the following in 'Cheat Codes' selected from the options menu:
Indestructible cars:
ontheroad
Unlock every location in arcade:
crosscountry
Unlock Atlanta and Detroit:
mode roadtrip

NEED FOR SPEED MOST WANTED

On the Press Start screen, input:
↑, ↓, ↑, ↓, ←, →, ←, →
to unlock the Burger King challenge race.
←, →, ←, →, ↑, ↓, ↑, ↓
to unlock the Ford GT Castrol SYNTEC car.
↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ←, →, ↑, ↓
to unlock an extra marker to use in the One Stop Shop backroom.

ROGUE TROOPER

Enter the following codes on the Extras screen, selectable from the title menu, to enable the cheats. You will then be able to switch the cheats on and off from the single-player menu.

Infinite health:
←, →, ↑, ↓, L3, □
Infinite supplies:
SELECT, R1, L1, SELECT, R3, L1
Flowers for blood:
R2, →, ◎, ↓, R1, SELECT
Dead bodies float:
□, □, ◎, ◎, ↑, ↓
Dead bodies fly:
↑, ↑, ↑, R2, R2, ↑

SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR

To unlock all levels and arenas in the Single Mission Replay mode, highlight Extras on the main menu and do the following: Press ← 11 times, → seven times and then press □.

SLY 3: HONOUR AMONG THIEVES

While flying the plane, pause the game and enter R1, R1, →, ↓, ↓, →. Unpause the game and you'll now be flying the Toonami Plane.

SSX ON TOUR

Go to the Extras menu, select Cheats, then enter the passwords:
FLYTHREADS – All clothing
THEBIGPICTURE – All movies
ZOOMJUICE – Infinite boost
POWERPLAY – Stat boost
JACKALOPESTYLE – Monster tricks
LETSPARTY – Snowball fight

STATE OF EMERGENCY 2

Enter ↑, ←, →, ↓, △, □, ◎, ⊗, L1, R2 on the 'Press Start' screen to activate the cheats options in the main menu.

THE GODFATHER

Pause the game and enter the following codes as quickly as possible – you'll hear a noise confirming successful code entry.

Get $5000:
□, ◎, □, □, ◎, L3.
Full ammo:
◎, ←, ◎, →, □, R3.
Full health:
←, □, →, ◎, →, L3.

THE WARRIORS

While playing, enter the following:
L1, SELECT, □, ↓, L2, → to instantly make 100% completion.
↑, △, L3, SELECT, ⊗, L2 for unlimited health.
□, ◎, △, SELECT, ⊗, ← for unlimited rage.
↓, □, ←, ⊗, L1, SELECT for unlimited spirit.
R2, ◎, SELECT, ↑, L1, → to get a pipe.
L1, ⊗, R1, R1, SELECT, R2 to get a machete.
↓, ↓, SELECT, ↑, ↑, L3 to get a knife.
↑, SELECT, ⊗, △, △, □ to get out of jail.
↓, □, ⊗, SELECT, L1, ← to instantly complete the level.

URBAN CHAOS: RIOT RESPONSE

At the main menu, press ↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ◎, ↓, ↑, ◎ to open the cheats menu and activate the following cheats:
ULTIMATE POWER – Unlock the Mk 3 assault rifle with infinite ammo
ZEROTOLERANCE – Unlock the Mk 4 pistol
MINIFUN – Unlock a mini-gun
FRYINGTIME – Get a long-range stun gun
KEYTOTHECITY – Unlock all levels/emergencies
BURNERSREVENGE – Activate the terror mode
DANCINGFEET – Activate the disco mode
ISEEYOU – Get a new thermal effect
WHATWASTHAT – Turn on squeaky voices
BURNINGBULLET –Bullets sets fire to enemies
KEEPYOURHEAD – No heads

PS2 CHEATS

METAL GEAR AC!D 2

Enter these passwords at the password screen to unlock the following cards:
Dcy – Get Decoy Octopus card
SONOFSULLY – Get Jack card
Konami – Get Reaction Block card
Snake – Get Solid Snake card (*MGS4*)
NEXTGEN – Get *MGS4* card
thespaniard – Get possessed arm card
ntm – Get Natsume Sano card and Solid Eye video
Jehuty – Get Jehuty card
Otacon – Get Otacon card (*MGS4*)
Signt – Get Mr Sigint card

PAC-MAN WORLD 3

Press ←, →, ←, →, ◎, ↑ at the main menu to unlock everything.

SPLINTER CELL ESSENTIALS

Input these codes in the Bonus Missions option to unlock them:
Hold SELECT and press L + R together three times to unlock the Heroin Refinery Mission.
Hold SELECT and press L + R together three times to unlock the Television Free Indonesia mission.
Hold SELECT and press L + R 12 times to unlock the Paris-Nice mission.

WORMS: OPEN WARFARE

To restore health, pause the game and enter △, ↓, ⊗, ↑ while holding L and R.

X-MEN: THE OFFICIAL GAME

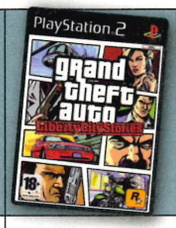
At the 'Cerebro File' menu screen enter the following codes, followed by START, to unlock each character's Danger Room – a bonus training level.
Wolverine: ↓, ↓, ↑, ↑, →, ←, →, ←.
Nightcrawler: ↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ←, →, ←, →.
Iceman: ←, ←, →, →, ↓, ↑, ↓, ↑.

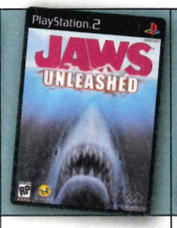
charts

FACTS, FIGURES AND FUNNIES

WHAT THE OTHER MAGS SAID

WE READ 'EM, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO





PSM2	"Classic stuff and still plenty entertaining" 82%	"Isn't fit to lace the boots of the Amiga version" 58%	"Dismembering people is quite fun" 61%	"...will leave you feeling empty" 48%
PSW	"...isn't quite as good as the PSP original" 8/10	"Plenty to keep you entertained" 6/10	NO REVIEW*	NO REVIEW*
PLAY	"A damn fine game on PS2" 90%	"A disappointing and unnecessary update" 45%	NO REVIEW*	"...a thoughtless, tiresome, ugly game" 25%
PlayStation.2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK **VERDICT**	"Still hugely enjoyable, glitches and all" 8/10	"A needless, exploitative 'update' of a classic" 4/10	"...witty, outrageously violent and top fun" 7/10	"A unique game but one with its priorities all wrong" 5/10

*Review not available at time of going to press

THE TOP 20 ChartTrack

ELSPA Entertainment and Leisure Software Publishers Association

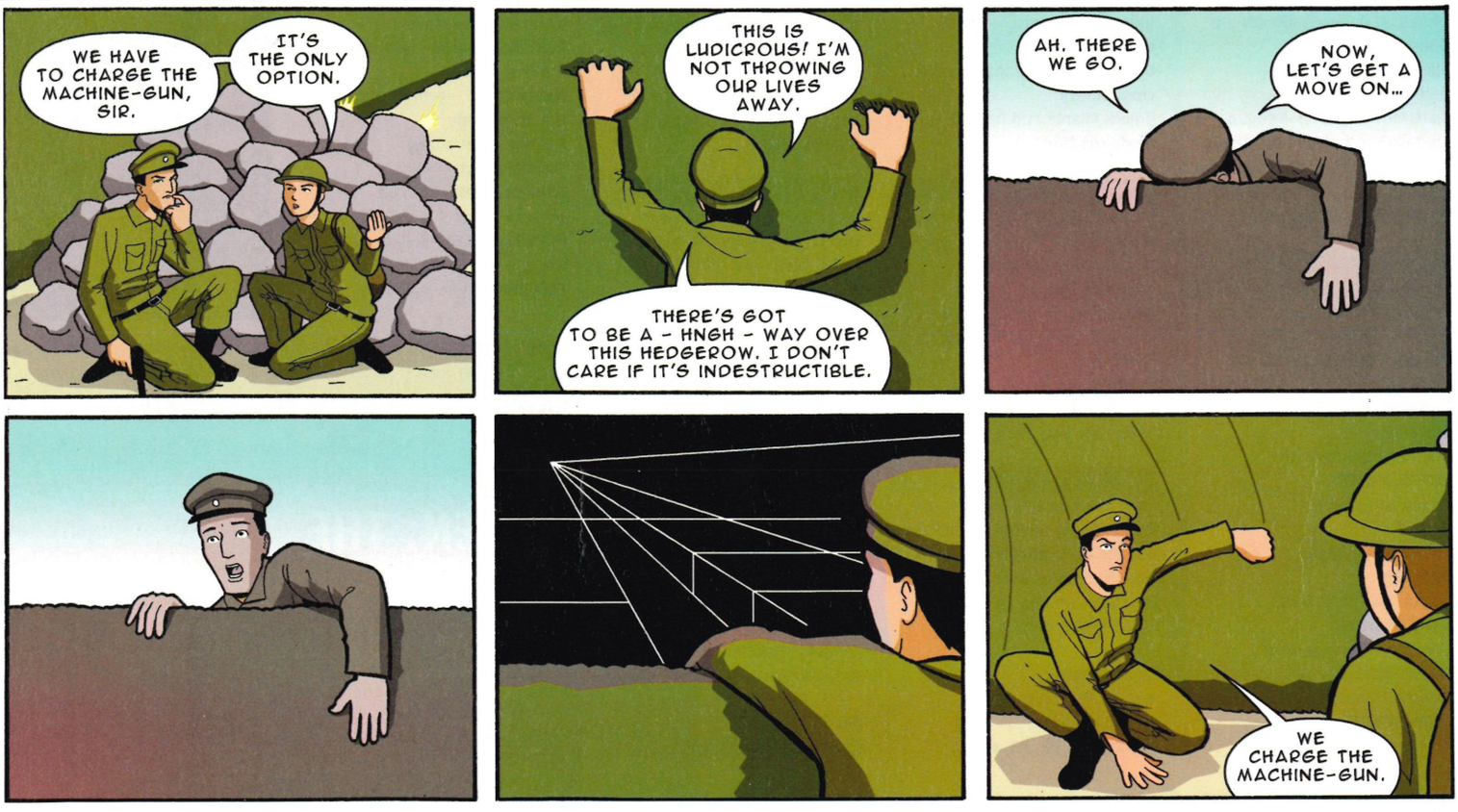
	Game Name	Publisher	Score
1	OVER THE HEDGE	ACTIVISION	5/10
2	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: THE LEGEND OF JACK SPARROW	UBISOFT	5/10
3	2006 FIFA WORLD CUP	EA SPORTS	8/10
4	HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY	EIDOS	9/10
5	TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND	EIDOS	8/10
6	BUZZ! THE BIG QUIZ	SONY	8/10
7	TOURIST TROPHY	SONY	7/10
8	CARS	THQ	7/10
9	NEED FOR SPEED MOST WANTED	EA	8/10
10	BLACK	EA	10/10
11	SUPER DRAGON BALL Z	ATARI	5/10
12	FLATOUT 2	EMPIRE	7/10
13	FIFA STREET 2	EA SPORTS	6/10
14	URBAN CHAOS: RIOT RESPONSE	EIDOS	8/10
15	FIFA 06	EA SPORTS	7/10
16	MICRO MACHINES V4	CODEMASTERS	7/10
17	CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2006	EIDOS	5/10
18	THE GODFATHER	EA	6/10
19	DRIVER PARALLEL LINES	ATARI	7/10
20	DYNASTY WARRIORS 5: EMPIRES	KOEI	5/10

BACK IN BLACK
A surprise up-swing for Criterion's superb shooter, returning guns-blazing, from the arse end of the chart.

MOVIE MAGIC?
Despite the less than great score last issue, film tie-in *Over The Hedge* hits the top spot. Never underestimate the pulling power of a film.

SAVE POINT TAKING THE LESS TRAVELLED ROUTE TO GAMING WISDOM

WORDS: KIERON GILLEN ART: JAMIE MCKELVIE

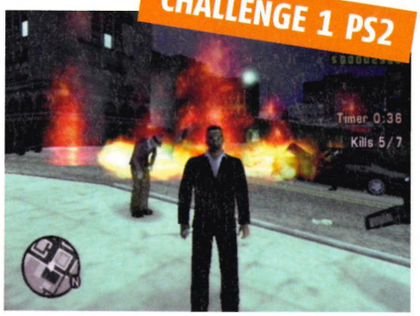


challenges

CAUSE CHAOS, SEND US THE EVIDENCE, GET PAID IN GAMES

GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES

CHALLENGE 1 PS2



A simple challenge to start you off this month: cause as much mayhem as you can in Liberty City, take a photo of the carnage, send the picture to us, and we'll choose our favourite.

Best picture gets... A bag of *GTA: Liberty City Stories* merchandise and an *OPS2* T-shirt.

FORMULA ONE 06

CHALLENGE 2 PS2

Head over to the Time Trial mode and select the Shanghai circuit. Shave more off our 1min 42.425 seconds lap time than anyone else and you'll drive away with the prize.

Best proved time gets... A selection of PS2 games and an *OPS2* T-shirt.

HOW TO ENTER

Attach your MMS picture then text either **CHALLENGE1** or **CHALLENGE2** or **CHALLENGE3** (then a space) followed by your name and full address to

07738 647 177

Only the entries that *OPS2* judges as the best picture / best time / best score will win the respective prize. Texts will be charged at 50p plus your standard network tariff rate. Please source all necessary permissions. Lines are open from 10 August to 06 September inclusive. We will not advise non-winners of the result.*

WORLD TOUR SOCCER 2

CHALLENGE 3 PSP

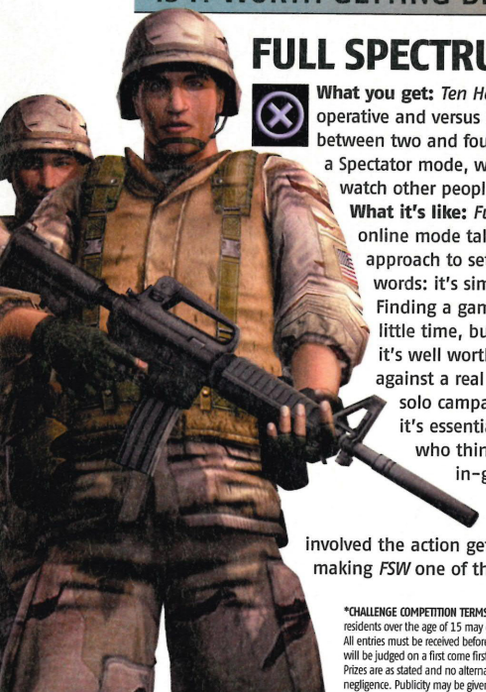
Set up a friendly between England and Wales, choose either side, and try to win by as many goals as possible. We plumped for England and won 4-0. Can you beat that?

Best proved score gets... A selection of PSP games and an *OPS2* T-shirt.

online

IS IT WORTH GETTING BROADBAND FOR THESE GAMES?

FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR: TEN HAMMERS



What you get: *Ten Hammers* has co-operative and versus missions that support between two and four players. It also has a Spectator mode, which enables you to watch other people's games.

What it's like: *Full Spectrum Warrior*'s online mode takes a streamlined approach to setup – in other words: it's simple and accessible. Finding a game session takes a little time, but with *Ten Hammers*, it's well worth the effort. Playing against a real person beats the solo campaign every time, and it's essential for the hardcores who think the advanced in-game AI is 'too predictable'. When four players are involved the action gets seriously tense, making *FSW* one of the few games that's as enjoyable to watch in Spectator mode as it is to play. The downside is that you still feel at the mercy of your own men's targeting. You might spot the enemy first, but unless your infantry hit their targets accurately, you'll get shot up with returning fire, leaving you to fume while the session is slowly resolved by the other opponents. Frustrating, yes, but it rarely spoils this otherwise cracking, jarhead-fest.

SHOULD I GET BROADBAND FOR THIS? ✓

PSP WIFI TEST

FIELD COMMANDER

What you get: Up to four-player versus modes, a handful of co-operative options, the opportunity to play via email, and all the usual leaderboard stats.

What it's like: Not the kind of game you'd turn to for five minutes' worth of high-octane warring, *Field Commander* is perfect for anyone who enjoys investing time in their WiFi multiplay. Playing against real opponents is a welcome challenge after facing off against the game's sluggish AI, although we did find it frustrating waiting for opponents to finish making moves. The Transmission mode, which lets you play via email, is excellent for long term gaming sessions, and the Hot Swap co-op – where you and a friend take it in turns to make moves against an AI opponent – is similarly great because it enables you to get involved with mates who don't own PSPs.

SHOULD I GET MY MATES ROUND FOR THIS? ✓

*CHALLENGE COMPETITION TERMS AND CONDITIONS By entering this competition you are agreeing to receive details of future offers from Future Publishing Ltd and third parties. Only UK residents over the age of 15 may enter. If you do not want to receive information relating to future offers and promotions, please include the word NO at the end of your text message. All entries must be received before the closing date of 06 September. *OPS2*'s choice of prize is final and the winner will be notified within 28 days. In the instance of a draw, the winner will be judged on a first come first serve basis. No employees of Future Publishing Ltd or any company associated with this competition or any member of their close family may enter. Prizes are as stated and no alternatives cash or otherwise are available. Future Publishing Ltd accepts no liability for any loss, damage or injury caused by any prizes won except by its negligence. Publicity may be given to any competition winners and/or entrants and their names, addresses and/or photographs printed in *OPS2*. The Editor's decision is final and no

multiplay

Promotional feature in association with m&m's

WORDS: JOAO DINIZ-SANCHES: PMA MARKETING LTD

SO, THINK YOU CAN BEAT US?

WE PLAY READERS AT THE FINEST MULTIPLAYER GAMES

THIS MONTH: PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5

Ever wondered just how good we actually are at playing games? Ever thought you might be better? Well, thanks to m&m's, we're giving you guys the chance to find out firsthand, by challenging the *OPS2* team on the best multiplayer games.

And with the searing pain of England's World Cup defeat still in our hearts, what better way to start than on the hallowed turf, courtesy of footy favourite, *Pro Evo 5*? It's a confrontation the *OPS2* boys – who claim to spend most of their waking hours refining their *PES* skills – are relishing.

Of course, it's familiar territory for them, and it comes with a routine that they follow religiously: football kits (obligatory), a PS2, a multitap, four joypads and a continuous supply of m&m's (the perfect gaming snack, as the hard coating ensures your hands – and therefore joypads – don't end up covered in greasy, sticky goo). But enough pre-match chit-chat... Let the games commence!

THE PLAYERS

BEN (*OPS2*)

OPS2's leading *Pro Evo* player, what Ben doesn't know about The Beautiful Game would fit neatly onto the back of the PS3 Cell chip.
Career start: 2000
Games played: 845
Games played when should have been working: 845
m&m's of choice: Blue
Team: Italy

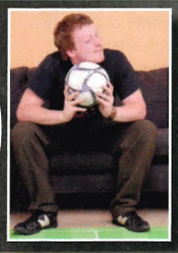
ANDY (*OPS2*)

A master tactician, rumours abound that Andy's love of football is only rivalled by his (worrying) affection towards the DualShock joypad.
Career start: 2001
Games played: 273
Games played when should have been working: "No comment"
m&m's of choice: Red
Team: Italy

VS

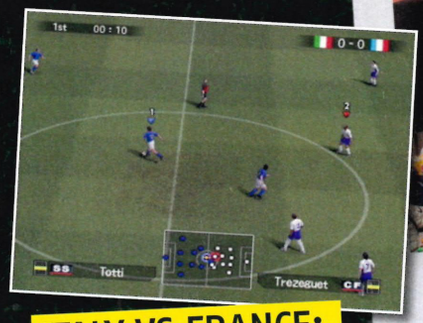
DAVE (READER)

Dave's outstanding *Pro Evo* skills so impress the ladies that they're too intimidated to talk to him. At least, that's his excuse.
Career start: 2000
Games played: 650
Games played when should have been working: 0
m&m's of choice: Yellow
Team: France



JOE (READER)

Don't let the controlled demeanour and friendly face fool you, as they mask a ferocious Mourinho-esque zeal to succeed.
Career start: 2002
Games played: 184
Games played when should have been working: "What's work?"
m&m's of choice: Green
Team: France



ITALY VS FRANCE: IT'S THE WORLD CUP '06 FINAL, PART DEUX

"Here we go"

Believing you can never take anything too seriously, the teams stand for the French and Italian national anthems. Ben interrupts the proceedings with a pledge of his 'platonic love' for Fabio Cannavaro, while Andy hums along tunelessly.

"GOAL!"

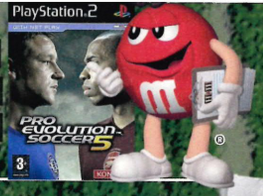
A pathetic schoolboy error in the readers' defence creates a gap, and Ben doesn't need to be asked twice – using Francesco Totti, he blasts a screamer past Fabien Barthez from 20 yards. It's a dream start for the *OPS2* boys, but Dave and Joe insist they're not beaten yet.

M&MS IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF MASTERFOODS 2006.

GAME TITLE PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5

REVIEWED ISSUE 064

SCORE 10/10



Promotional feature in association with m&m's

WITH TYPICAL COMPOSURE, HENRY STROKES THE FRENCH LEVEL ON 45 MINS

"GOAL!"

Into injury time in the first half and a superb through ball from Dave puts Joe – AKA Thierry Henry – through on goal. The Arsenal man calmly slots the ball home, and Joe marks the occasion by spontaneously breaking into Peter Crouch's absurd robo-dance.

"GOAL!"

Despite hitting the bar and dominating the second half, Dave and Joe fail to take the lead. They pay the ultimate price when Alberto Gilardino breaks clear to score three minutes from time. The *OPS2* boys have won it in heartbreaking fashion!

FINAL RESULT

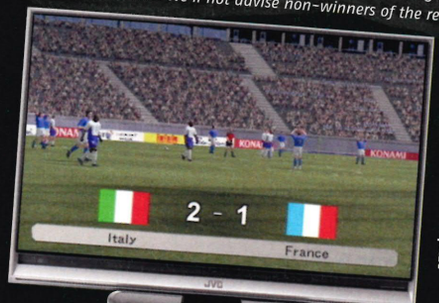
2–1 OPS2 WINS!

WIN A HD 32" TV®

Life isn't worth living if you're not playing games on a decent telly with your mates. Thankfully, the makers of m&m's are giving you the chance to win an amazing 32" HD-ready TV from JVC, worth a whopping £1,400! And to go with it, you'll get a stunning DVD digital cinema system.

We want to see how you lot play your games. Take a photo of you and your mates playing and then either text it (attach your MMS picture and then text MNMCOMP, followed by your name to 07738 647 117), or email it to ps2compos@futurenet.co.uk. The funniest and most original entry will win the lot!

*Only UK residents over the age of 15 may enter. Text messages will cost you £1, plus your standard network tariff rate. Please source all necessary permissions. Lines are open from 10 August to 27 December inclusive. We'll not advise non-winners of the result.**



TV shown may differ from prize

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the hot 100

NEXT TIME YOU BUY A GAME, MAKE SURE IT'S ONE OF THESE

THIS MONTH

A first for the Hot 100 this month as *Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories* – which has already stormed the top spot on the PSP – now makes its debut in the must-have ton on PS2. It may be a straight PSP port but it's still hugely enjoyable and will set you back only 20 notes.

YOUR KEY TO THE TOP 100

GOLD
Reserved exclusively for games that scored the elusive 10/10

SILVER
Only awarded to games that scored a mighty 9/10

BRONZE
Lovingly given to games that scored an impressive 8/10

DVD#75
Want to try before you buy? Here's the issue where we ran a playable demo

2006 FIFA WORLD CUP — BRONZE
Great presentation and slick football make this the best *FIFA* ever.
REVIEWED *OPS2#73* / **OVERALL** 08

24: THE GAME — BRONZE
The hit TV show arrives on PS2 in fine style.
REVIEWED *OPS2#69* / **OVERALL** 08 / DVD#69/#72

ACE COMBAT: SQUADRON LEADER — BRONZE
Top flight sim that will take your breath away.
REVIEWED *OPS2#56* / **OVERALL** 08 / DVD#56/#57

AMPLITUDE — SILVER
Music/rhythm game with loads of top artists and online options.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#38

AREA 51 — SILVER
Guns, aliens and conspiracies make for a top-notch shooter.
REVIEWED *OPS2#60* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#58/#62

BATTLEFIELD 2: MODERN COMBAT — SILVER
Genius body-swapping war shooter full of challenges and action.
REVIEWED *OPS2#65* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#68

BEYOND GOOD & EVIL — BRONZE
Not quite *Jak II* but still an engaging platformer.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / DVD#39

BLACK — GOLD
Hollywood-style gun porn – by far the best shooter on PS2.
REVIEWED *OPS2#69* / **OVERALL** 10 / DVD#69/#72 ON THE DVD

BRIAN LARA INTERNATIONAL CRICKET 2005 — BRONZE
Quite simply the best cricket game yet.
REVIEWED *OPS2#62* / **OVERALL** 08 / DVD#63

BROTHERS IN ARMS: ROAD TO HILL 30 — BRONZE
An addictive take on both WW2 and squad-based shooters.
REVIEWED *OPS2#58* / **OVERALL** 08 / DVD#60/#62

BURNOUT REVENGE — GOLD
Faster-than-light and the best racer in existence.
REVIEWED *OPS2#64* / **OVERALL** 10 / DVD#64

BUZZ! THE BIG QUIZ — BRONZE
General knowledge quiz with USB buzzers – great family fun.
REVIEWED *OPS2#71* / **OVERALL** 08

CALL OF DUTY: BIG RED ONE — SILVER
Stunning looking WW2 shooter with atmosphere to spare.
REVIEWED *OPS2#67* / **OVERALL** 09

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 2005 — SILVER
Looks great, and the new career mode makes for massive fun.
REVIEWED *OPS2#51* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#51

DESTROY ALL HUMANS! — SILVER
Alien invasion B-movie style as you zap, crush and fry mankind.
REVIEWED *OPS2#61* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#61/#62

DEVIL MAY CRY 3: DANTE'S AWAKENING — SILVER
Combat-heavy adventure with shooters and swords.
REVIEWED *OPS2#58* / **OVERALL** 09

DRAGON QUEST: THE JOURNEY OF THE CURSED KING — SILVER
Vintage Japanese role-player: long, strong and good-looking.
REVIEWED *OPS2#71* / **OVERALL** 09 DVD#71/#73/#75

ESPN NHL 2K5 — BRONZE
More fun and fewer broken bones than real ice hockey.
REVIEWED *OPS2#56* / **OVERALL** 08

EVERYBODY'S GOLF — BRONZE
Addictive cartoon golf that laughs in the face of realism.
REVIEWED *OPS2#65* / **OVERALL** 08 / DVD#64

EYETOY: ANTIGRAV
Unique use-your-body-as-the-controller jet-board racing game.
REVIEWED *OPS2#58* / **OVERALL** 07

EYETOY: PLAY 2 — BRONZE
This more creative follow-up shows off the EyeToy to full effect.
REVIEWED *OPS2#53* / **OVERALL** 08 / DVD#54

FAHRENHEIT — SILVER
Stylish, cinematic reinvention of the point and click adventure.
REVIEWED *OPS2#64* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#64/#69

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3 — SILVER
Knockout boxing sim takes face-punching to the next level.
REVIEWED *OPS2#71* / **OVERALL** 09 DVD#71/#74

FINAL FANTASY X-2 — SILVER
FF meets *Charlie's Angels* for a narcotic dose of the familiar RPG.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 09

FREEDOM FIGHTERS — SILVER
Tactical battling in Russkie New York. Insanely addictive.
REVIEWED *OPS2#37* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#38

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE — BRONZE
This is the finest Bond game on PS2.
REVIEWED *OPS2#66* / **OVERALL** 08 / DVD#67

FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR: TEN HAMMERS — BRONZE
Tactical army sim that's accessible and truly gripping.
REVIEWED *OPS2#72* / **OVERALL** 08

GOD OF WAR — SILVER
Heart-in-mouth joy from this frantic and bloody hack fest.
REVIEWED *OPS2#60* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#62/#63

GRAND THEFT AUTO DOUBLE PACK — GOLD
Two superb games in the same box for just £40!
REVIEWED *OPS2#41* / **OVERALL** 10

GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES — BRONZE
Budget-priced port of handheld *GTA* that's a thrill-filled joy.
REVIEWED *OPS2#75* / **OVERALL** 08 NEW ENTRY

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS — GOLD
Massively expansive, even over *Vice City*. The biggest game ever.
REVIEWED *OPS2#54* / **OVERALL** 10

GRAN TURISMO 4 — SILVER
Unsurpassed, automotive beauty. The best driving game on PS2.
REVIEWED *OPS2#57* / **OVERALL** 09

GUITAR HERO — SILVER
Swap your PS2 controller for the plastic 'axe' and nail those solos.
REVIEWED *OPS2#71* / **OVERALL** 09

GUN — SILVER
This *GTA*-inspired Wild West shooter is mighty fine, if a little short.
REVIEWED *OPS2#67* / **OVERALL** 09

HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY — SILVER
Agent 47's biggest, bloodiest and best adventure yet.
REVIEWED *OPS2#73* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#72/73/#75

ICO — SILVER
Beautiful, inventive... *Ico* is an adventure unlike any other.
REVIEWED *OPS2#18 & #69* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#19/#35/#69

JAK 3 — BRONZE
Sublime platform adventure and oodles of varied gameplay.
REVIEWED *OPS2#53* / **OVERALL** 08 / DVD#53/#58/#75

JAMES BOND 007: EVERYTHING OR NOTHING — SILVER
Bond finally gets the game he deserves. SPECTRE-tacular stuff.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 09 / DVD#40/#44

THE PSP TOP FIVE

Got a PSP? Then you need these

1 GTA: LIBERTY CITY STORIES 9/10
Rockstar goes back to Liberty City where new missions and multiplayer make for an explosive package.

2 SYPHON FILTER: DARK MIRROR 9/10
PSone shooter series gets new lease of life on PSP, with deathmatch and 'Rogue Agent' modes providing endless WiFi joy.

3 DAXTER 9/10
Superb platform action as Jak's little orange sidekick gets his own fantastically varied and relentlessly enjoyable game.

4 LUMINES 9/10
A simplistic mix of block puzzler and music mixer that will suck up hours of your life and never give them back. An absolute classic.

5 LOCOROCO 9/10
Addictive and literally 'oddball' platformer. Beautifully simple controls create a tactile and testing challenge as you bounce around.

NEED A BACK ISSUE OF *OPS2* TO CHECK OUT THE FULL REVIEW? THEN CALL:
UK: 0870 837 4773
OVERSEAS: +44 1858 438 795

replay

KILLER 7 — BRONZE
Insane shooter with exploding zombies and schizophrenic killers.
REVIEWED *OPS2#61* / **OVERALL** 08

KILLZONE — SILVER
Visually amazing FPS that'll rock your game world every time.
REVIEWED *OPS2#51* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#52/#55/#59**

KINGDOM HEARTS — BRONZE
Disney partners with Square for the ultra-cute RPG crossover.
REVIEWED *OPS2#27* / **OVERALL** 08

LEGO STAR WARS — BRONZE
One of the best *Star Wars* games yet, despite the cutesy looks.
REVIEWED *OPS2#59* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#59/#62**

MADDEN NFL 06 — SILVER
Deep and technically flawless recreation of American football.
REVIEWED *OPS2#64* / **OVERALL** 09

MANHUNT — SILVER
A dirty, grisly, filthy but *brilliant* game experience.
REVIEWED *OPS2#42* / **OVERALL** 09

MARC ECKO'S GETTING UP: CONTENTS UNDER PRESSURE
Graffiti game created by a fashion designer. Original and good.
REVIEWED *OPS2#69* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#71**

MASHED — SILVER
Got friends? Get the brilliant party racer *Mashed*. No excuses.
REVIEWED *OPS2#48* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#48/#49/#55**

MERCENARIES — SILVER
Enjoy all the fun of free-roaming warfare. And get paid for it!
REVIEWED *OPS2#55* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#55**

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY — GOLD
A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage stealth-a-thon.
REVIEWED *OPS2#17* / **OVERALL** 10 / **DVD#17/#37**

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER — SILVER
Cinematic stealth adventure that devours the competition.
REVIEWED *OPS2#57* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#57** — ON THE DVD

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION REMIX — BRONZE
Super-bling street racer, now with extra tunes and vehicles.
REVIEWED *OPS2#73* / **OVERALL** 08

MORTAL KOMBAT: SHAOLIN MONKS — BRONZE
The classic beat-'em-up gets a spectacular adventure makeover.
REVIEWED *OPS2#65* / **OVERALL** 08

MOTO GP4 — BRONZE
The fastest, prettiest and bestest motorbike racing money can buy.
REVIEWED *OPS2#60* / **OVERALL** 08

MUSIC 3000 — SILVER
A virtual recording studio for £30? Can anyone say no to that?
REVIEWED *OPS2#33* / **OVERALL** 09

NBA STREET V3 — SILVER
The definitive basketball game. Shoot hoops to build your rep.
REVIEWED *OPS2#57* / **OVERALL** 09

NEED FOR SPEED MOST WANTED — BRONZE
Throwing cops into the mix gives the *NFS* series a turbo boost.
REVIEWED *OPS2#67* / **OVERALL** 08

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2 — BRONZE
Vast racer with tons of mod-tastic freedom of expression.
REVIEWED *OPS2#53* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#53**

ONIMUSHA 3 — SILVER
If you're looking for the best '*Musha*, this is your boy.
REVIEWED *OPS2#48* / **OVERALL** 09

OUTRUN 2006: COAST 2 COAST — BRONZE
Sun-kissed, retro-racer makes blistering comeback.
REVIEWED *OPS2#70* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#72/#73/#75**

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG — SILVER
The best movie tie-in on PS2. An awesome adventure.
REVIEWED *OPS2#66* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#66**

PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE TWO THRONES — SILVER
Only slight tweaks to the formula, but it's the best *POP* so far.
REVIEWED *OPS2#67* / **OVERALL** 09

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5 — GOLD
Like playing real football, but with your hands. Utterly beautiful.
REVIEWED *OPS2#64* / **OVERALL** 10 / **DVD#65**

PROJECT ZERO — BRONZE
Genuinely disturbing survival horror, dripping with menace.
REVIEWED *OPS2#24* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#23**

RAINBOW SIX 3 — BRONZE
Squad-based shooter with a realistic edge and online missions.
REVIEWED *OPS2#45* / **OVERALL** 08

RATCHET & CLANK 3 — SILVER
Weapons and flash gun-centric play make this the series' best.
REVIEWED *OPS2#53* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#51/#58**

RED DEAD REVOLVER — SILVER
Wild West shooter that's like a cool breeze in Death Valley. Yeehaw!
REVIEWED *OPS2#47* / **OVERALL** 09

RESIDENT EVIL 4 — GOLD
Simply one of the greatest games ever made. Buy it. Now.
REVIEWED *OPS2#65* / **OVERALL** 10

REZ — SILVER
Psychedelic, music-based rhythmic shoot-'em-up. Hypnotic stuff.
REVIEWED *OPS2#16* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#17**

SECOND SIGHT — BRONZE
Slick thriller touched with psychic powers from the '*Splitters* boys.
REVIEWED *OPS2#50* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#50**

SHADOW OF ROME — BRONZE
A historic blend of bloody action and stealth set in Roman times.
REVIEWED *OPS2#56* / **OVERALL** 08

SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS — SILVER
Original, beautiful and haunting – nothing else feels like this.
REVIEWED *OPS2#68* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#69**

SILENT HILL 3 — SILVER
Wet-the-bed scary survival horror. We dare you to play it.
REVIEWED *OPS2#33* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#34**

SINGSTAR ROCKS! — BRONZE
Party fun of the highest order, whether you can sing or not.
REVIEWED *OPS2#72* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#74/#75** — ON THE DVD

SLY 3: HONOUR AMONG THIEVES — SILVER
Clever, inventive and funny, this is the best platformer around.
REVIEWED *OPS2#66* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#66**

SMASH COURT PRO TENNIS TOURNAMENT 2 — BRONZE
A new career mode makes the top tennis seed even better.
REVIEWED *OPS2#47* / **OVERALL** 08

SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALS — BRONZE
Move in for the commander-in-chief of online tactical shooters.
REVIEWED *OPS2#43* / **OVERALL** 08

SOUL CALIBUR III — SILVER
Better than ever, this is the greatest fighting game ever made.
REVIEWED *OPS2#66* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#65**

SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR — SILVER
Mythological hack and slash epic.
REVIEWED *OPS2#64* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#66**

SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR

Imagine a cross between God Of War and an '80s football riot and you'll have the measure of this. There are masses of on-screen enemies to slaughter with a rich and inventive array of moves, weapons and magic, all set in a beautifully imagined Greek mythology setting. Bloody brilliant.

SPIDER-MAN 2 — BRONZE
Free-roaming, superhero adventure fun with loads to see and do.
REVIEWED *OPS2#49* / **OVERALL** 08

SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY — SILVER
Top stealth adventure, travelling the world to surprise terrorists.
REVIEWED *OPS2#58* / **OVERALL** 09

SSX 3 — SILVER
Super-long, fast races make this an essential PS2 purchase.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#43**

STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT II — BRONZE
Fantastic set-pieces and brilliant space battles. Buy it.
REVIEWED *OPS2#66* / **OVERALL** 08

SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE — BRONZE
Steer monkeys in Perspex balls around courses in this arcade oddity.
REVIEWED *OPS2#59* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#60**

TEKKEN 5 — BRONZE
The original PlayStation fighter beats its way back to top form.
REVIEWED *OPS2#61* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#61/#63**

TLOTR: THE RETURN OF THE KING — BRONZE
Well-crafted version of the film, with huge battles and great extras.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08

THE SUFFERING: TIES THAT BIND — BRONZE
Hardcore, ultra-bloody action-survival horror.
REVIEWED *OPS2#64* / **OVERALL** 08

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2006 — BRONZE
Like the man himself, this year's edition is on fine form.
REVIEWED *OPS2#65* / **OVERALL** 08

TIMESPLITTERS 2 — GOLD
As vital to PS2 as your central nervous system is to your brain.
REVIEWED *OPS2#25* / **OVERALL** 10 / **DVD#25/#31**

TIMESPLITTERS FUTURE PERFECT — SILVER
Shooter with enough guns to satisfy the most trigger-happy soul.
REVIEWED *OPS2#57* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#56**

TOCA RACE DRIVER 3 — SILVER
Tones down the story mode and ups the red-hot driving experience.
REVIEWED *OPS2#69* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#68/#72**

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND — BRONZE
A spectacular return to form from the first lady of adventuring.
REVIEWED *OPS2#71* / **OVERALL** 08 **DVD#71/#72/#73/#74/#75**

TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN WASTELAND
Tony's looking tired, but this is still a great place to start.
REVIEWED *OPS2#66* / **OVERALL** 07

TOTAL OVERDOSE — BRONZE
Comedy Tex-Mex shoot-a-thon with entertaining special attacks.
REVIEWED *OPS2#65* / **OVERALL** 08

URBAN CHAOS: RIOT RESPONSE — BRONZE
Loud, brash, highly enjoyable law-and-order shooter.
REVIEWED *OPS2#72* / **OVERALL** 08 /

VIEWTIFUL JOE 2 — BRONZE
Cartoon-style action adventure with great fighting controls.
REVIEWED *OPS2#57* / **OVERALL** 08

WALLACE & GROMIT: THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT — BRONZE
For once, a kid's game that doesn't treat you like a child.
REVIEWED *OPS2#65* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#65**

WE ❤ KATAMARI — BRONZE
Deeply odd and very Japanese but also hugely enjoyable.
REVIEWED *OPS2#69* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#70/#72**

WRC RALLY EVOLVED — SILVER
Fantastic tracks with random events to test your skill.
REVIEWED *OPS2#65* / **OVERALL** 09 / **DVD#65**

WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW 2006 — SILVER
With better online play and new match types, this is essential.
REVIEWED *OPS2#66* / **OVERALL** 09

XIII — BRONZE
Gorgeous PS2 version of the comic-book hero. Play this now.
REVIEWED *OPS2#40* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#42**

ZONE OF THE ENDERS: THE 2ND RUNNER — BRONZE
The strikingly impressive robo scrapper returns. Awesome.
REVIEWED *OPS2#38* / **OVERALL** 08 / **DVD#38**

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18

PlayStation®2

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Dense fog creeps across an abandoned island, a siren sounds and the sea turns a deathly shade of red. Murderous demons have sensed your presence. To uncover the mysteries of this sinister island you will need to use Sight-jacking; an ability that allows you to see through your enemies' eyes. As these demons hunt you down, do you face the horror of your own death or outwit your enemies and bring the nightmare to an end? You decide.

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JUST CAUSE

A revolutionary leap on PS2

EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

ON YOUR DISC

- NEED FOR SPEED CARBON
- ACE COMBAT: THE BELKAN WAR
- LEMMINGS
- PLUS MORE

ON SALE 10 AUGUST

IN THE MAG

BULLY'S BACK
WE GET BOGWASHED BY ROCKSTAR'S BAD BOY

JOIN THE CLUB
SIGN UP WITH THE MOST FRANTIC SHOOTER ON PS3

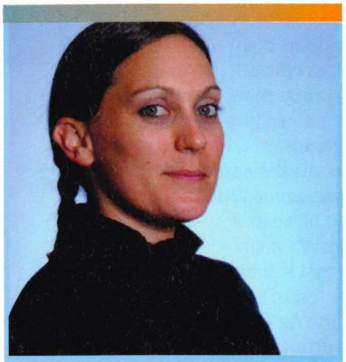
DEVIL MAY CRY 4
DANTE MAKES EVERY OTHER NEXT-GEN GAME HIS BITCH

PLUS
LEGO STAR WARS II
MERCENARIES 2
F.E.A.R.
STRANGLEHOLD
WIN A GOLF BUGGY

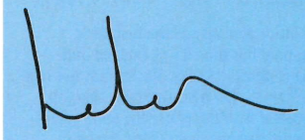
Contents subject to change. Blame 'fickle whim of fate'.

comedown

THE REST OF YOUR PS2 AND PSP LIFE IN ONE HANDY SECTION



This month we've been having a little think about the best mini-games ever and what it is that makes them so good. See page 126 for the outcome. It also came to light that the best mini-games don't always come from the best games. Which, when you think about it, is a little bit like real life. It's on the boring days when it rains or when there's just nothing to do, that you end up seeing how far an entire bog roll will stretch around your house. Or how many swear words you can think of in 30 seconds. Or come up with a conclusive list of your top ten scariest animals with teeth. Or four legs. Or gills. Or a list of the top five most embarrassing situations you could ever imagine yourself in. Number three on my list is going to the swimming baths, wearing my pants on top of my costume so I won't forget to pack them, then forgetting to remove them before entering the public pool. (I have done this.) I can't tell you number 2 or 1 on my list – this is not the time or place. Why not send me your real-life mini-game ideas to the usual address – that way, next time I'm bored, I'll have a whole list of things to do.



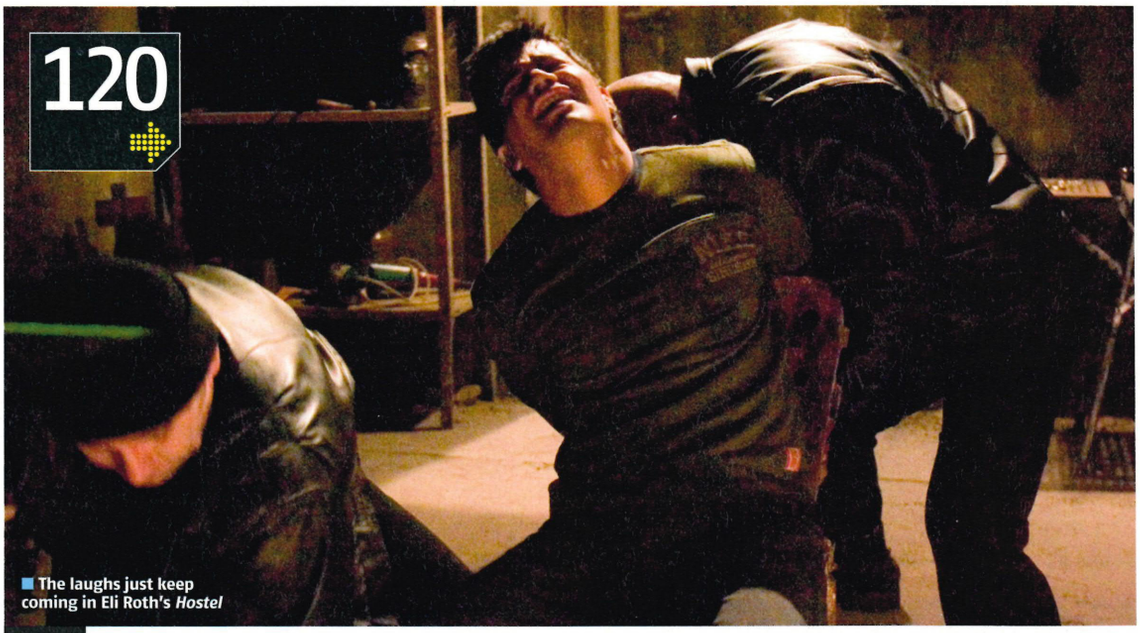
Helen Woodey,
Operations editor

film

music

incoming

feature



120

The laughs just keep coming in Eli Roth's *Hostel*

120 **FILM REVIEWS**
Hostel, *Inside Man*, *Scary Movie 4* and *Basic Instinct 2* are heading to DVD. But should you believe the hype, or avoid the tripe?

121 **HOW TO GET MOVIES ON YOUR PSP**
Do you want to transfer prized movies, vids and clips from PC to PSP? Hmm, if *only* someone had created a plain English guide...

121 **THIS MONTH'S WEIRDEST PSP THINGS**
A bunny boiler with a giant bug, insanely addictive lo-fi gaming, and vice cops discuss their beauty routine

122 **MUSIC REVIEWS**
DJ Shadow, Slayer, Basement Jaxx and The Bronx have all shown up at your house with their CDs. Who gets first play?

122 **PSP KIT REVIEW**
This month PSP gets theatre sound with added light show, and a combined carry case and speakers

123 **HOW TO... CREATE A GAMING PODCAST**
Don't just be a consumer – follow our dead simple guide to making and posting a podcast on the web, and get involved

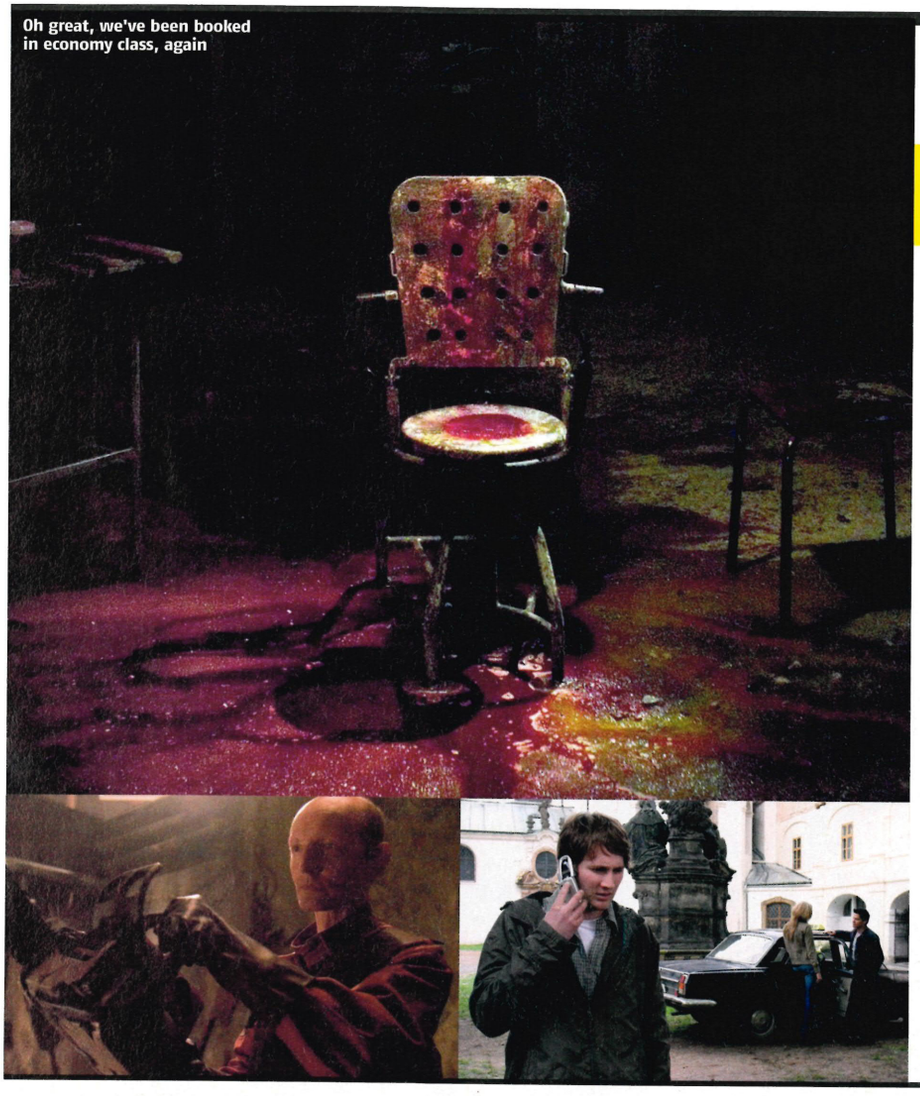
124 **INCOMING**
Is your gaming life a mess? Re-establish some order with our exhaustive list of every PS2, PSP and PS3 releases date

126 **MINIATURE GAMES**
From *Dragon Quest*'s casino to quad bike ice hockey in *ATV Offroad Fury 2*, we reveal the best mini-games on PS2

DJ Shadow. The cap, acceptable; the beard, rubbish

122

126


Oh great, we've been booked in economy class, again

HOSTEL

WELL, THIS IS ONE WAY TO DISCOURAGE YANK TOURISTS FROM VISITING EUROPE

DIRECTOR
Eli Roth
STARRING
Jay Hernandez, Derek Richardson, Eythor Gudjonsson
DISTRIBUTOR
Sony Pictures
OUT
Now
PRICE
£19.99 (DVD)
£19.99 (UMD)

FILM: American frat boys Paxton and Josh are trekking across Europe with Icelandic oddball Oli, scoring chicks and getting high. In Amsterdam they hear whispers of a mysterious hostel in Bratislava where gorgeous, easy-going girls love to show tourists a good time, and the three take the next train out of the Netherlands...

The rest, to anyone who saw the ads for the cinematic release (or the accompanying media fuss) speaks for itself. Billed as a visceral, amoral shocker, *Hostel*'s main selling point seemed to be that it subjected the viewer to an endurance test of look-away-now torture scenes. The reality is more in line with director Roth's previous film, *Cabin Fever* – a seemingly unbalanced but deliberate mix of dumbass comedy and brilliantly precise gore. *Hostel*'s first half is a bland, Americans-abroad farce, and it's only when the promised claret arrives that you realise it's the slow winch to the summit before the rollercoaster goes into red-washed freefall. As for the gore – it just about does justice to the hype, although it's the unnerving swerves in tone that'll really make you uncomfortable. **7/10**

EXTRAS: Four commentaries including Eli Roth and Quentin Tarantino, three featurettes. **9/10**

VERDICT: Not quite the brain-changing meat market we were promised, but oddly unhinged and effective horror. ■ **ND**

INSIDE MAN

Director *Spike Lee* / Starring *Denzel Washington, Clive Owen* / Distributor *Universal Pictures* / Out *Now* / Price *£19.99 (DVD)*

FILM: Owen's cerebral crook Dalton Russell has, he tells us in the film's opening gambit, devised and carried out the perfect bank robbery. Rewind to the score itself, and we see the calculated calm with which Russell's crew seize control of the bank and marshal the hostages. Locked in a war of wits and wills with Washington's canny hostage negotiator, Russell seems happy to go nowhere. The film becomes a watching and waiting game, with their tease-and-test relationship the focal point of several hanging uncertainties – why are the hostages all dressed in grey jumpsuits? And what *exactly* is in the bank's vault that the owner is so keen to protect? **7/10**

EXTRAS: None. **0/10**

VERDICT: Frayed around the plot edges, perhaps, but a compelling curve ball of a movie all the same. ■ **ND**

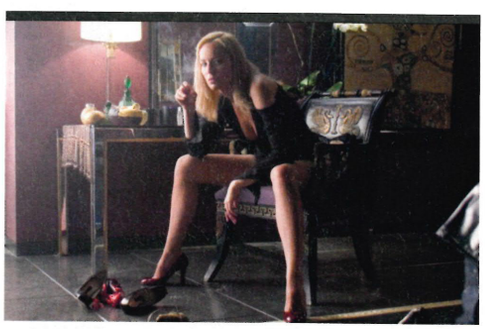
SCARY MOVIE 4

Director *David Zucker* / Starring *Anna Faris, Carmen Electra* / Distributor *Buena Vista* / Out *14 August* / Price *£19.99 (DVD)*

FILM: Tired, unfunny and stupid, stupid, stupid disease of a movie, visited upon us thanks to all the mindless guffawing idiots who paid to see parts one, two and three. What started off as a reasonably precise parody of knowing '90s slasher flicks has degenerated into scattershot sarcasm, taking wild swings at as many high-profile Hollywood films as possible. The problem with widening the pool of possible targets is that the jokes themselves become less relevant, less sharp, and less funny – was the world really crying out for a piss-take of *The Village*? A desperate waste of time for all involved, including you if you watch it. **1/10**

EXTRAS: Audio commentary, deleted scenes, six featurettes, trailer. **9/10**

VERDICT: Even the worst horror movies are better than this. And many are funnier too. Best left well alone. ■ **ND**



BASIC INSTINCT 2

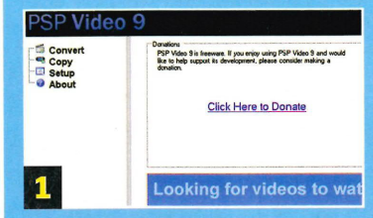
Director *Michael Caton-Jones* / Starring *Sharon Stone, David Morrissey* / Distributor *Entertainment In Video* / Out *7 August* / Price *£19.99 (DVD)*

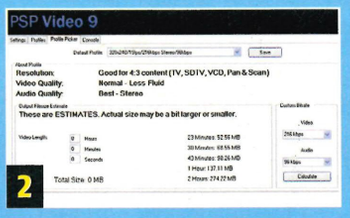
FILM: Pretty much a remake of the first *Basic Instinct* film, only this time it's in England and Sharon Stone is *much* less sexy. She reprises her role as Catherine Tramell, the psychosexually charged maybe-murderess who's now playing mind games with psychiatrist Michael Glass. That's how it's supposed to go, anyway, but their supposedly smouldering relationship is actually an embarrassing shambles of crude posturing and laughable eroticism. And for some reason failed Premiership footballer Stan Collymore turns up in a small role, an appearance almost as inexplicable as the reason for making this flaccid sequel in the first place. **3/10**

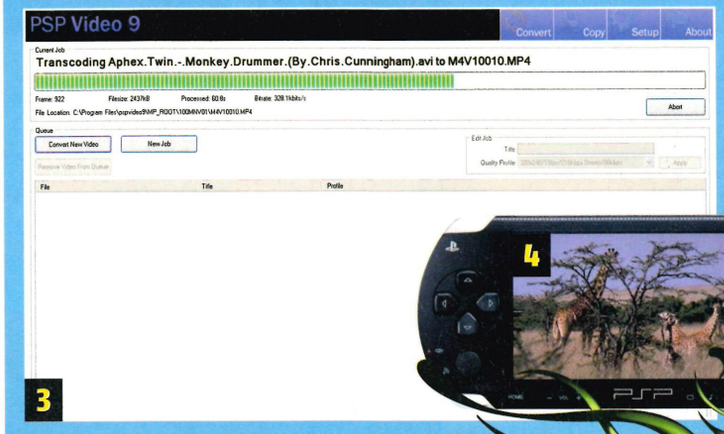
EXTRAS: Making of, deleted scenes, featurette. **5/10**

VERDICT: More juvenile fumble than sexual thriller. ■ **ND**

Step by step guide to... getting movies on your PSP





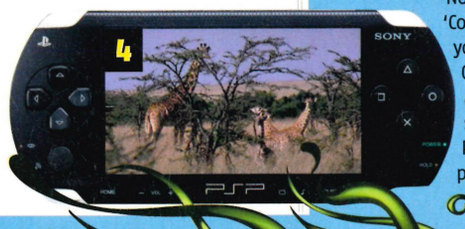


Got video files you want to watch on the go? Follow our guide...

PSP only plays certain types of video file – MP4, AVC – so you need to convert your movie file first. The easiest way to do this is by using a program like *PSP Video 9* 1 available at www.pspvideo9.com. It's free and easy to use, and transfers the finished files to PSP automatically.

Download the program and choose your video settings in the 'Setup' tab 2 Tinker with the resolution, framerate and so on until you've found the balance between video quality and file size that suits you (you may want to use the 'Profile Picker' with automatic settings and descriptions of the quality level).

Now click the 'Convert' tab, select 'Convert New Video' and find the file you want to copy from the menu. Once converted, *PSP Video 9* automatically prepares the file so that your PSP can find it 3 Plug your PSP into your PC's USB port, click the 'Copy' tab and you're away 4

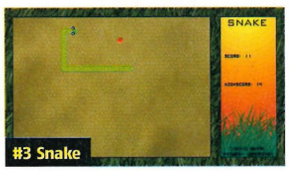


THE WEIRDEST THINGS WE'VE SEEN ON PSP THIS MONTH

RANK WEIRDNESS SYPHONED FROM THE WEB'S U-BEND

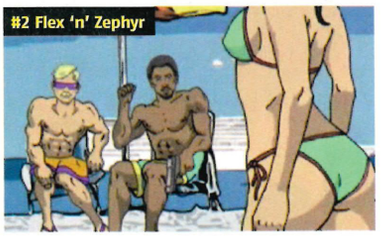
#3 SNAKE

Ages-old game about a snake that eats stuff and gets bigger. We're not sure which is weirder – the fact that someone decided to make a Flash version of this for PSP or the fact that we played it for a good hour, with a stack of UMD titles within easy reach. Available in the Flash Competition Pack from **www.pspupdates.qj.net**



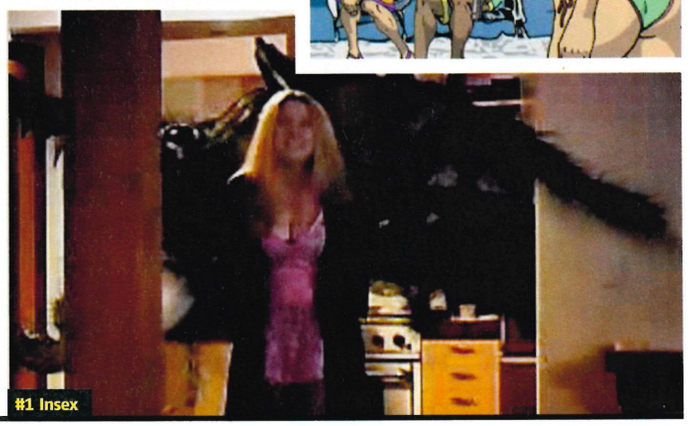
#2 FLEX 'N' ZEPHYR

Short *Miami Vice*-riffing animation in which maverick cops Flex and Zephyr take down crooks while discussing the complexities of a successful skin-moisturising routine. A damning indictment of vanity-driven American network television? Or just, y'know, funny? Search for 'Flex 'n' Zephyr' at **www.video.google.com**



#1 INSEX

Far from being rude, the title of this short dating comedy is actually a clever pun which our brains only just got while we were writing this. Boy meets girl. Girl takes boy back to her place. Girl invites boy to meet her 'bug'. Boy gets excited until a four-foot beetle emerges from the bedroom. Available at **www.atomfilms.com/af/togo/**



trailer park

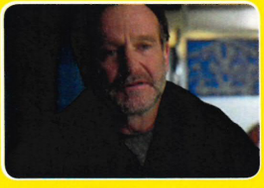
Download trailers for hot new films to view on your PSP

MONSTER HOUSE
Animated horror comedy in which three children discover that their next-door neighbour's house is, in fact, a big scary monster. With the ace Steve Buscemi. www.planetmg.com

INVINCIBLE
Mark Wahlberg plays a rookie Pro Football player in the 1970s. A quick look at the trailer reveals that, disappointingly, he's not invincible at all. www.movie-list.com

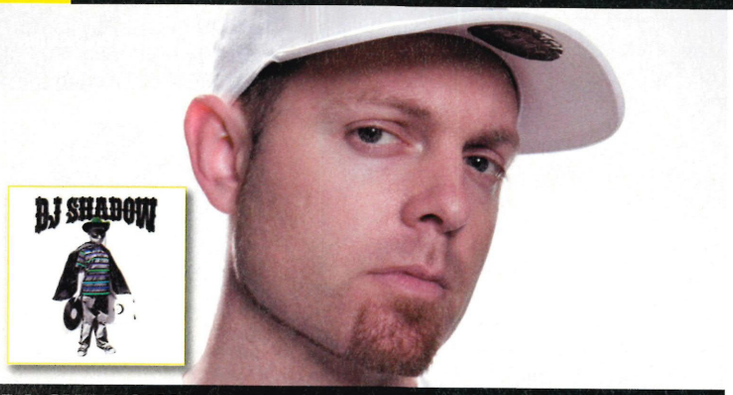
WORLD TRADE CENTER
Oliver Stone's latest attempt to make America really cross is a re-examination of 9/11. Looks massively pompous and brash. Vintage Stone, then. www.uip.co.uk/news/psp_trailers.asp

THE ASSASSINATION OF JESSE JAMES BY THE COWARD ROBERT FORD
The title *literally* says it all. Old West tale of Jesse James and, er, how he was killed by Robert Ford. Starring Brad Pitt. www.movie-list.com



THE NIGHT LISTENER
Creaky thriller in which Robin Williams' radio host befriends a terminally ill teenage author over the phone, only to discover it might be a ruse. www.apple.com/trailers

music THE TUNES CURRENTLY ROCKING OUR WORLD



DJ SHADOW THE OUTSIDER (ISLAND)

WHO Geeky San Francisco hip-hop producer, taking a short break from lovingly stroking criminally expensive bits of vinyl to release his third album.
HIGHLIGHTS *Seein Thangs*, starring rowdy Dirty South rapper David Banner. Not the mellow Shadow we know and love, but ace nonetheless.
LOWLIGHTS The album's introduction sounds like a trailer for a really bad fantasy film.
VERDICT Some good tracks. But *The Outsider* is so packed with guests, from indie shufflers Kasabian to folk siren Christina Carter, it's a bit all over the shop. **6/10**

SLAYER
CHRIST ILLUSION (Warner Bros)
WHO Hoary thrash-metal legends hailed by everyone, from Slipknot to Metallica.
HIGHLIGHTS The breakneck-speed *Jihad*, sung from the perspective of a suicide bomber.
LOWLIGHTS There's a song called *Consfearacy*, which is what passes for clever if you've got tattoos on your face.
VERDICT 20 years on, Slayer rock harder than any metal act before or since. **8/10**

BASEMENT JAXX
CRAZY ITCH RADIO (XL)
WHO Brixton duo bring the carnival on fourth LP.
HIGHLIGHTS *Run 4 Cover*, a hyperactive slice of cartoon grime starring East London MC Lady Marga.
LOWLIGHTS *Zoomalude* aims for classic soul, but it's too wishy-washy.
VERDICT Bit bland for the dancefloor warriors, but Jaxx are the champions of good-vibes partying. **7/10**

THE BRONX
THE BRONX (Wichita)
WHO Los Angeles bruisers who make gutter-dredging punk chaos.
HIGHLIGHTS The party anthem *White Guilt* suggests the Bronx's soirees involve something slightly stronger than crisps and soda.
LOWLIGHTS *Dirty Leaves* is an unusually sedate track.
VERDICT Bad attitude, great tunes... Strong combination. **7/10**

ALSO RELEASED THIS MONTH
Christina Aguilera Back To Basics (RCA)/**The Young Knives** Voices Of Animals And Men (Transgressive)/**Broadcast** The Future Crayon (Warp)

ON THE *OPS2* STEREO
Bruce Springsteen Born To Run (Columbia)/**Movietone** The Sand And The Stars (Domino)/**Saigon** Warning Shots (Sureshot)/**Outkast** Atliens (LaFace)

PSP tunes
Cool music downloads for your handheld

TV On The Radio
PROVINCE (4AD)
Electronic soul featuring a cameo from quaver-voiced oldie David Bowie
Buy from Playlouder.com

Burial
DISTANT LIGHTS (HYPERDUB)
Bleak, brooding cyberpunk dance from the South London ghetto
Buy from Bleep.com

Nouvelle Vague
THE KILLING MOON (PEACEFROG)
Cute bossa nova cover of Echo And The Bunnymen's goth classic
Buy from Bleep.com

Plan B
MISSIN' LINKS (679)
Cut from the Forest Gate rapper's album because of an uncleared Radiohead sample
Download free from MySpace.com/time4planb

The Pipettes
PULL SHAPES (MEMPHIS INDUSTRIES)
Polka-dot girl pop for the cool kids
Buy from Playlouder.com

Mogwai
LIKE HEROD (LIVE) (ROCK ACTION)
Post-rockers' alternately quiet/really-bloody-loud masterpiece
Buy from Bleep.com

Royksopp
GO WITH THE FLOW (LIVE) (WALL OF SOUND)
Chill-out merchants tackle Queens Of The Stone Age's head-bang epic
Buy from Bleep.com

Dashboard Confessional
REASON TO BELIEVE (HASSLE/FULL TIME HOBBY)
Songs about girls and crying from sensitive emo dude
Buy from Playlouder.com

Test Icicles
CIRCLE SQUARE TRIANGLE (SPANK ROCK REMIX) (DOMINO)
Real-life Nathan Barleys get a mad hip-hop makeover
Buy from Bleep.com

PSP KIT REVIEW

THE BEST BITS 'N' BOBS FOR YOUR PSP

A mixed bag of PSP cinema and speaker hardware this month, this time courtesy of Gamexpert (www.gamexpert.co.uk). First up is the PSP Portable Theatre (£39.99), which, as the name suggests, is a portable device for enhancing the playback of films on your handheld. The Portable Theatre comes with all the features you'd expect from a PSP dock – a 2.1 speaker system, charger jack and two headphone points – but also incorporates a couple of unusual extras, like an ambience-enhancing blue-glow effect (we're not entirely convinced) and a much more useful remote control. If you're on the go you'll need a ready supply of AA batteries – the Portable Theatre doesn't have a rechargeable power supply – but apart from that it's a very attractive gadget indeed.

Which is something that can't really be said for Gamexpert's Sound Case (£24.99). The chunky protective pouch is all about practicality over looks, but that's fine by us. Like mother used to say: it's what's inside that counts, and the Sound Case has an integrated flat-panel speaker embedded in the top lid of the cover, meaning it not only provides boosted sound when you're watching a movie with the case flipped open, but it's also able to play music when the case is closed and you're on the move. (From the lounge to the bathroom.)

1 Gamexpert Portable Theatre
2 Gamexpert Sound Case

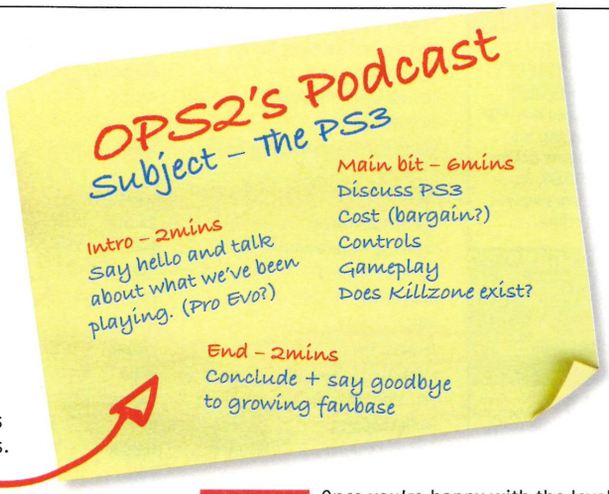
HOW TO...
CREATE YOUR OWN GAMING PODCAST

FEEL LIKE SHOOTING YOUR BIG MOUTH OFF? HERE'S HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN ONLINE TALK SHOW

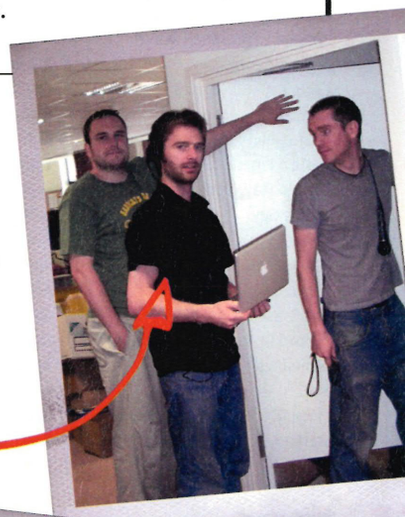
IMPORTANT!
Don't be tempted to put any music in the background of your Podcast. If you use someone's music without permission then you are breaking the law. Buying a CD only entitles you to listen to it at home, and so broadcasting it on the net is a breach of copyright and could land you in loads of trouble.

A Podcast – for those of you came out of a coma five minutes ago – is essentially a radio show recorded in MP3 format that you get from a website, transfer to your iPod or PSP and listen to on the move. And it's incredibly easy to create your own. All you need is computer access (broadband if possible), a microphone and some sound recording software. We're using a program called *Audacity* to record ours, which you can get for free from http://audacity.sourceforge.net. Here's what you need to do...

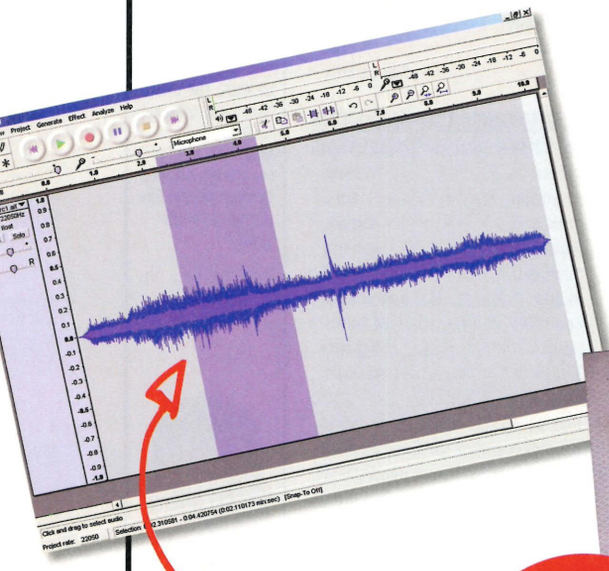
STEP 1 If you haven't already, follow the relevant instructions to set up the mic and the software on your computer. Before you record anything, get your mates together and decide on a subject to talk about. Keep it simple: you don't need a script but you should have a plan – in our case we're talking about PS3. But you could do anything (a review for example). List the points you want to cover and stick to them – nobody wants to hear you waffle on for ages. This is our plan:

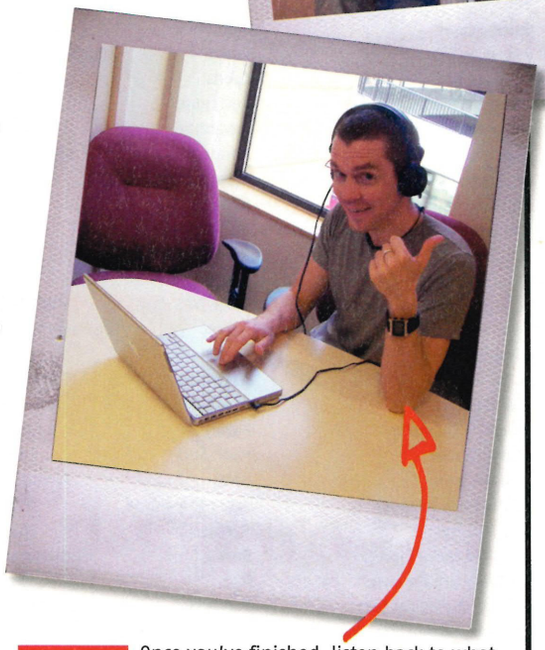


STEP 2 Try to make sure you won't be disturbed when you start recording. Shut doors and windows to keep unwanted noise out, switch off your mobiles and tell people not to bother you until you've finished – making a test recording to begin with really helps. Hit the big red button to start and let everyone involved say a few sentences in their normal voice.



STEP 3 Once you're happy with the levels then you're ready to start. First, decide on a single chairperson to oversee and lead the discussion so you don't have everyone talking at once. Make sure people speak slowly, without rushing, and that everyone introduces themselves by name at the beginning. That way, listeners can identify each voice. Try not to move around too much, either. Rustling papers, squeaky seats and clumpy foot stomping will not only sound unprofessional but will make it harder to hear what you're saying. Make sure you keep a watch or a clock handy so you don't lose track of time.





LISTEN TO OUR PODCAST!
Hear the OPS2 crew talk PS3 on theStash.tv. Check page 4 for details.

STEP 4 Listen back to your recording and check that everyone can be heard clearly and without distortion. If you need to make adjustments, you can change the input volume using the computer's sound controls or alter your distance from the microphone.

STEP 5 Once you've finished, listen back to what you've done to make sure it sounds okay – you can use *Audacity*'s Noise Removal effect to eliminate hissing and crackling from the recording. You can also use the cut and delete options to take out unnecessary space from the beginning and the end. When you're done, use 'Export As MP3' to save your work. Now transfer the file to your web space or hosting service. You can then publish a link to it on your blog or MySpace page. Once you get good, try adding Westwood-style explosions. [Drops bomb]

incoming

Our guide to what's coming your way

PS2

OCTOBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Aladdin's Quest	Adventure	Liquid
Barnyard: The Original Party Animals	Adventure	THQ
Bratz 2: Forever Diamonds	Adventure	THQ
Capcom Classics Collection Vol 2	Retro	Capcom
Cartoon Network Grand Prix	Racing	The Game Factory
Chicken Little: Ace In Action	Action	Buena Vista
Curious George	Platform	Electronic Arts
Destroy All Humans! 2	Action/Adventure	THQ
Disgaea 2	Strategy/RPG	KOEI
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2	Fighter	Atari
EyeToy: Kinetic Combat	EyeToy	Sony
EyeToy: Play Sports	EyeToy	Sony
Family Guy	Adventure	Take Two
FIFA 07	Sports	EA Sports
Happy Feet	Party	Midway
Impossible Mission	Adventure	Play It
Just Cause	Action/Adventure	Eidos
Legend Of The Dragon	Action/Adventure	The Game Factory
Lemmings	EyeToy	Sony
Marvel: Ultimate Alliance	Action	Activision
Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistence	Action	Konami
Mortal Kombat: Armageddon	Beat-'em-up	Midway
NBA 2K7	Sports	Take Two
NHL 2K7	Sports	Take Two
Open Season	Platformer	Ubisoft
Play With Fire	Puzzle	Midas Interactive
Pro Evolution Soccer 6	Sports	Konami
Quest For The Snow Queen	Adventure	Liquid
Robin Hood's Quest	Adventure	Liquid
Rule Of Rose	Horror	505 Games
Scarface: The World Is Yours	Action/Adventure	Vivendi
Test Drive Unlimited	Racing	Atari
The Legend Of Spyro: A New Beginning	Platformer	Vivendi
Thrillville	Theme Park Sim	Atari

NOVEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Biker Mice From Mars	Racing	The Game Factory
Bionicle Heroes	Adventure	Eidos
Bully	Adventure	Rockstar
Call Of Duty 3	Shooter	Activision
EuroRally Champion	Racing	Liquid
Flushed Away	Platformer	D3PE
Guitar Hero II	Party	RedOctane
Justice League Heroes	Action/Adventure	Eidos
K-1 GP 2006	Racing	D3PE
Need For Speed Carbon	Racing	Electronic Arts
Phantasy Star Universe	RPG	Sega
Rayman Raving Rabbids	Platformer	Ubisoft
SpongeBob SquarePants: Creature From The Krusty Krab	Platform	THQ
Superman Returns	Action	Electronic Arts
The Sopranos	Action	THQ
Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf 2007	Sports	EA Sports
Tony Hawk's Project 8	Skateboarding	Activision
WWE SmackDown Vs Raw 2007	Wrestling	THQ
Xioalin Showdown	Adventure	Konami

DECEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Arthur And The Minimoys	Adventure	Atari
Buzz! Junior: Jungle Party	Quiz	Sony
Call Of Cthulhu: Destiny's End	Action/Adventure	Ubisoft
Dirge Of Cerberus: Final Fantasy VII	Action	Square Enix

RADAR

Only the big games bleep really loudly

OUT NOW

GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES

For all you non-PSP owners this is a brand new *GTA* for just £19.99. An offer you simply can't refuse

OUT SOON

FIFA 07

The first *FIFA* we've played for years that has everyone in head-nodding agreement: it's *properly* good

MILES OFF

SOS: THE FINAL ESCAPE 2

This quirky sequel swaps earthquakes for flooding as you attempt to escape a watery grave. What next? Locusts?

Eragon	Action/Adventure	Vivendi
Gangsters Ride	Action	GMX
Marvel Legends	RPG	Activision
Okami	Adventure	Capcom
Tomb Raider: 10th Anniversary Edition	Adventure	Eidos
World Championship Darts	Sports	Oxygen Interactive

2007	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Anubis 2	Action	Midas
Ape Escape: Million Monkeys	Platformer	Sony
Brian Lara International Cricket 2007	Sports	Codemasters
Dancing Stage SuperNOVA	Dance	Konami
Final Fantasy XII	RPG	Square Enix
Ghost Rider	Racing	Take Two
God Hand	Action	Capcom
God Of War II	Action	Sony
Lost	Adventure	Ubisoft
Rogue Galaxy	RPG	Sony
SOS: The Final Escape 2	Action/Adventure	505 Games
Spider-Man 3	Action	Activision
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Action	Konami
TNA Impact!	Wrestling	Midway
Transformers: The Movie	Action	Activision
Wild Arms 4	RPG	505 Games
World Pool Championship 2007	Sports	Sega

TBC	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
ATV Offroad Fury 4	Racing	TBC
Code Age Commanders	RPG	Square Enix
Dawn Of Mana	RPG	Square Enix
Grandia III	RPG	Square Enix
IGPX	Racing	Namco Bandai
Jackass: The Game	Action	TBC
Metal Slug Collection	Retro	TBC
Pac-Man World Rally	Racing	TBC
Radiata Stories	RPG	Square Enix
Samurai Champloo: Sidetracked	Fighter	Namco Bandai
Tales Of Legendia	RPG	Namco Bandai
The King Of Fighters 2006	Fighter	Ignition
Tokobot Plus: Mysteries Of The Katakuri	Platformer	TBC
Truth Or Dare	EyeToy	TBC
Valkyrie Profile 2: Silmeria	RPG	Square Enix

PSP

OCTOBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
50 Cent: Bulletproof G Unit Edition	Action	Vivendi
Ace Combat X: Skies Of Deception	Flight Sim	Sony
Bomberman	Puzzle	Komani
Death Jr 2: Root Of Evil	Platformer	Konami
Dungeons & Dragons: Tactics	Strategy	Atari
Every Extend Extra	Puzzle	Buena Vista
FIFA 07	Sports	EA Sports
Gradius Collection	Retro	Konami
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City Stories	Action	Rockstar
Guilty Gear Judgment	Fighter	THQ
James Pond Codename Robocod	Platformer	Play It
Legend Of The Dragon	Action/Adventure	The Game Factory
Lumines II	Puzzle	Buena Vista
Marvel: Ultimate Alliance	Action	Activision
Mercury Meltdown	Puzzle	Ignition
Moto GP	Racing	Sony
Online Chess Kingdoms	Chess	Konami
Open Season	Platformer	Ubisoft
Pocket Racers	Racing	Konami
Power Stone Collection	Fighter	Capcom
Pro Evolution Soccer 6	Sports	Konami
Rengoku 2	Action	Konami
Ridge Racer 2	Racing	Sony
Sonic Rivals	Racing	Sega
Steel Horizon	Strategy	Konami
Street Supremacy	Racing	Konami
Tekken: Dark Resurrection	Fighter	Sony
Test Drive Unlimited	Racing	Atari

KEY

PS2 GAMES

PSP GAMES

PS3 GAMES

Leon (staff writer) wants...

OKAMI

"The game with a magical cartoon dog and a paint brush tail attack. I can't sleep, I'm so excited."

George (disc ed) wants...

JACKASS: THE GAME

"I'm often mistaken for Johnny Knoxville. Not for my acerbic wit, but because people like throwing things at me."

Tim (ed) wants...

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6

"I've already sorted my Master League signings: Mad Jens, Cannavaro, Gattuso, and Cristiano Ronaldo. Just so I can leave him on the bench, blubbing."

comedown

The Con	Action	South Peak
Thrillville	Theme Park Sim	Atari
Traxion	Music	LucasArts
Winx Club: Join The Club	Adventure	Konami
World Snooker Championship 2007	Sports	Sega
Xyanide Resurrection	Shooter	Playlogic
Yu-Gi-Oh! GX	Card Battler	Konami

NOVEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Battlezone	Retro	Atari
Beatmania	Music	Konami
Biker Mice From Mars	Racing	The Game Factory
Capcom Classics Collection Reloaded	Retro	Capcom
Football Manager 2007	Sports	Sega
Hot PXL	Party	Atari
Killzone: Liberation	Shooter	Sony
Marvel Trading Card Game	Strategy	Konami
Rush	Racing	Midway
SOCOM: US Navy SEALs Fireteam Bravo 2	Shooter/Strategy	Sony
Superman Returns	Action	Electronic Arts
Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf 2007	Sports	EA Sports
Tony Hawk's Project 8	Skateboarding	Activision
WWE SmackDown Vs Raw 2007	Wrestling	THQ
Xioalin Showdown	Adventure	Konami

DECEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Arthur And The Minimoys	Adventure	Atari
Capcom Puzzle World	Puzzles	Capcom
Dungeon Siege: Throne of Agony	Strategy	Take Two
Eragon	Action/Adventure	Vivendi
Myst	Adventure	Midway
Sid Meier's Pirates	Action	Take Two
Tomb Raider: 10th Anniversary Edition	Adventure	Eidos

2007	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
300: March To Glory	Action	Eidos
Coded Arms Contagion	Shooter	Konami
Codename: Panzers	Strategy	10tacle
Dead Head Fred	Action	D3PE
Ghost Rider	Racing	Take Two
Hellboy	Action/Adventure	Konami
Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops	Action	Konami
Ratchet & Clank: Size Matters	Platformer	Sony
Silent Hill Origins	Adventure	Konami
Spider-Man 3	Action	Activision
Transformers: The Movie	Action	Activision
World Pool Challenge 2007	Sports	Sega

TBC	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
ATV Offroad Fury Pro	Racing	TBC
Byte Hell 2000	Party	Sony
Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII	RPG	Square Enix
Dave Mirra BMX Challenge	Sports	TBC
The Dog - Happy Life	Breeding Sim	TBC
Gekido: The Dark Angel	Fighter	TBC
Pac-Man World Rally	Racing	TBC
Star Trek: Tactical Assault	Strategy	TBC

PS3

NOVEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Alone In The Dark	Adventure	Atari
Call Of Duty 3	Shooter	Activision
Eye Of Judgment	Puzzle	Sony
Fatal Inertia	Racing	KOEI
Formula One 06	Racing	Sony
Full Auto 2: Battlelines	Racing	Sega
Madden NFL 07	Sports	EA Sports
Marvel: Ultimate Alliance	Action	Activision
MotorStorm	Racing	Sony
NBA 2K7	Sports	Take Two
NBA Live 07	Sports	EA Sports
Need For Speed Carbon	Racing	Electronic Arts
NHL 2K7	Sports	Take Two
Rainbow Six Vegas	Shooter	Ubisoft
Rayman Raving Rabbids	Platformer	Ubisoft
Resistance: Fall Of Man	Shooter	Sony
Ridge Racer 7	Racing	Namco Bandai
SingStar	Party	Sony
Sonic The Hedgehog	Platformer	Sega
Stranglehold	Action	Midway
The Darkness	Action/Adventure	Take Two
Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf 2007	Sports	EA Sports
Tony Hawk's Project 8	Skateboarding	Activision
Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom	Action/RPG	Sony
WWE SmackDown Vs Raw 2007	Wrestling	THQ

2007	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Armored Core 4	Action	TBC
Army Of Two	Strategy/Shooter	Electronic Arts
Assassin's Creed	Action/Adventure	Ubisoft
Bladestorm: The Hundred Years War	Action	KOEI
Brothers In Arms: Hell's Highway	Strategy/Shooter	Ubisoft
Coded Arms: Assault	Shooter	Konami
Codename: Panzers	Strategy	10tacle
Colin McRae: Dirt	Racing	Codemasters
Devil May Cry 4	Action	Capcom
Dirty Harry	Action	Warner Bros
Eight Days	Action	Sony
Elveon	Action	10tacle
Final Fantasy Versus XIII	RPG	Square Enix
Final Fantasy XIII	RPG	Square Enix
Frontlines: Fuel Of War	Shooter	THQ
Genji 2	Action	Sony
Ghost Rider	Racing	Take Two
Golden Axe	Beat'-em-up	Sega
Grand Theft Auto IV	Action	Rockstar
Haze	Action	Ubisoft
Heat	Action	TBC
Heavenly Sword	Action/Adventure	Sony
Hellboy	Action/Adventure	Konami
Indiana Jones 2007	Action/Adventure	LucasArts
Interstellar Marines	Shooter	TBC
Killzone	Shooter	Sony
Lair	Action	Sony
Lost	Adventure	Ubisoft
Medal Of Honor: Airborne	Action	Electronic Arts
Mercenaries 2: World In Flames	Shooter	TBC
Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns Of The Patriots	Action	Konami
Monster Madness	Action	South Peak
The Lord Of The Rings, The White Council	RPG	Electronic Arts
Rengoku: The End Of The Century	Action	TBC
Romance Of The Three Kingdoms	Strategy	KOEI
Sega Rally	Racing	Sega
Siren 3	Horror	Sony
Spider-Man 3	Action/Adventure	Activision
Stuntman 2	Racing	THQ
Tekken 6	Fighter	Namco
Terra: Formations	Action	TBC
The Club	Action	Sega
The Outsider	Action	Frontier
TNA Impact!	Wrestling	Midway
Turok	Action	Buena Vista
Unreal Tournament 2007	Shooter	Midway
Virtua Fighter 5	Fighter	Sega
Virtua Tennis 3	Sports	Sega
Warhammer: Age Of Reckoning	RPG	Electronic Arts
Warhawk	Action/Adventure	Sony
World Snooker Championship 2007	Sports	Sega

Andy (news ed) wants...
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
"The first next-gen game from the hog on whom I based my hairstyle."

Ben (games ed) wants...
SPIDER-MAN 3
"Shaping up to be tops, but the missus has already banned me from wearing my figure-hugging all-in-one Spidey outfit while playing it. Arse."

WHICH UPCOMING GAMES ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO?

Send us your choice and comment to ps2postal@futurenet.co.uk, with Most Wanted in the subject line. Every month we'll be counting down the top five, complete with your opinions. Keep it clean.

READERS' MOST WANTED CHART

THE GAMES YOU'RE CROSSING YOUR LEGS FOR...

1

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6 (PSP, PS2)
"Konami should think about a special release of *PES* for international tournaments, like EA does with *FIFA*. I just can't handle the wait any longer!"
■ *Nookiebot, London*

2

METAL GEAR SOLID 4: GUNS OF THE PATRIOTS (PS3)
"Is that stuff about Snake dying really true? Really? I won't believe it until I see it."
■ *Al G, email*

3

CALL OF DUTY 3 (PS2, PS3)
"Amazing feature last month, lads and lasses. But please, please, *please* make sure Activision gets this out on time. Okay? Thanks."
■ *Jen, Berwick*

4

GUITAR HERO II (PS2)
"Just discovered the first one, what a game! And you'll get to play bass in this new one too! ROCK ON!"
■ *Little Chris, Northampton*

5

FINAL FANTASY XIII (PS3)
"That sword-wielding girl in your pics is properly pretty. I think I'm in love with her. Is this wrong?"
■ *Col5, email*

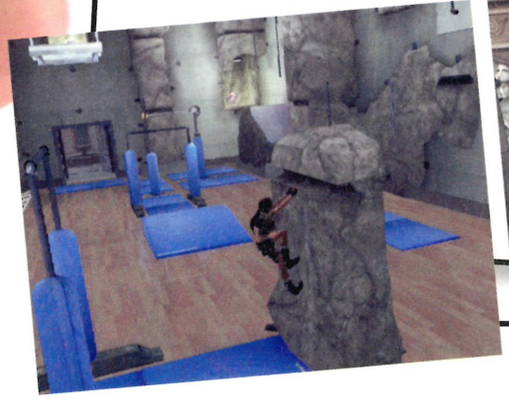
MINIATURE GAMES

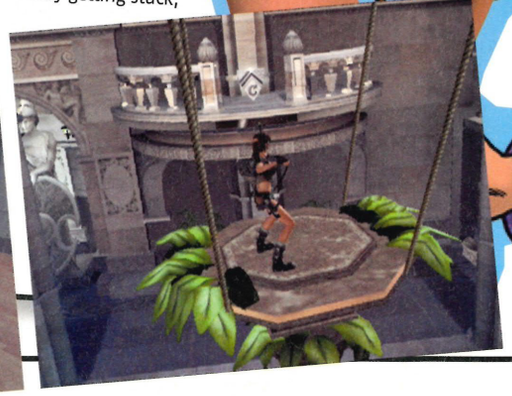
THEY'RE SMALL, BUT OH SO PERFECTLY FORMED. HERE WE PRESENT THE GREATEST MINI-GAMES IN PS2 HISTORY

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

Croft Manor

If the main game leads you by the hand, then Croft Manor sticks you in a dark room and won't let you out until you've learnt French. Quoi? Initially, all you do is explore Lara's house and, er, that's it. You haven't even got any equipment, see? It's only when you blunder into her grappling hook, that you start to suspect that there's actually a *point* to whole thing. You discover a hidden artifact, and another. Then you spot one glinting on a distant, initially unreachable, flagpole, and it all starts to make sense. Within minutes, you're flipping around Lara's gym, and solving Ye Olde English puzzles referencing colours like 'Cerulean', 'Topaz' and 'Viridian'. Obscure and rewarding, it's an ideal tonic to counteract the saccharine fluidity and forgettable ease of the main game. A plus for anyone who misses actually getting stuck, lost or *thinking* from the old PSone games.





SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE

Monkey Fight

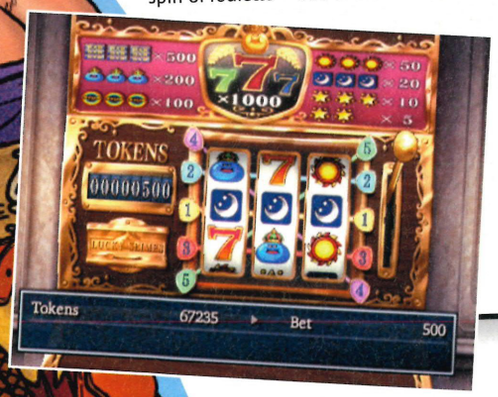
Yes, it's just four monkeys rolling around on a floating platform trying to knock each other off using oversized boxing gloves. So why did we plump for this over obvious classics like Monkey Target and Monkey Bowling? Fight is the pick of *Super Monkey Ball*'s extensive multiplayer mini-game roster because winning is as much about luck as it is skill – and the randomness prevents one highly-skilled player from ruining it for everyone else (a problem for the other modes) making this the ultimate party game.

DRAGON QUEST: THE JOURNEY OF THE CURSED KING

Slot Machines

One-armed bandits, roulette and slime-hosted bingo form the attractions in *Dragon Quest*'s Baccarat Casino, and it's addictive as it is frustrating. You gamble with tokens in exchange for some unique liquid metal armour or a mighty whip; each setting you back an astronomical amount.

There isn't even a cheat code to con the system so you *have* to ride the rollercoaster of emotions to stack up the tokens. But when that big win comes, it's a high-five, champagne moment – especially on the big money 100 token slots. Our only gripe is that you can't gamble your entire winnings on a single spin of roulette – 500 is the house limit.



ATV OFFROAD FURY 2

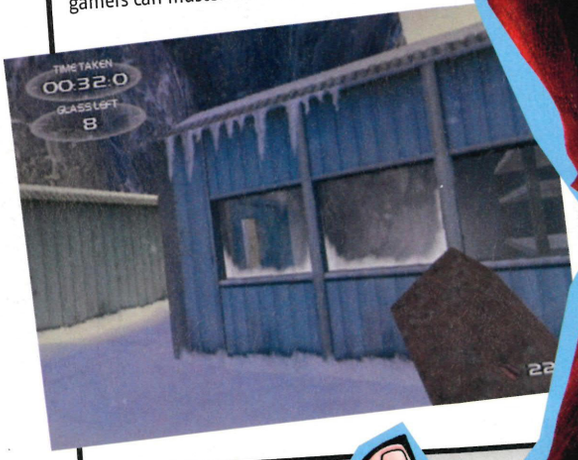
ATV Ice Hockey

For fans of hairy Canadians hitting each other with bent sticks, ice hockey is hard to beat. But for the truly discerning man of sports, the professional game's lack of all-terrain vehicles is nothing short of criminal. Hence the inevitable brilliance of *ATV Offroad Fury 2*'s Ice Hockey mini-game. With a pair of quad bikes skittishly slipping and smacking around the rink in pursuit of a novelty-sized, enormous puck, this is the stuff of demented sporting genius. In fact, with the exception of actual offroad racing and (possibly) synchronized swimming, is there any sport that *wouldn't* benefit from the addition of ATVs? Unlikely...

TIMESPLITTERS 2

Bricking It

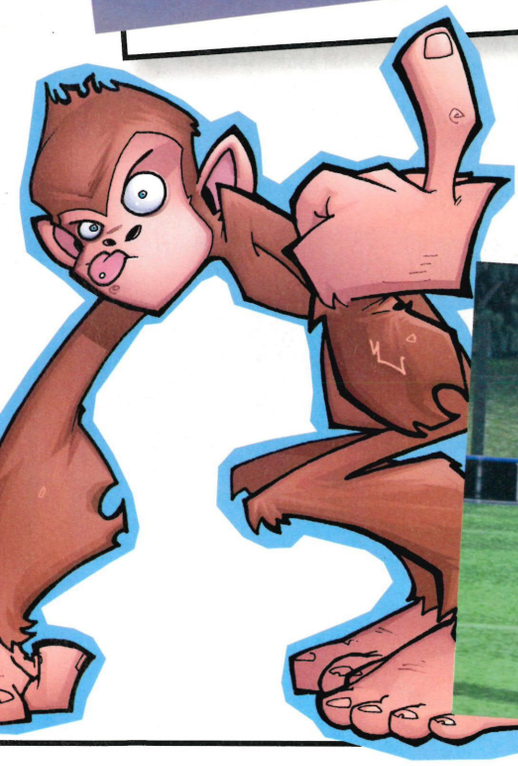
It's unusual to find an FPS doing mini-games, but *Splitters'* made a niche for itself with its painfully addictive Challenges section. In many ways it was a fancy training ground for the skill set necessary to be a top marksman in the main game – pinpoint accuracy, controlled speed and precise movement. Which is exactly what you need in order to get a gold in Bricking It – a fenced off area of the Siberian level with 22 panes of glass to smash with a limited supply of hand-thrown bricks. Stupidly compulsive, it requires a level of concentration and dexterity only Jedi-like gamers can muster. Our best time: 25.5 secs.



TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT

Tekken Bowl

Back in the days of the PS2 launch when games were thin on the ground we actually reviewed Tekken Bowl *as a separate game*. It's possible that it got played more than the beat-'em-up. A dead simple format, involving golf-swing style direction and power meters (later copied in *Super Monkey Ball*), is given a 'hilarious' twist when juxtaposed with the unintentionally comedy *Tekken* characters. You know, like, how the hell does the *panda* fit his fat claws in the bowling ball?



PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5

Free Training

Ignore the 'challenge training' – although it's more of a conventional mini-game, there's too much fannying around reading and negotiating menus. The real joy is using the moreish 'free training' mode to knock in endless free kicks. Just drag and drop the ball to where you want (we favour about 23m out, slightly wide) and start testing all those sure-thing tips found on the PESfan forums. Try tapping ⊗ as the ball clears the wall to add dip. Or brush △ for some extra punch if you're striking from distance. Oh, and *always* aim for the smallest man in the wall. Soon, you're lasering them in with a 1-in-3 ratio. But it's never enough. You keep lining them up again and again, always searching, obsessive/compulsively, for an even sweeter shot.

GOD OF WAR

The Challenges Of The Gods

The Challenges Of The Gods are like one of those 'can't lose' debt consolidation deals – the Devil's in the small print. The evil Challenge Five invites you to 'Shoot the enemies', forgetting to mention that a) they're rotating on a wheel 30m away, b) the crossbow takes three seconds to reload, c) fires *instantly* when cocked, and d) shooting a human soldier (rotating on *another* wheel in front of the enemy) means an instant fail. The tenth and final challenge is so hard it took six team members two hours of posturing to declare it 'impossible'. Yet it's masochistic gaming at its most perversely rewarding, and so finely balanced, you improve every go. Addictive genius.

RESIDENT EVIL 4

Mercenaries

This has to be a strong contender for best mini-game *ever*. You're dropped off in one of four enclosed areas teeming with evil 'Ganados'. Each time you notch a kill you have a few seconds to bag another and keep the combo multiplier ticking. You play against a clock that counts down to your retrieval by helicopter, but picking up the hourglass icons dotted around the map extends the time. It makes for a classic risk vs reward dynamic: how long can you afford to stay in one place popping heads before legging it to scoop up more time? Plus there's the added inconvenience of boss-type characters like the machine-gunner and 'Daddy Chainsaw' to worry about. The real magic, though, is the replayability generated by the different characters' weaponry. Some players swear by Ada's sniper rifle, others go for the all-purpose stopping power of Leon's riot gun. But for the true gentleman gamer, it has to be Krauser, with his twang-thwip bow and one-hit-kills-anything arm attack. Fact: Mercs packs in more entertainment than most full-priced games.

SPY HUNTER

Chicken Hunter

Easily the best thing about the first *Spy Hunter* on PS2 and worthy of a title in its own right, Chicken Hunter is an RSPB-bating (crumb-coated) nugget of 24-carat gaming gold. The idea – as if you really need the explanation – is to navigate a specially adapted level in the game's is-it-a-boat-or-a-car Interceptor, flattening as many of the corn fed cluckers as you can before end of the run. Brilliantly there are chickens flocking *everywhere*. Played mano a mano in split-screen, with clouds of feathers kicking up alongside a massed chorus of comedy squawks, Chicken Hunter is an ultra competitive, must-play mini-game for all breast, thigh and drumstick men.

METAL GEAR SOLID 3

Snake Vs Monkey

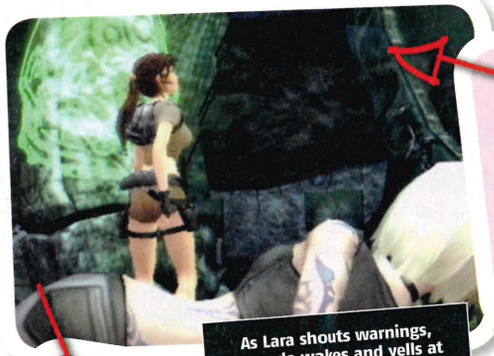
Metal Gear Solid takes itself too seriously. If it were a person, it would spend hours posing in front of the mirror admiring its own biceps. So the Snake Vs Monkey mini-game, where our hero is tasked with tranquillising and capturing *Ape Escape* characters, is nothing short of magic. Light-hearted, and above all, tons of fun, it's perfect for a few moments of comic relief after battling through such a heavy, demanding adventure game. It's just a shame you can't keep the captured monkeys to snack on in the main game. ■

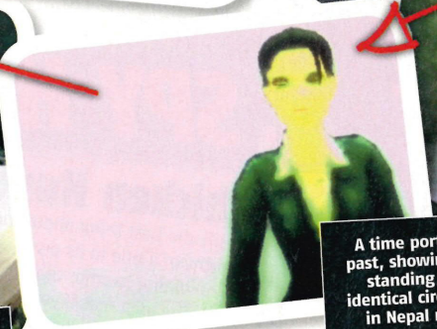
ENDGAME

FINISHING GAMES SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO. THIS MONTH: TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

Miss Croft's outstanding comeback saw her travelling the world over, investigating the disappearance of her mother when she was a child. Having seen *loads* of tombs, Lara goes back to the one she saw first. And so the final level takes place where it all began – at a stone circle in Bolivia. This monument is identical to the one in Nepal that exploded, causing her old dear to vanish all those years ago. After a battle with her rival Rutland and his mercenaries – a fight that kills Rutland – Lara defeats her former friend Amanda and the creature she controls. With Amanda unconscious, Lara approaches the circle...

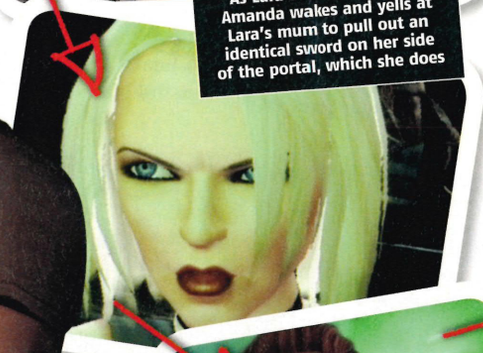
Lara plunges the blade of a mysterious sword, unearthed during her travels, into an ancient mechanism. It bursts into life





A time portal opens to the past, showing Lara's mother, standing in front of the identical circle she uncovered in Nepal many years ago

As Lara shouts warnings, Amanda wakes and yells at Lara's mum to pull out an identical sword on her side of the portal, which she does



The portal explodes, forcing Lara to leap clear of the blast

At gunpoint Lara asks Amanda what happened to her mother. Refusing at first, Amanda's tongue is loosened by a few warning shots

As Lara walks away she calls Alister and Zip back at Croft Manor and tells them to make preparations for another expedition. The rescue mission is on!

Lara tells Amanda that "From this moment on, your every breath is a gift from me" and then knocks her about a bit, leaving her sparked out on the floor

She explains that Lady Croft and Lara accidentally opened a gateway to Avalon, a heavenly domain from the legend of King Arthur. Mum's still alive! In some made-up

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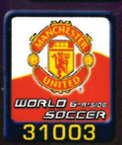

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31697	31687	S MENDES/BEPs	Mas Que Nada
30679	29061	INFERNAL	From Paris To Berlin
31351	30866	PINK	Who Knew
31705	31696	MUSE	Supermassive Black Hole
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33587	31344	LOSTPROPHETS	Rooftops
34280	33870	JUSTICE VS SIMIAN	We Are Ur Friends

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David Brent!
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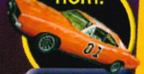
General Lee's Horn!
23014

Cartman!
26608

Southpark Fart Song!
14082

Big Brother Theme!
11018

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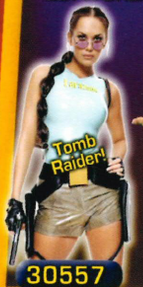

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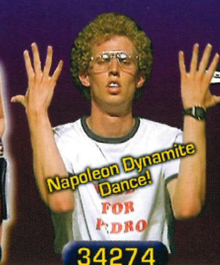

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Cat Fight!
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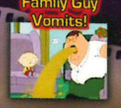
Family Guy Vomits!
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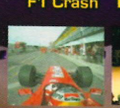
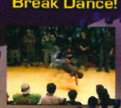
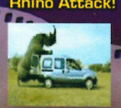
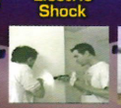

F1 Crash
29157


Break Dance!
24654

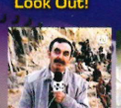
Avril!
24648


Rhino Attack!
23174


Electric Shock
29123

Backyard Wrestling!
29129

Whale Chomp!
23771


Look Out!
23772

Bad Panda!
23777

Mountain Fall!
24661

Bike/Plane crash?!
27551

Cat Attack!
17103

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Yes mate! First PSP review

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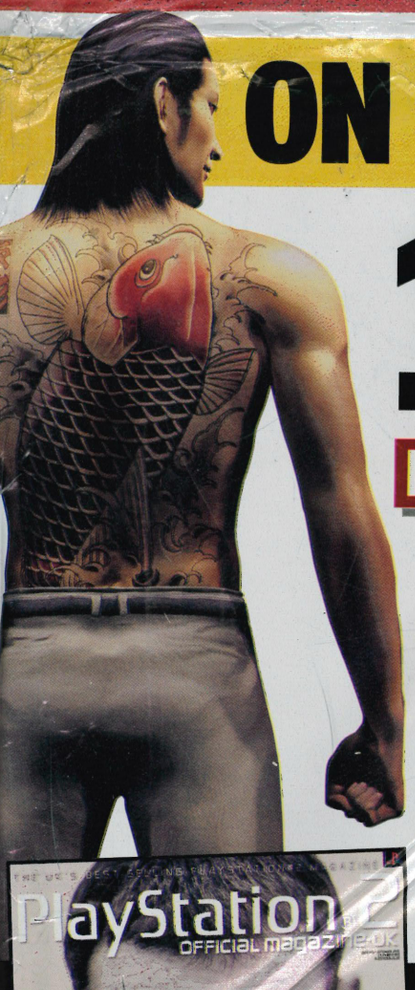
ARMY OF TWO

Hanging out with PS3's most macho men



ON YOUR DVD

10 GAMES TO PLAY ON YOUR DISC

INCLUDING

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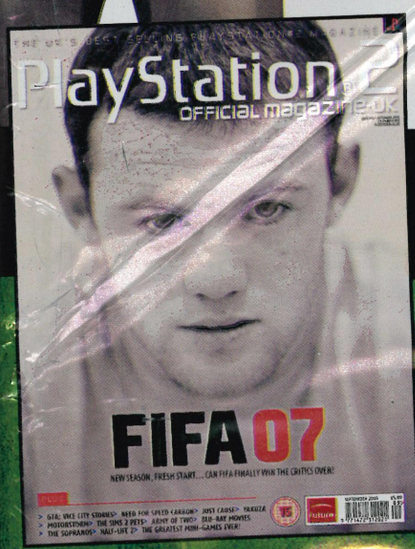
- YAKUZA
- **FORMULA ONE 2006**
- B-BOY
- **FORBIDDEN SIREN 2**
- SHINOBIDO



IN THE MAG

FIFA 07

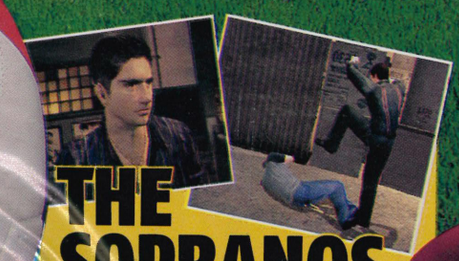
THE WORLD'S BIGGEST FOOTY GAME IS BACK

MASSIVE DOUBLE SIDED POSTER

- 06/07 Premiership wallchart
- Wayne Rooney

THE SOPRANOS

Drive your best mate somewhere quiet for a 'chat'



SIMS 2 PETS

Design a dog in this year's biggest craze

SMALL BUT PERFECTLY FORMED

Our guide to the greatest mini-games

PS3 SHOTS

PLAY LEGO STAR WARS II

...a month before it's in the shops!

FREE POSTER

1. Wayne Rooney
2. 06/07 Premiership wallchart

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FIFA 07

BETTER THAN PRO EVO?! FULL REPORT INSIDE

1. Brand new gameplay revealed
2. See the world's first shots
3. PS2, PSP and PS3 versions

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BARCLAYS PREMIERSHI

ARSENAL

Ground: Emirates Stadium
Capacity: 60,000
Address: Ashburton Grove, London, N7
Ticket Info Hotline: 0207 704 4040

MANAGER: Arsene Wenger
LAST SEASON: 4th
BEST CHANT: He's bald, he's s**t / He gets a game when no-one's fit / Pascal Cygan, Pascal Cygan
DID YOU KNOW: Arsenal finished in 5th place in the Second Division in 1919, but nevertheless was elected to rejoin the First Division at the expense of local rivals Tottenham Hotspur

Sat 19 August	Aston Villa	(H)	15:00
Sat 26 August	Man City	(A)	17:15
Sat 09 September	Middlesbrough	(H)	15:00
Sun 17 September	Man Utd	(A)	16:00
Sat 23 September	Sheff Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 30 September	Charlton	(A)	15:00
Sat 14 October	Watford	(H)	15:00
Sun 22 October	Reading	(A)	16:00
Sat 28 October	Everton	(H)	15:00
Sun 05 November	West Ham	(A)	13:30
Sun 12 November	Liverpool	(H)	16:00
Sat 18 November	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Sat 25 November	Bolton	(A)	17:15
Wed 29 November	Fulham	(A)	19:45
Sat 02 December	Tottenham	(H)	12:45
Sun 10 December	Chelsea	(A)	16:00
Wed 13 December	Wigan	(A)	19:45
Sat 16 December	Portsmouth	(H)	15:00
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Sat 03 March	Reading	(H)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Everton	(A)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Liverpool	(A)	15:00
Sat 07 April	West Ham	(H)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Tottenham	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Fulham	(H)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Chelsea	(H)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00

ASTON VILLA

Ground: Villa Park
Capacity: 42,573
Address: Trinity Road, Birmingham, B6 6HE
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 423 8104

MANAGER: David O'Leary
LAST SEASON: 16th
BEST CHANT: He tackles and he passes / He wrestles and harasses / He gets up people's asses / He's better than Zidane, Gavin McCann (Clap, Clap)
DID YOU KNOW: Aston Villa has provided more England internationals than any other club – 63 to date

Sat 19 August	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Wed 23 August	Reading	(H)	19:45
Sat 26 August	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Sun 10 September	West Ham	(H)	16:00
Sat 16 September	Watford	(A)	17:15
Sat 23 September	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Sat 30 September	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Sat 14 October	Tottenham	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 October	Fulham	(H)	17:15
Sat 28 October	Liverpool	(A)	15:00
Sat 04 November	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Sat 11 November	Everton	(A)	15:00
Sun 19 November	Wigan	(A)	13:30
Sat 25 November	Middlesbrough	(H)	15:00
Wed 29 November	Man City	(H)	19:45
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Sat 23 December	Man Utd	(H)	15:00
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Mon 09 April	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Middlesbrough	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Portsmouth	(H)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Man City	(A)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Sheff Utd	(H)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Bolton	(A)	15:00

CHARLTON ATHLETIC

Ground: The Valley
Capacity: 27,111
Address: Floyd Road, Charlton, London, SE7 8BL
Ticket Info Hotline: 0871 226 1905

MANAGER: Iain Dowie
LAST SEASON: 13th
BEST CHANT: Sha-la-la-la-la-la-la-la / Sha-la-la-la-la-la-la-la / Sha-la-la-la-la-la-la-la / And we sent the Palace down
DID YOU KNOW: In the sitcom *Only Fools And Horses*, Rodney's middle name was Charlton as his mum was an Addicks fan

Sat 19 August	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Wed 23 August	Man Utd	(H)	20:00
Sat 26 August	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Sat 09 September	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Sat 16 September	Portsmouth	(H)	12:45
Sat 23 September	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Sat 30 September	Arsenal	(H)	15:00
Mon 16 October	Fulham	(A)	20:00
Sat 21 October	Watford	(H)	15:00
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Sat 25 November	Everton	(H)	12:45
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Sat 09 December	Tottenham	(A)	15:00
Sat 16 December	Liverpool	(H)	12:45
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Sat 24 February	West Ham	(H)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Watford	(A)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Fri 06 April	Man City	(A)	14:30
Mon 09 April	Reading	(H)	20:00
Sun 15 April	Everton	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Sheff Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Blackburn	(A)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Tottenham	(H)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Liverpool	(A)	15:00

CHELSEA

Ground: Stamford Bridge
Capacity: 42,449
Address: Fulham Road, London, SW6 1HS
Ticket Info Hotline: 0207 915 2951

MANAGER: Jose Mourinho
LAST SEASON: 1st
BEST CHANT: Got no hair but we don't care / Got no hair but we don't care / Got no hair but we don't care / Super Arjen Robben
DID YOU KNOW: Chelsea's original club crest had a grinning Chelsea Pensioner on it

Sun 20 August	Man City	(H)	16:00
Wed 23 August	Middlesbrough	(A)	20:00
Sun 27 August	Blackburn	(A)	16:00
Sat 09 September	Charlton	(H)	15:00
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Sat 23 September	Fulham	(A)	15:00
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Sat 21 April	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Everton	(H)	15:00

LIVERPOOL

Sat 19 August	Sheff Utd	(A)	12:45
Sat 26 August	West Ham	(H)	12:45
Sat 09 September	Everton	(A)	12:45
Sun 17 September	Chelsea	(A)	13:30
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Sat 18 November	Middlesbrough	(A)	17:15
Sat 25 November	Man City	(H)	15:00
Wed 29 November	Portsmouth	(H)	20:00
Sat 02 December	Wigan	(A)	15:00

MANCHESTER CITY

Sun 20 August	Chelsea	(A)	16:00
Wed 23 August	Portsmouth	(H)	19:45
Sat 26 August	Arsenal	(H)	17:15
Mon 11 September	Reading	(A)	20:00
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Sat 11 November	Newcastle	(H)	12:45
Sat 18 November	Fulham	(H)	12:45
Sat 25 November	Liverpool	(A)	15:00
Wed 29 November	Aston Villa	(A)	19:45
Mon 04 December	Watford	(H)	20:00

2006/07

BLACKBURN ROVERS

Ground: Ewood Park
Capacity: 31,367
Address: Bolton Road, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB2 4JF
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 112 3456

MANAGER: Mark Hughes
LAST SEASON: 6th
BEST CHANT: Pedersen ooh ooh ooh ooh / Pedersen ooh ooh ooh ooh / He's got a slick hair cut / He's kept the Rovers up
DID YOU KNOW: Robbie Savage and Lucas Neill were the most ill-disciplined Blackburn players last year, each with 13 yellow cards and one red

Sat 19 August	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Wed 23 August	Everton	(H)	19:45
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Sat 14 April	Watford	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Reading	(H)	15:00

BOLTON WANDERERS

Ground: Reebok Stadium
Capacity: 28,723
Address: Burnden Way, Bolton, Lancs, BL6 6JW
Ticket Info Hotline: 0871 871 2932

MANAGER: Sam Allardyce
LAST SEASON: 8th
BEST CHANT: He's as cold as ice / His name is Sam Allardyce
DID YOU KNOW: The last Bolton player to be capped by England was Michael Ricketts, who's since played for six clubs – and is now with Southend

Sat 19 August	Tottenham	(H)	17:15
Wed 23 August	Fulham	(A)	19:45
Sat 26 August	Charlton	(A)	15:00
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Sat 21 April	Reading	(H)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Sat 05 May	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Aston Villa	(H)	15:00

EVERTON

Ground: Goodison Park
Capacity: 40,569
Address: Goodison Road, Liverpool, L4 4EL
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 442 1878

MANAGER: David Moyes
LAST SEASON: 12th
BEST CHANT: Davey Moyes, Davey Moyes, Davey Davey Moyes / He's got red pubes, but we don't lose / Davey Davey Moyes
DID YOU KNOW: Everton comes out to the theme from '60s BBC police drama *Z-Cars*, which was set in a fictional town on Merseyside

Sat 19 August	Watford	(H)	15:00
Wed 23 August	Blackburn	(A)	19:45
Sat 26 August	Tottenham	(A)	15:00
Sat 09 September	Liverpool	(H)	12:45
Sat 16 September	Wigan	(H)	15:00
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Sun 15 April	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 April	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Man Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Portsmouth	(H)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Chelsea	(A)	15:00

FULHAM

Ground: Craven Cottage
Capacity: 22,486
Address: Stevenage Road, Fulham, London, SW6 6HH
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 442 1234

MANAGER: Chris Coleman
LAST SEASON: 11th
BEST CHANT: We all follow the Fulham over land and sea (and Leicester!) / We all follow the Fulham onto victory
DID YOU KNOW: Manager Chris Coleman became the first £2million player outside the top two divisions when he signed for Fulham in 1997

Sun 20 August	Man Utd	(A)	13:30
Wed 23 August	Bolton	(H)	19:45
Sat 26 August	Sheff Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 09 September	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Sun 17 September	Tottenham	(A)	15:00
Sat 23 September	Chelsea	(H)	15:00
Mon 02 October	Watford	(A)	20:00
Mon 16 October	Charlton	(H)	20:00
Sat 21 October	Aston Villa	(A)	17:15
Sat 28 October	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Sat 04 November	Everton	(H)	12:45
Sat 11 November	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Sat 18 November	Man City	(A)	12:45
Sat 25 November	Reading	(H)	15:00
Wed 29 November	Arsenal	(H)	19:45
Sat 02 December	Blackburn	(A)	15:00
Sat 09 December	Liverpool	(A)	15:00
Sat 16 December	Middlesbrough	(H)	15:00
Sat 23 December	West Ham	(H)	12:45
Wed 27 December	Charlton	(A)	20:00
Sat 30 December	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Watford	(H)	15:00
Sat 13 January	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Sat 20 January	Tottenham	(H)	15:00
Tue 30 January	Sheff Utd	(A)	19:45
Sat 03 February	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Sat 10 February	Bolton	(A)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Man Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Aston Villa	(H)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Wigan	(A)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Portsmouth	(H)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Everton	(A)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Man City	(H)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Reading	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Liverpool	(H)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Middlesbrough	(A)	15:00

MANCHESTER UNITED

Sun 20 August	Fulham	(H)	13:30
Wed 23 August	Charlton	(A)	20:00
Sat 26 August	Watford	(A)	15:00
Sat 09 September	Tottenham	(H)	17:15
Sun 17 September	Arsenal	(H)	16:00
Sat 23 September	Reading	(A)	17:15
Sat 30 September	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Sat 14 October	Wigan	(A)	12:45
Sun 22 October	Liverpool	(H)	13:00
Sat 28 October	Bolton	(A)	15:00
Sat 04 November	Portsmouth	(H)	15:00
Sat 11 November	Blackburn	(A)	17:15
Sat 18 November	Sheff Utd	(A)	15:00
Sun 26 November	Chelsea	(H)	16:00
Wed 29 November	Everton	(H)	19:45
Sat 02 December	Middlesbrough	(A)	17:15

MIDDLESBROUGH

Sat 19 August	Reading	(A)	15:00
Wed 23 August	Chelsea	(H)	20:00
Mon 28 August	Portsmouth	(H)	20:00
Sat 09 September	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Sat 16 September	Bolton	(A)	15:00
Sat 23 September	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Sat 30 September	Sheff Utd	(A)	17:15
Sat 14 October	Everton	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 October	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Mon 30 October	Man City	(A)	20:00
Sat 04 November	Watford	(A)	15:00
Sat 11 November	West Ham	(H)	15:00
Sat 18 November	Liverpool	(H)	17:15
Sat 25 November	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Sat 02 December	Man Utd	(H)	17:15
Tue 05 December	Tottenham	(A)	19:45

LIVERPOOL

Ground: Anfield
Capacity: 45,362
Address: Anfield Road, Liverpool, L4 0TH
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 444 4949

MANAGER: Rafael Benitez
LAST SEASON: 3rd
BEST CHANT: Steve Gerrard, Gerrard / He'll pass the ball 40 yards / He's better than Frank Lampard / Steve Gerrard, Gerrard
DID YOU KNOW: Liverpool's longest distance goal was scored in last season's FA Cup by Xabi Alonso against Luton Town, from all of 65 yards

Sat 09 December	Fulham	(H)	15:00
Sat 16 December	Charlton	(A)	12:45
Sat 23 December	Watford	(H)	15:00
Tue 26 December	Blackburn	(A)	15:00
Sat 30 December	Tottenham	(A)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Sat 13 January	Watford	(A)	15:00
Sat 20 January	Chelsea	(H)	15:00
Wed 31 January	West Ham	(A)	20:00
Sat 03 February	Everton	(H)	15:00
Sat 10 February	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Sheff Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Man Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Arsenal	(H)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Reading	(A)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Middlesbrough	(H)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Man City	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Charlton	(H)	15:00

MANCHESTER CITY

Ground: City of Manchester Stadium
Capacity: 48,500
Address: Sportcity, Rowsley Street, Manchester, M11 3FF
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 062 1894

MANAGER: Stuart Pearce
LAST SEASON: 15th
BEST CHANT: Oh Micah you're so fine, score a goal in extra time / Hey Micah, hey Micah
DID YOU KNOW: Manchester City has not issued the squad number 23 as it was retired in honour of Marc-Vivien Foé, who died while playing for Cameroon in the 2003 Confederations Cup

Sat 09 December	Man Utd	(A)	12:45
Sat 16 December	Tottenham	(H)	17:15
Sat 23 December	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Tue 26 December	Sheff Utd	(A)	15:00
Sat 30 December	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Everton	(H)	15:00
Sat 13 January	Bolton	(A)	15:00
Sat 20 January	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Tue 30 January	Arsenal	(A)	19:45
Sat 03 February	Reading	(H)	15:00
Sat 10 February	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Chelsea	(H)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Middlesbrough	(A)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Liverpool	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Watford	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Aston Villa	(H)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Man Utd	(H)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Tottenham	(A)	15:00

NEWCASTLE UNITED

Ground: St James' Park
Capacity: 52,316
Address: Strawberry Place, Newcastle, Tyne and Wear, NE1 4ST
Ticket Info Hotline: 0191 261 1571

MANAGER: Glenn Roeder
LAST SEASON: 7th
BEST CHANT: You put your left foot in / Your right foot out / In, out, in, out, and shake it all about / You do the Ameobi and you turn around / That's what it's all about
DID YOU KNOW: Magpies' keeper Shay Given made just two league appearances in three years with previous club Blackburn Rovers

Sat 19 August	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Sat 26 August	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Sat 09 September	Fulham	(H)	15:00
Sun 17 September	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Wed 20 September	Liverpool	(A)	20:00
Sun 24 September	Everton	(H)	16:00
Sat 30 September	Man Utd	(A)	15:00
Sun 15 October	Bolton	(H)	16:00
Sat 21 October	Middlesbrough	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 October	Charlton	(H)	17:15
Sat 04 November	Sheff Utd	(H)	17:15
Sat 11 November	Man City	(A)	12:45
Sat 18 November	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Sun 26 November	Portsmouth	(H)	13:30
Sat 02 December	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Wed 06 December	Reading	(H)	19:45
Sat 09 December	Blackburn	(A)	15:00
Sat 16 December	Watford	(H)	15:00
Sat 23 December	Tottenham	(H)	15:00
Tue 26 December	Bolton	(A)	15:00
Sat 30 December	Everton	(A)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Man Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 13 January	Tottenham	(A)	15:00
Sat 20 January	West Ham	(H)	15:00
Wed 31 January	Aston Villa	(H)	19:45
Sat 03 February	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sat 10 February	Liverpool	(H)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Wigan	(A)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Middlesbrough	(H)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Charlton	(A)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Man City	(H)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Sheff Utd	(A)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Arsenal	(H)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Chelsea	(H)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Reading	(A)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Watford	(A)	15:00

PORTSMOUTH

Ground: Fratton Park
Capacity: 20,288
Address: Frogmore Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO4 8RA
Ticket Info Hotline: 0871 230 1898

MANAGER: Harry Redknapp
LAST SEASON: 17th
BEST CHANT: Play up Pompey / Pompey play up (The oldest chant in football still sung today!)
DID YOU KNOW: The original 'Chimes' chant went: Play up Pompey / Just one more goal! / Make tracks! What ho! Hallo! Hallo!

Sat 19 August	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Wed 23 August	Man City	(A)	19:45
Mon 28 August	Middlesbrough	(A)	20:00
Sat 09 September	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Sat 16 September	Charlton	(A)	12:45
Mon 25 September	Bolton	(H)	20:00
Sun 01 October	Tottenham	(A)	16:00
Sat 14 October	West Ham	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 October	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 October	Reading	(H)	15:00
Sat 04 November	Man Utd	(A)	15:00
Sat 11 November	Fulham	(H)	15:00
Sat 18 November	Watford	(H)	15:00
Sun 26 November	Newcastle	(A)	13:30
Wed 29 November	Liverpool	(A)	19:45
Sat 02 December	Aston Villa	(H)	15:00
Sat 09 December	Everton	(H)	15:00
Sat 16 December	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Sat 23 December	Sheff Utd	(H)	15:00
Tue 26 December	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Sat 30 December	Bolton	(A)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Tottenham	(H)	15:00
Sat 13 January	Sheff Utd	(A)	15:00
Sat 20 January	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Tue 30 January	Middlesbrough	(H)	19:45
Sat 03 February	Wigan	(A)	15:00
Sat 10 February	Man City	(H)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Blackburn	(A)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Chelsea	(H)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Reading	(A)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Man Utd	(H)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Watford	(A)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Liverpool	(H)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Everton	(A)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Arsenal	(H)	15:00

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

Ground: White Hart Lane
Capacity: 36,240
Address: Bill Nicholson Way, 748 High Road, Tottenham, N17 0AP
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 420 5000

MANAGER: Martin Jol
LAST SEASON: 5th
BEST CHANT: Ten men went to lift / Went to lift Frank Lampard / Ten men and their dumper truck / Went to lift Frank Lampard
DID YOU KNOW: Manager Martin Jol has two brothers, one called Cock and the other Dick

Sat 19 August	Bolton	(A)	17:15
Tue 22 August	Sheff Utd	(H)	19:45
Sat 26 August	Everton	(H)	15:00
Sat 09 September	Man Utd	(A)	17:15
Sun 17 September	Fulham	(H)	15:00
Sat 23 September	Liverpool	(A)	12:45
Sun 01 October	Portsmouth	(H)	16:00
Sat 14 October	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 October	West Ham	(H)	13:00
Sat 28 October	Watford	(A)	15:00
Sun 05 November	Chelsea	(H)	16:00
Sun 12 November	Reading	(A)	13:30
Sun 19 November	Blackburn	(A)	16:00
Sat 25 November	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Sat 02 December	Arsenal	(A)	12:45
Tue 05 December	Middlesbrough	(H)	19:45
Sat 09 December	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Sat 16 December	Man City	(A)	17:15
Sat 23 December	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Tue 26 December	Aston Villa	(H)	15:00
Sat 30 December	Liverpool	(H)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Sat 13 January	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Sat 20 January	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Wed 31 January	Everton	(A)	19:45
Sat 03 February	Man Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 10 February	Sheff Utd	(A)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Sat 03 March	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Watford	(H)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Reading	(H)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Wigan	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Arsenal	(H)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Middlesbrough	(A)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Charlton	(A)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Man City	(H)	15:00

WATFORD

Ground: Vicarage Road
Capacity: 22,100
Address: Vicarage Road, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD18 0ER
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 111 1881

MANAGER: Adrian Boothroyd
LAST SEASON: Promoted via play-offs
BEST CHANT: Eieieio / Up the Premier League we go / When we get Champions League this is what we'll sing / We hate Luton, we hate Luton, Boothroyd is our king
DID YOU KNOW: Elton John has been chairman twice and is now the club's honorary life president

Sat 19 August	Everton	(A)	15:00
Tue 22 August	West Ham	(H)	19:45
Sat 26 August	Man Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 09 September	Bolton	(A)	15:00
Sat 16 September	Aston Villa	(H)	17:15
Sat 23 September	Wigan	(A)	15:00
Mon 02 October	Fulham	(H)	20:00
Sat 14 October	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 October	Charlton	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 October	Tottenham	(H)	15:00
Sat 04 November	Middlesbrough	(H)	15:00
Sat 11 November	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Sat 18 November	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Sat 25 November	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Tue 28 November	Sheff Utd	(H)	20:00
Mon 04 December	Man City	(A)	20:00
Sat 09 December	Reading	(H)	15:00
Sat 16 December	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Sat 23 December	Liverpool	(A)	15:00
Tue 26 December	Arsenal	(H)	17:30
Sat 30 December	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sat 13 January	Liverpool	(H)	15:00
Sat 20 January	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Wed 31 January	Man Utd	(A)	19:45
Sat 03 February	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Sat 10 February	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Everton	(H)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Tottenham	(A)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Chelsea	(H)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Middlesbrough	(A)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Portsmouth	(H)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Blackburn	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Man City	(H)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Sheff Utd	(A)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Reading	(A)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Newcastle	(H)	15:00

UNITED

Ground: Old Trafford
Capacity: 68,174
Address: Sir Matt Busby Way, Manchester, M16 0RA
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 442 1968

MANAGER: Sir Alex Ferguson
LAST SEASON: 2nd
BEST CHANT: Oh the KGB are knocking on his door / 'Cause he stole all his money from the poor / When the Kremlin get his number, Chelsea's going under / Oh the KGB are knocking on his door
DID YOU KNOW: Legendary United manager Matt Busby played for both Man City and Liverpool

Sat 09 December	Man City	(H)	12:45
Sun 17 December	West Ham	(A)	16:00
Sat 23 December	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Tue 26 December	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Sat 30 December	Reading	(H)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Sat 13 January	Aston Villa	(H)	15:00
Sat 20 January	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Wed 31 January	Watford	(H)	19:45
Sat 03 February	Tottenham	(A)	15:00
Sat 10 February	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Liverpool	(A)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Tue 10 April	Sheff Utd	(H)	20:00
Sat 14 April	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Middlesbrough	(H)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Everton	(A)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Man City	(A)	15:00
Sun 13 May	West Ham	(H)	15:00

Ground: The Riverside Stadium
Capacity: 35,100
Address: Middlesbrough, Cleveland, TS3 6RS
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 421 1986

MANAGER: Gareth Southgate
LAST SEASON: 14th
BEST CHANT: You are Boa-teng / Always believe in your soul / You've got the power to know / You're indestructible...
DID YOU KNOW: If Gareth Southgate makes a single appearance next season he'll become the Premiership's first player-manager in seven years

Sat 09 December	Wigan	(H)	15:00
Sat 16 December	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sat 23 December	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Tue 26 December	Everton	(A)	15:00
Sat 30 December	Blackburn	(A)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Sheff Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 13 January	Charlton	(A)	15:00
Sat 20 January	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Tue 30 January	Portsmouth	(A)	19:45
Sat 03 February	Arsenal	(H)	15:00
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Sat 24 February	Reading	(H)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Man City	(H)	15:00
Sat 31 March	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Watford	(H)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Liverpool	(A)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Aston Villa	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Man Utd	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Tottenham	(H)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Wigan	(A)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Fulham	(H)	15:00

READING

Ground: The Madejski Stadium
Capacity: 24,225
Address: Bennett Road, Reading, RG2 0FL
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 999 1871

MANAGER: Steve Coppell
LAST SEASON: 1st in Championship – promoted
BEST CHANT: Show me the way to Aston Villa / Middlesbrough or Man Utd / Wave goodbye to Coca Cola / It's Premier League that waits for me
DID YOU KNOW: Reading was the first club to register its own fans as an official member of their squad – they've got the number 13 shirt

Sat 19 August	Middlesbrough	(H)	15:00
Wed 23 August	Aston Villa	(A)	19:45
Sat 26 August	Wigan	(A)	15:00
Mon 11 September	Man City	(H)	20:00
Sat 16 September	Sheff Utd	(A)	15:00
Sat 23 September	Man Utd	(H)	17:15
Sun 01 October	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Sat 14 October	Chelsea	(H)	17:15
Sun 22 October	Arsenal	(H)	16:00
Sat 28 October	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Sat 04 November	Liverpool	(A)	15:00
Sun 12 November	Tottenham	(H)	13:30
Sat 18 November	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Sat 25 November	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sat 02 December	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Wed 06 December	Newcastle	(A)	19:45
Sat 09 December	Watford	(A)	15:00
Sat 16 December	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Sat 23 December	Everton	(H)	15:00
Tue 26 December	Chelsea	(A)	13:00
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Sat 10 February	Aston Villa	(H)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Middlesbrough	(A)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
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Sat 07 April	Liverpool	(H)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Charlton	(A)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Fulham	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Bolton	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Watford	(H)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Blackburn	(A)	15:00

SHEFFIELD UNITED

Ground: Bramall Lane
Capacity: 33,000
Address: Cherry Street, Bramall Lane, Sheffield, S2 4SU
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 787 1799

MANAGER: Neil Warnock
LAST SEASON: 2nd in Championship – promoted
BEST CHANT: (About keeper Paddy Kenny.) He's fat and he's Premier League / He's fat and he's Premier League
DID YOU KNOW: Manager Neil Warnock is a qualified referee and chiropodist

Sat 19 August	Liverpool	(H)	12:45
Tue 22 August	Tottenham	(A)	19:45
Sat 26 August	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sat 09 September	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Sat 16 September	Reading	(H)	15:00
Sat 23 September	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Sat 30 September	Middlesbrough	(H)	17:15
Sat 14 October	Man City	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 October	Everton	(A)	15:00
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Sat 18 November	Man Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 25 November	West Ham	(A)	15:00
Tue 28 November	Watford	(A)	20:00
Sat 02 December	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Mon 11 December	Aston Villa	(H)	20:00
Sat 16 December	Wigan	(A)	15:00
Sat 23 December	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
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Sat 10 February	Tottenham	(H)	15:00
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Sat 03 March	Everton	(H)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Bolton	(A)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Tue 10 April	Man Utd	(A)	20:00
Sat 14 April	West Ham	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Charlton	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Watford	(H)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Wigan	(H)	15:00

WEST HAM

Ground: The Boleyn Ground
Capacity: 35,146
Address: Green Street, Upton Park, London, E13 9AZ
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 112 2700

MANAGER: Alan Pardew
LAST SEASON: 9th
BEST CHANT: When the ball hits the net / It's not Henry nor Becks / It's Zamora
DID YOU KNOW: Club captain Nigel Reo-Coker plans to adopt deprived kids to give them a better life

Sat 19 August	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Tue 22 August	Watford	(A)	19:45
Sat 26 August	Liverpool	(A)	12:45
Sun 10 September	Aston Villa	(H)	16:00
Sun 17 September	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Sat 23 September	Man City	(A)	15:00
Sat 01 October	Reading	(H)	15:00
Sat 14 October	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 October	Tottenham	(A)	15:00
Sun 29 October	Blackburn	(H)	16:00
Sun 05 November	Arsenal	(H)	13:30
Sat 11 November	Middlesbrough	(A)	15:00
Sat 18 November	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Sat 25 November	Sheff Utd	(H)	15:00
Sun 03 December	Everton	(A)	16:00
Wed 06 December	Wigan	(H)	19:45
Sat 09 December	Bolton	(A)	17:15
Sun 17 December	Man Utd	(H)	16:00
Sat 23 December	Fulham	(A)	12:45
Tue 26 December	Portsmouth	(H)	15:00
Sat 30 December	Man City	(H)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Reading	(A)	15:00
Sat 13 January	Fulham	(H)	15:00
Sat 20 January	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Wed 31 January	Liverpool	(H)	19:45
Sat 03 February	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Sat 10 February	Watford	(H)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Charlton	(A)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Tottenham	(H)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Blackburn	(A)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Middlesbrough	(H)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Chelsea	(H)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Sheff Utd	(A)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Everton	(H)	15:00
Sat 28 April	Wigan	(A)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Man Utd	(A)	15:00

WIGAN ATHLETIC

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Capacity: 25,023
Address: Loire Drive, Robin Park, Wigan, Lancs, WN5 0UH
Ticket Info Hotline: 0870 112 2552

MANAGER: Paul Jewell
LAST SEASON: 10th
BEST CHANT: Teale, Teale will tear you apart / Teale, Teale will tear you apart
DID YOU KNOW: Summer signing Fitz Hall is known to friends and fans alike as 'One Size'

Sat 19 August	Newcastle	(A)	15:00
Sat 26 August	Reading	(H)	15:00
Sat 09 September	Portsmouth	(A)	15:00
Sat 16 September	Everton	(A)	15:00
Sat 23 September	Watford	(H)	15:00
Sun 01 October	Blackburn	(A)	15:00
Sat 14 October	Man Utd	(H)	12:45
Sat 21 October	Man City	(H)	12:45
Sat 28 October	Fulham	(A)	15:00
Sat 04 November	Bolton	(A)	15:00
Sat 11 November	Charlton	(H)	15:00
Sun 19 November	Aston Villa	(H)	13:30
Sat 25 November	Tottenham	(A)	15:00
Sat 02 December	Liverpool	(H)	15:00
Wed 06 December	West Ham	(A)	19:45
Sat 09 December	Middlesbrough	(A)	15:00
Wed 13 December	Arsenal	(H)	19:45
Sat 16 December	Sheff Utd	(H)	15:00
Sat 23 December	Chelsea	(H)	17:15
Tue 26 December	Man Utd	(A)	15:00
Sat 30 December	Watford	(A)	15:00
Mon 01 January	Blackburn	(H)	15:00
Sat 13 January	Chelsea	(A)	15:00
Sat 20 January	Everton	(H)	15:00
Tue 30 January	Reading	(A)	20:00
Sat 03 February	Portsmouth	(H)	15:00
Sat 10 February	Arsenal	(A)	15:00
Sat 24 February	Newcastle	(H)	15:00
Sat 03 March	Man City	(A)	15:00
Sat 17 March	Fulham	(H)	15:00
Sat 31 March	Charlton	(A)	15:00
Sat 07 April	Bolton	(H)	15:00
Mon 09 April	Aston Villa	(A)	15:00
Sat 14 April	Tottenham	(H)	15:00
Sat 21 April	Liverpool	(A)	15:00
Sat 28 April	West Ham	(H)	15:00
Sat 05 May	Middlesbrough	(H)	15:00
Sun 13 May	Sheff Utd	(A)	15:00

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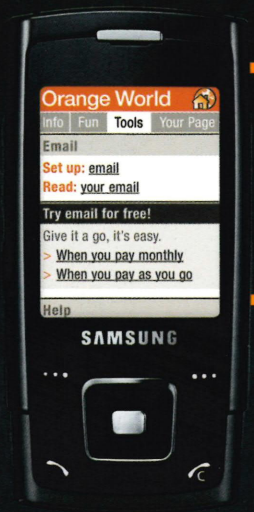

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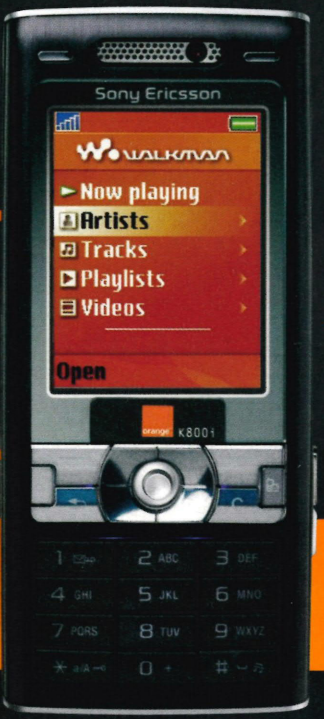

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