

PlayStation 2

OFFICIAL

ISSUE 079 • DECEMBER 2006
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REVIEW AND DEMO

PES 6

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

Score yourself the definitive verdict

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KONAMI

PES 6
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCERPES 6
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

DECEMBER 2006

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KONAMI

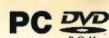
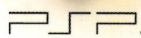


Rbk 

FEEL IT




PlayStation.2



NINTENDO DS



PES 6
PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

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www.pesrankings.com

WRITE: Official PS2 Mag, Future Publishing Ltd,
30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2BW
TELEPHONE: 01225 442244
FAX: 01225 732275
EMAIL: Postal: ps2postal@futurenet.co.uk
Competitions:
ps2compos@futurenet.co.uk
Subscription queries/back issues:
customerservice@futurenet.co.uk

EDITORIAL

EDITOR: Nick 'The Real Slim Shady' Ellis
DISC EDITOR: George 'La Cucaracha' Walter
ART EDITOR: Simon 'I'm Not Okay' Middleweek
GAMES EDITOR: Ben 'Take It Easy Chicken' Wilson
NEWS EDITOR: Andy 'I Don't Like Mondays' Hartup

CONTRIBUTORS

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: James 'Rollin' Batchelor, Ian 'Iron Eagle' Dean, Nathan 'Smooth Criminal' Dittum, Keiron 'I Am The Mob' Gillen, Tim 'Neighbourhood' Henderson, Leon 'Float On' Hurley, Nathan 'Mama Said Knock You Out' Irvine, Andy 'Orinoco Flow' Kelly, Lesley 'A Kind Of Magic' Smith, Joel 'Eye Of The Tiger' Snape, Alan 'Fog On The Tyn' Wardle, Pete 'Tonight, Tonight' Webber
CONTRIBUTING PRODUCTION: Paul 'Crockett's Theme' Fitzpatrick, Dean 'The Archers Theme' Mortlock, Helen 'Cowboys From Hell' Woodey
CONTRIBUTING DESIGNERS: Ziggy 'Ziggy Stardust' Baker, Anna 'Car Wash' Fisher, Richard 'Dance Of The Sugar Plum Fairy' Hood, Ian 'Flashdance' Lloyd-Edwards
CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATORS: Jamie 'Where The Streets Have No Name' McKelvie
PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATOR: Stephanie 'Honey' Smith
CREATIVE SOLUTIONS: Colin 'Animal' Polis
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Rose 'Crazy In Love' Griffiths
MARKETING EXECUTIVE: Kim 'Keep The Faith' Owens

ADVERTISING

BATH OFFICE
ADVERTISING DIRECTOR: Jayne 'The Birdie Song' Caple
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LONDON OFFICE
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT MANAGER:
Poorvi 'I Love Rock 'N' Roll' Smith
Call London advertising on: 0207 317 2600

MANAGERIAL & MARKETING

SENIOR EDITOR: Mike 'Batfink Theme' Goldsmith
MARKETING PRODUCT MANAGER: Stuart 'Our House' Bell
OVERSEAS LICENSING: Simon 'Tubthumping' Wear
EDITORIAL DIRECTOR: Jim 'I Believe I Can Fly' Douglas
GROUP ART EDITOR: Robin 'Basket Case' Abbott
PUBLISHER: Matthew 'The More You Ignore Me, The Closer I Get' Pierce

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Future Publishing Ltd, FREEPOST RLSC-SXSE-SKKT
Unit 4, Tower House, Sovereign Park, Market
Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 9EF
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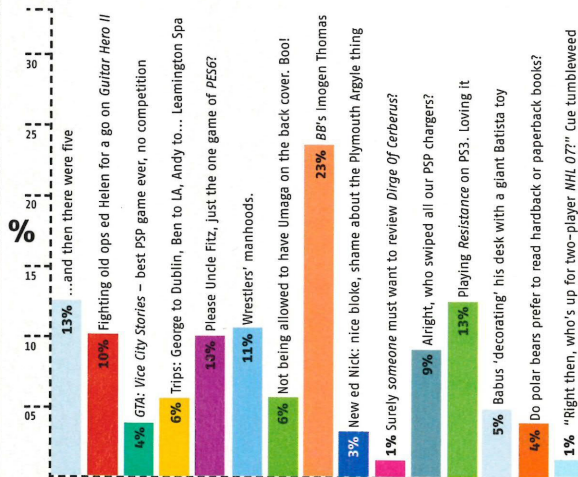
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THE NEW KID

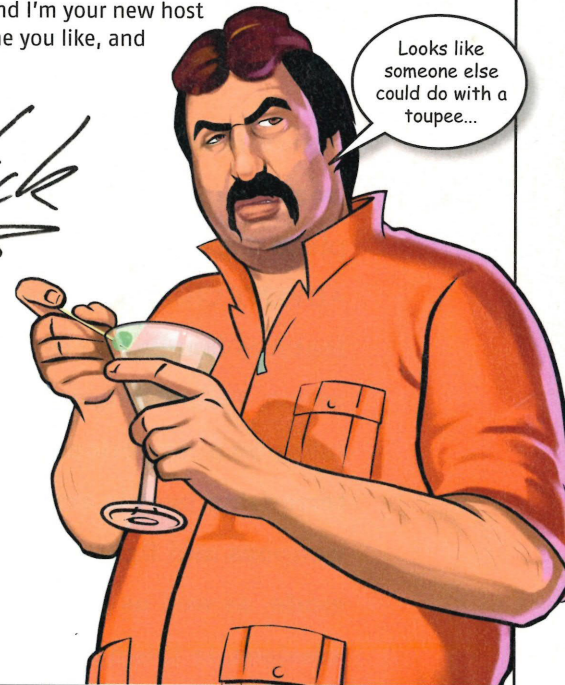
This is my very own PS2. In the five years since I bought it, the machine has been stepped on, dropped on the floor, splashed with hot tea, and insulted by my missus on many occasions because 'you pay more attention to that thing than me'. Perhaps the biggest strain my PS2 was put under though, was being left on for countless hours as I battled through dungeons in *Dark Chronicle*, thrashed the wheels off *Gran Turismo*, fought my way to the top of the Master League in *PES*, explored the galaxy in *Ratchet & Clank*, became the crime kingpin of *Vice City* and... well, you get the idea. Despite all this abuse, it's still going strong today, and if you take even the briefest of glimpses at this issue's reviews section, you'll realise that my poor overworked PS2 isn't going to get a break any time soon. In addition to our sizzling *SmackDown* exclusive, *PES6* gets a run out, we sneak up on the latest *Splinter Cell*, write a school report on Rockstar's *Canis Canem Edit*, take *Need For Speed Carbon* for a spin, and so much more besides. Other magazines might tell you that PS2 has had its day, but we know different. In fact, there's never been a better time to be a PS2 gamer, especially as new games are coming down in price all the time. The biggest problem facing both you and I is what to play first. Of course, we haven't forgotten about PSP, and it's an equally fruitful month for pocket-sized gaming, with *Vice City Stories* and *Killzone: Liberation* this issues' handheld highlights. Oh, how rude, in all the excitement I've forgotten to introduce myself. The name's Nick and I'm your new host for *OPS2*. Hi! Feel free to drop me a line about anything you like, any time you like, and I'll pull myself away from my PS2 and get back to you.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT



Nick

NICK ELLIS,
Editor

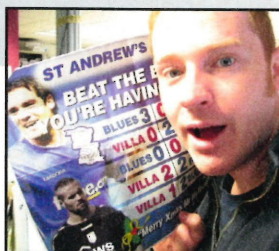


Looks like someone else could do with a toupee...

CONTRIBUTORS



Ben 'Mr. T' Wilson
Writer, *SmackDown* review (p72)
Despite his fear of flying, wrestling addict Babus has nervously jetted off to Chicago, Boston, LA and Vancouver in recent months. He now wants to move to Canada permanently. "So long," he says, "as I can keep reviewing the *WWE* games." We're still thinking it over.



Pete Webber
Writer, *Need For Speed Carbon* review (p86)
Brum fan Pete spends his Sundays hurtling down the M5 and cursing his team's 'bad luck', so he was more than happy to engage in some road rage for us. We could have done without the Martin Taylor voodoo doll, though...



Paul Fitzpatrick
Freelance Production Ed
Recently appointed our Stand-In Word Surgeon, nice guy Fitz spends the whole week relentlessly badgering us for reviews and then presents us with cakes on Friday afternoons as a reward. Truth be told, it's the perfect bribe. Chocolate eclair, anyone?



George Walter
Writer, *Canis Canem Edit* review (p102)
It's been an uneventful month in Walter World. George didn't fall asleep in any public places. He didn't get an exciting haircut. He didn't play a single rubbish game. But he did enjoy Rockstar's latest - even giving it a small smile. Woohoo!



Return to Midgar in this fast-paced action shooter from the makers of FINAL FANTASY® VII. Taking place one year after the events of FINAL FANTASY VII ADVENT CHILDREN, this new chapter in the cult saga features familiar faces and cutting edge gunfighting action. Follow enigmatic Vincent Valentine as he takes on a mysterious organisation of soldiers terrorising people across the globe. Customise your weapons and fight your way through the main story mode, as well as 46 action-packed bonus missions, in this optimised release. The fate of the world will be decided in a storm of bullets!

www.dirgeofcerberus.co.uk



**WHEN
MIDGAR DIED,
SOMETHING
SURVIVED.**

DIRGE of CERBERUS™
FINAL FANTASY VII

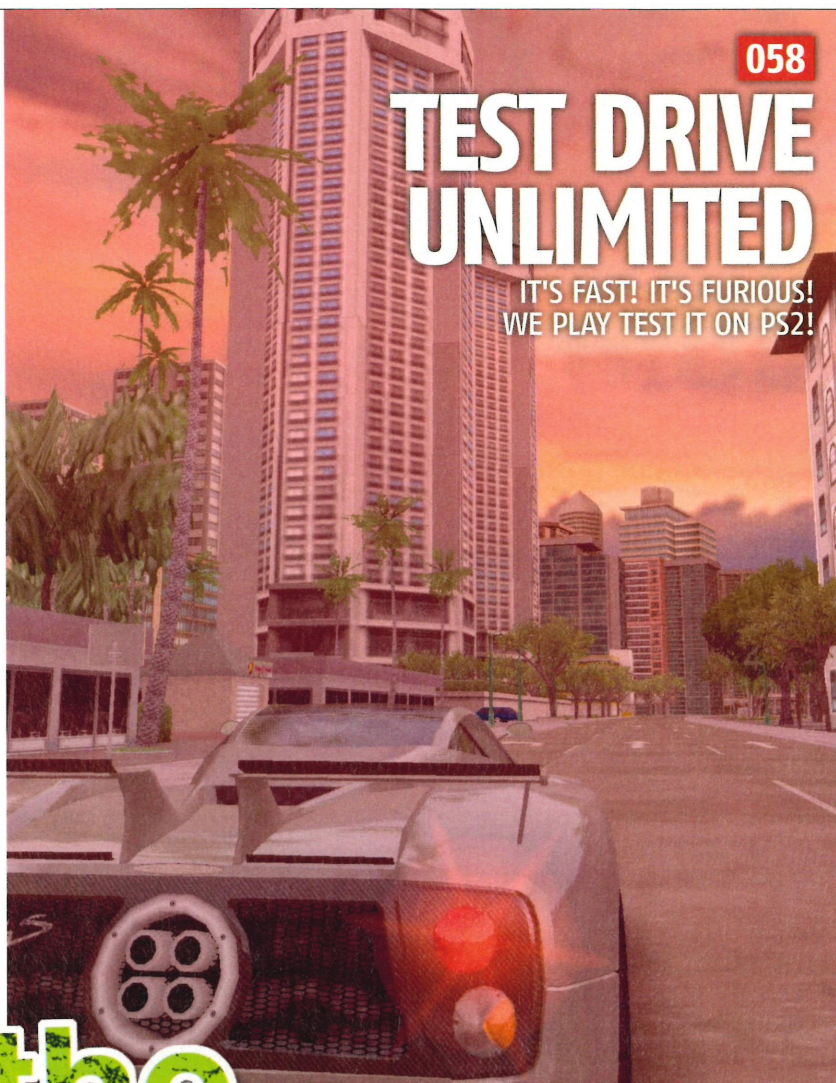


PlayStation 2
SQUARE ENIX

058

TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED

IT'S FAST! IT'S FURIOUS!
WE PLAY TEST IT ON PS2!



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: *Metal Gear Solid 4*, *L.A. Noire*, *Turok*, *Thrillville*, *Virtua Fighter 5* and tons more PS2, PSP and PS3 footage...

Password: OiCuRMT18u



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OBLIVION



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NEXT-GEN GT REVEALED AND IT'S UNLIKE ANY *TURISMO* YOU'VE SEEN
 - 027 OI, GRANDAD!**
MAKE SURE YOUR RELATIVES KNOW THE GAMES YOU NEED THIS XMAS
 - 030 ROONEY TALKS FIFA**
WE QUIZ ENGLAND'S FINEST FOOTY PLAYER ABOUT HIS ROLE IN *FIFA 07*
- AND LOADS MORE...**

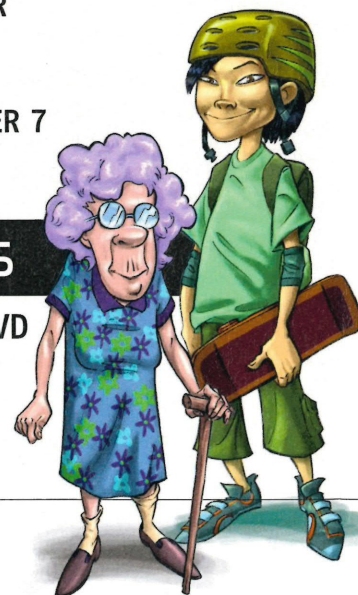
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review

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WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007

NEW STARS, NEW CONTROLS... BUT IS IT STILL A CLASSIC?

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replay

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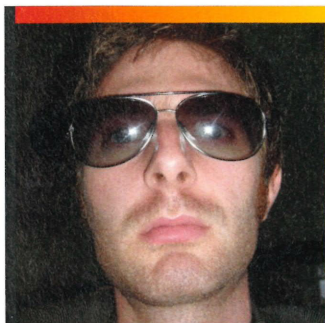
064 FIGHTING SPECIAL





PLAY GAMES

THIS MONTH'S HOTTEST DEMOS!



I've always been a die-hard *Pro Evo* fan, but this month my faith has been tested. You see, this issue's disc has demos of both *FIFA 07* and *PES6*, and side by side, it's a close run thing which one is the better footy game. And that's after hours and hours of 'testing' the disc – which is obviously essential for, ahem, quality control.

Once you've decided on your favourite, don't forget to check out the other excellent demos on the disc, like the brilliant multiplayer teaser from Sony's latest get-together game *Buzz! Junior: Jungle Party*. As for me, I reckon I've got time for one more game of *FIFA* and *PES6* before the night security guard turns off the lights in the office...

George

George Walter,
Disc editor

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

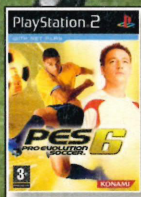
WHY WON'T MY DISC WORK?

To be honest, we're not sure. But seriously, if your DVD appears not to be loading properly, first try resetting the console and 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 *PS2 Magazine, Disc Returns*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. If you have any further queries, email us at ps2disc@futurenet.co.uk.

HOW DO I GET MY GAME SAVE ON THE DISC?

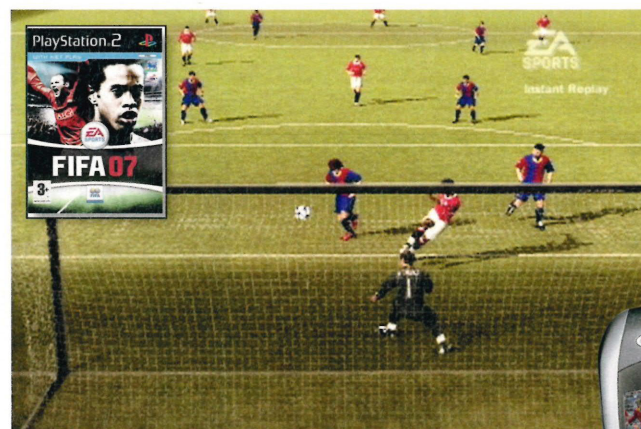
So you think you're a gaming legend? Then prove it to us by sending in your finished game saves for the disc. Each one we use will win its owner a free game! To enter, pop your memory card into an envelope and send it by Recorded Delivery to: 'Yes, I'm A Legend', Official PlayStation 2 Magazine, Future Publishing Ltd, 30, Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Please include an S.A.E. *PS2* cannot be held responsible for memory cards lost in the post.*

*GAME SAVE TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Memory cards are sent to *PS2* at sender's risk and *PS2* cannot be held responsible for the non-receipt of memory cards. Readers whose saves are used on the *PS2* disc will win a game of the editor's choice. There's no prize for saves that are not used on *PS2*'s 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.



PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6

What you get: The entire first half of a thrilling international exhibition match between France, the Czech Republic, Brazil, Spain or Italy. You can fully manage your team, fiddle with the camera angles and controls, and when the action has finished, you'll be treated to a classic *PES* highlight reel.



FIFA 07

What you get: Pick from a selection of world-class club sides, including Manchester United and AC Milan, to take part in the first half of a friendly match. All the licensed players are included, naturally.

HEADS!

DISC CHALLENGE

Win yourself a copy of *PES6* or *FIFA 07*

For this month's disc challenge, we're giving you the chance to win a copy of your favourite footy game. All you have to do is jump into either the *Pro Evo* or *FIFA* demo, score as many goals as you can in the 45 mins and send us a picture of the final score. We'll pick five of the top scorers in each demo and post a copy of the corresponding game to the winners. So if you fancy the full *PS2* version of *FIFA 07* or *PES6*, slot as many goals in as you can in the corresponding demo and send us the result.



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

Of the top-scoring *PES6* and *FIFA 07* demo entries *PS2* receives, only the five best from each game, selected at random, will win a copy of the respective game. The Editor's decision is final. Texts will be charged at 50p plus your standard network tariff rate. Please source all necessary permissions. Lines are open from 2 November to 29 November inclusive. We will not advise non-winners of the result.**

NOW!



TAILS!



BUZZ! JUNIOR: JUNGLE PARTY

What you get: Four ape-themed party games – Bubble Bath, Freefall, Run Around and Rocket Riders. Dish out the *Buzz!* controllers for some four-player monkey madness.



And there's more...

This month's exclusive extra DVD content

Downloader

This month we've got full level unlocks for, among others, *Medal Of Honor: Rising Sun* and *Amplitude*. Fancy tackling the later levels of *Return To Castle Wolfenstein* and *James Bond 007: Nightfire*? We've got those too, as well as goodies for *Silent Hill 3* and that exclusive *TimeSplitters 2* multiplayer map designed by David Doak.

Game Save Downloader

Return To Castle Wolfenstein	479KB
saved for into game	
Clash Legion	242KB
all levels unlocked	
Fast Racing 2	140KB
saved for into game	
MOH Rising Sun	117KB
all levels unlocked	
Beyond Good & Evil	2082KB
saved for into game	
LOTH Return of the King	73KB
all game open	



LEGO STAR WARS II: THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY

What you get: A full, 30-minute blast around the Mos Eisley Space Port level. Collect enough studs and you'll be able to unlock some secret *Lego Star Wars* characters.



LEGO STAR WARS

What you get: A short taster from the opening level of the original *Lego Star Wars* game. Play as Obi-Wan or Qui-Gon and fight through hordes of battle droids and destroyers, solve puzzles, and have a giggle at some of the series' superbly tongue-in-cheek cut-scenes.



LMA MANAGER 2007

What you get: A chance to recreate the entire 2005 Champions League final between Liverpool and AC Milan. This bloated demo packs in all the mid-game, stat-busting options you'll need to test your managerial savvy to the full.



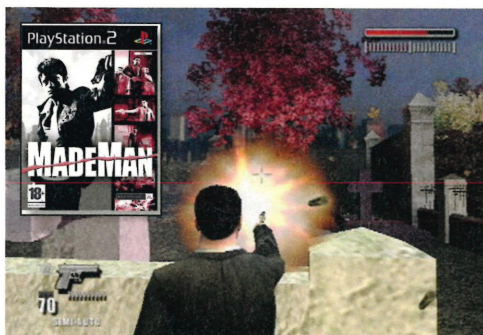
DESTROY ALL HUMANS! 2

What you get: Take on the Radio Station mission from the London stage of this hippy-cookin' sequel. Or just run around zapping cockneys and lobbing bobbies into the Thames – it's your alien invasion.



MADE MAN

What you get: Another chance to disrespect the dead by gunning down swathes of Mafia goons in the graveyard stage of this mobster shooter. You've dug up the gold, but can you escape with your life? Now's the chance to find out in this top action-packed demo.



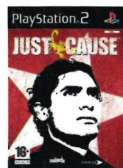
BIONICLE HEROES

What you get: One whole level, including a tricky boss fight, from this explosion-loving Lego game. Collect masks, unleash the Hero mode on your enemies, and reduce everything to small plastic studs with your blaster.

postal

THIS MONTH: LEGO RESIDENT EVIL, HAIRY HITMEN AND MOUNTAINTOP PSPS

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 lovely copy of *Just Cause* courtesy of Gamestation.co.uk. The Star Letter also wins *B-Boy*, *FIFA 07* and *Devil May Cry 3: Special Edition*. Only main Postal letters receive games. Letters will be edited for length and clarity.

gamestation

star letter

LEGO RESIDENT EVIL 4

What do you think of these mini *Resident Evil 4* models I've made? I think that Mendez and Saddler came out the best. Keep up the great work on the mag.

Jason Ling, Erith

They're a bit 'low res' Jason but they do have a certain, roughly-hewn charm about them. That said, we're a little disappointed you missed out daddy chainsaw. Does anybody else have any game-inspired Lego?



Well, it beats the hell out of *Bionicle Heroes*

These jeans are slimming

BRIAN LARA'S STEALTH DUTY CALL?

In your preview of *Full Auto 2: Battlelines*, you observed that the developers had been impressed by both *Burnout* and *Black*. Recognising the popularity of racing games and shoot-'em-ups they

simply thought 'well, why not combine the two?' This has led me to an idea of Hideo Kojima-type genius. Simply by combining different titles and genres you could end up with a whole host of new and magnificent games. Some of the best ones I came up with include *Brian Lara's Zombie Cricket*, *Stealth Wrestling*, *LocoRoco Sudoku* and *Call Of Duty 4: The Big Katamari One*. The last one involves you winning WW2 by rolling up Nazi stormtroopers, Alsations, tanks and ultimately Adolf into a big ball. To any developers reading this, all I'm asking for is £1,000 for every idea you use.

Christopher T Roberts, Denbighshire

This is just a guess but do you have a lot of free time? Thought so. Although we have to admit the idea of a WW2-themed Katamari Damacy is interesting. All sorts of wrong, you understand, but interesting.



THE EDITED HIGHLIGHTS SPILLED FROM SOME VERY STRANGE MINDS

T. Kebede, Leeds
Imagine my surprise when I found this dumb squirrel eating my controller and basically destroying my PS2.



Who're you calling dumb?

Pep, Australia
I cannot get access to your magazine.

Ryan, email
The moo cows of death have invaded my dreams. You know; the ones from *Metal Gear Solid 3*!

John Graham, Whitstable
Have you got any good ideas for how to keep a cat off of my PS2? Something non-lethal would be preferable.

Michael Clark, Sunderland
I came back and found my two-year-old had the SWAT team on him and was in the process of throwing a car.

Reuben Paeman, Barton-on-Sea
I think my sister is trying to curse your magazine. Voodoo magic is involved. No more shall be said.



REX FEATURES

DISTRESSING DELIVERY

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

1. Several pictures of a cat being used to 'model' PlayStation games.



2. An advert for a pelvic floor exerciser. If you don't know, don't ask.

GIRL'S GOT GAME

You know Sophie Picton, the girl who was in a previous mag as the Fat Crying Baby? [She complained that there was no difference between PSP, PS2 and PS3 - Ed] I just wanted to thank her for showing up all the girl gamers out there. It's hard enough being taken seriously without uninformed people like her sticking oar in. I told a boy the other day that I'd completed *God Of War* and he didn't believe me. And in my old job I got funny looks from the blokes whenever I played my PSP. I also get singled out when I'm in a game shop on my own, because I must clearly be buying something for my boyfriend. I'm a much bigger gamer than my boyfriend, by the way.

Siobhan Harper, Birmingham

You hang on in there Siobhan; you're not the only girl gamer out there. Just think of yourself as Emily Pankhurst with a memory card.

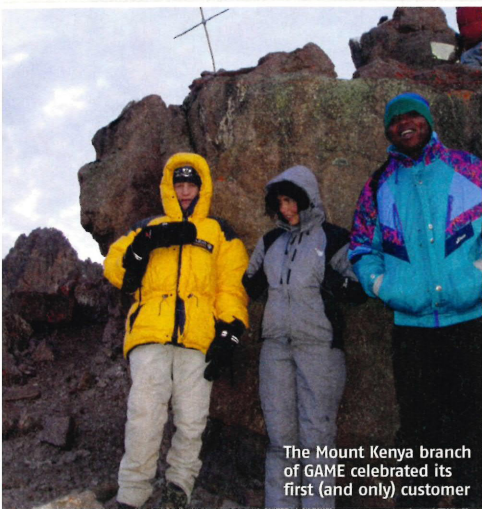
INSOLVENT PROBLEM

I have just realised how dumb I am. In issue 67 you had a letter called Sticky Problem, about stickers on games boxes. On the page there was a sticky label with instructions on how to remove it with cotton wool and solvent. I got a cloth and some aftershave and tried to remove the label. I didn't realise it was a picture of a label on the page. I ruined part of the magazine. WHAT IS WRONG WITH ME!?

Connor

Trying to clean off fake labels isn't your only problem Connor; you left your

THIS IS NOT A REAL STICKER



The Mount Kenya branch of GAME celebrated its first (and only) customer

address off the letter, meaning we can't send you a prize. Drop us a line to let us know where you live and we'll stick(er) it in the post to you.

KENYA BELIEVE IT?

Having seen pictures of people with their PSPs, both on safari and on top of Ben Nevis, I believe I can top them with the attached picture of my handheld and I, on top of Mount Kenya. It was 5,000 metres up and as a result far too cold to take my gloves off and actually play it.
David Ramsey, Essex

Top PSP travelling there, David. This will take some topping. So, anyone going to the moon anytime soon, or the bottom of the ocean? Grab your PSP, take a picture, and you could win a prize.

BOB THE DESTROYER

My brother isn't the worst person in the world but the seven-year-old lunatic played Bob The Builder with a screwdriver on my PS2. He pulled the fan out, broke the infrared laser and destroyed the plug before hiding the bits in a bush. I



READER FACE OFF

THINK OF IT LIKE A FIGHT BUT WITH INK SPILT INSTEAD OF BLOOD
THIS MONTH: IS FINAL FANTASY XIII'S AUTO COMBAT SYSTEM A GOOD IDEA?

+10 NO

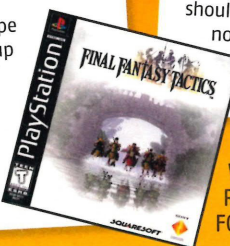
I've been reading some previews of *Final Fantasy XIII* and I'm not sure if the new battle system will work. I'm a huge fan of the series – a big enough fan that I've completed every *Final Fantasy* game ever made. I know the random battle system was a bit annoying, but it was also one of the defining features of the series. I just hope that *XIII* doesn't end up as some kind of *Final Fantasy Tactics* clone with no skill or strategy involved.

David Owens, Newcastle

+10 YES

Now I've seen the way you fight in the new *Final Fantasy* game I might actually buy this one. I've always liked the idea of the games – I just can't do the battles. All those numbers and attacks to choose from? If the Gambit system makes it more like an action/strategy game then it should mean that a complete RPG novice like myself can still enjoy the story.

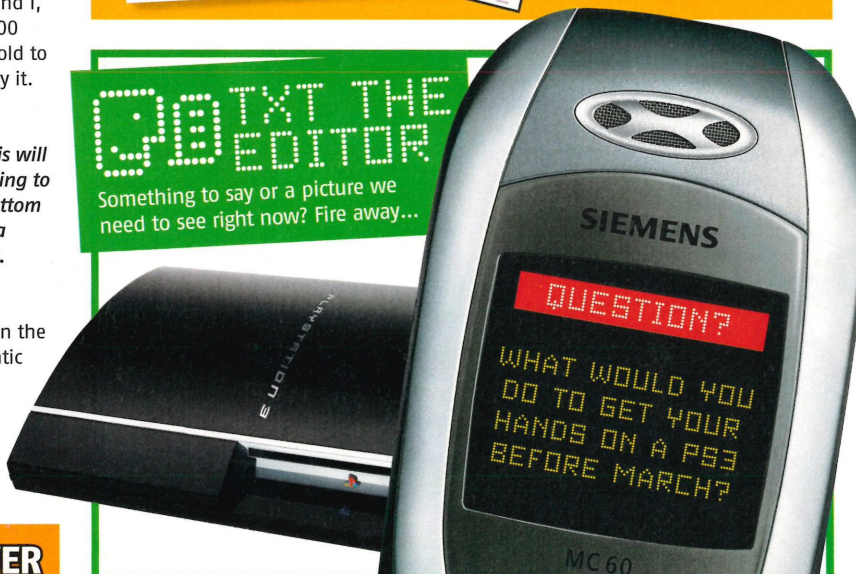
Sara Trenton, via email



SARA WINS. FROM WHAT WE'VE SEEN SO FAR, FFXIII ROCKS HARD. LOOK OUT FOR OUR REVIEW SOON.

Q&A THE EDITOR

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



TXT 87103 OR SEND YOUR PICS TO 07738 647 177

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

HELLO, IT'S GDD. SORRY 2 BOTHER U BUT U OWE ME MONEY U CHEEKY BITCH. IF U DON'T PAY THEN I'LL DELAY THE PS3 FOR TEN YEARS. THANK U. AND PLEASE, PLEASE LET ROCKSTAR BRING OUT A MAX PAYNE GAME 4 PSP. I LUV HIM. I WANT 2 LAY IN BED PLAYING WITH HIM. ON MY PSP, OF COURSE! SUE NO OFFENCE BUT YOUR MAG STINKS OF CAT PEE EVERY TIME. KEEP IT UP. :)
ROSS WARNE, MERSEYSIDE

WHY DO DEVELOPERS PUT ALL THEIR GAMES ON THE SHELF AT THE SAME TIME, AND WE ARE LEFT WITH WEEKS OF NOTHING IN BETWEEN?
FRED, LONDON
HAZE LOOKS LIKE GDD'S OWN GAME. IF FREE RADICAL GETS THE SQUAD COMMANDS RIGHT IT WILL ROCK!
IEUAN, WALES
I THINK CHIPS R BETTER THAN BEANS. STITCH.

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THE SHORT ANSWER

Q Have you heard anything else about the *Lost* game?

Dan, Bromsgrove
A No

Q Do you have any idea when *Naruto Ultimate Ninja* will be released for PS2? **Kris**, Scotland
A 10 November

Q If you could be anyone from the *Metal Gear Solid* series who would it be? **Greg**, email
A Ninja/Grey Fox

Q Do you take your PSP with you on holiday? **Lisa**, Kent
A Yes

scorebores

Are you disrespecting us?

I would like to complain to you about *B-Boy*. It is a crap game because the controls don't respond.

Matt, email

How could you not give *Just Cause* a ten? IT'S GOT A PARACHUTE IN IT! Jumping from a plane and free falling to earth is the coolest thing ever.

Jeremy, email

FIFA 07 a 9/10? Say it ain't so? Are you finally succumbing to the evil EA disease? I prescribe at least an hour of *PES* a day. You'll soon realise you were wrong.

Richard O'Hanlon, Donegal

What have you got against *Reservoir Dogs*? It's a great game; taking hostages and crashing cars has got to be worth at least a seven surely?

Asi, email

How could you give *50 Cent: Bulletproof* on PSP only 6/10? Don't you lot like good games or something? Sort it out.

Ray Devlin, email



➡ can't tell you how mad I am – this was my second PS2.

Thomas Parry, Aberarth

Well, Thomas, it could be worse. Somehow. Look on the bright side... Um. No, you're shafted – that really sucks. Next time hide the screwdrivers, or your PS2. Whichever is easiest.

HAIR-SSASSIN

While wrapping my fiber wire around the neck of a target in *Hitman: Blood Money*, I wondered, why does 47 have to be bald? Wouldn't it be more interesting if our favourite assassin had a mullet, or a huge afro? I think a deadly new look would suit him more than a shiny head. It's high time 47 hit the wig store.

George Ralph, Portsmouth



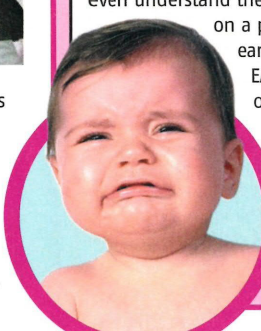
I could tell you the name of my stylist, but I'd have to kill you

FAT CRYING BABY

NO MORE HAWK

What is the point of EA making a skating game? We've already got loads of Tony bloody Hawk ones and I don't even understand the point of them. Keeping your balance on a piece of wood with wheels is hardly an earth-shattering achievement. We know EA can make great sports games because of *FIFA* and *Madden*, so why not make something more interesting? A skill-based sport like martial arts or dressage, rather than skateboarding?

Michelle Conner, Bournemouth



Can you pull off a flawless 360-degree kiddflip, Michelle? And seriously, dressage?

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.



Trouble is, how well would the world's greatest hitman blend in with a massive afro? And, outside of Louisiana, a mullet would seriously damage his credibility. No we like our favourite contract killer bald as an egg. Maybe some Elvis sideburns or ZZ Top beard would be cool though?

AN IMPORTANT CASE

Last Saturday night I was visiting Blackpool with my friends for the day, and at around ten o'clock we decided to hit the arcades. After winning a giant teddy on one of those crane grabbers, I noticed one machine had a copy of *Hitman: Blood Money* as a prize. So I thought, "I've got to win this." £15 pounds later I'd finally won the game, or at least the empty box.

When I went to the counter to collect the CD and instructions, I found they'd shut up and gone home. I could have cried. I kept the case out of spite.

Alex Royce, Stockport

Well at least you got a box, Alex. You can use it to collect your tears. No? Okay, have a game instead. Obviously we won't be sending you a case as you've already got one.

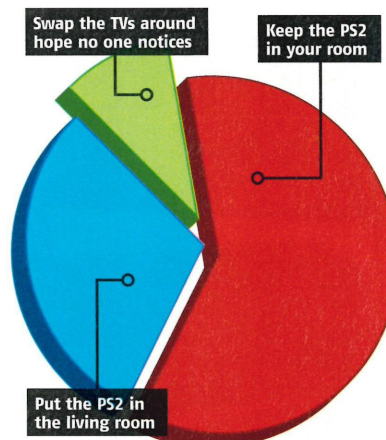
PICTURE PERFECT?

I have a problem which you PS2 geniuses might be able to help me with. It all started when my parents got a new 40" TV with a subwoofer; it's amazing. There is one problem though. Since the old TV got moved into my room I have a choice – either I put my PS2 in my room where I can play it all day, but

with a small, fuzzy screen. Or I put it in the front room to use the massive telly and speakers, but can then only play it for one hour a day. What should I do?

Billy, email

Tricky decision Billy. We've had a poll in the office and here are the results...



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 grade one hair clipper attachment



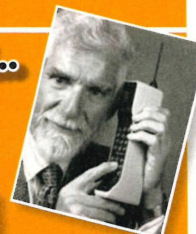
YOU GET...

The Prince Of Persia: The Two Thrones



WE WANT...

Any working Motorola mobile phone, made before 1990



YOU GET...

Tomb Raider: Legend and The Warriors



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: Stephen Michaels
Offence: Sending us an obscenity-filled email about the PS3 delay. 237 words, 190 of which were unprintable. We're all upset, Steve, but don't shoot the messenger.



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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THE WORLD IS YOURS



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MONEY. POWER. RESPECT.

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PSP

UNIVERSAL

RADICAL
ENTERTAINMENT

FARSIGHT
STUDIOS

SIERRA

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RESPECT YOUR ELDER

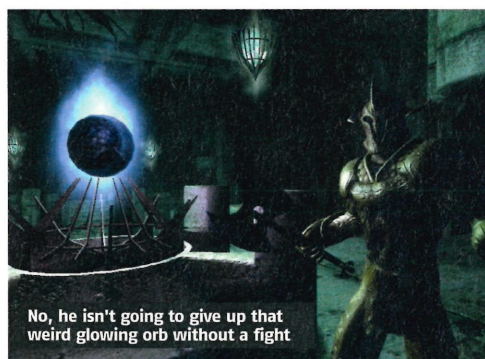
OBLIVION BECKONS

Best RPG ever confirmed for PS3, and it's a launch game, too!



What is *The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion*? That's a tough one. *Oblivion* certainly isn't just a game. For the millions who have already thrown themselves into the beautiful world of Cyrodiil, it's a way of life; an obsession. And now, *Elder Scrolls IV* has shaken off its PC and Xbox 360 shackles to show you the kind of brilliance we can all expect from PS3.

At its heart, *Oblivion* is a traditional swords 'n spells RPG. Indeed, for the first hour or so – as you're crawling around a generic prison dungeon, learning how to use spells and swing a blade – you'll probably wonder what all the fuss is about. Then, as you emerge blinking and dirty from the sewage pipe you used to escape the 'training level', the beauty of *Oblivion* hits you like a mace in the face. The game world in this epic RPG is a staggering expanse of open space; a living, breathing land that defies belief. It's not just the scale of the game (although it takes most people a *minimum* of 100 hours to complete the main story) that impresses, but also the detail

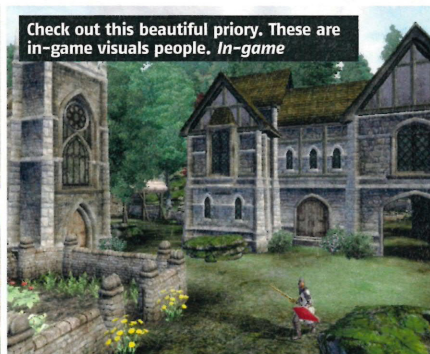


No, he isn't going to give up that weird glowing orb without a fight

and variety of inhabitants that really hammers home the fact that you're living in the next generation.

Far from being a sea of dull RPG browns and greens, *Oblivion* is alive with colour and contrast. There are vast forests, open plains, mountain ranges, cities, hamlets, cave systems, ruined temples, lakes (with their own islands), farms and literally thousands of other features that make up the most believable game world in existence. In every location, people and animals are living out their lives. They chat like friends (the people, that is) go to work, visit the pub to get drunk, and even break out into fights, but most importantly, none of it is scripted. This guarantees one player's time in *Oblivion* will be vastly different from anyone else's.

Check out this beautiful priory. These are in-game visuals people. In-game



To join the Knights Of The Nine you must impress them with your piety

So what's new for PS3? The most significant addition is the inclusion of a fifth guild, known as The Knights Of The Nine. What's a guild? Well, much like the gangs of *GTA*, you can join as many or as few guilds as you like in *Oblivion*, but the advantage of signing up to either the Thieves' guild, the Magicians' guild, the Fighters' guild or the Dark Brotherhood is that they provide you with missions, rewards and opportunities you wouldn't get from wandering aimlessly around the world. To join the Knights Of The Nine you'll have to go on pilgrimage across the land, visiting temples and wayshrines, to secure ancient artifacts before you can be initiated.

As well as a fresh faction, *Elder Scrolls IV* on PS3 will introduce new areas, extra weapons and spells, and previously unseen characters. In terms of visuals, *Oblivion* on PS3 isn't a massive step up from the PC version (although it renders details at distance much better than other iterations), but that's more of a testament to the tear-shedding beauty of the original than lack of ambition on the developer's part. This is going to be an essential launch title – and the list of new features may well increase, if its creators are able to offer new downloadable game items for sale via the Network Platform. Expect more info on this game as its March release date nears. ■ AH



SONY

Sometimes you need to just stop and admire the view. Breathtaking...

IT'S ON PSP TOO!

Don't ask us how the developer has managed it, but *Oblivion* is also being packed onto PSP under the name *Elder Scrolls Travels: Oblivion*. It'll play in a similar way to its big brother, but will take place in a new setting. Expect it in March 2007.

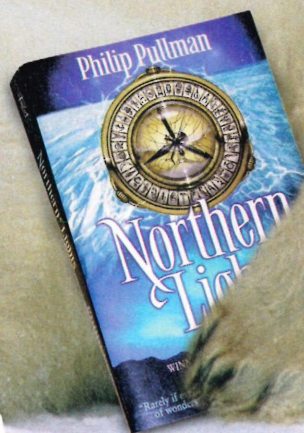
Exploring dungeons can be dangerous, but they are stuffed full of gold and special items

Skele

SNAPPED!

The future of PlayStation presented in pictures

Wachoo lookin' at?



Sega has bagged the licence to make games based on the best-selling **His Dark Materials** books

LEGO Star Wars developer Traveller's Tales is working on a **LEGO Batman** game

This photo of a **PS3** was taken in our office when we got to play **Resistance: Fall Of Man** this month. And yes, it is awesome

WHITE KNIGHT STORY



UNKNOWN REALMS



RAILFAN



Here are some of the best new **Japanese PS3 games** unveiled at Tokyo Game Show 2006



Sega has announced arcade flyer **After Burner: Black Falcon** for PSP



Social interaction takes another blow, as popular card game **Top Trumps** is announced for PS2



The day after the Yanks lost the Ryder Cup, top celebs (and DJ **Spoony**) turned up to help **Tiger** promote his latest game

MASSIVE QUEUES FOR PS3 IN JAPAN



WiFi zones are coming to all major rail routes in the UK, so you can play multiplayer **PSP** games on the move

THE REAL THING

PS3 MATERIALISES!

As Sony's next-generation console gears up for release in the US and Japan this November, everything starts to get a bit more real. Sit back, relax and bask in the newness of it all...

CARDBOARD!

It may just be a cardboard box, but you wanted to see it, right? Of course you did. This is the official PS3 packaging. We'll just tactfully forget that this is an empty one used for display purposes, and that real working PS3s currently come in boring brown cardboard boxes.



MENUS!

From March 2007, no one will get excited about the PS3 menu screens any more, so enjoy this while you can. Recent demos of the XMB (the cross menu bar, and

similar to the system used in the PSP) have shown a clever photo gallery mode that turns images into 3D 'postcards' that can be laid out on a white background with captions underneath. If you've got a high-def TV then it'll be a sexy way of viewing your digital photos.



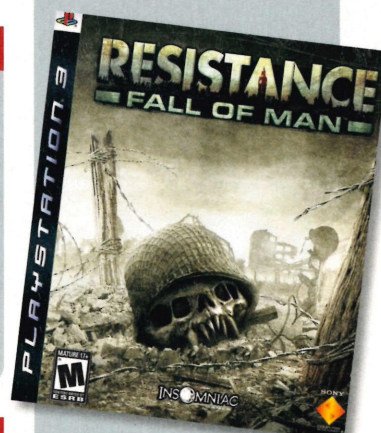
MORE PORTS!

After shocking the world's AV geeks with news that the less expensive PS3 would have no HDMI port earlier this year, Sony has decided to put it back in the 20GB

model. The picture provided to demonstrate this has an unfortunate shadow over the area it's supposed to highlight, but trust us, it's definitely there.

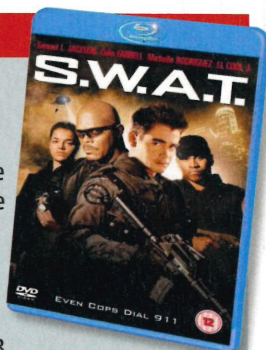


BOX ART!



BLU-RAYS TO BUY!

The UK arms of online stores Amazon and Play have both started offering Blu-ray movies on a pre-order basis – you'll be able to play these on a PS3. The RRP is £17.99, but it looks like they'll be more like 14 quid at most major online retailers. Currently the selection is pretty limited, but by the time the PS3 hits UK shelves there should be a lot more on offer, judging by the current US Blu-ray release schedules.



1080p HIGH-DEF!

1080p is the top end of high definition, and it's always been Sony's goal to make PS3 the flag-bearer of this advanced next-gen TV format. At last month's Tokyo Game Show, the 1080p dream was finally shown in operation in three impressive-looking titles – Ridge Racer 7, Virtua Tennis 3 and of course Gran Turismo HD.



Packaging design for PS3 games appears to have abandoned the horizontal logo across the top of the box and gone for a vertical treatment. We honestly can't think of any sensible reason why this might be a bad thing, but if you want to see how contrary people are being about this issue on the Internet, just Google 'new PS3 packaging'. Babies.

HER DESTINY IS IN YOUR HANDS

DYNASTY WARRIORS Vol. 2

真・三國無双

COMING SOON

Now these Legendary Warriors return to the PSP® system in the sequel that eclipses the original with awesome new features.

- ✂ For the first time, multiplayer combat with Battle Royal for up to 4 players (ad hoc).
- ✂ Includes the complete collection of all 48 fearless Dynasty Warriors with branching story paths for each kingdom.
- ✂ Unleash Double Musou attacks with your officers.
- ✂ Have a stable of up to 8 horses and elephants that gain experience during battle.
- ✂ Over 50 stages and 31 maps

could be a classic

FANCY A SPOT OF FRIENDLY NORSE PLAY?

VALKYRIE PROFILE 2: SILMERIA

Format: PS2

Publisher: Square Enix

Developer: tri-Ace

Release: Out now (US) TBC 2007 (UK)

WHAT WE KNOW

Don't be misled by the '2', *Valkyrie Profile 2* is actually a prequel. It's set yonks before the original, *VP: Lenneth*, which came out on PSone in 1999, (and is, incidentally, due for a re-release on PSP in 2007). Confused? Wait till you hear the plot ...

Goddess Silmeria has angered the Norse god Odin, and has been trapped inside the earthly body of a princess called Alicia. What follows is a two-way struggle, which sees Silmeria trying to reinstate herself as a goddess, and Alicia trying to survive.

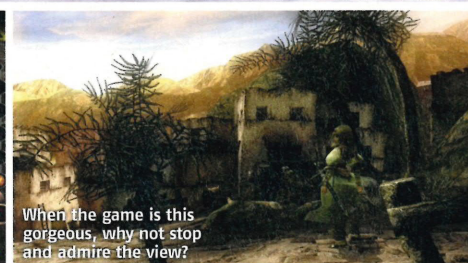
Rather unusually this is a side-scrolling RPG, which challenges players to enter dungeons in a search for heroes who can then be recruited to fight for Silmeria's cause. Combat takes place in a 3D arena, with some of the most beautifully animated fights yet seen in a PS2 role-playing game.

COULD BE A CLASSIC BECAUSE

It's from the same stable as the acclaimed *Radiata Stories* and is being released by *Final Fantasy*



"Help me! I've got a Goddess trapped in my throat!"



When the game is this gorgeous, why not stop and admire the view?

developer Square Enix, so hardcore RPG enthusiasts should be sold right away. Square never rushes its games to the shop shelves, so although we might have to wait a few of months before seeing *Silmeria* in the UK, you can be sure it'll be perfectly polished.

The only real problem facing *Valkyrie Profile 2* is its story, which is a tangle of plot threads that only true devotees will want to unravel. Get past the mock-mythological madness though, and you'll discover an adventure to rival *Final Fantasy*. ■ AH

JUST SO YOU KNOW...



Hi, my name's Lacey Chabert and I'm voicing Princess Elise in *Sonic The Hedgehog* for PS3

WHERE AM I?

MGS GOES GPS

But how does it work with the game?



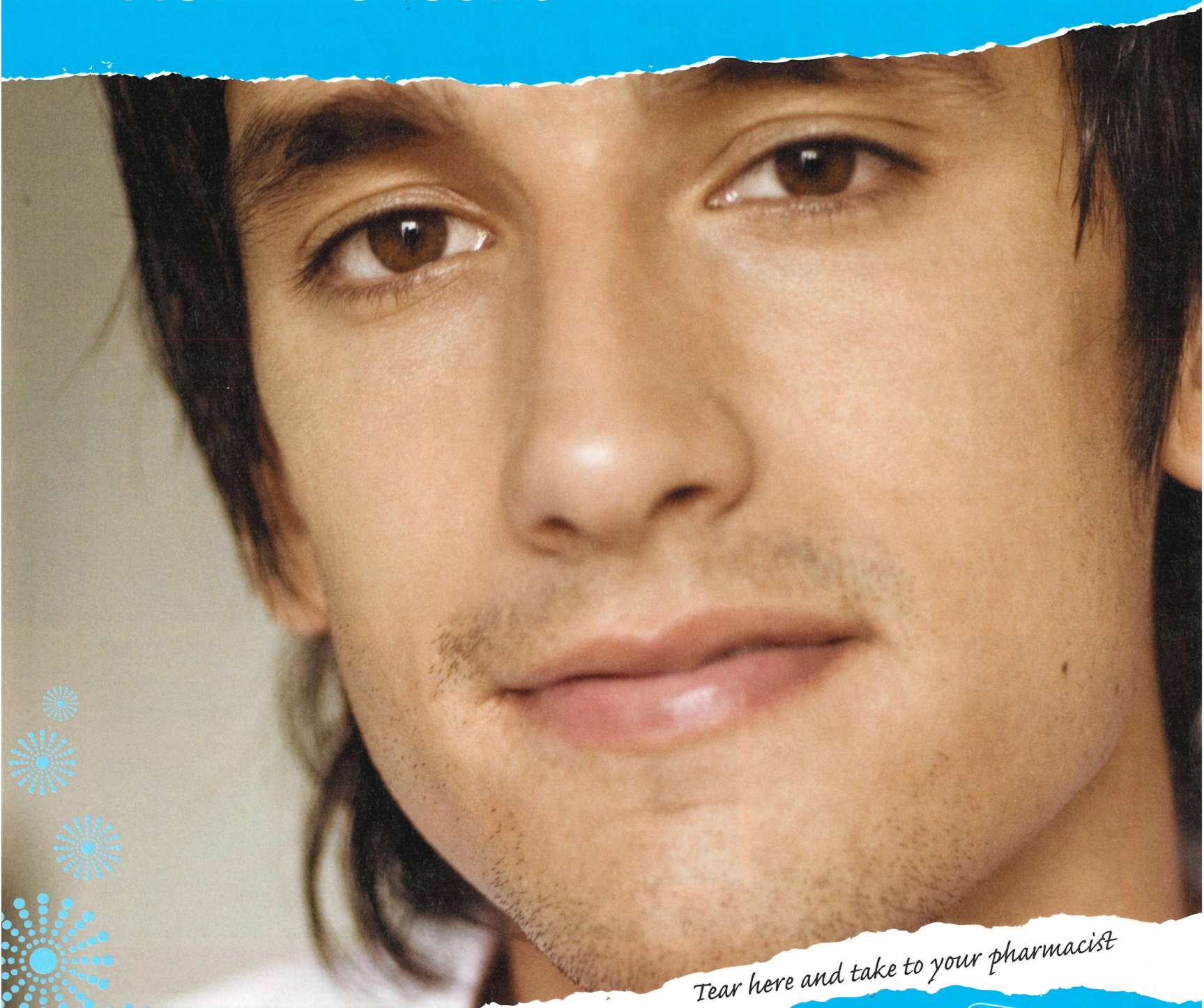
The short answer is that it works with WiFi hotspots. When *MGS: Portable Ops* is released for PSP, you'll be able to visit selected hotspots and download multiplayer characters to fight with.

However, very special spots around the world will enable you to download one exclusive character. How do you find them? The GPS device will point you to your nearest hotspot. So, for example, you might need to visit London to download Ocelot, but travel to Edinburgh for Big Boss. Don't worry if you don't get out much though, as you'll be able to win characters by beating other players online. ■ AH

"Tell me where I can download Otacon, damn it!"



"I've tried loads of spot treatments.
Now I've found **Freederm**®"




Tear here and take to your pharmacist

"Spot treatments. I'd tried loads of them.

Then I found Freederm Gel. It's the only spot treatment with an anti-inflammatory that gets to work inside my pores. In fact, it's clinically proven to reduce inflamed spots and redness. It really works and it even helps stop spots from forming too."

Freederm-freedom from spots

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Contains nicotinamide.
Always read the label.

www.freederm.co.uk

> HIGH-SPEED HIGH-DEF

FUTURE OF GT UNLEASHED

Gran Turismo HD is real!
And much bigger than
we ever imagined



What we really wanted to say was: 'New Gran Turismo is dirt cheap!' But to use the word cheap in conjunction with this decidedly 'prestigious' PS3 car simulation feels a bit wrong, even if it's 100% true.

Sony has revealed that *GTHD* will go on sale in the UK in March 2007 at 'the cost of a disc and a manual', which we take to mean simply covering the manufacturing costs – around a tenner by our maths.

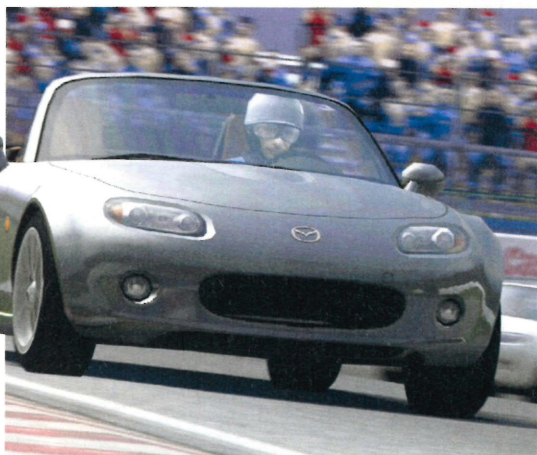
There's a good reason for this: despite containing two separate styles of game, your *GTHD* disc will only feature a limited amount of cars and tracks. Confused? So were we, but luckily you have the benefit of our rundown of the two games' innovative new features.



Photo-realistic graphics
are so *nearly* here...



The Nissan Nismo
GT-R concept is a
phenomenal car



GRAN TURISMO CLASSIC

What is it?

Gran Turismo 4 in full 1080p high-definition 'with additional enhancements'.

What does it do?

To be honest, not much initially. The deal here is that you use an iTunes-style shop that appears on your PS3's menu system to buy cars, tracks and other accessories. The 'shop' (nicknamed 'GT Tunes' by its creators) will eventually contain over 700 cars, 51 courses and 4,500 items. It's controversial, given that some will probably balk at the idea of paying for individual cars, but with an open mind we're pleased (at least) that we'll be able to splash out on the good cars without having to traipse through 100 hours of racing hatchbacks with lawn mower engines.

What does it look like?

Pretty much *Gran Turismo 4* but with much sharper graphics. It's one of Sony's benchmark 1080p titles, showcasing just how good games can look when viewed on an extremely expensive TV.

What makes it so special?

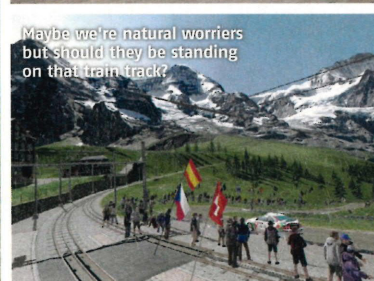
The online modes. While online play was initially developed for *GT4* (we played it on a network way back in 2004) the mode never made it to commercial release because the makers felt that it was a poor representation of the offline game. To make up for this, *GTHD* Online shoehorns in every conceivable network option alongside the obvious online racing, car trading and community building. (See 'Modding in GT?' for more on this.)



The new Swiss course is a thing of incredible beauty. The Lotus ain't bad, either.



It wouldn't be GT without the Scooby Impreza.



Maybe we're natural worriers but should they be standing on that train track?



Let's hope that Polyphony improve the AI of the computer-controlled cars.

MORE BIG GTHD WORDS

DAMAGE!

At long last, *GT* will incorporate visible car deformation. Of course, being an ultra-realistic simulation, a catastrophic crash into a cliff face at 90mph will render your car useless and the race over. Experts will love the added risk, while beginners will soon tire of their car falling apart after crashing 17 seconds into every race. Another future update will add opponent AI for you to race against/plough into. Currently it's you versus the clock.

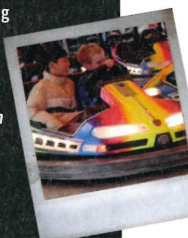


MOBILE!

Rapidly turning into a mythical entity, the creators have reconfirmed their commitment to creating *GT Mobile* for PSP. Currently they're pondering the ways of making it link up with the PS3 version.

BOYS!

So it wasn't a joke after all. At some point there will be a *Gran Turismo* for boys – a kiddified 'step up' to the proper game. What platform it'll be on is unclear, but we're guessing PS2.



FERRARIS!

GTHD will also feature Ferraris, after a licence deal was signed with the Italian car firm. The first one to be confirmed in a screenshot is the ultra new 599 GTB Fiorano ('06), while the F430 ('05) appears in the *GTHD* teaser trailer.



MODDING IN GT?

While the crowd-pleasing elements of *GT online* will surely be the head-to-head racing, polite name-calling over messaging and voice chat, and the ability to create your own race meetings, it's the possibility of 'modding' in *GT* that has sparked our interest most. Kazunori recently commented that the new online mode would offer users "the freedom that was only available to developers". This leads us to believe that full-scale game tinkering might be a possibility. As well as tweaking handling and car aesthetics, could this mean track editors? We reckon there are plenty of *GT* fans out there who would kill for such a feature.

GRAN TURISMO PREMIUM

What is it?

A single-player 'preview version' of *GT5* that's been built using a brand new PS3 graphics engine.

What does it do?

Amazingly (going on past form), *Premium* is a chance to play the next 'proper' *Gran Turismo* straight from the *GTHD* game disc, with the full game earmarked for a 2008 release. You'll find 30 cars and two brand-new tracks (Eiger Nordwand in Switzerland and a London-based circuit), with a further 30 cars and one additional location to download on the day the game is launched.

What does it look like?

It's rumoured that Kazunori Yamauchi (the father of *Gran Turismo*) was the first developer to have access to the PS3 hardware and may even have had input into the console's design, so he knows how to make a game look sexy. The first track to showcase this is Eiger Nordwand, a challenging single-lane, high-altitude course. As well as creating an incredibly authentic Swiss mountainside, PS3 allows for 3D spectators, fully modelled car interiors and real-time weather effects. It should be a fascinating glimpse into *GT's* future.

What makes it so special?

Initially, *GT Premium* will operate as a tantalising demo, but there's every indication to suggest that new tracks, cars and other gameplay updates will be made available up to the release of *GT5* proper. Also, everything you've downloaded up to that point will work in the full game.

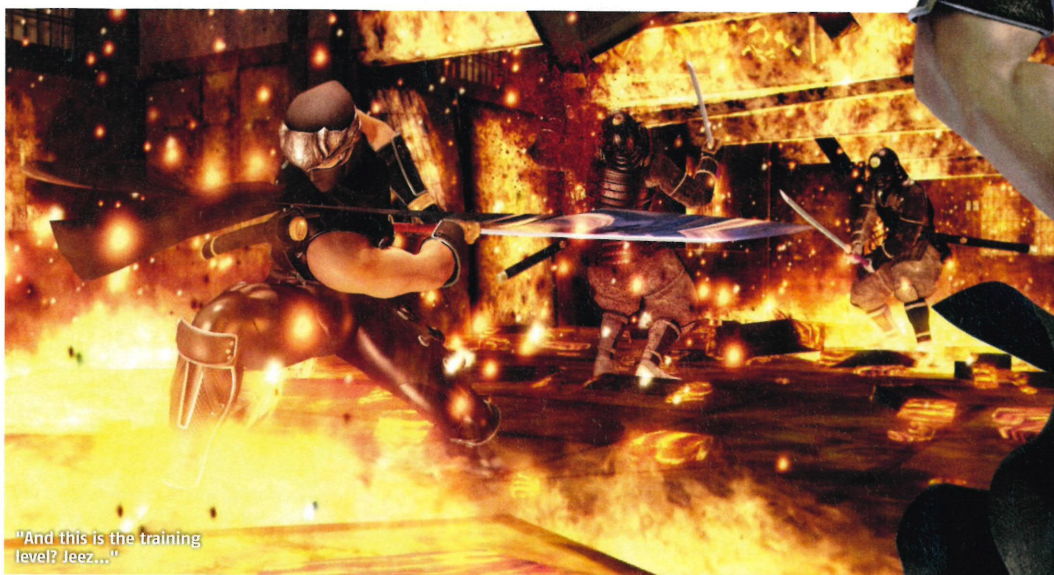


The ever-popular rally courses will return.



Will the game really look this amazing? Don't bet against it.

TOUGH LOVE



"And this is the training level? Jeez..."



HARDEST. GAME. EVER.

OFFICIALLY NAILS

Forget *Devil May Cry*, PS3 has bagged **Ninja Gaiden**



Never heard of *Ninja Gaiden*? Well that's all going to change, as *Ninja Gaiden Sigma*'s been snapped up as a PS3 exclusive, and it's going to be everywhere. When it first appeared on Xbox in 2004, it was to gamers like a siren to sailors – utterly irresistible, but by God it could be the end of you. It's both brilliant and beautiful, but at the same time it's brutally hard and constantly unforgiving.

Ninja Gaiden is so hard that it makes *Vin Diesel* look as weak and helpless as a newborn fawn. Completing it is considered to be an achievement of Everestian proportions, thanks to its near-vertical learning curve and devilish enemy AI. But if you can bring the skill and Dalai Lama levels of serenity needed, then you're rewarded with some truly spectacular fight sequences and tear-jerkingly beautiful cut-scenes that make *Final Fantasy*'s CG movies look like the deranged scribbles of a five year-old in the throes of ADD.

So what is *Sigma*? Sadly, it's not a completely new game, as it's a semi-sequel that takes *Ninja Gaiden Black* (if you can believe it, a slightly tougher version of the original *NG*) and adds a whole bunch of new characters and fresh levels. And, of course, the whole game has been given a complete graphical tart-up to take advantage of the PS3's potent, throbbing innards.

As with the original, you take on the role of Ryu Hayabusa, the nails-hard ninja on a revenge quest, carving your way through legions of absurdly tough enemies (ninjas, demons and dragons – the usual suspects) before attempting the hardest boss battles ever burnt to disc. Fortunately, you've got a huge array of attacks, weapons and combos at your disposal: Dish out shurikens (throwing stars), dual-wield dragon-blade swords, and behead your enemies with a swift strike of the katana, and that's just for starters. Oh, and you can also run on water. Handy.

In a mode exclusive to *Sigma*, you'll also assume the role of demon slayer

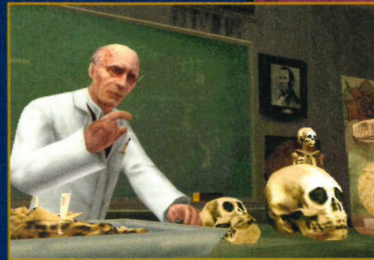
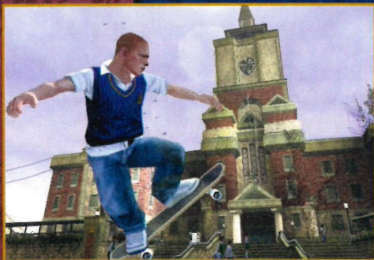
Rachel – an axe-wielding dominatrix whose leather one-piece fights its own difficult battle to contain the sort of heaving chest you'd expect from the development studio behind the digitised jugs-a-thon franchise, *Dead Or Alive*. There's no word on a release date yet, so you've plenty of time to get yourself acquainted with a good psychiatrist. You'll need one. ■ PW



With a costume like that you'd think she'd have a more exotic name than Rachel

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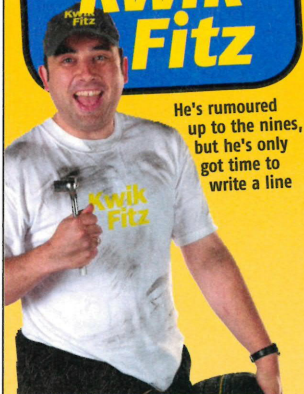


PlayStation®2



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Kwik Fitz



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

CONFIRMED: Mercury Remix, a PS2 version of the superb handheld puzzle series, will be out next month

RUMOURED: Kojima Productions is working on a third instalment of *Zone Of The Enders* for PS3

CONFIRMED: *Mind Quiz*, the European name for the insanely popular Japanese PSP game *Brain Trainer*, will hit UK shelves this month

CONFIRMED: Sony has officially confirmed creepy Japanese horror game 'threquel' *Siren 3* is heading to PS3

RUMOURED: The European version of PS3's *Fatal Inertia* will come with features not included in either the US or Japanese games

CONFIRMED: Namco has announced the card combat game *Warhammer: Battle For Atlluma* on PSP

RUMOURED: Sony will drop the price of the PSP before Christmas

RAIDER RUMBLLED

CROFT CONFIRMED FOR PS3

Well, sort of...



Thanks to a mixture of rumour, off the record nods and blind arrogance, we've known Lara was coming to PS3 for over a year now. Last year

we brought you the news that Morgan Gray, the producer of *Tomb Raider: Legend*, had let slip that he planned to implement multiplayer into the next *Raider*, but until now publisher Eidos had remained schtum on the game's existence.

However, nestled away at the bottom of the publisher's end-of-year financial report (after the big numbers that suggested *everyone* loved *Legend*) was the revelation that the company is planning "new versions of *Tomb Raider* (including a PS3 version)". So there you have it. There's no word on when we can expect to get our grubby hands on high definition Lara just yet, although a late 2007 release seems the most likely scenario.

Also tucked away in the report was the news that IO, the developer of *Hitman: Blood Money*, is working on another next-gen game, side-by-side with its Xbox 360 title, *Kane And Lynch*. *Hitman 4*? Only madmen and pacifists would bet against it... ■ AH

Lara on PS3 is more likely to look like this...

...than this

PS3?

PS2



HAS THE GTA STORY FINISHED?

Rockstar hints at the future of its legendary series on PS2 and PSP



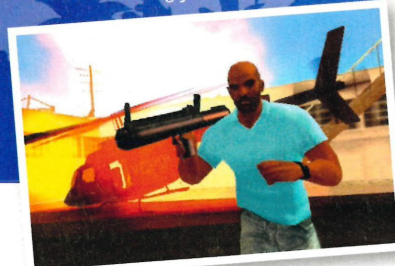
The thought of a release schedule devoid of *GTA* goodness terrifies us like those human-scoffing cave beasts in *The Descent*. Sadly, this horrific scenario could become a reality.

The likelihood of both *San Andreas Stories* for PSP and *Vice City Stories* for PS2 was put in doubt during a recent interview* with Rockstar Leeds' studio head, Gordon Hall, in which he commented: "As for *Vice City Stories*, there are, as yet, no plans to bring it to PS2."

Regarding *San Andreas*, Hall is concerned about packing all that gangsta greatness onto a single UMD. He says that Rockstar Leeds "Can't rule anything out in

terms of being able to fit *San Andreas* on there, but whether we'll actually do it or not, that's another matter." Discouraging? Yes. A definite 'no', though? Hardly. Our best guess is that you'll be playing both games by Christmas 2007. Until then you'll have to feast on *Vice City Stories* for PSP. Start sating your hunger with our massive review on page 76. ■ AH

*Interview source: Eurogamer.net



> BE PREPARED

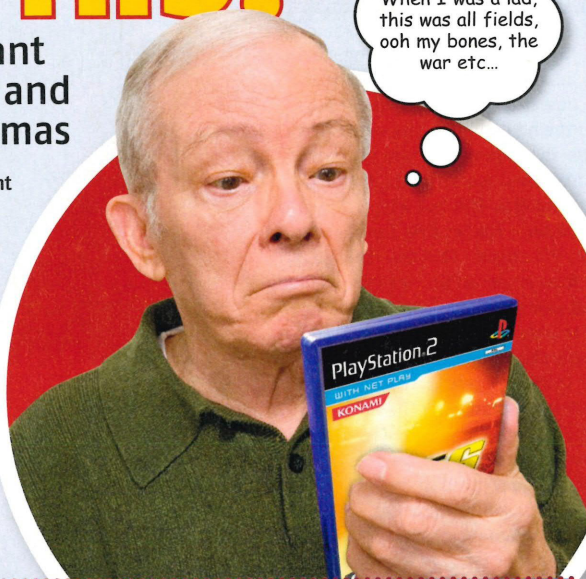
"OI GRANDAD, BUY THIS!"

Because you don't want another pair of socks and a bottle of Lynx this Xmas



Pretending to beam with delight on Christmas morning when you unwrap a brand new copy of *Rig Racer* instead of *Ridge Racer* is tough like overcooked turkey. We've all been there, done that, and lied through grinding teeth when the generous but misguided relative casually asks "That was the one, wasn't it? It had a picture of a car on the box".

And so, to prevent this scenario from ruining your festive season we've crafted six cut-out-and-give-to-Grandad coupons for the games you actually want to get for Christmas. ■ AH



PlayStation 2
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Dear

this festive season I would like:

Pro Evolution Soccer 6

GET IT FOR MY...

- ☐ PlayStation 2
☐ PSP (Tick appropriate box)

Don't get ripped off, it should cost no more than £39.99



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Dear

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Need For Speed Carbon

GET IT FOR MY...

- ☐ PlayStation 2

Don't get ripped off, it should cost no more than £39.99



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this festive season I would like:

WWE SmackDown Vs Raw 2007

GET IT FOR MY...

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☐ PSP (Tick appropriate box)

Don't get ripped off, it should cost no more than £34.99



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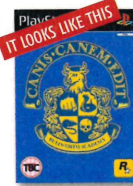
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Kingdom Hearts II

GET IT FOR MY...

- ☐ PlayStation 2

Don't get ripped off, it should cost no more than £39.99



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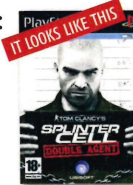
this festive season I would like:

Splinter Cell Double Agent

GET IT FOR MY...

- ☐ PlayStation 2

Don't get ripped off, it should cost no more than £39.99



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JAFFE'S PSP PROJECT GETS SHELVED

God Of War creator David Jaffe has decided to stop work on his unannounced PSP game, *Project HL*. For now, Jaffe announced this on his blog, stating that "HL is, for the moment, on the shelf". The reason? Key members of the *HL* development team are tied up with Sony's revolutionary PS3 flyer, *WarHawk*, and can't dedicate enough time to both projects. We're also guessing that the imminent arrival of *God Of War 2* might be Hoovering up big chunks of Dave's free time, too.



MTV SNAPS UP GUITAR HERO FOR A SONG

Well, the developer behind the *Guitar Hero* concept, anyway. The music giant snapped up digital music maestros Harmonix for a very reasonable \$175 million. With this bold purchase, MTV also gains the rights to the *Frequency*, *Amplitude* and *Karaoke Revolution* franchises, developed by Harmonix before the 'Hero series. Expect to see new versions of these classics soon.



SEAMAN LOBBED ON PS2

If you're partial to a spot of Japanese weirdness, you'll be pleased to hear that Sega Japan is releasing *Seaman 2* for PS2. The original game, which appeared on Dreamcast in 2000, had gamers talking to pet fish with human faces. In *Seaman 2* though, you'll chat to miniature cavemen using a special microphone that will come bundled with the game. A UK release? Don't hold your breath.

HOT SAUCE

GO LOCO DOWN IN ACAPULCO (OR ANYWHERE ELSE)

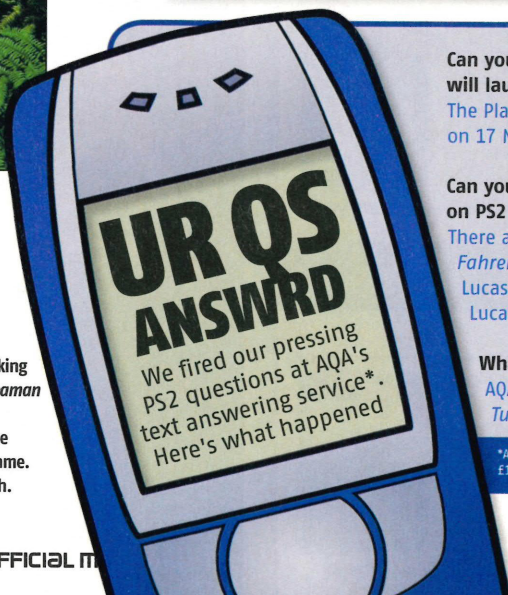
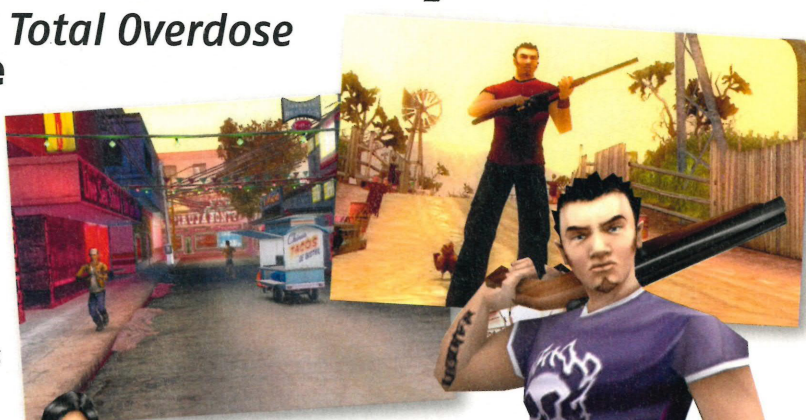
PSP gets a serving of *Total Overdose* in *Chili Con Carnage*



Total Overdose: great game, bad name. When it arrived last year, it was a spicy serving of Mexico-themed gunplay that unleashed *Tony Hawk's*-style shooter-combo freestyling and never took itself too seriously. Now *Total Overdose* is coming to PSP, but with a different – infinitely better – name: *Chili Con Carnage*...

Unlike its PS2 cousin, *Chili Con Carnage* is completely focused on action. The free-roaming sections that saw you driving around the town looking for trouble have been removed, and now the game skips from mission to mission with only a short cut-scene in-between.

The other main change for the handheld version is the pace of the pistol-play. *Total Overdose* always encouraged players to chain together long combos of moves and kills, and *Chili Con Carnage* has beefed up this feature massively. Judging by our recent taster of the game, we reckon that with practice it'll be possible to string together one long kill-combo that lasts for the whole level. Hungry for more? *Chili* will be served in February and we'll have an exclusive preview next issue. ■ AH



Can you predict the exact date that PS3 will launch in the UK?

The PlayStation 3 will probably be released on 17 March 2007 in the UK.

Can you explain the ending to *Fahrenheit* on PS2 for us?

There are three possible final endings for *Fahrenheit* on PS2. If you defeat everyone, Lucas takes Jade to the altar, then later on Lucas and Carla kiss.

What is the worst PS2 game ever?

AQA thinks that *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* is the worst game on the PS2. It

failed to live up to the legacy of the NES and SNES games.

Why have all the German clubs been removed from *Pro Evo 6*?

The German clubs have been removed from *Pro Evo 6* due to a rights issue.

Who is the young man at the end of the *Metal Gear Solid 4* trailer shown at Tokyo Games Show 2006?

Konami has not explained who the young man in the TGS *Metal Gear Solid 4* trailer is. AQA believes that it is either a young Snake, or a Snake clone.



*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 message.

WIN! EXCLUSIVE KINGDOM HEARTS II STUFF

Get your hands on a slimline PS2 and some very special **Square Enix** goodies



Kingdom Hearts II is in the shops now, and for anyone without this Disney and *Final Fantasy* RPG mash up, salvation is at hand thanks to the wheeling and dealing of your trusty friends at *OPS2*.

All the kit we have for you is neatly laid out on the right, and all you have to do to be in with a chance of winning this RPG-gasmic loot is to answer the head-meltingly tough question on the right correctly. Watch out though, as it's a hard one...



Which of the following characters does not appear in *Kingdom Hearts II*?

- A) Winnie The Pooh
- B) Danger Mouse
- C) Captain Jack Sparrow

One overall winner gets:

- A slimline PS2
- A copy of *Kingdom Hearts II*
- A *Kingdom Hearts II* poster signed by producer, Tetsuya Nomura
- A *Kingdom Hearts II* goodie bag

Ten lucky runners up each get:

- A copy of *Kingdom Hearts II*
- A *Kingdom Hearts II* goodie bag

You have three ways to enter:

By Post

Send your answer to 'Gimme Your Heart, Gimme Gimme Your Heart, Gimme Gimme', *OPS2*, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW

By email

Email your answer to ps2compos@futurenet.co.uk and put 'Gimme Your Heart' in the subject line.

By SMS

Text GIMMEHEART, followed by a space, then your answer (A, B, or C) to 80889

Closing Date 29 November

Gimme Your Heart competition terms and conditions Only the first entry that *OPS2* draws and judges to be correct will win the slimline PS2, copy of *Kingdom Hearts II*, signed *Kingdom Hearts II* poster and goodie bag. Only the ten additional entries that *OPS2* draws and judges to be correct will each win a runner-up prize of a copy of *Kingdom Hearts II* and a *Kingdom Hearts II* goodie bag. Texts will be charged at 50p plus your standard network tariff rate. Please source all necessary permissions.

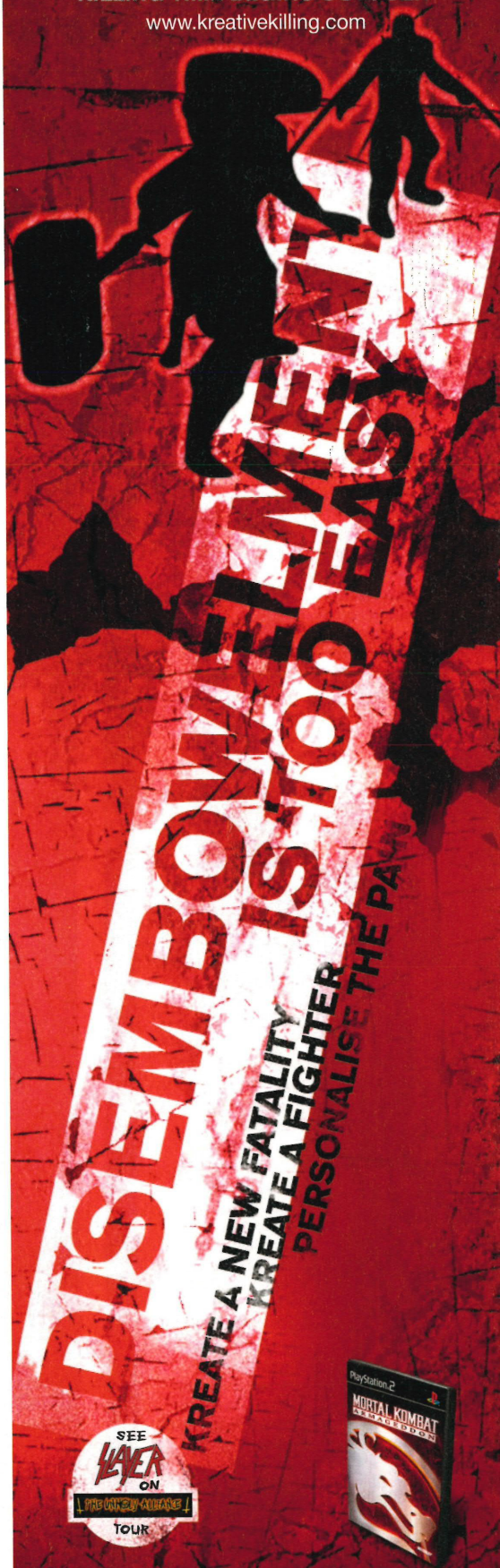
Lines are open from 2 November to 29 November inclusive. We will not advise non-winners of the result. By entering you are agreeing to receive details of future offers from Future Publishing Ltd and third parties. Only UK residents over the age of 15 may enter. If you do not want to receive information relating to future 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.

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THE LIGHT SIDE

■ ENTER OBLIVION

Bye-bye spare time. So long social life. *Elder Scrolls IV* is coming to PS3 and it'll suck up your free time like a Dyson

■ STILL RAIDIN'

With *Tomb Raider 10th Anniversary Edition*, Lara is standing by PS2 like a loyal, implausibly athletic lover

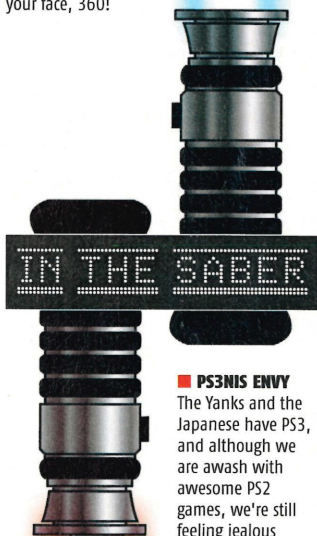
■ WE'VE (ALL)

PLAYED IT

A PS3 in the office for a day + *Resistance* + *MotorStorm* = a total of zero words written by team OPS2

■ NINJA NABBED

PS3 snatches former Xbox mainstay *Ninja Gaiden* as a next-gen exclusive. In your face, 360!



■ PS3NIS ENVY

The Yanks and the Japanese have PS3, and although we are awash with awesome PS2 games, we're still feeling jealous

■ VEGAS DELAYED

We were itching to shoot craps (and terrorists) on the PSP version of *Rainbow Six* this month, but Ubisoft delayed the game until Xmas

■ THE WRONG

TYPE OF GAME *Railfan* is unveiled at the Tokyo Game Show. The Japanese go crazy. We head for the exit...

■ NOT VERY VICE

No *Vice City Stories* for PS2, Rockstar? Surely, you're having a laugh? This game deserves to be seen on a big screen

THE DARK SIDE

KICK ABOUT

WAYNE'S WORLD

Kickin' back with the biggest name in football



With Wayne Rooney drafted in to make sure the animation in *FIFA PS3* is the slickest thing on two legs, we caught up with the enterprising player prior to his motion-capture shoot for the game at Manchester's Webb film studios.

OPS2: So Wayne, when did you first get involved in the project?

WR: I got involved with EA Sports about two years ago now, and I'm very happy with the way it's going at the minute. I'm enjoying it.

OPS2: Have you always been a gamer?

WR: Throughout my life, really. I've always played computer games, mostly *Tiger Woods* and *FIFA*. I enjoy it – it passes the time.

OPS2: That's interesting – we're constantly being berated about how kids these days aren't being active enough, but you've managed to play videogames and carve out an impressive sporting career.

WR: As much as you encourage kids to go out on the streets and play football, it's good to play computer games because it's enjoyable, and when you're a young kid you want to do things like that.

OPS2: Do you play many other games?

WR: I'm only really into those two games.

OPS2: So is *FIFA* a good representation of the game?

WR: Yeah, it's good to see different things; different moves in the game. And when you've seen them you can try and practice them.

OPS2: If it's so accurate, do you ever check out your own stats in the game?

WR: Not really, I don't really look at the stats to be honest. I just play...



Rooney checks out the results of the mo-cap session

OPS2: When you're playing *FIFA*, need we ask which team you use?

WR: I always go United...

OPS2: Never anyone else – Everton or Liverpool maybe...?

WR: (laughs) No, always United. That way I get to play as myself as well!

OPS2: And how does it feel seeing yourself in the game?

WR: It's a bit strange, but it's good. Sometimes though, it works against you, cos you're always trying to score as yourself. But other than that it's good, yeah.

OPS2: Don't you get a bit angry when you're playing and another player feels the virtual Rooney?

WR: Well... not really. It's a bit weird.

OPS2: And what do you think of your likeness in the game?

WR: Yeah, it's good. Each year it (the technology) gets better and better, so pretty soon it'll probably seem like a real person.

OPS2: Do you play *FIFA* with your team-mates? And who's best?

WR: Well, we normally have little

tournaments: me and Wes Brown against Rio (Ferdinand) and Darren Fletcher. It's a bit even at the moment.

OPS2: Oh c'mon...

WR: Me and Wes are probably better. Rio and Fletch are my biggest gaming rivals. We probably play every time we're at a hotel; every away game.

OPS2: What's it like wearing the mo-cap suit for *FIFA*? We tried it once and it wasn't pleasant...

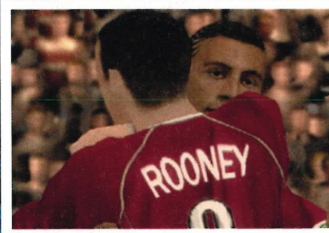
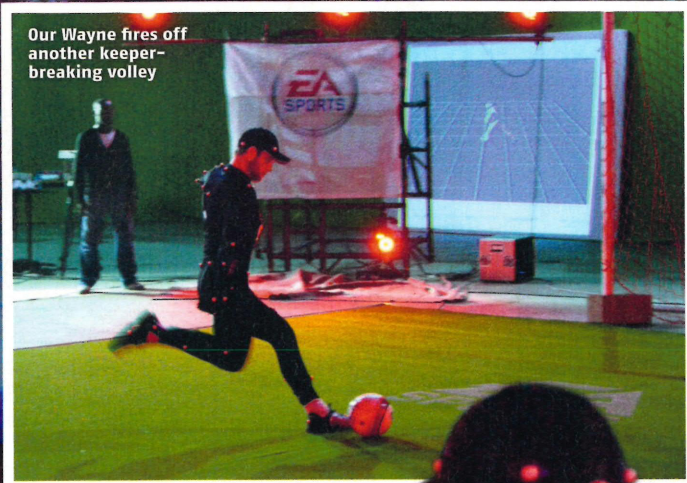
WR: It's a bit weird, a bit tight and a bit hot in there...

OPS2: They don't leave much to the imagination either, do they?

WR: (laughs) No!

■ DL

Our Wayne fires off another keeper-breaking volley



THE NEXT LEVEL

Our EA mole spills five reasons why FIFA on PS3 is set to dominate the beautiful game

THE PHYSICS

PS3's power is a revolution. Independent ball physics (no more 'ball stuck to foot' syndrome) and blended animation mean they've managed to make it more responsive *and* more realistic at the same time.

THE CHALLENGE

EA has kindly stepped back from its overly newbie-friendly approach and spent two years developing a game that, while still accessible, they claim will really take time to master. *OP2* salutes whoever made that call.

THE INTELLIGENCE

Virtual 'brains' in each player mean an end to the classic 'FIFA goal' (down the wing, far post, bang it home). Instead the game feels fluid and tactically adept, with each play seemingly unique and eminently workable.

THE DEPTH

Player development modes and detailed match strategies finally bring the series closely in line with *PES*. The real battleground then is the gameplay, which is funny, because...

WE'VE PLAYED IT...

...albeit briefly. And hell, if it can hold its own after extended play, *PES* for PS3 may be in hot water unless it can pull something special out of the bag. Stay tuned for developments.

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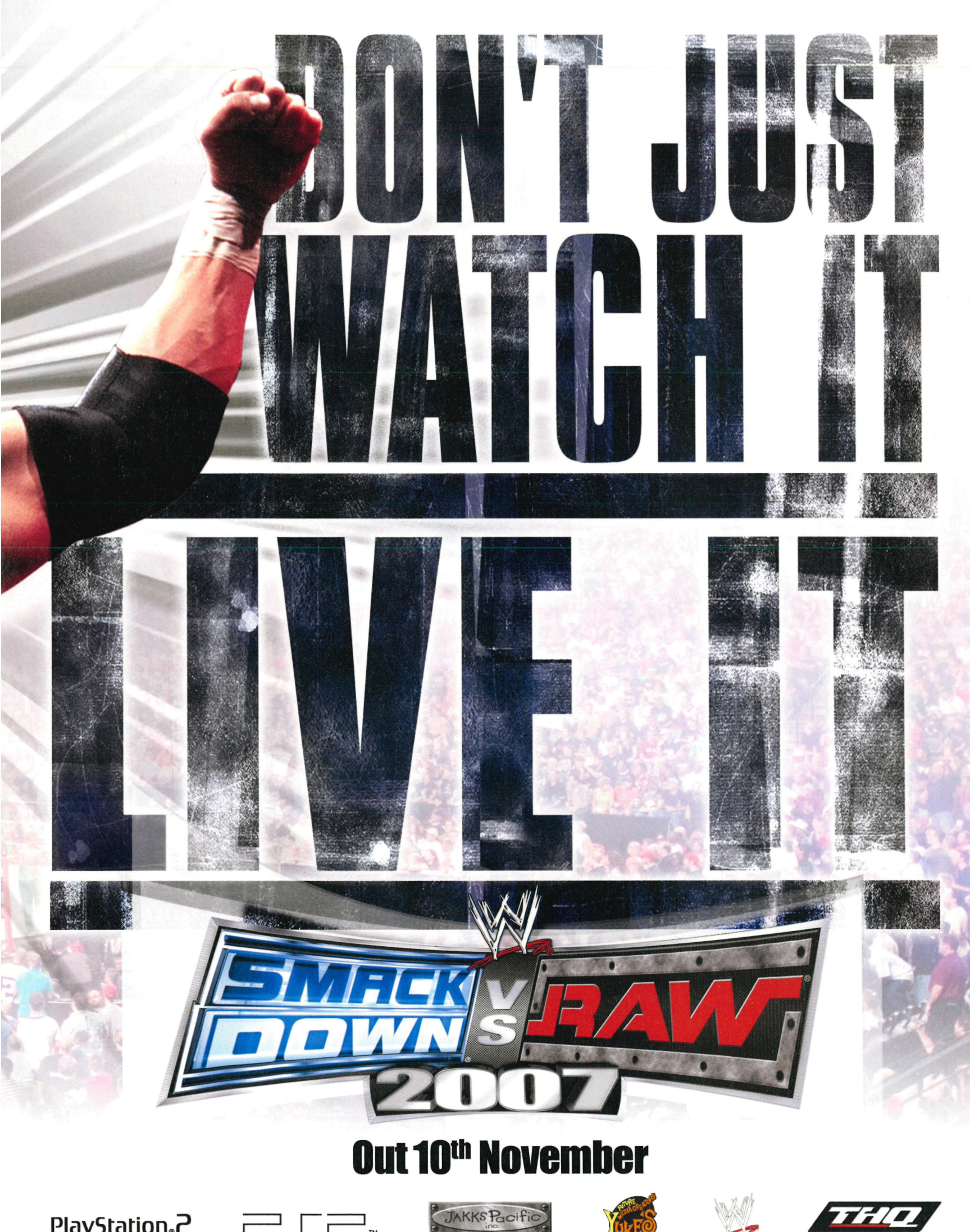
16+
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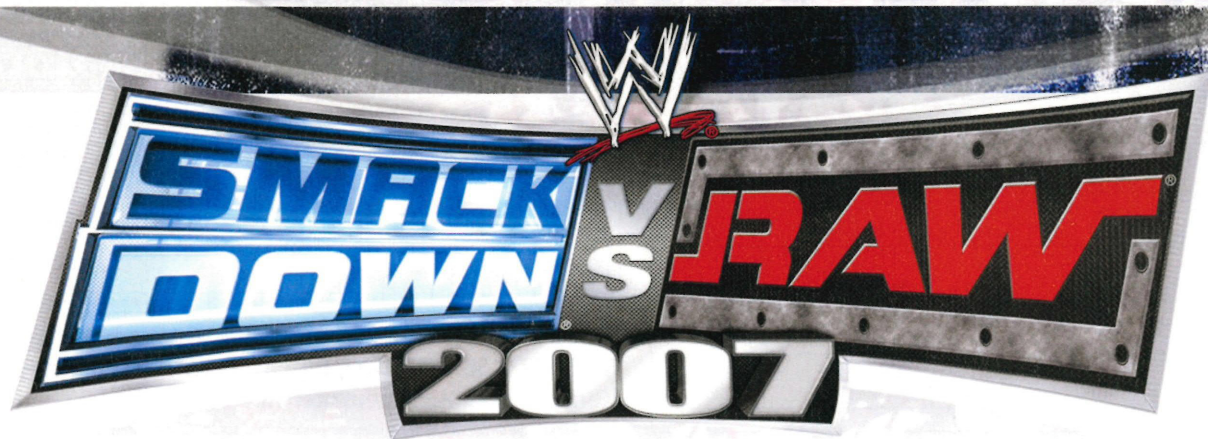
XBOX 360

XBOX LIVE



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LIVE IT



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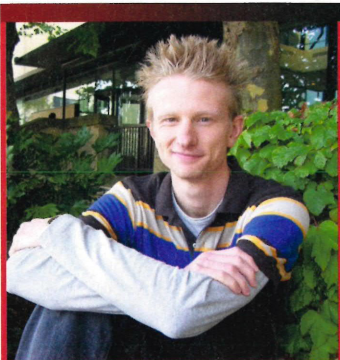
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monitor

FLIPPING OVER THE TAROT CARDS OF GAMING



Man down, man down... We've lost Leon! Still, Monitor must go on, so we've ploughed manfully into the PlayStation war zone to bring you the hottest information on tomorrow's killer games.

Pick of the month? It's got to be creepy shooter *F.E.A.R.* on PS3. We reckon you'll need at least one change of pants to see the game right through from start to finish. Another young hopeful is Rockstar's first ever PS3 outing, *L.A. Noire*. Set in a gorgeous '40s recreation of The City Of Angels, expect this one to be all over Sony's next-generation beast like a cheap floozy.

Naturally, there's plenty of action left on PS2 as well. *Bionicle Heroes* (check out the demo on this month's disc), *Thrillville*, jet shooter *Heatseeker* and *Guitar Hero II* are rocking the console harder than a Metallica/Bullet For My Valentine/Slipknot triple-bill. Dig in, there's plenty for everyone.

Andy

Andy Hartup,
News editor



F.E.A.R.

STOP YOUR GRINNIN' AND SOIL YOUR LINEN. THE MOST TERRIFYING SHOOTER EVER CREATED IS STALKING PS3

050

036

BIONICLE HEROES

We've pulled the latest LEGO romp apart and reassembled it as a stonking first-look preview

038

THRILLVILLE

You must be at least five feet tall to read our hands-on with this amusement park sim

041

GUITAR HERO II

Dust off the plastic Gibson, as RedOctane gears up for another ear-shattering series of gigs

042

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?

Will this be the finest quiz game on PS2? You don't need to phone a friend to find out

044

DEATH JR. 2: ROOT OF EVIL

The bony ball of angst is back for another scythe swipe at PSP. We strip it down to the bare bones

046

HEATSEEKER

Sending an air-to-air missile right up *Ace Combat*'s tail. Will this be the PS2's finest flyer?

054

RIDGE RACER 7

The legendary racer is gearing up for PS3, and it's got more drifting than a hobo convention

056

L.A. NOIRE

Throw on your fedora and gumshoes, there's a crime storm brewing in 1940's Los Angeles

PLUS

037

ERAGON

039

PDC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DARTS

047

GOD HAND



PUBLISHER EIDOS | DEVELOPER TRAVELLER'S TALES | WEBSITE WWW.BIONICLEHEROES.COM

BIONICLE HEROES

HOW TO BUILD YOUR OWN BESTSELLER KIT...

The Danish brick merchants are aiming to build on the success of the *LEGO Star Wars* games



The smell of burning plastic filled the air...



"Darling, you didn't leave the oven on, did y... oh bugger"



1 USE A ZILLION-SELLING TOY

Bionicle is one of LEGO's biggest-selling brands. The story follows a classic good versus evil dust-up on an island called Voya Nui, and revolves around characters based on elemental powers: fire, water, air, stone, earth and ice. Each year a fresh set of characters are released to accompany a new adventure. This game is based on the current 'Legends' story, which follows good guys (the Toa) and baddies (the Piraka) as they battle for a powerful artefact called the Mask Of Life.

2 FOLLOW A WINNING FORMULA

Traveller's Tales, the developer behind the *LEGO Star Wars* series, knows a winning formula when it sees one. And so, just as in the *Star Wars* titles, in *Bionicle Heroes* you can collect LEGO bits to buy upgrades from a shop, while the various characters you unlock can be found wandering around a beach outside of the main game. This time, however, in addition to constructing objects from the parts you find lying around, you can also build creatures that can help you progress.

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on**

3 KEEP IT SIMPLE

From what we've played so far, this is a basic, 'hold the button down' blaster. Despite the over-the-shoulder, *Resi 4*-style view, it plays like a first-person shooter. A strong auto aim also means that all that's required to get a bead on a baddy is to loosely point your Bionicle in his general direction. It sounds simple but the current control scheme does take a little getting used to, as both motion and orientation are mapped to the left stick.

Much like real life, you'll find bits of LEGO just lying around - which are great to step on with bare feet

4 GIVE IT REPLAY VALUE

As you blast objects and enemies, you can use the LEGO studs they drop to improve characters. There are several masks to wear and upgrade, each enabling various abilities like jumping, swimming and building. You can also revisit areas as defeated enemies, complete with their unique skills. In a similar way to *LEGO Star Wars*, by doing this you unlock previously unreachable areas and new abilities, meaning that it'll take more than one play through to see everything on Voya Nui. It's a shame there isn't a co-op or multiplayer mode, though. ■ LH

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THE SHOOTING ACTION is enjoyable enough, but so far it's feeling a little too basic and derivative. And we doubt the lumpy-headed Bionicles carry the same charm as their *LEGO Star Wars* buddies

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN



> ALSO 1 MONTH AWAY...

PUBLISHER VIVENDI | DEVELOPER STORMFRONT
WEBSITE WWW.ERAGONGAME.COM

ERAGON

IT'S IN THE FLAME

It's got a saddle, so let's presume it's tame, shall we?

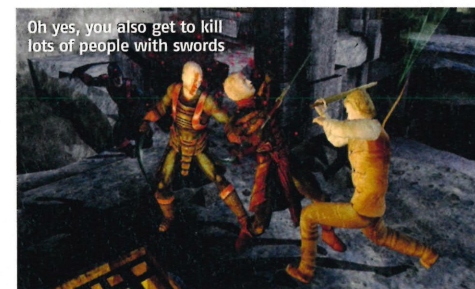


> A thorough play of the nearly complete version of *Eragon* confirmed what we've suspected for a while - that this is very much a movie tie-in. Pretty visuals? Check. Decent interpretation of the plot? Check. Painfully thin gameplay? Check...

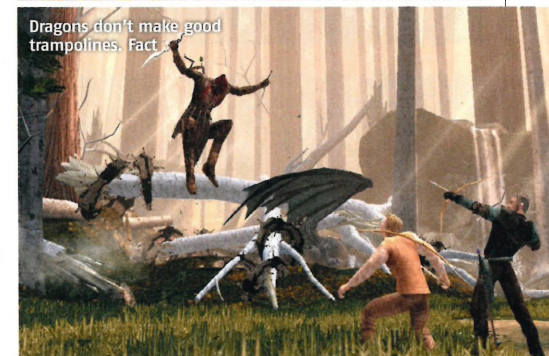
The majority of your time will be spent hacking at enemies with your sword in a variety of urban and rural locations taken from the film/book, and there's a simple but effective combo system in place for this. The claim that enemies will get wise to your moves should you over-use them does ring true, and you will need to change tactics as you progress, adding a much-needed layer of depth. You also have a bow, accessed swiftly and without fuss by pressing **△**, and magical powers are acquired along the way, which operate in a similar fashion.

The dragon-riding levels are a clear highlight but there just aren't enough of them. Overall the game proves a lot more fun in the co-op mode, which you'll be able to sample for yourself on next month's demo disc. ■ NE

Oh yes, you also get to kill lots of people with swords



Dragons don't make good trampolines. Fact.



HOT OR NOT?

Generic hack 'n' slash action, but decent storytelling

TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN

PUBLISHER ATARI | DEVELOPER FRONTIER | WEBSITE WWW.LUCASARTS.COM/GAMES/THRILLVILLE

THRILLVILLE

CONSTRUCT YOUR VERY OWN ALTON TOWERS

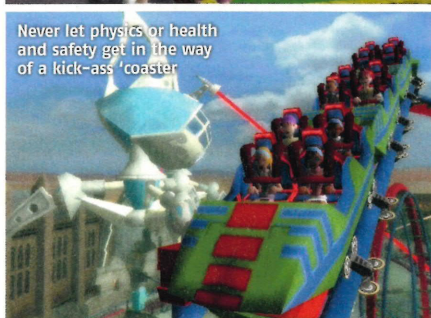
PlayStation is no stranger to theme park games. *Theme Park World* from EA has appeared on both PSone and PS2, and both were very decent affairs. And now *Thrillville*, developed by the outfit behind the *RollerCoaster Tycoon* series on PC, is also shaping up nicely. While these screenshots suggest a game geared towards a young audience, it's surprisingly deep, offering a neat blend of resource and people management, park-building, punter-pleasing and mini-games.

You play the part of the park manager, and it's up to you to construct a series of differently themed parks that will draw in the crowds and make you rich like the Queen. There's plenty to think about, such as where you're going to build the rides and roller coasters, which services your customers need or want and the kind of staff you're going to employ to keep your parks clean, tidy and working efficiently. Brain-engaging stuff. ■ NE

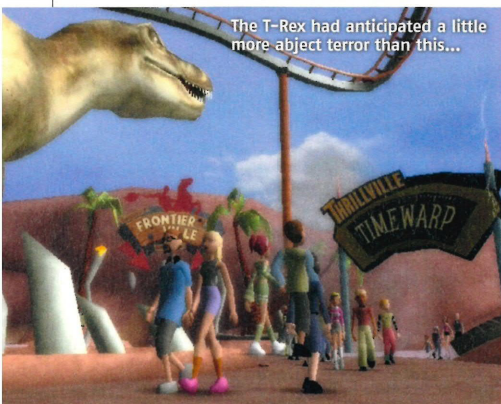
If you build it, they will come (and spend all their money on sweets)



Never let physics or health and safety get in the way of a kick-ass 'coaster



The T-Rex had anticipated a little more abject terror than this...



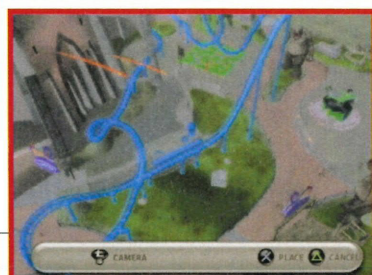
TRAIN STAFF

You can't run the park by yourself, so you'll need to hire and train staff. Training takes the form of mini-games. Here you're getting your groundsman to wash away vomit and Hoover up litter. The better the score, the better trained your staff will be.



SET UP STALLS

As well as being entertained, the punters need to be fed and watered, so you'll have to make sure there's a variety of food and drink stalls dotted about. Of course, stalls will earn you piles of cash too.



BUILD 'COASTERS

Roller coasters are obviously your park's main attraction. You can buy in pre-made models or construct your own from scratch. Once you've placed them in a park, you can hop on and give them a try yourself, from a first-person perspective. No barfing!



RUN THE RIDES

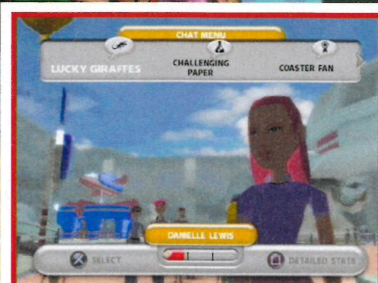
Although a variety of thrilling rides is essential to attract the public, you can't operate them all yourself. You'll need to train some staff to save you from any nasty lawsuits from mangled punters.

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PLAY MINI-GAMES

There are a ton of little games to play, either on your own or with mates in the game's Party Mode. They range from this Super Sprint-style racing game to Space Invaders. And, as with other attractions, you have to build and place them around your park.



CHAT TO PUNTERS

What the people want, the people should get, and you can discover their desires by making friends with your punters. Each person has their own set of stats to show what's making them happy or unhappy.

monitor

PlayStation 2

REFRESHINGLY DIFFERENT and packed with a variety of game styles, don't be fooled by *Thrillville*'s cartoon looks; this is a fair test for your brain. Just don't chuck your guts up when you ride the waltzers

HOT OR NOT

TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN

> ALSO 1 MONTH AWAY...

PUBLISHER OXYGEN | DEVELOPER OXYGEN
WEBSITE WWW.DARTSTHEGAME.COM

PDC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP DARTS

IS IT DOUBLE TOPS?

> Okay, stop making exasperated faces at the magazine now. Yes, it's a darts game. And actually, it's *pretty frickin' good*. Forsaking the face buttons in favour of an all-analogue control system, slinging your dart is as simple as aiming with the left stick and throwing with the right. On amateur difficulty, a dart-shaped display shows the power of your throw as you pull back on the right stick. Hitting the 'sweet spot' line half way up this HUD then firing the stick forward is the key to pinpoint accuracy and, with a bit of luck, the voice of darts, Russ Bray, yelling "One hundred and eiiiiiiiiiiightyyyyy" as you step off the oche.

Along with Bray, further authenticity comes in the form of ten licensed players, including 13-time world champion Phil 'The Power' Taylor and Dutch legend Raymond van Barneveld. The action mirrors Sky Sports' always slick TV coverage with uncanny precision, and with five genuine tournaments to participate in, this should tug at the heart strings of every dart addict. **■ BW**



Niche gaming, perhaps, but is *NHL* more popular in the UK? Doubtful...

HOT OR NOT?

Multiplayer fun gives this bullseye potential

TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN

YOUR BLACK EYES
ROLL BACK INTO YOUR
HEAD AND YOUR JAWS
HYPEREXTEND POSING ROWS
OF JAGGED, DARTING TEETH AND
YOU CAN SMELL YOUR PREY
your are the shark
YOUR HUNGER IS INSATIABLE
YOU ARE REMORSELESS
OCEAN'S MOST PREDATOR



JAWS UNLEASHED

"OUTRAGEOUSLY VIOLENT AND TOP FUN"

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download the trailer at
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This psychedelic axe is one of a tour bus full of new unlockables



Orange to green in half a bar? Arrgh!



We wouldn't mind being her Monkey Wrench

PUBLISHER REDOCTANE | DEVELOPER HARMONIX | WEBSITE WWW.GUITARHEROGAME.COM

GUITAR HERO II

"YES, I AM A ROCK LEGEND..."

Even more than before, *Guitar Hero II* is all about playing with a mate. With three different multiplayer modes and roughly 60 songs – the final number is still to be confirmed, but there will be 40 licensed tracks and around 20 unlicensed offerings – this is likely to be the game that takes over your Saturday nights for the foreseeable future. Forget the pub – a 12-pack of lagerbeers, a couple of plastic axes and a willing buddy now constitutes a good night on the tiles.

Rocking it hardest is the new Pro Face-Off mode. Standard Face-Off – with both players tackling different parts – is still here, but Pro gives you the chance to go axe-to-axe on the same lead guitar parts and end all disputes over who is the greatest (virtual) string fiddler.

If you're fearful that such a debate could turn your good-natured house party into a riot, then stick to the co-op mode. Here, one rocker plays lead, while the other chugs the rhythm or bass part. Brilliantly, the only way to pull off Star Power is for the two of you to swing those guitars upright in tandem.



There's even more whammying this time, which is fine by us



That's us, rocking the free world. Yeah!

The other key new addition to the game – alongside new characters and extra guitars, naturally – is a surprisingly deep training mode. We say surprising because it doesn't just allow you to practice particular songs, but also individual sections of every song in the game – and at four different speeds. So if the glorious *Sweet Child O' Mine* solo is inducing thunderous migraines and blistered fingertips – and trust us, it will – you can slow it right down and perfect it before taking it on at full pelt in front of a moshing crowd. ■ BW

monitor

PlayStation 2
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THE FIRST *GUITAR HERO* worked because it was simple to grasp the basics, yet challenging to master. With the ace new features, RedOctane has created a sequel that promises to rock your socks off

HOT OR NOT

TEPID

WARM

HOT

BOILING

MELTDOWN

MUSIC TO MANGLE FINGERS BY

That *Guitar Hero II* licensed track list in full

BAD REPUTATION – Thin Lizzy
BEAST AND THE HARLOT – Avenged Sevenfold
CARRY ME HOME – Living End
CARRY ON WAYWARD SON – Kansas
CAN'T YOU HEAR ME KNOCKING – The Rolling Stones
CRAZY ON YOU – Heart
FREE BIRD – Lynyrd Skynyrd
FREYA – Sword
GIRLFRIEND – Matthew Sweet
HANGER 18 – Megadeth
HEART SHAPED BOX – Nirvana
INSTITUTIONALIZED – Suicidal Tendencies
JESSICA – Allman Brothers Band
JOHN THE FISHERMAN – Primus
KILLING IN THE NAME – Rage Against The Machine
LAID TO REST – Lamb Of God
LAST CHILD – Aerosmith
MADHOUSE – Anthrax
MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE – The Police
MISIRLOU – Dick Dale
MONKEY WRENCH – Foo Fighters
MOTHER – Danzig
PSYCHOBILLY FREAKOUT – Reverend Horton Heat
ROCK THIS TOWN – Stray Cats
SEARCH AND DESTROY – Iggy Pop And The Stooges
SHOUT AT THE DEVIL – Motley Crue
STOP – Jane's Addiction
STRUTTER – KISS
SURRENDER – Cheap Trick
SWEET CHERRY PIE – Warrant
SWEET CHILD O' MINE – Guns N' Roses
TATTOOED LOVE BOYS – The Pretenders
THEM BONES – Alice In Chains
TONIGHT I'M GONNA ROCK
YOU TONIGHT – Spinal Tap
TRIPPIN' ON A HOLE IN A PAPER
HEART – Stone Temple Pilots
WAR PIGS – Black Sabbath
WHO WAS IN MY ROOM LAST
NIGHT? – Butthole Surfers
WOMAN – Wolfmother
YOU REALLY GOT ME – Van Halen
YYZ – Rush





With a selection like this, it's hard to pick four that you'll warm to



PUBLISHER EIDOS | DEVELOPER CLIMAX | WEBSITE WWW.EIDOS.CO.UK

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?

ANSWERING THE BIG MONEY QUESTIONS ON THE BUZZ!-ENABLED QUIZZER

Tarrant: For £250,000, can you tell me why there's been a five-year wait for a new *WWTBAM*?
OPS2: Well Chris, the people over at Eidos have been sitting on the license all this time waiting for an opportunity to do something new with the franchise. Luckily Sony's *Buzz!* games and peripheral took off and

so the buzzers have been adopted into the game. The result? A new competitive way to play.

Tarrant: For £500,000, can you tell me what's the best new game mode in *WWTBAM*?

OPS2: From our play of *WWTBAM*, it's sure to be the new multiplayer mode. Here, four pals play against one another, vying to be the first to fill the 'money tree' – the ladder of cash that leads to the million pound question.

Tarrant: Is that your final answer?

OPS2: Yes, that's my final answer, Chris. Additionally, quick-minded players can buzz in and 'steal' an opponent's question and the cash that goes with it. Or you can nominate a rival to answer the question if you think it's their weak subject. If they answer correctly, then they get the bar lit on their money tree and you're left looking daft. It soon boils down to a fiendish game of bluff and double bluff, feigning ignorance or swooping in to snatch the cash from slow-witted opponents.

Tarrant: Okay, for £1,000,000, can you tell me if the classic *WWTBAM* style of play is still in the game?

OPS2: Sure, it's in there – in the Original TV mode.

Tarrant: Is that your final answer?

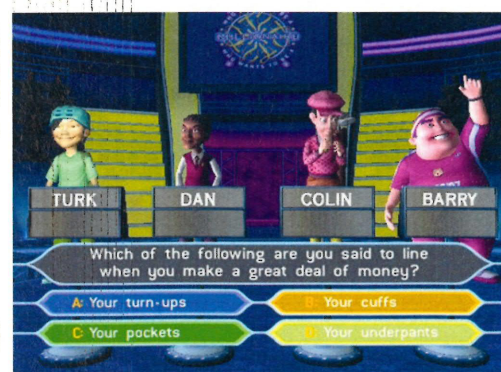
OPS2: Yes.

Tarrant: Are you sure?

OPS2: Yep. As with the telly game, you play through 15 questions until you get the biggie. As an extra incentive, you're awarded a code on completion that can be entered into the *Millionaire* website and will rank your competition time against players from around the world.

Tarrant: Hmmm. You had £500,000 [Pauses]... We'll be back right after this break...

OPS2: Git. ■ ID



FACE TO FACE

Meet the geeks you'll be playing with

The new multiplayer spin on the licence meant that Eidos had to create a bunch of comedy characters to represent you and your clan on-screen. Some of the predictable stereotypes – such as the kilted Scot – are questionable, but a special mention goes to the brassy chavette complete with designer trackie and regulation hoop earrings. The good news is that should these characters begin to grate, then you'll be able to use the EyeToy camera to insert your own attractive face into the game.



monitor PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

A SURPRISINGLY ENJOYABLE albeit basic *Buzz!*-style party game spin on the *Millionaire* format. But is it a better family blast than *Buzz! Junior: Jungle Party*? We have our doubts...

HOT OR NOT?

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AS SPYRO

DAVID SPADE AND
AS SPARX

GARY OLDMAN
AS IGNITUS

THE LEGEND OF SPYRO™ A NEW BEGINNING

Powerful Upgradeable
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Dragon Cynder

Unleash the
True Dragon
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Air and Ground
Melee Combat

Unleash Devastating
Fury Attacks

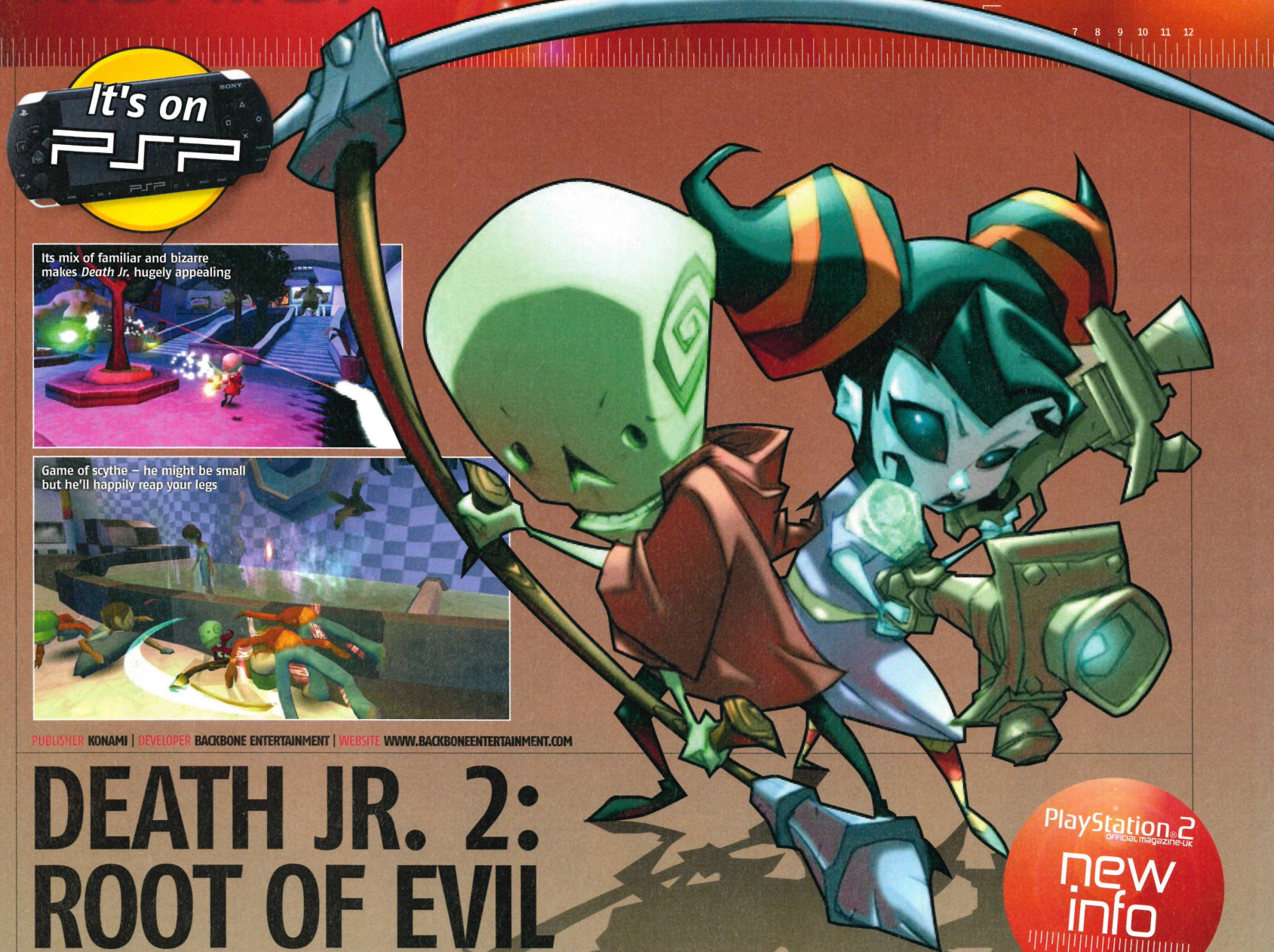
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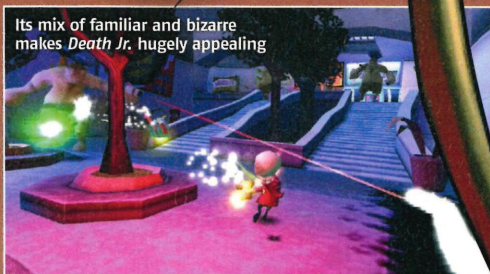
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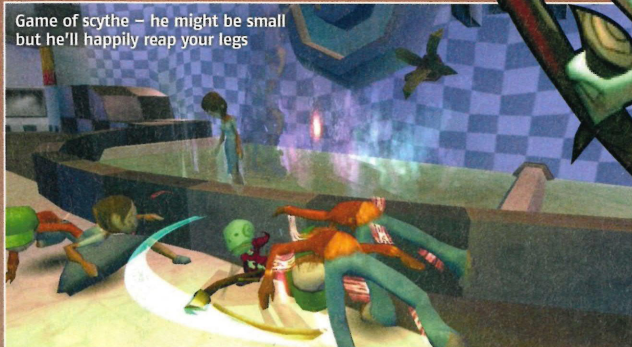
It's on

PSP

Its mix of familiar and bizarre makes *Death Jr. 2* hugely appealing



Game of scythe – he might be small but he'll happily reap your legs



PUBLISHER KONAMI | DEVELOPER BACKBONE ENTERTAINMENT | WEBSITE WWW.BACKBONEENTERTAINMENT.COM

DEATH JR. 2: ROOT OF EVIL

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info

BACK FROM THE GRAVE TO KICK ASS AND PLAY WITH HIS TOYS

➤ One of the first games to be announced for PSP at its launch in 2005, *Death Jr.* caused quite a stir. Gone were the quaint 2D visuals associated with handheld gaming and, in their place, the kind of 3D spectacle that had only previously been seen in the best PS2 games. Of course, we're now fully immersed in the PSP's technology, and free-roaming 3D adventures are ten a penny on Sony's pocket rocket. However, there still aren't too many with *Death Jr. 2*'s style.

Once again you play as DJ, the son of the Grim Reaper – who's backed up neatly by his coven of equally spooky pals – in an adventure packed with the kind of Tim Burton meets *Devil May Cry* gameplay that made the original so wickedly unique.

DEATH BECOMES HER

The biggest shift in focus for this sequel comes with the introduction of DJ's Goth-chick friend, Pandora. Linked wirelessly, with you as DJ and your friend as Pandora, you run, gun and jump your way through a world overrun by evil toys. It's easily the best new feature of the game. The Burton-esque vibe continues with levels based in a Toy Graveyard and on the River Styx, plus a pervading dark sense of humour that could have been snipped wholesale from *Edward Scissorhands*.

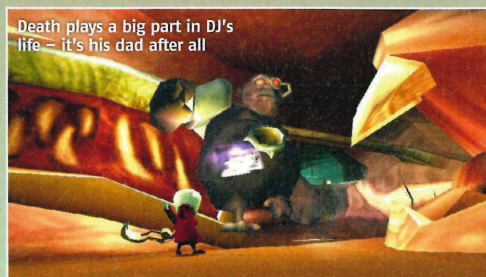
Despite the kid's channel-style animated visuals, *Death Jr. 2* is no nursery game. New weapons and upgrades ensure the platform-based gameplay is more explosive than ever. DJ can now call on a new Flaming TP Launcher, while Pandora can count on her Tommy gun and C4 Hamster Mark II launcher to keep the maniac toys at bay. These are familiar console armaments twisted into a Gothic cartoon environment that should appeal to anyone with a taste for grim humour and big bangs.

So while *Death Jr. 2* doesn't look too dissimilar from the original, there's plenty to blow the cobwebs of familiarity away. The co-op mode will offer a new way to play, the innovative weaponry – which now focuses on ranged attacks – should enhance the action and it still looks like one of the most colourful games on PSP. ■ ID

Pandora comes with her own impressive range of weapons



Death plays a big part in DJ's life – it's his dad after all



monitor

PlayStation 2
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A DARKLY COMICAL TALE of adolescent grim reaping and twisted toys. Fans of Tim Burton's dark fairy tale visions will adore *Death Jr. 2*, but even if you don't it'd be a mistake to ignore this game

HOT OR NOT?

TEPID

WARM

HOT

BOILING

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Battle as Eragon as you fight alongside or astride your mighty dragon ally.



Combine forces with Brom and Murtagh any time in two-player drop-in, drop-out co-op mode.

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See the Movie - Only in Cinemas



PlayStation 2



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PUBLISHER CODEMASTERS | DEVELOPER CODEMASTERS | WEBSITE WWW.CODEMASTERS.CO.UK

HEATSEEKER

KNOW YOUR FLANKERS FROM YOUR RAPTORS WITH OUR CELEBRATION OF THE JET PLANE CENTREFOLDS FEATURED IN *HEATSEEKER*

> While the thought of an ultra-complicated flight simulator that requires an extensive joypad overlay to pilot a 747 to New York in real time has never really appealed to us, we've always got time for the heady rush of supersonic interception and missile-flinging above the clouds. If that sounds like you too, then *Heatseeker's* payload of intense arcade action in a series of fully licensed birds of prey is liable to blow you away.

While we exclusively revealed *Heatseeker* last issue, new features have recently come to light: namely, stealth missions that require you to fly under radar (indicated by a large green net in the sky), and special avoidance moves that require you to enter button or thumbstick combinations with split-second timing (much like *Resident Evil 4's* Spaniard-dodging mini-games). You can clearly see from the screens that the action is far more *Burnout* than *Microsoft Flight Simulator*, but what's getting us most excited is the ability to fly in accurate representations of some of the world's most advanced jets. Here's our flypast of the best... **GW**

PlayStation 2
official magazine-uk
new
planes

SU-27 FLANKER

Top Speed: 2500 km/h
Designed by:
Sukhoi Aviation Corporation

The SU-27 was Russia's answer to America's F-15 Eagle. In many ways the SU-27 is a better plane and even today is considered one of the world's most agile jets. Its party trick is called the 'Cobra' – a breathtakingly tight 'S'-shape manoeuvre that turns the table on less agile pursuers, putting the Flanker right on their tail.

monitor

PlayStation 2
official magazine-uk

IF *HEATSEEKER* really can pull off the promise of recreating *Burnout* in the sky – and at this stage we're feeling confident it will – this could trigger quite a dogfight with the current arcade king of the skies, *Ace Combat*
HOT OR NOT?

TEPID WARM **HOT** BOILING MELTDOWN

"EJECT! Oh crap, we're supposed to do that when we blow up, right?"



The F-16 lines up for a fairly pointless race with two fully laden cargo ships



SU-47 BERKUT

Top Speed: 2500 km/h
Designed by: Sukhoi Aviation Corporation

The unmistakable back-to-front wings of the SU-47 lend this Russian-designed plane incredible manoeuvrability, allowing for awe-inspiring quick turns, even during supersonic flight. The SU-47 is not yet used by any air force and is described as an experimental fifth-generation jet fighter.

SR-71 BLACKBIRD

Top Speed: 3529 km/h
Designed by: Lockheed 'Skunkworks'

The granddaddy of long-range supersonic reconnaissance aircraft, the design of this spectacular plane must have seemed positively futuristic when it first flew in 1964. The curved shape was intended to reduce radar visibility, but in fact this never really worked in practice and during service the Blackbird was often shot at with surface to air missiles. The avoidance tactic was simply to *out-run* the threat – easy when your top speed is an incredible three times the speed of sound.

ALSO 4 MONTHS AWAY...

PUBLISHER **CAPCOM** | DEVELOPER **CLOVER STUDIO**
WEBSITE WWW.CAPCOM-STUDIO.COM

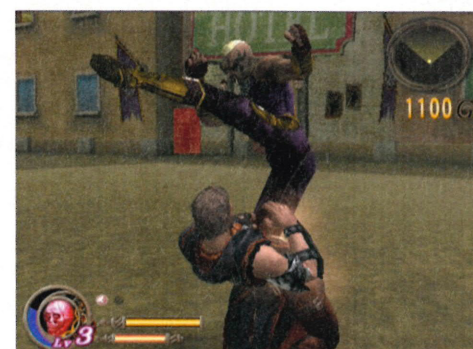
GOD HAND

DEVIL MAY CRY-ALIKE RULES BY THE FIST



➤ Our first encounter with Gene – square-jawed, bionically-armed hero of *God Hand* – saw us impressed by his various knuckle-based powers, but concerned about the game's occasionally crude button-mashing gameplay. These fears have been alleviated to an extent by our discovery of a new 'Roulette' feature. Complementing the option to map favourite moves to the joy pad's face buttons, this feature enables you to utilise random combinations of strikes to dazzle your opponent at the same time as caving his cheekbones in.

Continuing a recent trend among analogue-obsessed developers, *God Hand* makes heavy use of the Dual Shock's sticks. So much so that at the moment there are no plans for it to support D-pad control at all. While the left stick is used for general movement, wagging the right one from side to side causes Gene to dodge attacks. It takes some getting used to but we like the idea, and it leaves us confident that *God Hand* will deliver more than a sense of mild disappointment and a severely blistered thumb. ■ BW



HOT OR NOT?

Deified digits might just have the magic touch

TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN

F-15 EAGLE

Top Speed: 2655 km/h
Designed by: McDonnell Douglas
(now Boeing)

Built in part as a response to the Russians' formidable MIG-25 Foxbat, the F-15 was one of the first jets to use computer technology to lower pilot workload. It also incorporated what's known as 'look down, shoot down' radar, which is able to distinguish ground clutter from low-flying targets. Interestingly, despite being one of the best-known fighter jets, it's often criticised for being too large to be a dedicated dogfighter.

F-22 RAPTOR

Top Speed: 2575 km/h
Designed by: Lockheed Martin/Boeing

If we're talking sexiest looking jet in the world, it's hard to top the space-age Raptor, nicknamed the '21st Century fighter'. The Raptor's hook is its first look/first shot/first kill capabilities, which give pilots a special 'sensor suite' that can detect a bogey and squeeze off a Sidewinder before it's even detected the F-22. As a result of this superior technology (and the fact that it's the fastest jet fighter not to use an afterburner) the US military have ordered 339 F-22s.

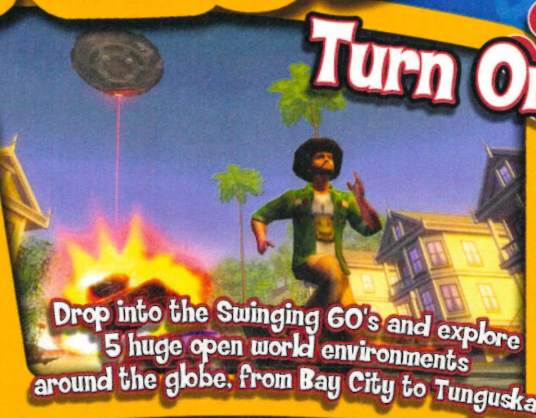
Make War, Not Love!

Tune In



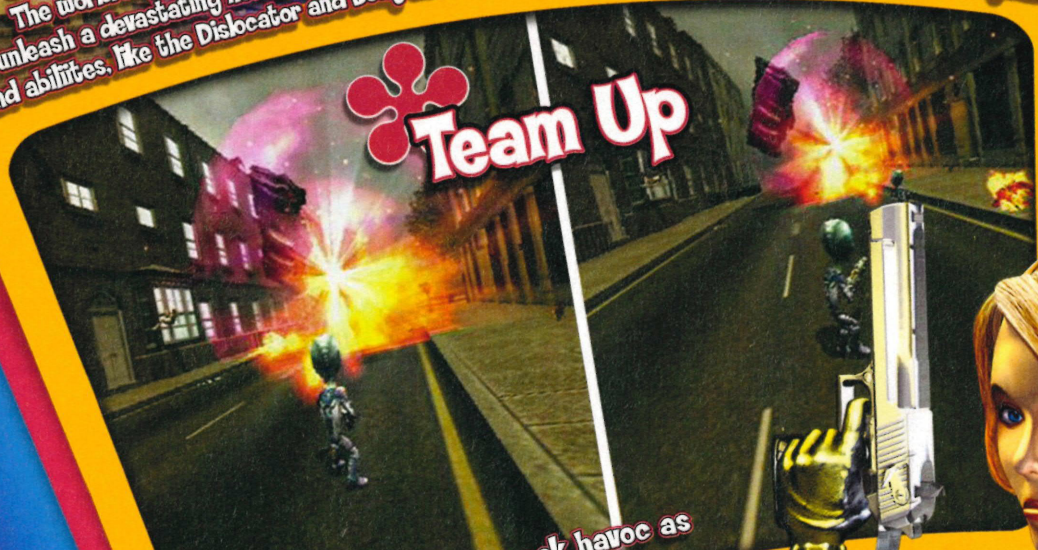
The world is your stomping ground as you unleash a devastating new arsenal of weapons and abilities. Like the Dislocator and Body Snatching

Turn On



Drop into the Swinging 60's and explore 5 huge open world environments around the globe, from Bay City to Tunguska

Team Up



Play with a friend and wreak havoc as you vaporise the human race together



PlayStation 2



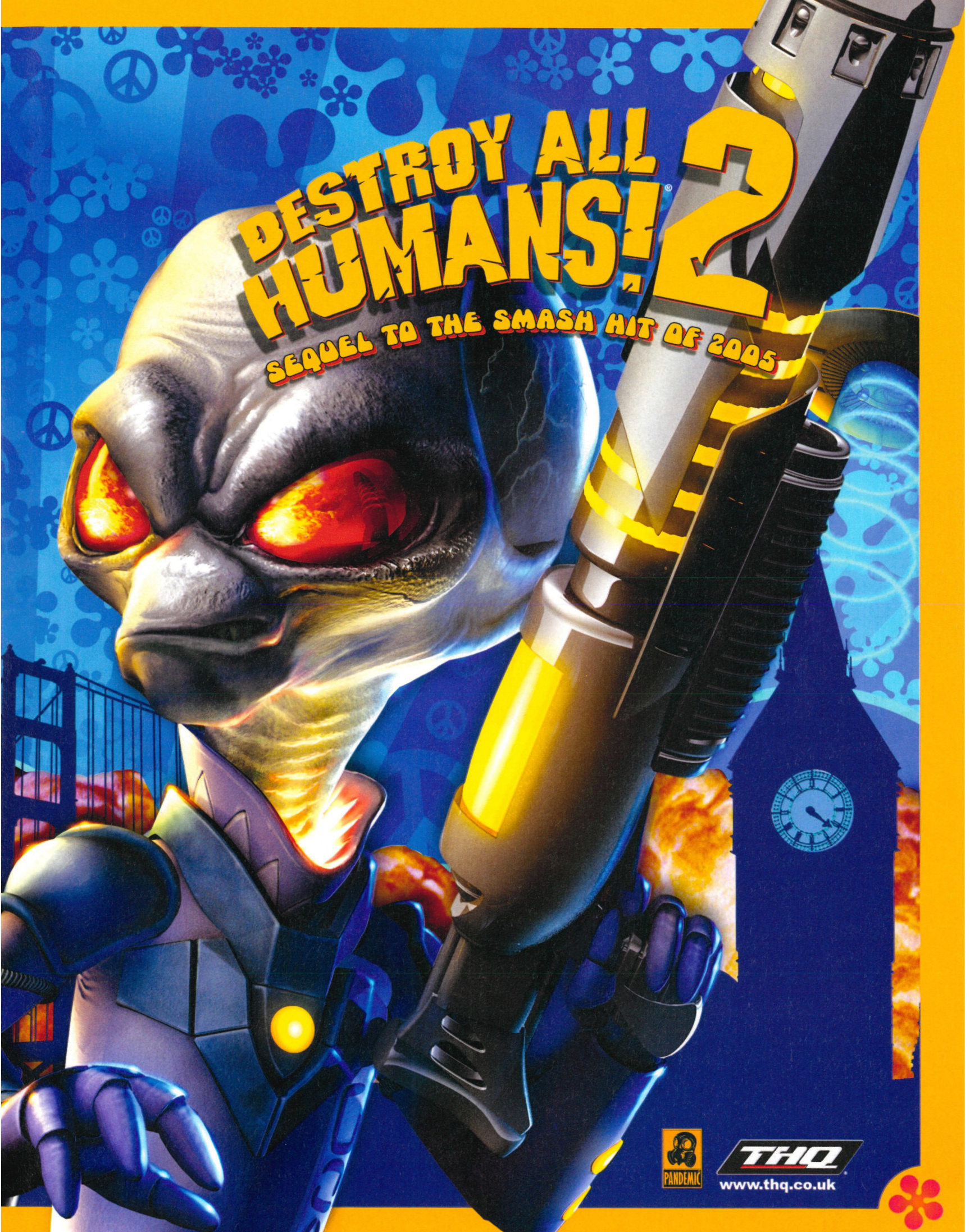
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DESTROY ALL HUMANS! 2

SEQUEL TO THE SMASH HIT OF 2005



www.thq.co.uk





PUBLISHER VIVENDI | DEVELOPER DAY 1 | WEBSITE WWW.WHATISFEAR.COM/UK

F.E.A.R.

WHAT A WAR ON TERROR REALLY LOOKS LIKE

> First Encounter Assault Recon – that's what it stands for, in case you were wondering. Yes, it is a bit of a mouthful, but if you want a cool abbreviation for your crack squad of supernatural threat-neutralising Special Forces then those are the breaks. 'Course, the team's slick handle also doubles as a warning to any faint-hearted gamers who might be expecting another straightforward, hardware-heavy first-person shooter. As we found out during a recent visit to developer Day 1, *F.E.A.R.* is as much about dread as it is about making people dead. The realisation came just one level into our extensive play test, when, savaged by some massively powerful, unseen entity, our supporting Delta Force team began unexpectedly bursting into pluming clouds of scarlet pulp around us. What got to us more

than the shuddering gore was the numbing suspicion that whatever other-worldly being was trying to kill us, it wasn't about to be stopped by a burst of hot lead, and in an FPS this is a pretty terrifying thought...

BE AFRAID

First released on PC just over a year ago, the PS3 version of *F.E.A.R.* will form part of the console's crucial launch line-up. Its inclusion is a big statement of intent from Sony, as it's widely acknowledged that shooters were not PS2's strongest feature. Perhaps it's odd then, that while it does include some platform-exclusive content (more on this later), *F.E.A.R.* on PS3 is basically the same game that our keyboard-hammering cousins have been enjoying for the last 12 months. Should this provoke indignant rages about Sony feeding us scraps from the PC table? No. Rather, it should clue you in to just what a strong and unique experience *F.E.A.R.* is. Yes, it is a shooter (as we'll explain, an enormously accomplished and fluid one at that), but it's also got scares – chillingly authentic, brilliantly crafted scares.

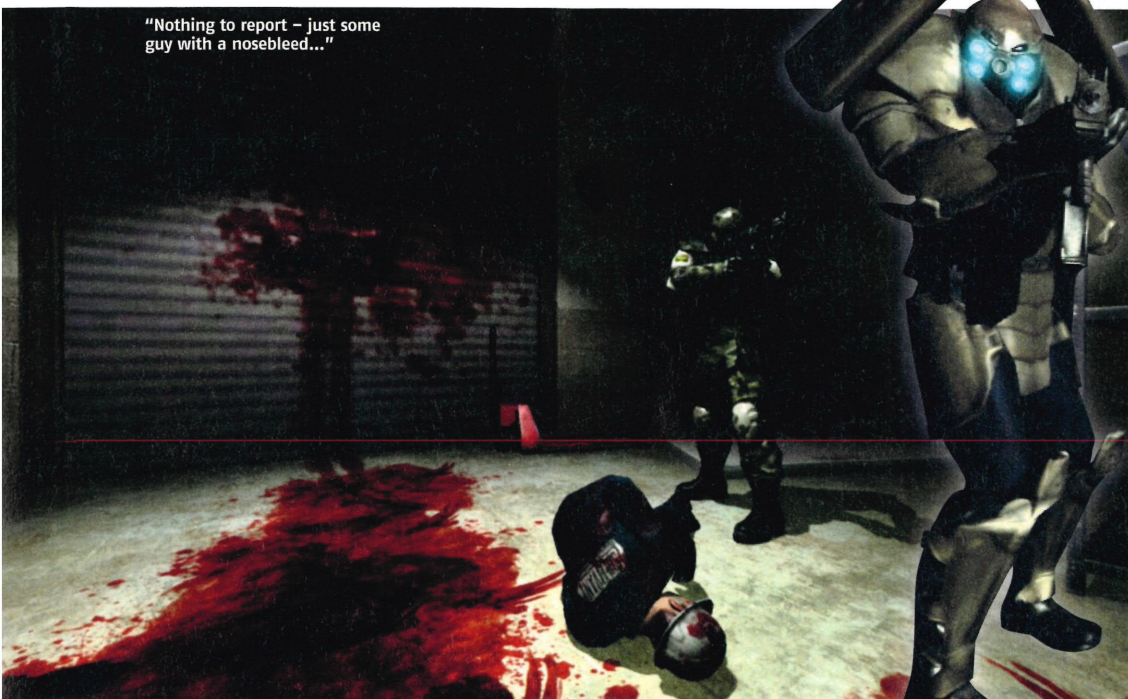
It starts with a mission briefing. The *F.E.A.R.* team is summoned to deal with a crisis at Armacham Technology Corporation – ATC – a shady military contractor whose premises have been invaded by a powerful telepath named Paxton Fettel. The team learns that Fettel is using



The commander always insisted on a good warm up before battle

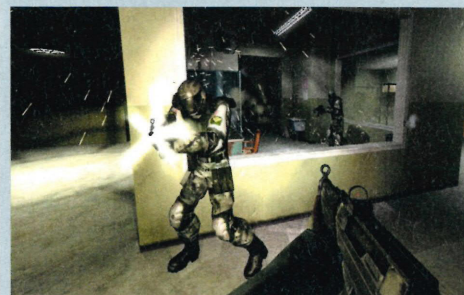
Getting separated from the main squad is not recommended

"Nothing to report – just some guy with a nosebleed..."



F.E.A.R. WITH FRIENDS

How the multiplayer game measures up



F.E.A.R.'s multiplayer is a mix of familiar FPS staples – Deathmatch and objective-based modes – with significant, game-adding twists. We played Deathmatch and came away very impressed with what we saw. The game's excellent mechanics really come into their own against other human players, and the level layout was superb. Aside from Deathmatch there'll also be King Of The Hill and Capture The Flag game types, but what's got us really excited is the inclusion of the SloMo device in multiplayer games. Available for shorter bursts than in the normal game, the device nevertheless provides a devastating advantage to whoever's in possession and can turn a match in a few (drawn out) seconds. Even better, the time-stretching tool can be used in team games to give your whole side the edge over your opponents. It's gonna get very messy...



Dave *always* won the 'who's got the biggest shoulder pads?' argument

Sneaking off while no one's looking – the trooper on the right really must have the fear

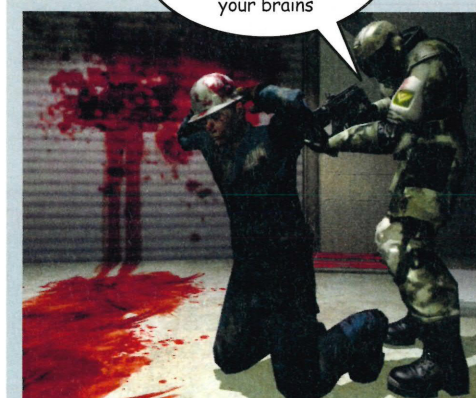


Tell us everything you know about next-gen updates or we paint the floor with your brains

his psychic abilities to control a battalion of cloned super soldiers. Naturally, it's the team's job to wade in and restore order. During the briefing you also find out that your character is almost as new to the F.E.A.R. team as you are, having assumed the role of point man (read: the guy who always goes in first, and may as well have a target painted on his forehead) just a week previously. This does not sit well with your squad-mates and the typically grizzled grunts refer to you only as 'the new guy' throughout.

YOUR MOVE

Homing in on Fettel, thanks to a satellite tracker implanted in his head, we assume control of the point man as we're dropped off outside ATC's building. The first thing we notice is how comfortable basic moving and aiming is. As pernickety FPS players, we're regularly alienated by a muddy, imprecise interface, but our introduction to F.E.A.R. feels like reacquainting ourselves with a familiar old friend. There's a satisfying sense of solid physical presence in the environment – footsteps echo and crunch, weapons recoil, and movement transmits a tangible sense of your mass in this world. This is helped by the analogue sticks on the PS3 controller, which feel a little less stiff than the DualShock 2's, and consequently all the better for precision targeting. We tap up the adjustable control sensitivity a notch to get ▶



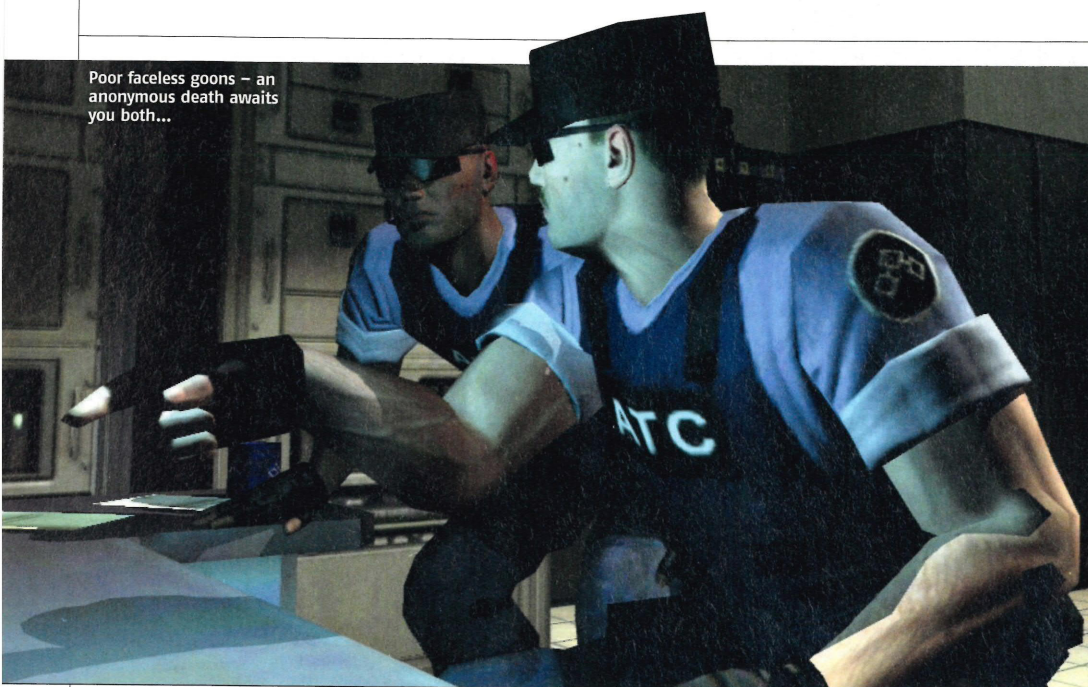
PS3 UPDATES REVEALED!

F.E.A.R. now includes a new, cut-to-the-mess mode called Instant Action. Levels from the main game are played individually against the clock, with the aim being to thoroughly smash the place up in as short a time as possible. Detailed stats of your frenzy – hit ratio, kill rate, favourite weapon – are provided and can be uploaded to ranked online leader boards.

The PS3 version also gets its own exclusive level and gun. The level is unlocked when you hit a particular point in the single-player game, and sees you playing as one of the doomed Delta Force soldiers you encountered previously. The gun, meanwhile, is the massively destructive SAS 12 rapid-fire shotgun – think semi-automatic fast, with abattoir-Artex results.

As for extra content, 'meetings were held' after the PS3's launch delay in Europe to discuss whether that meant extra content could now be added. No decision has been reached yet, but given that an expansion pack – Extraction Point – is due for imminent PC release there's a ready supply of additional material on offer. Here's hoping...

Poor faceless goons – an anonymous death awaits you both...



► things just so, and then we're ready to rock.

Except, it turns out, there's not much rocking to do. Not straightaway, at least. *F.E.A.R.*'s first level is both a tease and an introduction to the game's hybrid sensibilities. It knows you want to shoot things to bits, and that's exactly what it doesn't give you. Instead – and this is where we came in – you have the members of Delta Force going off like wet fireworks at the hands of an invisible enemy, and a sensory overload of creepy whispers, lurching hallucinations and corridors of blood.

NOW YOU SEE HIM...

While the horror displays a definite Japanese movie influence – like *The Ring* or *The Grudge* it's all creepy kids and tantalisingly 'out of reach' meanings – the brilliance of its application is the way it plays against your normal FPS instincts. Things move at the periphery of your vision, forcing you into a constant pattern of jittery twisting and turning. One very unsettling moment saw us catch a glimpse of Fettel nonchalantly strolling past a doorway up ahead. We race to the exit and swing left to where he should be but there's no sign of him. Of course, in our hurry we just made a blind turn into an unchecked area so we spin around again, jumpy as all hell and ready to fire, only to find an empty roof top. Deep breaths...

Aside from all the nasty jumps and bumps, when it does get down to business *F.E.A.R.* is also surprisingly tough, thanks to some strong AI. The enemies we came up against made good use of cover, were accurate shots and, most impressive of all, exploited alternative routes around the map – stay in one place too long and they'll work as a team to find another way to get to you.

To counter the strength of the opposition, *F.E.A.R.*

What? Crates in an FPS? What will they think of next?



offers some out-of-the-ordinary combat options. Firstly, there are close-quarters melee attacks. Building from standard gun-butt thwacks, these include sliding and jumping kicks as well as punches, although in the version we played these were rather clunky and clumsy to execute. More elegant is the bullet time-styled SloMo. Available whenever your SloMo meter is full, this is different to similar effects in other games in that crucially, with the nails AI, you'll actually need to employ it to survive. Aside from which, after five minutes of nervous creeping through empty, echoing corridors, the release of entering a protracted pyrotechnic fury, complete with beautifully disintegrating particle effects, is exhilarating.

And that, boys and girls, is *F.E.A.R.* in a nutshell – nerve-shredding suspense punctuated by blinding bursts of adrenalised action. We're not totally convinced by the current implementation of hand-to-hand combat – although there's time for a spit-and-polish – but we are convinced that *F.E.A.R.* will be an assured, must-play title, and that it represents a very smart choice for PS3's starting line-up. Are we scared? Excited, more like, and desperate for more. ■ ND

Having a big gun doesn't guarantee survival...



A RECIPE FOR F.E.A.R.

We pull apart the gruesome shooter and show you what it's made of



CREEPY PSYCHIC CHILDREN

This freakish apparition is nicked wholesale from *The Ring*, with the red duffle-coated munchkin from *Don't Look Now* thrown in



TONS OF DECORATIVE GORE

Similarities to veteran PlayStation scarer *Silent Hill* can be found in the voluminous use of blood and pulpy man-bits



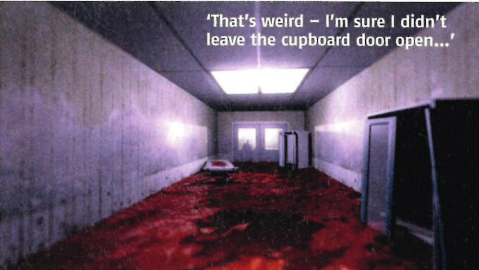
HI-TECH GUN PORN

No FPS would be complete without a clearly displayed fetish for shiny, death-dealing boomsticks

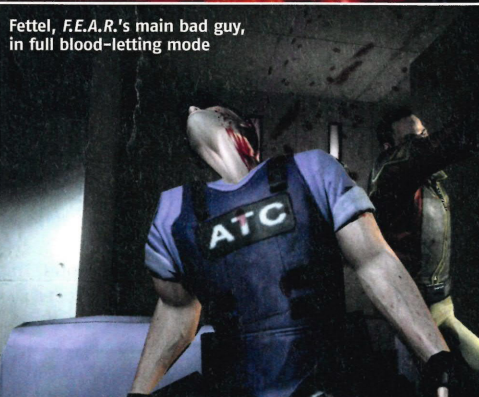
Fleeting glimpses of bad guy Fettel, will rattle your nerves



'That's weird – I'm sure I didn't leave the cupboard door open...'



Fettel, *F.E.A.R.*'s main bad guy, in full blood-letting mode



monitor

PlayStation 2
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F.E.A.R.'S GOT STYLE, creepy atmosphere in spades, and it plays like a dream, albeit a twitchy, heart-in-the-mouth kind of dream. It's a refreshing approach to the FPS and we can't wait to play the finished article

HOT OR NOT

TEPID

WARM

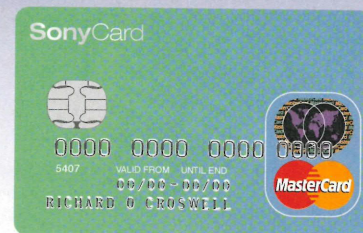
HOT

BOILING

MELTDOWN

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Now you can tinker with the under-the-hood stats and decals for every car



PUBLISHER SONY | DEVELOPER NAMCO BANDAI | WEBSITE WWW.NAMCO-CH.NET/RIDGERACER7

RIDGE RACER 7

BIGGER, SHINIER AND FASTER THAN EVER, NAMCO'S CLASSIC SQUEALS BACK INTO POLE POSITION

> Namco's premier racing franchise has become an elder statesman of gaming. The series is so well established that it's now traditional for every new console to have a *Ridge Racer* game. Got a new console to launch? Book in *Ridge* to cut the ribbon. Even Xbox 360 succumbed to the delights of Ridge City.

Because of this illustrious heritage, the series' gameplay has been gradually refined to near perfection. So much so, in fact, that *Ridge Racer* has become a self-referential masterpiece – as we saw with the PSP versions. Fans don't want change, and when the racing is as fast, gutsy and glossy as in *Ridge Racer 7*, you can see why.

For the launch of PlayStation 3 though, Namco is pulling out all the stops. Not so much to innovate – at least not with regards to the core race mechanics – but

rather to impress us with technical aplomb. This game is going to shine brighter than virtually any other PS3 launch title. The endless production line of cars, the glowing neon skylines and the ancient temple landmarks have all been reworked for their next-gen Sony debut. In fact, the impressive scale of this game is represented by Namco's decision to ditch Ridge City for Ridge State. This looks leagues ahead of the Xbox 360 version released last year too, and with a total of 44 tracks (22 reversed), packs in considerably more depth.

A RIDGE TOO FAR?

Visually, the game surpasses the 360 instalment, too. The cars in particular now look shinier and more solid and the detail is there to be seen, with subtle tyre treads and leather interiors all on show. Also, the road surfaces look cracked around the edges, and the cobbled stones of the ancient Asian Ruins stages look painfully bumpy.

This racing series is about the tail-sliding gameplay though, and it's here where Namco is keenest to impress. Although the same drifting, nitrous-based arcade play returns, it's been fundamentally rebuilt for PS3. The physics that govern the drifts are seriously complex and motor away in the background to ensure every turn feels tight. Initially the tracks feel easy, wide and forgiving, but after you've unlocked one of the faster cars in the roster of 44 new motors, those same bends will be hazardous

to your health. The joy of *Ridge Racer* is always about conquering the bends – learning to combine drifts to throw your car in and out of every curve with perfect timing to nail the racing lines. On PS3, with the Cell processor pounding away at the maths, this old-skool gameplay will feel slicker than ever.

It's not all refinement at the expense of innovation, though. *Ridge Racer 7* features a customisation mode for the first time in the series. Sure, you could add new decals and parts in *Rage Racer* and change colours in *RR4*, but now you can tune *everything*. Namco is promising a staggering 7,150 tuning mods (exhausts, brakes, engines, etc.) to encourage you to develop a car that suits your racing style down to the ground. Namco has already committed to delivering download packs post-release too, so this figure is sure to rise.

And customisation isn't the only fresh, Net-assisted feature gamers can look forward to, as Namco is planning to exploit the PS3's online setup with support for up to 14 players per race in Online Battle mode. You'll be able to take your customised motors to the party too, which will appeal to the thriving online community of speed-addicted racers. The game will always be 'on', so even when you're racing solus, Sky Sports-style ticker tape news will roll across the screen, highlighting players who are about to smash your fastest lap time (in Global Time Attack mode), signalling whom from your friends list is



Classic drifting gameplay refined for the next generation



This is clearly the first proper next-gen *Ridge Racer*

ESSENTIAL TRACKS

Old tracks rebuilt beyond recognition for the next generation of racers



ASIAN INDUSTRIAL CITY

We don't know the exact names of any of the new circuits yet, as Namco is keeping schtum for the time being. But we think that this new 'Asian City' set of tracks looks very similar in style to the street races of the original game's Ridge City.



EURO CIRCUIT

The 'Euro Circuit' looks to be a new addition to the *Ridge Racer* circuit roster, taking greater inspiration from the real world than from the *Ridge* of old. We don't think it'd be wide of the mark to expect wide and open traditional racing circuits here.

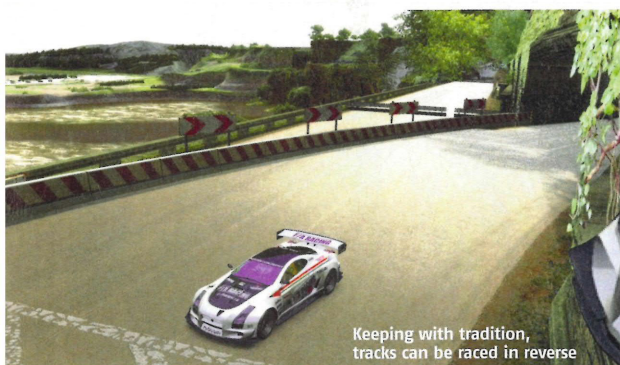


ASIAN TEMPLE

Like the old *Rage Racer* Mythological tracks, these new 'Asian Temple' circuits mix ancient ruins and ocean-side races. Replacing rocky passes and pillars for Thai-style Buddhas and jungle, these are the most impressive tracks that Namco has so far revealed.



The new 'Asian Temple' circuits look stunning



Keeping with tradition, tracks can be raced in reverse

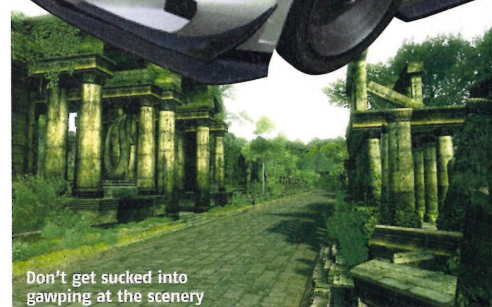


There aren't many racers that can keep up with *Ridge*

online and generally keeping you up to speed on life within the online *Ridge Racer* community.

This messaging system appears to be at the heart of the whole *Ridge* experience. Message boards will be available for you to chat and share notes, and leader boards, online tournaments and a number of, as yet, undisclosed ranking services have been hinted at. Post an awesome time on new city circuits and you'll be shunted in with similarly skilled players, ensuring it's always a challenge.

This deep online service is the kind of thing Sony needs desperately from its first batch of launch games. And players need to know there's an extended world out there to explore. With *Ridge Racer 7* we're going to get a polished arcade racer and a new community aspect – tradition and innovation in one package. Who'd have thought the old man of racing would deliver that? **ID**



Don't get sucked into gawping at the scenery



THE ROAD IS LONG...

Set your own path to victory in *Ridge Racer 7*

The structure of the new Ridge State Grand Prix on PlayStation 3 is quite interesting. Firstly, it ditched the forked path layout of the Xbox 360 and PSP games and instead opts for a freer structure.

A map appears and you have the option to skip around, joining races and earning credits for victories. Each Grand Prix has a set number of races, rules on types of car that can be entered and a variety of tracks. There will be around 160 races from rookie to legend, so you're likely to be in Ridge State for some time to come.

This freedom to enter whenever and wherever you want should mean that both newbies and *Ridge Racer* fanatics alike can find their niche in the game. We're betting a similar structure will appear for setting-up Grand Prix among friends online.



monitor

PlayStation 2

OFFICIAL magazine UK

OF ALL THE LAUNCH titles *Ridge Racer* is the one most likely to inspire envy in any non-PS3 owning mates. Now it's been demoed running velvety smooth in 1080p, we've no reason to doubt that this will be the bomb

HOT OR NOT

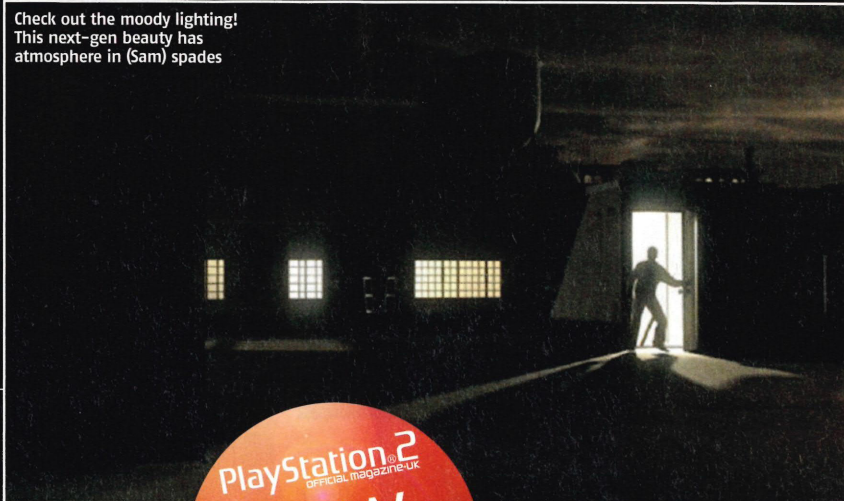
TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN



All-night diners – a must-have in any film noir game



Check out the moody lighting! This next-gen beauty has atmosphere in (Sam) spades



PUBLISHER ROCKSTAR GAMES | DEVELOPER TEAM BONDI | WEBSITE WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/LANOIRE

L.A. NOIRE

NOIRE IS THE NEW BLACK

Forget inner-city gangs and tough school kids, Rockstar is going back the era of hard-boiled detectives and pulp fiction for its first outing on PS3. The legendary developer and publisher of the *Grand Theft Auto* series has snapped up former *Getaway* man Brendan McNamara's stylish new outing, *L.A. Noire*.

Going by the early teaser trailer, newly formed developer Team Bondi's vision of 1940's L.A. is going to be incredibly authentic. It's as if the team has been bingeing on James Ellroy novels and Edward Hopper paintings specifically to bring the faded glamour of all-night diners, beige raincoats, and sulphur-lamp lit cities back to life. Every last detail, from the cars – all outrageous curves and white-wall tires – right down to the uniform of the man glimpsed serving hotdogs, is absolutely spot on. Even the music, a brash trumpeted jazz number fits the visuals perfectly.

Far from simply relocating *The Getaway* to a sepiatic City Of Angels, *L.A. Noire* puts you in the position of a detective investigating a series of murders. Using a blend of action and detection you'll face an 'open-ended' challenge as you attempt to track down the killers. Most interesting will be whether McNamara and his new team will be able to use PS3 to live up to their promise of seamlessly blending cinema and gaming – something *The Getaway* never managed. ■ AH

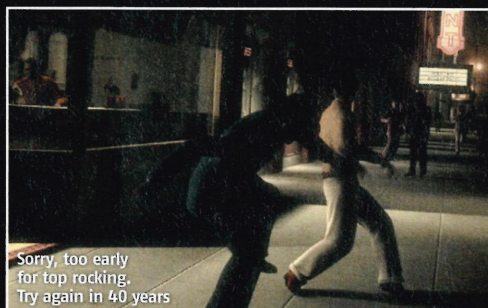
monitor

PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

IT'S EARLY DAYS and we're yet to see any actual, in-game footage. However, this teaser of Rockstar's latest captures the '40s gangster feel perfectly, and that bodes well. Watch this one like a hawk

HOT OR NOT?

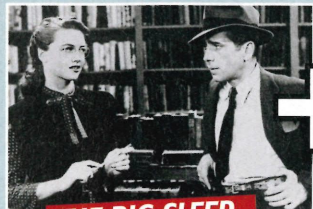
TEPID WARM HOT BOILING MELTDOWN



Sorry, too early for top rocking. Try again in 40 years

PLAYING DETECTIVE

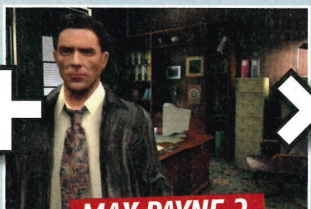
So what the hell is *L.A. Noire*?



THE BIG SLEEP



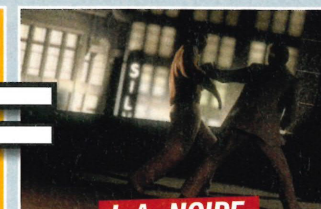
L.A. CONFIDENTIAL



MAX PAYNE 2



ROCKSTAR



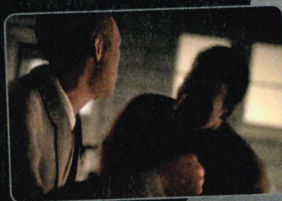
L.A. NOIRE

It's on
PS3**SCENE 1**

The trailer opens on a neon-lit street in '40s Los Angeles. The camera zooms in on two cops, sat in a car. They stop at the lights and start talking about making a murder collar. Suddenly a man walks in front of them. "That's him" screams one of the cops, and the passenger bolts out of the car to give chase. The two dash across roads, past pedestrians, and narrowly avoid a speeding tram. The cop then follows his suspect into an all-night diner.

**SCENE 2**

The suspect crashes through the back door of the diner scrambling up a fire escape and onto the building's roof, with the cop hot on his heels. The criminal opens the roof top entrance door to make it look like he's bolted back downstairs, and then hides in the shadows ready for a fight. When the cop reaches the roof he checks the door, but he smells a rat. Meanwhile his mark lurks in the shadows.

**SCENE 3**

The cop searches the shadows, so the suspect jumps him and a dirty, frantic fist-fight ensues. The brawlers scrap their way to the edge of the roof top. Suddenly the criminal loses his footing and starts to flail, desperate to avoid plunging to the street below. The cop makes a grab for him, but it's too late... The unlucky perp falls to the pavement below. Crowds gather around the dead body as the cop's partner moves in barking a harsh "LAPD. Nothing to see here". He then looks up at his partner on the roof. Fade to *noire*.





Test Drive's roads vary from winding, hilly two-lane affairs to massive freeways



The interiors are nicely modelled and you can get them in a range of colours



With nearly 600 square miles of island to explore, the sat nav is invaluable



With nearly 600 square miles of island to explore, the sat nav is invaluable

WORDS: NICK ELLIS

PlayStation 2
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK
EXCLUSIVE!

130
01:34:39
2/6
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5/19

TEST DRIVE *Unlimited*

OPS2 buckles up with Atari's new racer. Next stop, gear head paradise...

Would you believe that it has been a few months shy of twenty years since the first *Test Drive* title roared onto games machines? Us neither. Things have come quite some way since the franchise's Amiga and Commodore 64 debut, and this month, having bagged an exclusive first play of the latest *Test Drive* (out in February), we got to see just how far.

The star of the *Unlimited* show is without question its game world, Oahu – at 597 square miles the third largest island in the Hawaiian chain, and also home to Hawaii's capital, Honolulu. When we say Oahu is *Unlimited*'s game world, that's exactly what we mean: the whole island, including all the real world cities, towns and topography, plus an accurately mapped road system. At least, that's how it was on Xbox 360. But this is the current-gen PS2, which means that the island will no doubt be broken down into segments that load up separately during play, right? Wrong. Once you've got the game up and running, the whole island is there right from the word go, and you can drive from top to bottom and side to side without seeing a single loading



● CAR-PG ELEMENTS

This displays your current 'XP' (for want of a better description). Just driving will keep this ticking along, but executing drift moves and catching air, for example, will rack up the points quickly. Naturally, you're also rewarded for racing success. Acquire a specific total and you'll go up a level, and with it, new, stiffer challenges will be unlocked.

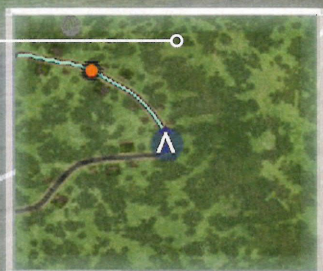
● KEEPING IT REAL

All the cars in the game are fully licensed and, from bonnet badge to wheel rims, accurately modelled. There's a comprehensive range of motors, too, from classic sports cars and American muscle cars to one-off concept models. And because there are so many different class-specific challenges on offer, you'll end up racing every type of car. Well, you will if you want to complete the game.



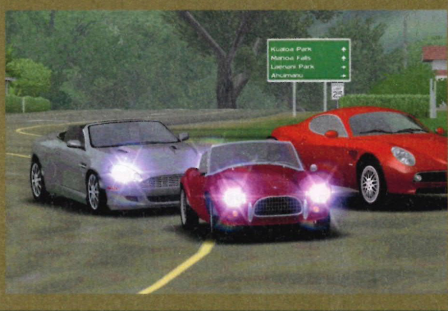
● SAT NAV

Oahu is a big old place so it's easy to get lost, but thanks to the game's excellent satellite navigation system (which, incidentally, is voiced by a rather sexy-sounding lady) you won't. Your immediate surroundings are always displayed on the HUD, as is the route to your current objective, and a quick press of will bring up the complete island map.



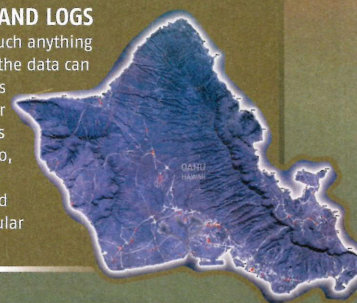
● CALL THAT CORNERING?

The AI racers are wonderfully erratic. Sometimes they'll barely put a wheel wrong and it'll take all your skill to beat them, other times they'll fight amongst themselves for track position and take each other out. Or alternatively, just mess it up royally on a clear road, like the driver ahead.

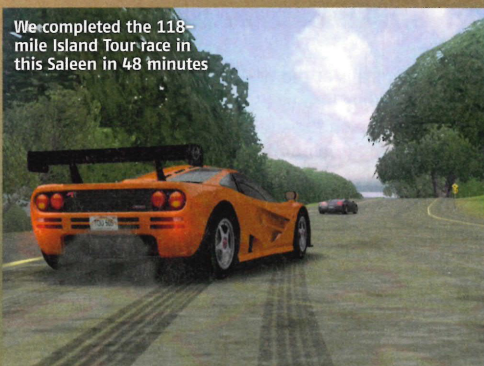


● RAINING STATS AND LOGS

Much like *GTA*, pretty much anything you do is recorded and the data can be viewed from the stats menu in your house. For example, each new car's mileometer starts at zero, so you can see just how much of this huge island you've hooned a particular motor around.



We completed the 118-mile Island Tour race in this Saleen in 48 minutes



screen. We think you'll agree, that's an astonishing technical achievement.

So it's a huge and fully streaming world. Cool. But surely the game will be blighted by unsightly pop-up, pitiful draw-distances and illusion-shattering slowdown, right? Wrong again. Oahu is rendered in glorious detail, all tropical beaches, sleepy towns and miles of luscious greenery, with minimal pop-up and far-reaching draw distances. Whether you're slinging your car around a winding mountain pass or flooring it down a five-lane freeway at 200mph, you can't help but wonder how developer Melbourne House has managed to fit it all in *and* make it look so good. Of course it's great to have swaying palms and golden sands but a quality racing game needs more than that...

FIRST GEAR

No, what you need for a quality racing game is a line-up of the world's classiest petrol-guzzlers, and

Unlimited isn't going to disappoint on that front either. Cars from marques including TVR, Jaguar, Mercedes, Dodge, Aston Martin and McLaren are present, and there are many more besides. The final list has yet to be drawn up, but it'll contain around 100 different models, from relatively ordinary runarounds like the VW Golf to bhp monsters such as the Saleen S7 Twin Turbo and rare classics like the Lamborghini Miura P400 SV. It's by no means a definitive listing – Ferrari is absent due to licensing restrictions for example – but there's ample here to satisfy the filthiest of car porn addicts.

So we've got the cars and we've got the environment, but how about the actual 'game' bit of the game? Well, let's take things from the top – the very start of *Unlimited*. Oddly enough, you start your *Test Drive* tropical road trip at an airport departure gate, and first on the agenda is to choose which of the eight or so 'passengers' waiting to board is going to be your avatar. While it doesn't affect the game in any way, your

THE TUNING SHOP

Unlike *Need For Speed* and *Midnight Club*, *TDU*'s tuning options are distinctly underwhelming. There are no fancy spoilers or hood scoops. Instead each car has three levels of internal performance pack to purchase. However, tuning your existing motor will likely take it up a class or two, enabling you to tackle races in a higher class without forking out for a new motor. Notch up some victories and before long you'll be able to buy that AC Cobra you've had your eye on.



TEST DRIVE

Unlimited

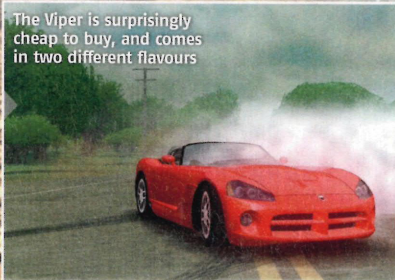
HOT PROPERTY

Buy yourself a place in the sun. Or ten.

So you want to be a sports car collector? Then you're going to need somewhere to store all those shiny rides, and *Test Drive* has just the thing – a selection of des res properties dotted around Oahu. They're not free, mind, so you'll have to pop into one of the many estate agents and pay hard cash for 'em. When you start out, the houses tend to be relatively pokey affairs whose garages can store only four vehicles. As you progress, you'll be able to afford sprawling mountain top hideaways or luxury beach side condos. There's no limit to the number of places you can own.



The Viper is surprisingly cheap to buy, and comes in two different flavours



Ah yes, the Pagani Zonda. More of a street-legal rocket ship than a car



► on-screen persona will be visible throughout, even if it's just through the rear windscreen. Naturally, we'd plump for the pretty ladies over the stubbly blokes. With that done, you hop on the plane to Honolulu and upon arrival you're introduced to the basics in a series of mercifully brief tutorials.

First you're taken to a car rental desk and invited to hire a ride (incidentally, you can rent a car at any time from one of several rental firms dotted across the island, and this is an excellent way of competing in class-specific races in a red hot motor that you don't yet have enough cash to buy). Next up you'll get a quick taste of the racing before being whisked off to the estate agents to purchase a house on the island (see 'Hot Property' above). Finally, you need a ride of your own, so it's off to the showroom to see what your relatively meagre budget can stretch too. Then you're done, and the whole island is your oyster, so to speak. If you want to

simply hit the road and go exploring, that's fine, but having seen all those exquisitely shiny, extortionately priced cars in the showrooms, you'll probably want to get stuck into the challenges, where success = cash, and cash = newer, faster cars.

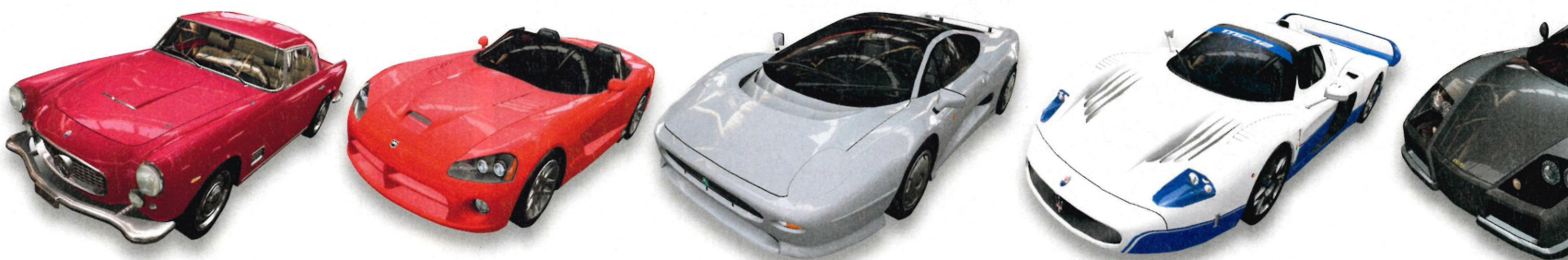
STREETS AHEAD

As we touched on earlier *Test Drive Unlimited* has already appeared on Xbox 360. Happily, from what we've seen so far, *everything* present in that version will appear on PS2. However, what was absent from the early build we played was a significant number of challenges. As it stands, though, the missing challenges are the boring ones – challenges that involve such things as picking up hitchhikers and driving them very carefully from point A to point B. This may change, of course, but for now the focus of PS2 *Unlimited* is firmly on racing AI opponents, driving extremely fast and

testing your skills at the wheel. And you know what? That's absolutely fine by us.

While we're on the subject of Xbox 360 comparisons, the PS2 version is genuinely shaping up to be a lot more fun than its next-gen peer. Really. For the PS2, it's all about getting into the action IMMEDIATELY. There's no farting around (which there's too much of on 360), just "OnetwothreeGO!" and you're off. The handling has also been tweaked for PS2, offering a more arcadey experience with a pronounced *Ridge Racer*-style drift. In addition there are three difficulty settings for each challenge – another absentee on 360. We've played both versions, and while it's obviously not as shiny, the PS2 version looks set to come out firmly on top.

Back on the road, one of *Unlimited*'s finer features is the freedom and variety it offers. Sure it's all good stuff when you're trying to beat your best lap time at the Nurburgring in *Identikit Racer 6*, but in *TDU* there



BEST IN SHOWROOM

"I'll take the Saleen S7, mate"

The island is littered with car showrooms containing some of the world's most prestigious motors, and you can pop in and take any of the available cars for a two-minute test drive whenever you like, even if you're as poor as church mouse. It's a nice teaser for when you're rich enough to just pop out and buy the things outright.



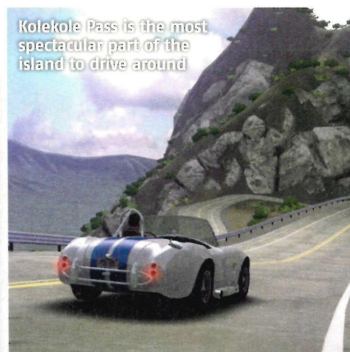
■ Showrooms are classed either by single manufacturer, or by themes, such as these classic European cars.



■ There's a 360 degree camera that allows you to size up potential purchases as they sit gleaming in their showroom spotlight.



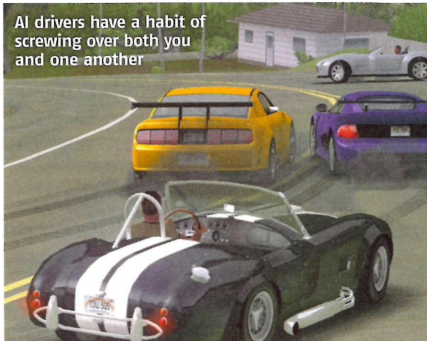
■ As if leching over the bodywork wasn't enough, you can also open up the doors and have a poke around each motor's interior. Mmm, calf skin.



Kolekole Pass is the most spectacular part of the island to drive around



You're never far from a tree, and they'll win most fights with the front of your car



AI drivers have a habit of screwing over both you and one another

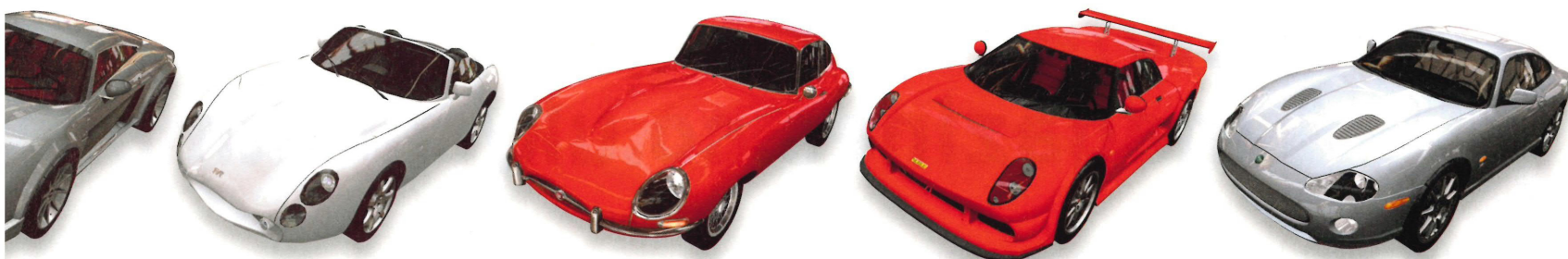


There's plenty of traffic on the roads, but it tends to thin out when you race

are literally hundreds of miles of road, so the races vary from six-laps-around-the-city-block to a tour of the entire island that'll take you the best part of an hour. That's right, an *hour*. What's more, you can design your own races, selecting start and finish points, meaning that a virtually *unlimited* number of bespoke tracks are available. The whole shebang is online, too (a feature that will no doubt prove more popular on the other side of the pond to ours). And here you're able to form car clubs with fellow *TDU*ers around the globe, or simply indulge in all the races available in the offline single-player game. Car clubs are also present offline; you'll be invited to join numerous class-specific clubs, and the challenge here is to rise through the club's ranks by beating other members in races, with the ultimate goal of claiming the presidency and its attendant rewards. It sure as hell beats picking up hitchhikers. We'll be bringing you more on *Test Drive Unlimited* very soon. ■

HAWAII ON A HANDHELD

It's on PSP too, and we've had a play. Incredibly, the developer is set to bring *Test Drive Unlimited* onto PSP in its entirety. Almost. It's basically identical to the PS2 version – so that means the whole island fully streaming without loading times, plus all the cars, houses and challenges. The only significant omission will be the car interiors (and hence the in-car camera). It looks just lovely, and, like the PS2 version, the arcade handling translates beautifully to the single analogue stick. There's online play too, which will allow you to hook up with racers across the globe, form car clubs and compete head-to-head in bespoke races.



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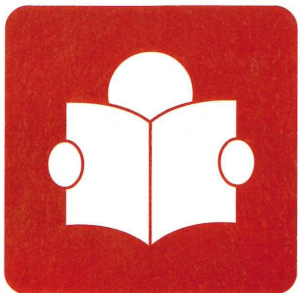


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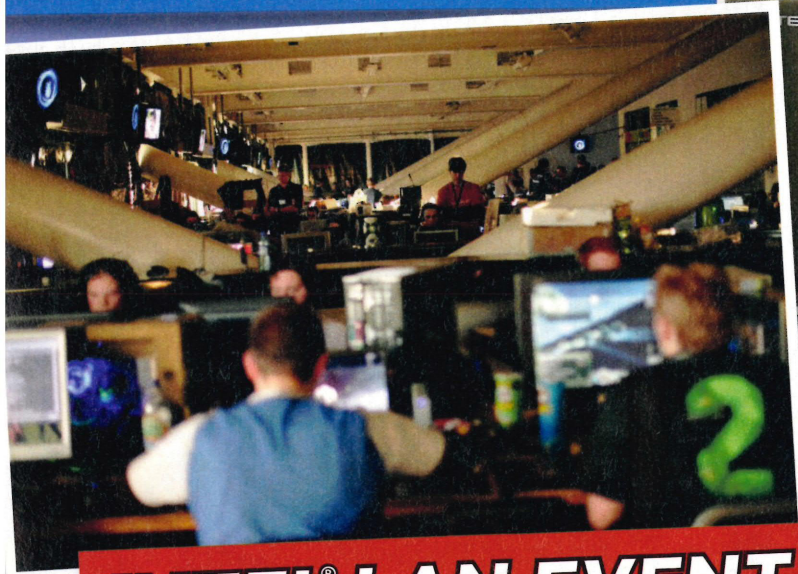
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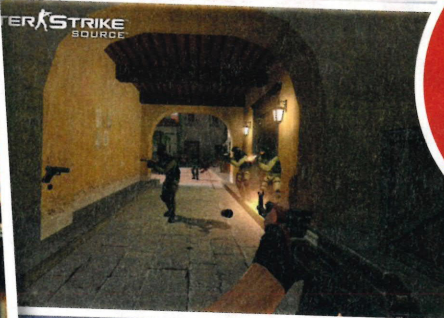
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WORDS: JOEL SHAPIRO

WELCOME TO

FIGHT CLUB

No shirts, no shoes...
just half a dozen games
that are itching to kick
your face off on PS3

DEVELOPER SEGA PUBLISHER SEGA OUT MARCH 2007

VIRTUA FIGHTER 5

The real king of fighters gets back in the ring

Forget all other contenders: in Japan, where arcades are still flourishing and beat-'em-ups are huge, *Virtua Fighter*'s the undisputed king. Special VF cards let gamers carry around customised characters with them, TVs located near game cabinets broadcast tournament rankings and match highlights from around the country, and players like Ice-9 and Chibita are revered as legends.

Why? Because to the elite, *Virtua Fighter*'s the best: scrupulously fair, insanely well-balanced and impossibly deep, with none of *Tekken*'s boring combo memorising, yet boasting gameplay that takes years to master. And *VF5* on PS3 promises to rule – they've fiddled with the evasion system, added two new characters, and tweaked *VF4 Evolution* latecomers Goh and Brad almost beyond recognition. And for anyone who can't be bothered with the intricacies of poke-parrying, it's simply beautiful to behold. Dig out a copy of *VF4* now: next year is the year.

LION RAFALE

Lion's excellent at poking – which isn't as rude as it sounds. His Praying Mantis style's simply excellent for darting in and out with frustrating jabs, and he's the favourite character of Japan's top-ranked VF player, Chibita.

SARAH BRYANT

Sarah's got the same Flamingo – read: 'perching on one leg' – stance as *Tekken*'s Hwoarang, and is the nippiest character in the game. Being tall and really light though, she's very easy to knock into the air and out of the ring.

LAU CHAN

One of the best characters in the game, Lau's all about keeping the pressure up with rushing moves and aggression. We're also big fans of his double chest-stomp to downed opponents – it's very Bruce Lee.

AKIRA YUKI

Widely regarded as the most difficult character to use, most VF fighters agree that a well-played Akira will beat anyone, but that it'll take years to get that good. Yeah, you heard right: years.

JEFFREY MCWILD

Jeffrey's your classic strong-but-slow character with what's known as a good 'strike/throw guessing game'. Basically, this means that lots of his punching combos can have a throw slotted in to catch blocking opponents off-guard. Because he's a bit flabby, it's also very difficult to juggle him.

JACKIE BRYANT

Jackie's a decent beginner character, but good high-low combo possibilities make him a technical choice, too. Nobody picks him though, because he's a whiny brat with really stupid hair.

LEI-FEI

Lei's your classic button-masher favourite. He's got four different stances, which makes things massively confusing if someone's simply pounding the pad with their hand hammers. He's also in the tournament to murder Lau, despite being a Shaolin monk.

WOLF HAWKFIELD

Native American wrestler Wolf is one of the game's heavier characters and very difficult to pull off juggle combos on. He's also got an insane selection of pro-wrestling-style throws, making his grapple attacks tough to defend.

BRAD BURNS

Ladies' man Brad is probably the character who's undergone most changes since *VF4*, where he made a late entry in the *Evo* edition. He's now a bit more balanced, but his kickboxing combos retain all of their horrible rushing power.

EILEEN

Eileen's a monkey kung fu expert who's uncannily similar to *Tekken*'s Ling Xiaoyu – she's nippy, likes turning her back on opponents, and boasts exactly the same turning crescent kick. She's already a firm fan-favourite in Japan.

KAGE-MARU

Unusually for a ninja character, Kage (pronounced 'car-gay') is all about the throws. And in *Virtua Fighter 5* they're much more important than in *Tekken*, typically knocking off about 40% of your opponent's energy in one go. Fans remember him for an infamous move that sees him unleashing a flying head-butt on a downed opponent. Looks painful when he misses.

EL BLAZE

El looks a bit like WWE fan-favourite Rey Mysterio, but his moves are actually loosely based on All Japan Pro Wrestling star KENTA (yes, it's supposed to be written in capitals). He's all about rushing attacks, and always seems frighteningly close to a ring out when we've seen him fight.

GOH HINOGAMI

Not one for *VF* newbies, Goh's outrageous selection of throws is integral to the *VF* throw-counter guessing game: you need to press the *last* command of any given throw, as well as punch and guard, to counter it – which is pretty much impossible when you're fighting someone with eight throws to choose from. Also, his hobby is 'collecting silver accessories'. Yes it is.

PAI CHAN

Pai's what good characters call a 'poking machine' – stop sniggering at the back – which means that she's good at breaking other characters' combos with quick jabs. She's quick and good for beginners, but so light that she's vulnerable to some serious juggling.

VANESSA LEWIS

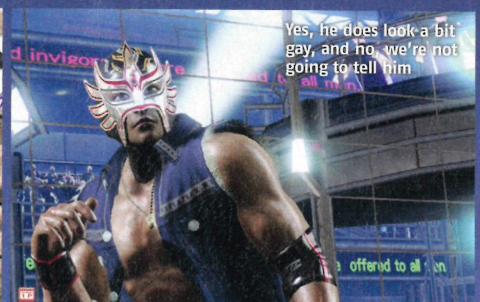
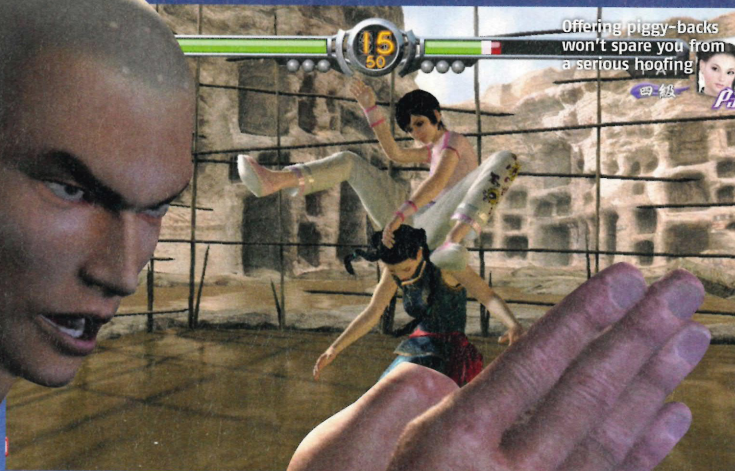
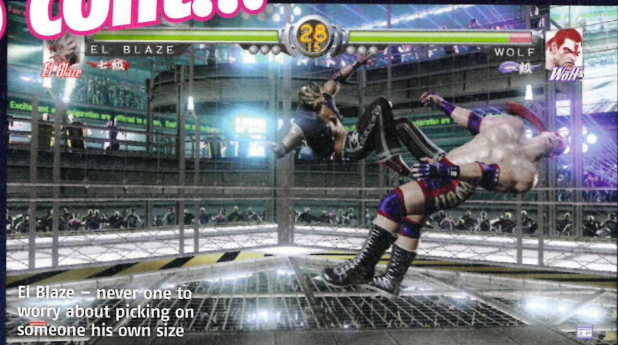
Vanessa's a Vale Tudo (Portuguese for 'anything goes') fighter who's a far cry from the usual light-and-quick female characters. She automatically counters punches if you leave her standing still, and she's got some vicious Muay Thai combos. A favourite.

AOI UMENOKOUJI

Aoi's a tough character to master, but she's got the widest variety of counters in the game, which can make her hugely frustrating to fight against. She's also got a massive crush on Akira, after constantly fighting him as a child...

WELCOME TO FIGHT CLUB

VIRTUA FIGHTER 5 cont...



DEVELOPER EA PUBLISHER EA OUT TBC 2007

DEF JAM 3

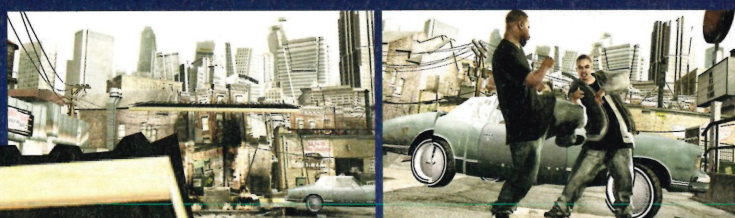
EA's rapper grapplers get set for the thug life on PS3

When it comes to gimmicky innovations, EA is head and shoulders above any other developer out there today. From the Off The Ball™ system in *FIFA* where you control your team mates while in possession of the ball, to the revolutionary Total Punch Control™ that really puts you in the ring in *Fight Night*, they've certainly devised a few. And PS3's going to get the same treatment with the hip-hop heavyweight *Def Jam* 3, and its innovative approach to environmental damage.

"The environment becomes a living breathing entity and acts almost like a third character in a fight," head honcho on *Def Jam* 3, Kudo Tsunoda tells us. "This and many other new ideas will redefine the fighting genre as you know it." While this particular nugget of PR-speak verges on white noise, we're inclined to agree with Mr Tsunoda. You just have to look at the trailer featuring a rugged Ice T and a ripped Ludacris to know that EA means business. And that

bit about your surroundings lending a hand is the most intriguing aspect bar none (see 'Block Party' over the page). Basically, while you're going toe-to-toe with one of the stars of *Def Jam* 3, you'll be able to use the environment to your advantage more effectively than ever before. The sweet spots that you could pummel your opponent's head into in previous *Def Jams* – such as pool tables or jukeboxes – have been elaborated on, so now you can slam him into anything that's immediately around your fight zone. Gas pumps, cars, plate glass windows – anything can be used to dole out a kicking of the most brutal kind.

If that's not enough, the baying crowds are still on hand to pass you a wrench to fix your opponent's skull in a tight spot. Not only that, but the game's hip-hop soundtrack will now have an immediate effect on your fighter. For example, if you're playing as Ludacris and one of his tracks blasts out mid-fight, then he'll become even more



The Jam crew seem to have toned their fashion sense down this season



WELCOME TO FIGHT CLUB DEF JAM 3 cont...

► fired up, giving him the upper hand against whoever he's biffing up at the time. Pretty neat, eh?

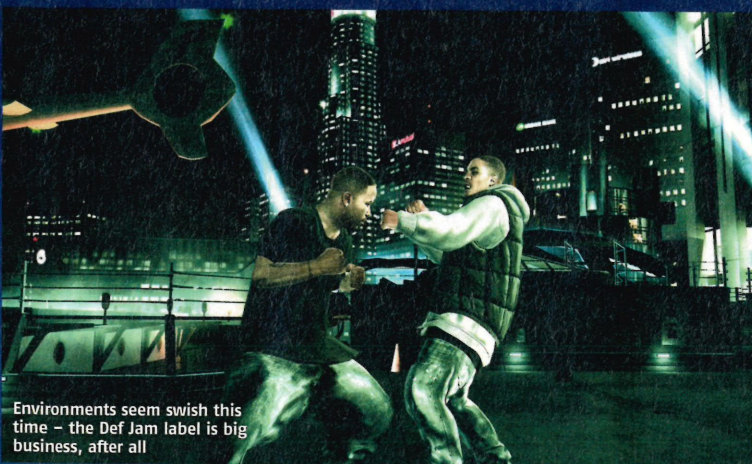
But it's not just the surroundings that have been given an overhaul for *Def Jam 3*. The fighting styles have been tweaked to serve up more of a street-fighting feel than the lumbering wrestling moves from previous outings. EA feels this is more akin to the world of hip-hop after working closely with all their stars during development. It's all in the pursuit of making a genuine hip-hop title and steering away from the stereotypical 'thugs with guns' reputation it was in danger of developing.

This is why *Def Jam 3* isn't just going to be about the brawling, as Kudo explains: "The goal of the Story mode is to build your own record label, sign artists and release songs to become a hip-hop mogul like Jay Z." This means that you'll need to recruit talent, as well as heavy-duty fighters, and then get your crew to the top of the charts. We can almost smell the East verses West coast rivalry from here.

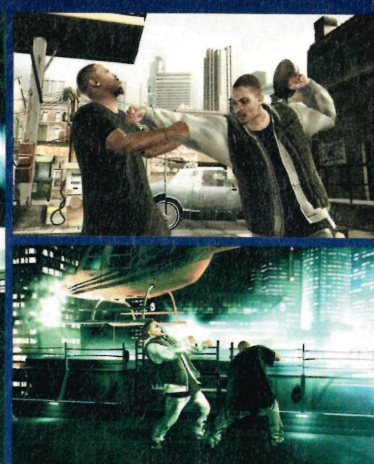
While we already know that Ice T, Ludacris, TI and Big Boi from Outkast will be knocking the snot out of each other, Kudo also tells us that for the first time in *Def Jam 3*, a selection of European artists will also make the cut. UK MC, Lady Sovereign could make an appearance, for example, since she's on the *Def Jam* label in the US. Frankly, we're massively excited about the prospect of a more diverse selection of fighters and we've got high hopes for *Def Jam's* new label-building focus. Bring it on. ■



"Will you be able to throw your opponent into the car wash? Surely you will"



Environments seem swish this time – the Def Jam label is big business, after all



BLOCK PARTY

In *Def Jam 3*, the whole environment literally jumps up and down to the music as you duke it out with your opponent. But this bouncing isn't just cosmetic, as it also determines a couple of things mid-action. For example, because the block is jiggling to the beat, you'll have to learn how the track develops to make full use of the hazards – for example, as you can see here, a gas flame that pumps to the

base line. If you nail the rhythm and throw your foe into the flickering heat at just the right time, then he'll be torched instantly.

The sight of the bumping buildings also indicates whether the momentum of the fight is working in your favour (lively) or whether you're having your ass whooped (sedate). We've heard about interactive environments before, but this is in a league of its own...



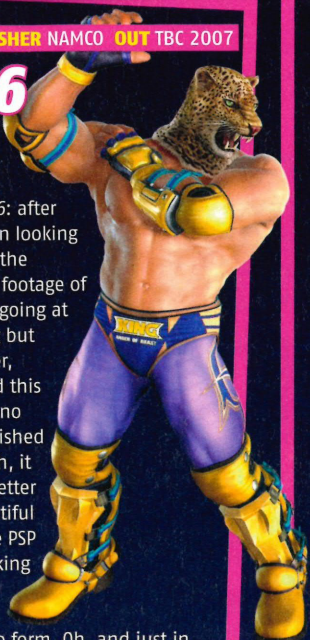
"And that's for forgetting to buy me a scotch egg from the garage..."



DEVELOPER NAMCO PUBLISHER NAMCO OUT TBC 2007

TEKKEN 6

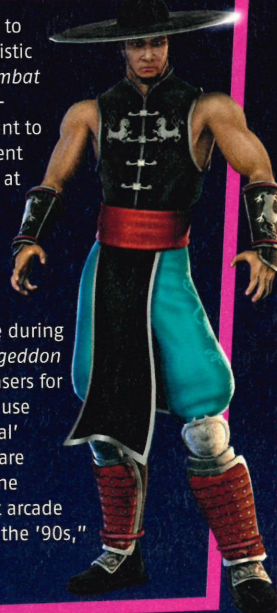
Namco undeniably scuffed it with everyone's first impressions of *Tekken 6*: after the 'target render' of Jin looking all lifelike and sweaty, the scaled-back cut-scene footage of Lili, Jin and Hwoarang going at it couldn't be anything but disappointing. However, Namco has since stated this early footage will bear no resemblance to the finished game. That said though, it is looking noticeably better than the already-beautiful *Tekken 5*, and with the PSP *Dark Resurrection* marking a new high point for the series, this could be a welcome return to form. Oh, and just in case you only saw the 26-second version of the trailer, look on www.gametrailers.com to see the full-fat, five-minute version.



DEVELOPER MIDWAY PUBLISHER MIDWAY OUT TBC 2007

MORTAL KOMBAT 7

Our goal this time around is to make the most photo-realistic MK game ever," says *Mortal Kombat* creator Ed Boon of the recently-announced MK7. "We really want to make people pause for a moment and wonder if they are looking at real people in costumes as opposed to polygons." Which might be upsetting when they start tearing each others' spines out. Theoretically, everybody was supposed to die during the last *Kombat*, but the *Armageddon* endings we've seen involve teasers for a new chapter, which will also use PS3's controller in 'experimental' ways. But the best bit? "There are lots of ways we can create online communities to reproduce that arcade atmosphere that was so big in the '90s," says Boon. We can't wait.



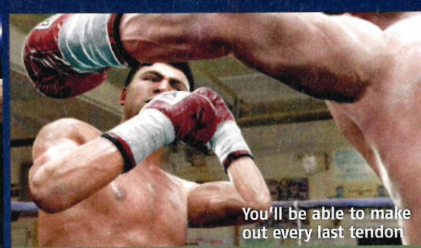
DEVELOPER NAMCO PUBLISHER TBC OUT TBC

SOUL CALIBUR IV

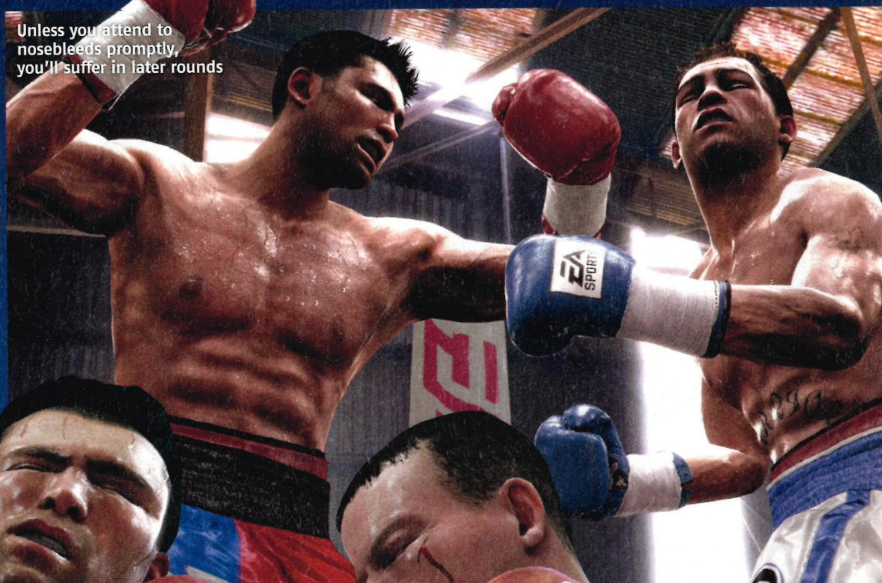
Namco producer Daisuke Uchiyama has already confirmed that it's in development, but other than that little is known about the fourth title in the *Soul Calibur* series. We're expecting all the characters to return, with the possible exception of *Tekken*'s Heihachi – who wasn't well-received by hardcore followers of the series. If Namco does decide to introduce any third-party characters – like the GameCube version's Link, say – we'd like to cast our vote for *God Of War*'s Kratos and his impossibly cool Blades Of Chaos, please.



Arturo Gatti needs to stick and move against Frazier



You'll be able to make out every last tendon



Unless you attend to nosebleeds promptly, you'll suffer in later rounds

DEVELOPER EA CANADA PUBLISHER EA SPORTS OUT MARCH 2007

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3

Painful to watch, but in a good way

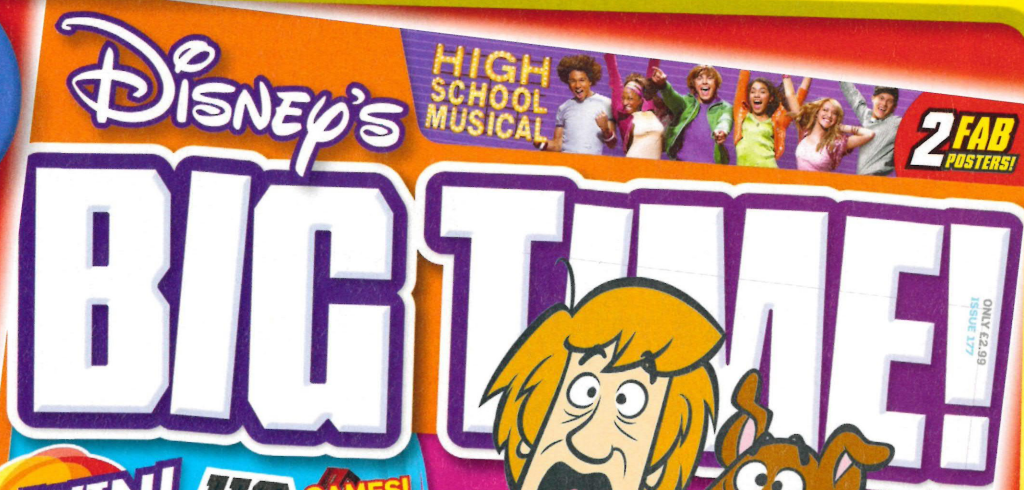
Oh. We've been punched in the face before, but it wasn't like this: an early version of *Fight Night Round 3*'s Get In The Ring mode sees the screen totally obscured by flashes of white light every time you get hit by a punch. Of course, that means you're less likely to see the next punch coming until the cumulative damage leaves the blackness closing in and the next thing you actually manage to focus on are the gleaming lights on the ceiling.

It's a nice system but a shade overdone at the moment – jabs shouldn't really have this effect, even if they're being thrown by Muhammad Ali. If EA tones it down slightly so that only a solid punch really rattles your cage, this could be the most authentic recreation of fist/face hurting since that time we got concussed in a Birmingham nightclub. ■



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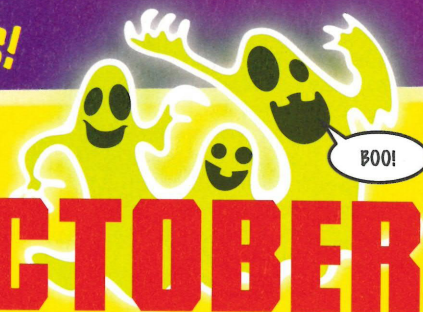
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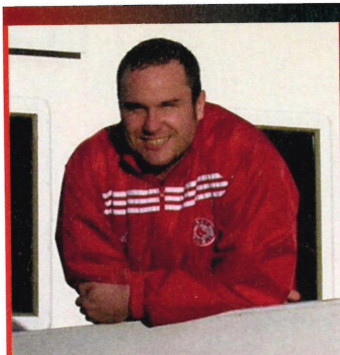
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review

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



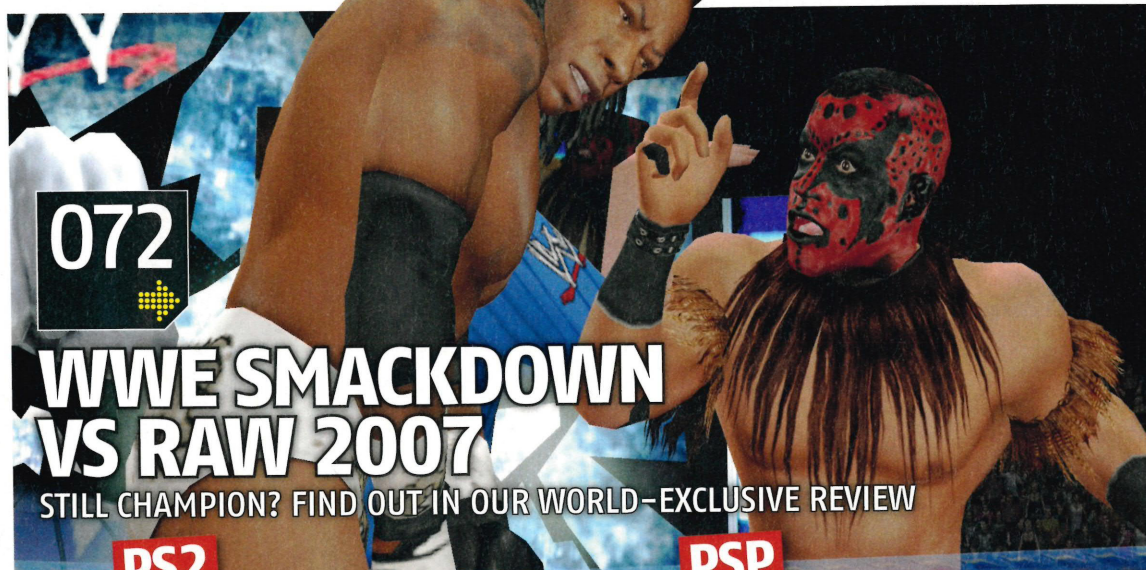
What a month. The last four weeks have been the most chaotic I've experienced since clambering aboard the good ship PS2. We've had an almost daily intake of potentially great games, and as a result there's been some frenzied yet friendly in-house squabbling over who should review what.

New Editor Nellis decreed that he fancied a spot of *PES6*, forcing the rest of us to sulk for two days while he relayed how brilliantly his Plymouth Argyle side were performing in Master League. Ever the naughty schoolboy, George got down to a bit of *Canis Canem Edit* behind the bike sheds, while Andy tested out his stealthy skills on *Splinter Cell Double Agent*. That left your grap-loving (though pleasingly Spandex-free) Games Ed to get knee-deep in the new *SmackDown*, while playing *Vice City Stories* on the side. To be honest, I've had worse months.

Amazingly, none of us were left disappointed. All of these big names delivered, as you'll find out over the next 36 pages. As an added bonus, a fair few not-so-glamorous titles delivered pleasant surprises, too. This might just be our strongest Reviews section ever, and for that reason alone, the pad-breaking, word-churning chaos has been well worth it.

Ben

Ben Wilson,
Games editor



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WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007

STILL CHAMPION? FIND OUT IN OUR WORLD-EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

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PSP

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MORTAL KOMBAT: ARMAGEDDON

More *MK* doing what *MK* does best: ripping off heads and squirting blood in your eyes. Yummy

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PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6

It's Milan-style slow build-up play all the way in Konami's latest work of footy wonderment

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NEED FOR SPEED CARBON

The high-octane classic gets team play and Tarmac-shredding canyon duels

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SPLINTER CELL DOUBLE AGENT

Fisher returns for another orgy of stealth, strategy and slayings. Pass the night vision goggles

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DIRGE OF CERBERUS: FINAL FANTASY VII

The PSone classic gets a sequel – nine years later

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CANIS CANEM EDIT

The Game Formerly Known As *Bully* arrives at long last, and (phew!) proves well worth the wait

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Glorious prequel to the free-roaming classic

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A crushing disappointment on PS2, will Don Corleone's arrival on PSP fare any better?

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Seeking high-impact combos, bloody kills and, um, chess? Then try this for size

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Classic retro shooter with a modern twist loses none of its sheen on the handheld

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FOOTBALL MANAGER HANDHELD 2007

The beautiful game, only in tiny spreadsheet form

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FIFA 07

This year EA finally got footy right on PS2. Will their Zidane-esque golden touch spread to PSP?

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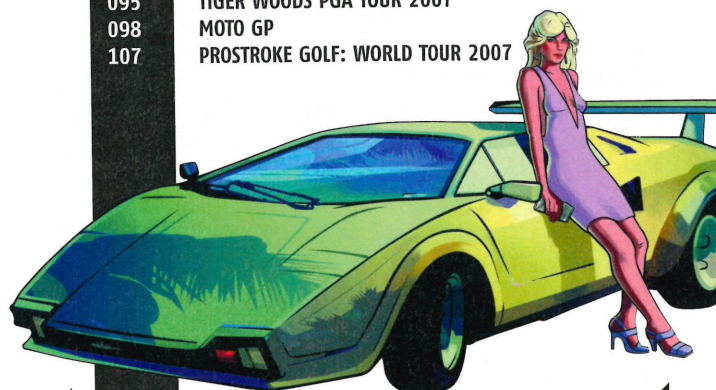
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2007

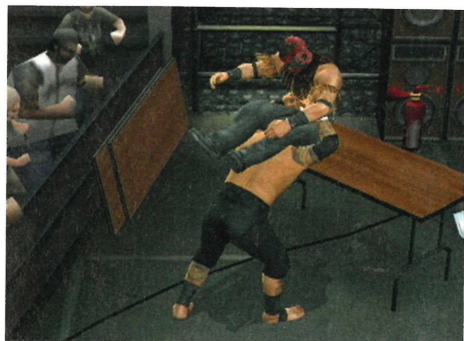
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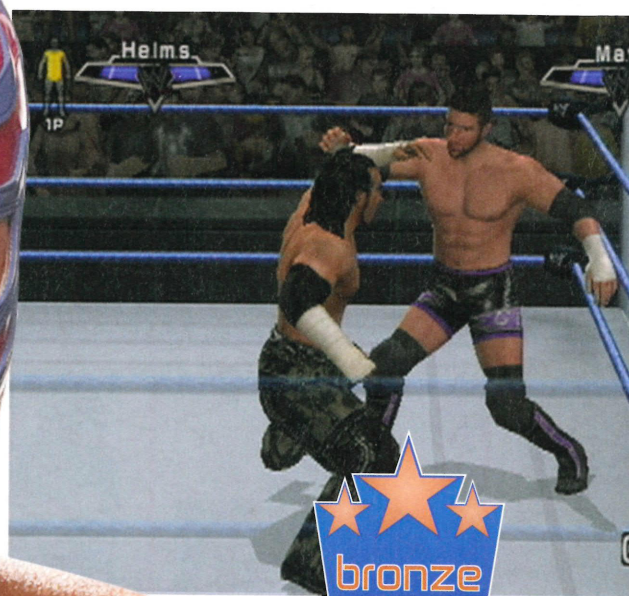
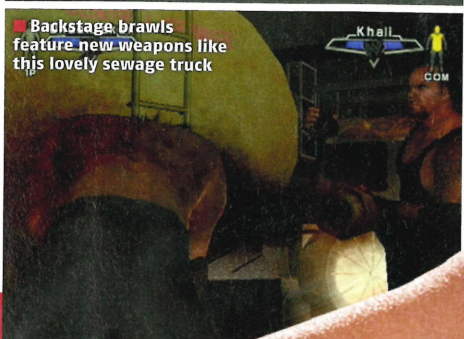
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PROSTROKE GOLF: WORLD TOUR 2007

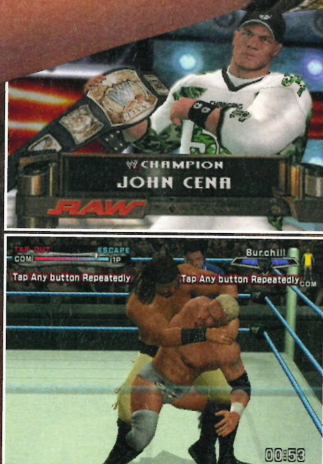




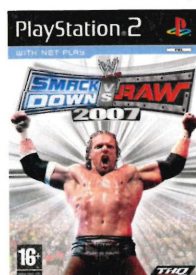
■ Backstage brawls feature new weapons like this lovely sewage truck



★ ★ ★
bronze
PlayStation 2
official magazine-uk



■ Just looking at the Perfect Plex gives us back pain



WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007

DETAILS

PUBLISHER THQ
DEVELOPER YUKE'S
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1-6
OUT 10 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE
WWW.SVR2007.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE YES

AT A GLANCE

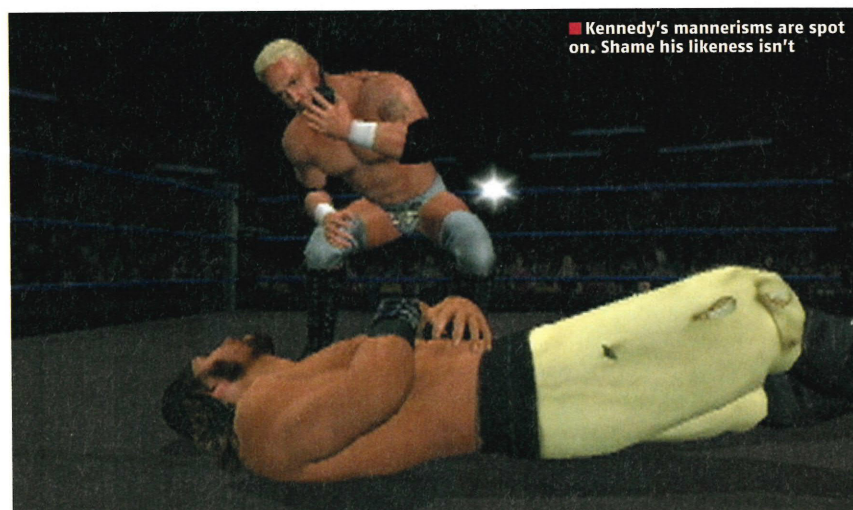
THQ's all-conquering wrestling game gets a completely reworked control system, an updated roster, a selection of new legends and an extra match type – the six-man 'Money In The Bank' ladderfest.

The long-time king of the ring clings to its crown

The current blizzard of child-friendly ads rudely interrupting your TV dinners these days can only mean one thing: Christmas is coming. And, as usual, Santa's sporting a dodgy red coat, dishevelled beard and is lugging a few thousand sackfuls of the latest WWE game behind him. Yuke's – the Japanese developer of the omnipresent grapple franchise – has created such a massive game series that it could probably shove a blank disc inside a WWE-themed box and still watch copies fly off the shelves. Fortunately for the army of 'rassle fans out there, the developer has gone one step further, revamping the control system and serving up 67 playable superstars for this, the sixth PS2 incarnation of *SmackDown*.

CONTROL YOURSELF

You'll notice the initially fiddly new control system within seconds. Basic grapple holds are mapped to the right analogue stick rather than the **○** button, and each direction performs a different move. Holding **△** while pushing the stick initiates a strong grapple, which can, if you so desire, then be turned into a high impact move with another push of the stick. Alternatively, you can drag your opponent around using the left stick, or perform an 'ultimate control move' by pressing R3. The latter enables you to carry your opponent on your shoulders at your leisure and then hit a suplex, throw, or piledriver.



Kennedy's mannerisms are spot on. Shame his likeness isn't

Re-learning the controls takes time and commitment – we spent two days playing non-stop before we started to get comfortable with them. Once acclimatised however, the system feels even more intuitive than before, thanks mainly to the environmental hotspots that are activated by dragging your opponent to a particular section of the ring or arena (see 'Going Interactive' below). Although these areas feel gimmicky at first, they're actually a well-honed inclusion that you'll settle into ➔



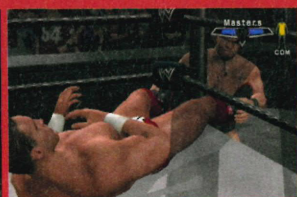
GOING INTERACTIVE

How to make good use of *SmackDown*'s cracking environmental hotspots. And when we say 'cracking', we don't mean it figuratively...



ROPE BOING

Is your mate a Mariah Carey fan? Then bounce him on the top strand for a few minutes and he'll be knocking off a perfect rendition of her painfully pitched smash hit *Hero* in no time at all.



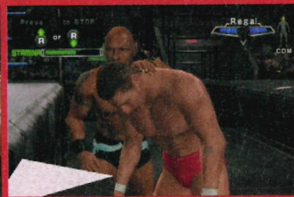
MEAT MINCER

Are your opponent's vegetables still intact, despite you pummelling him like a lump of fresh dough? Then drag him to the corner of the ring and introduce his 'little wrestler' to the ringpost.



THROAT INSPECTION

Little Rey seems have become a bit lost on the ring apron. Oh dear. Never mind though, as some well-placed forearm to his exposed throat should restore his positional awareness.



ALTERNATIVE B-BALL

Fancy some basketball, but accidentally picked up your swimming trunks instead of your Bulls shirt? No worries, as you can just use your buddy's noggin as a convenient ball substitute. Three points!



CRANIUM CRUSH

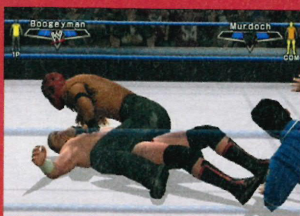
Here's a novel use for the MOT-less banger you've left rusting out front: shove a mate's head beneath the chassis and make that bonnet dance. And remember kids... Don't try this at home.

LEARNING TO BOOGEY

Face-painted, fur-wearing oddball The Boogeyman is our favourite playable character. If you're inexperienced regarding the man's peculiar habits, here's our guide to life as a worm-eating weirdo.



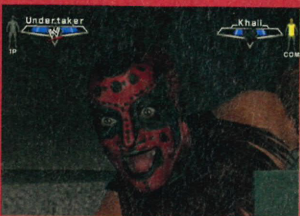
1. Don't just stroll to the ring like a normal grappler. Instead, smash a clock over your bicep and convulse like you've just locked eyes with Cherie Blair. In her birthday suit.



2. Soften your opponent up, then slam him chops-first into the canvas. Now lie across his sorry carcass with your elbow in his face as the ref counts to three.



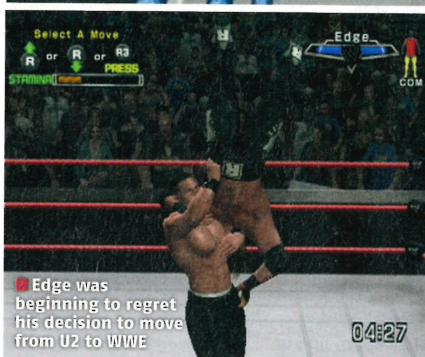
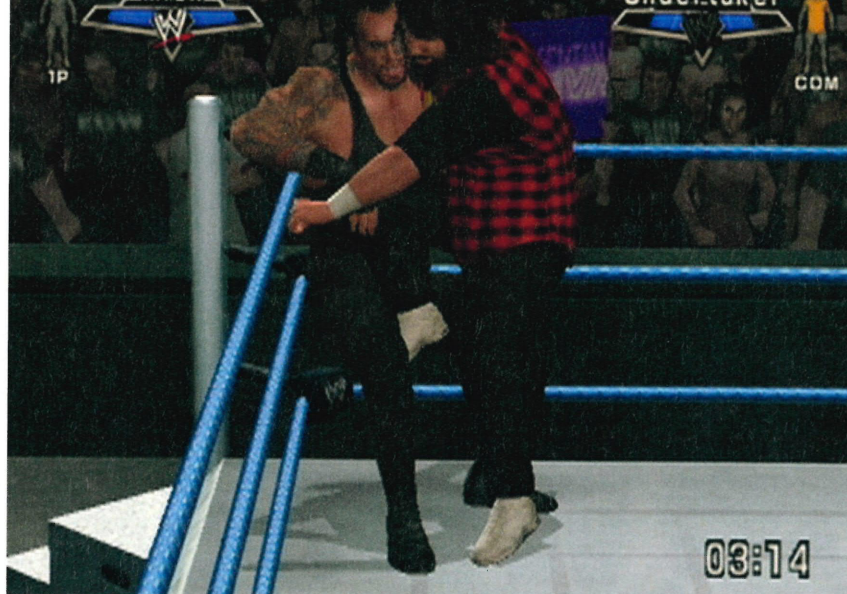
3. As a sportsmanlike gesture aimed at replenishing your beaten foe's energy levels, assist him with his post-match meal – a gullet full of tasty, succulent worms. Yum!



4. Finally, pop backstage and take refuge in the nearest vehicle. Then wait to frighten other unsuspecting fighters during their Parking Lot Brawls. Job done.

using once or twice a match, just like in televised WWE contests.

Reversals have also been modified. You still use the shoulder buttons to counter, but now your timing has to be accurate to a millisecond – there's no more hammering **□** until your opponent goes to grapple you. As a result, reversing is now nails – even on Normal difficulty – and the CPU will beat on you unrepentantly once it gains control of the match. The inclusion of sliders which enable you to customise AI actions like reversals, weapon attacks and stamina recovery is a masterstroke, but it takes plenty of



Edge was beginning to regret his decision to move from U2 to WWE



experimenting to fine-tune these correctly. Still, they're a welcome tool and do manage to add a more in-depth range to the gameplay.

Other praiseworthy inclusions to this year's update are the ability to double stack tables during ladder matches and the completely reworked ladder match, while the removal of bout-opening mini-games also makes sense – they always did feel like padding to us. Sadly, much of the commentary is reshaped from last year, and quickly becomes repetitive. It's also worth noting that the Fulfil Your Fantasy match type has been cut, but who wants to see Divas ripping one another's clothes off? Oh...

SEASON'S GREETINGS

This year's Season mode picks up where last year's left off, with short storyline threads lasting four Raw or SmackDown shows and culminating in a Pay-Per-View event. Again, the developers enlisted real WWE writers to pen these stories, and their influence is obvious – while we were playing as Mick Foley, Triple H appointed himself General Manager of Raw and launched a series of

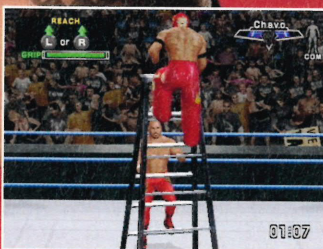
matches to find a number-one contender for the WWE title we'd recently won. But a twist arose in the lead-up to the Backlash event, as Trips unveiled that this new challenger was none other than himself. This is exactly the sort of thing you see watching Raw, bleary-eyed, in the early hours of Tuesday morning.

To enhance this authenticity, Season mode is now managed using a basic version of the WWE.com website (which hosts storyline updates and a shop where you purchase unlockable items, such as Legends and belts) and a mobile phone which relays smartly scripted voice messages from grapple friends and rivals. Complete a story arc and you even get a WWE magazine feature recapping it.

Factor in the great-looking cut-scenes and you have an immersive mode, but it still lacks choice, and winning or losing only affects the storyline during Pay-Per-View events. The end result is a solid main feature, but you never feel fully in control of your character's path.

GRASPING FOR GLORY

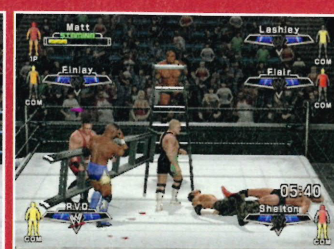
SmackDown 2007's ladder matches explained, step by step...



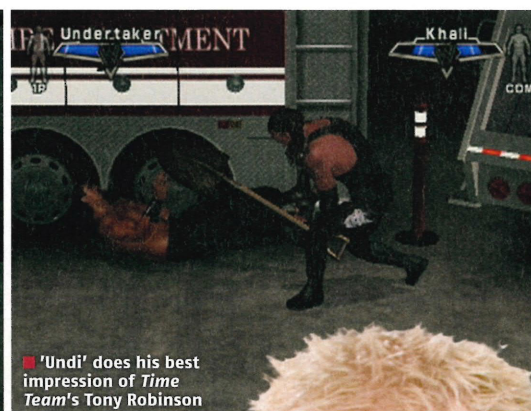
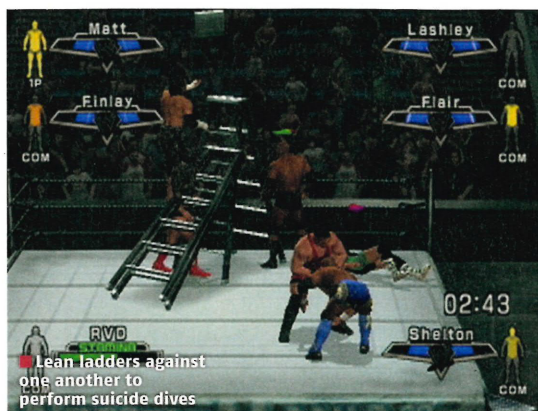
As well as the control system being tweaked, both types of ladder match (the standard version, and the new 'Money In The Bank' addition) have been overhauled. Winning is no longer as simple as climbing up and tapping **○** to nab the prize.



Instead, you're forced to reach for the belt with the joystick's sticks representing your arms. Once you've got a hand on the gold, you need to move the stick to find its 'sweet spot', then cling on as the belt's 'life force' gauge (seen here) depletes.



The longer you grip, the more stamina you lose – and the more chance your opponent has of knocking you off your lofty perch. In Money In The Bank matches, with six superstars fighting to grab the all-important suitcase, winning is a lottery.



■ Hulk Hogan and Cactus Jack are among the unlockable characters



MAKE NO MISTAKE, SMACKDOWN STILL REPRESENTS THE PINNACLE OF WRESTLING ON PLAYSTATION 2

An area of *SmackDown* which 'rattle fans always scrutinise is the roster. WWE wrestlers come and go on a regular basis, so every year the game features characters that have already left WWE. Trish Stratus and recent TNA addition Kurt Angle are this year's examples. There's been no attempt to recreate WWE's third brand, ECW, although The Big Show is included as a Raw wrestler. A handful of notable superstars, like long-term tag champs The Spirit Squad and comedy act Eugene, are missing altogether.

While it's easy to pick holes in an impressively vast roster that was assembled months back, it should be noted that every wrestler featured in the game (other than the weirdly-drawn Ken Kennedy model) has their entrance and mannerisms down to a tee. Kane looks genuinely troubled by some form of inner demon, Viscera's 'bottom love' finishing move is both awkward and hilarious and new characters like Bobby Lashley, Umaga, Finlay and Johnny Nitro all look completely mint. *SmackDown* really excels in this area, and knowing how closely wrestlingphiles analyse entrances and movesets, that's a major plus point for the game.

Impressive though all these improvements are, for the most part they feel incremental.

Make no mistake, *SmackDown* still represents the pinnacle of wrestling on PS2, but old-skool fans may find the new controls prohibitive, and it's that little bit harder for newbies to pick up and play. This is still a superbly authentic wrestling effort, it just doesn't seem to have advanced enough from its predecessor to earn the 9/10 score we gave that game. Deeper season options next time around would see that put right.

■ Ben Wilson

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK	
Graphics	10 Eye-catching blood, sweat and muscles
Sound	06 Like last year – accurate but repetitive
Gameplay	08 New controls eventually get the job done
Lifespan	08 Array of unlockables will keep you going
An influx of enjoyable new characters and stacks of authenticity keep this the finest grapple game on the planet	
8/10	

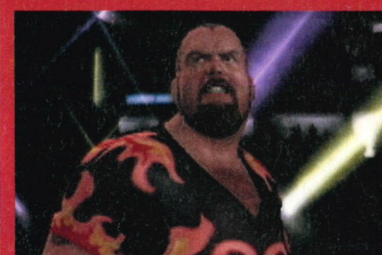
ABSOLUTE LEGENDS

Five of the sixteen unlockable Legends have never featured in *SmackDown* before. Here's the lowdown on all of them



MR PERFECT

Master technician who battled Bret 'Hit Man' Hart in one of the greatest matches ever at SummerSlam '91. Sadly passed away in 2003.



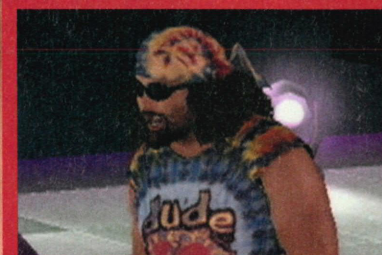
BAM BAM BIGELOW

One of the most athletic 'big men' ever. 'The Beast From The East' was feared for his massively tattooed bonnet and his head-butt from the top rope.



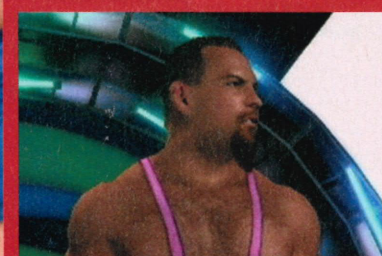
DUSTY RHODES

The American Dream's matches with Ric Flair are the stuff of legend. His late-'80s WWF comeback, complete with yellow polka-dot ringwear, is not.



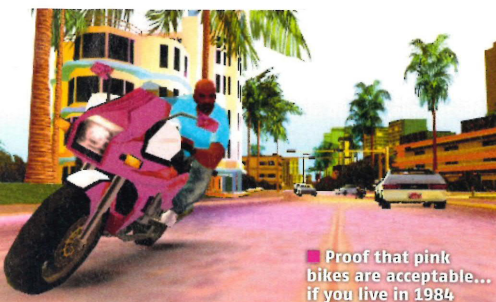
DUDE LOVE

The third of Mick Foley's alter egos. This one's a jive-dancing hippy with Bee Gees-style (read: castrato-pitch) theme music.

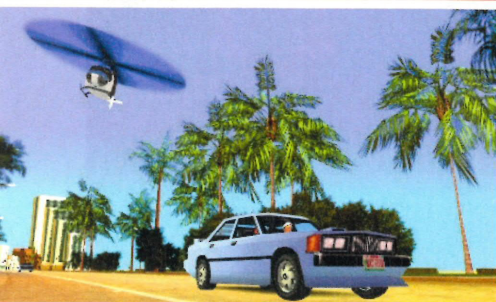


JIM 'THE ANVIL' NEIDHART

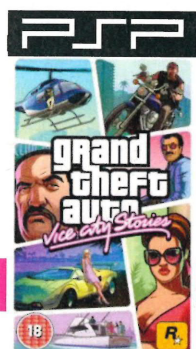
Formed The Hart Foundation with Bret Hart and then, for some unexplainable reason, turned into masked man 'Who?' Sample gag – Commentator One: "Who is Who?" Commentator Two: "Who?" Hilarious.



Proof that pink bikes are acceptable... if you live in 1984



This man runs the local redneck gun store, so keep him on your side



GRAND THEFT AUTO: VICE CITY STORIES

An East Coast adventure that's dripping with machismo

DETAILS
PUBLISHER
ROCKSTAR GAMES
DEVELOPER
ROCKSTAR LEADS
PRICE £39.99
OUT 3 NOVEMBER
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE
CONTENT YES
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS YES

AT A GLANCE

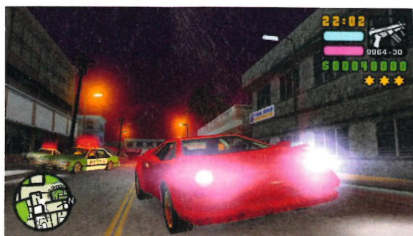
It's 1984 – two years before the events of PS2's *Vice City* – and promising marine Vic Vance has just been assigned to the local barracks. But his life is about to take a rather worrying down turn...

Fact: people like watching once-great entities lose the plot. Ask Michael Jackson. Or Britney Spears. Or Nottingham Forest FC. (Yes, they *were* great once. Honest.) So it was hardly surprising that when Rockstar released *GTA: Liberty City Stories* this time last year, critics began to wonder whether the legendary series was showing signs of weakness. Sure it was a cracking game, but it wasn't a timeless classic like *San Andreas* or *Vice City*. And for some, that was enough to suggest that *GTA* on PSP would never work.

The arrival of *Vice City Stories* sees that theory ripped into shreds, set on fire and burnt to a crisp, as it's an entirely joyful gaming experience. The key is its beautiful simplicity – every mission you carry out starts a short radius from your safe house, making it a pleasure to play in 15-minute micro sessions. But you don't *have* to do things that way. We had one uninterrupted seven-hour blast through the storyline, using vigilante and taxi missions to ease our frustration on the occasions where we got stuck. How time flies when you're having fun, mowing down pedestrians in a sports car and putting holes in rival gang members...

TOASTING THE VICTOR

While *Vice City Stories* does many things exceptionally, its storyline is the reason that



you'll keep this UMD glued into your PSP for the next three months. Lead character Victor Vance is the most reluctant of villains, having been booted out of the army for misdemeanours forced upon him by a bent sergeant. Desperate for work in order to help pay for his drug-addicted brother Lance's (remember that name?) medical bills, he begins doing odd jobs for the sarge's lowlife buddies – but always out of necessity, rather than enjoyment. As such you can't help but sympathise, as this increasingly desperate good guy is gradually dragged into the city's criminal underbelly. The contrast between Vic and *Liberty City Stories'* main character – the eminently unlovable Tony Cipriani – couldn't be starker.

HOME(Y) IMPROVEMENTS

That's not the only reason this is superior to its *Stories* predecessor. Most of the flaws that had critics sharpening their knives are gone – such as the ghosting, which made Cipriani look part-gangster, part phantom. Targeting is more instinctive than ever, and Rockstar has done a miraculous job with the oft-criticised PSP nub. Whether you're using a plane, helicopter, vehicle or Vic's own two feet to get around, there's no sliding at all – it all feels natural. Two new close-combat commands – **Ⓢ** to block an opponent, **ⓐ** to grab them in readiness for a pummeling – improve hand-to-hand fisticuffs, although this area still feels crude in places.

Crucially, the brightness issues that often left you flailing in the dark in *Liberty City Stories* are also a thing of the past. Indeed, *Vice City's* pastiche of '80s Miami – with its crisp Atlantic skies, vivid tangerine sunsets and crystal clear blue water – makes the PSP absolutely shine. Driving along the Vice Point shoreline on a bike as a blood-red

sun hovers over the horizon is one of the most majestic experiences available on any handheld, ever. And taking a dip down at Ocean Beach – the ability to swim has also been implemented this time – isn't exactly unpleasant, either.

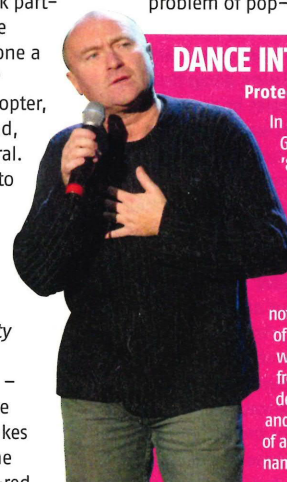
Not only have Rockstar corrected some of the issues which blighted *Liberty City Stories*, they've added features we haven't seen before. Most are common sense improvements, like the ability to buy back your weapons when busted or wasted by paying a \$2,000 bribe. We also like the ability to smash up the inside of shops with whatever's close to hand. Fancy unloading a machine gun into every freezer in a supermarket because they've run out of Hot Pockets? Go right ahead my friend. And the new empire-building model adds another layer of depth to an already gigantic experience – have a look at 'My Little Empire' overleaf to see how it works.

One annoyance that has returned is the problem of pop-up. Large buildings still

DANCE INTO THE VICE

Protecting Phil Against All Odds

In a genius – or should that be Genesis? – twist, slapheaded '80s pop star Phil Collins makes a smartly scripted cameo appearance playing... himself! Having jetted into Vice City to play a gig, he learns that his manager owes one of the area's most notorious villains a sizeable wad of cash. This leads to missions where Vic has to pick Phil up from the airport in a limo, deliver him safely to his hotel and then protect him from a gang of assassins. The latter mission's name? Kill Phil Part II, of course.

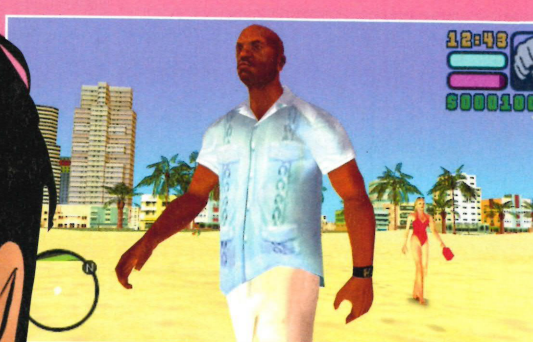
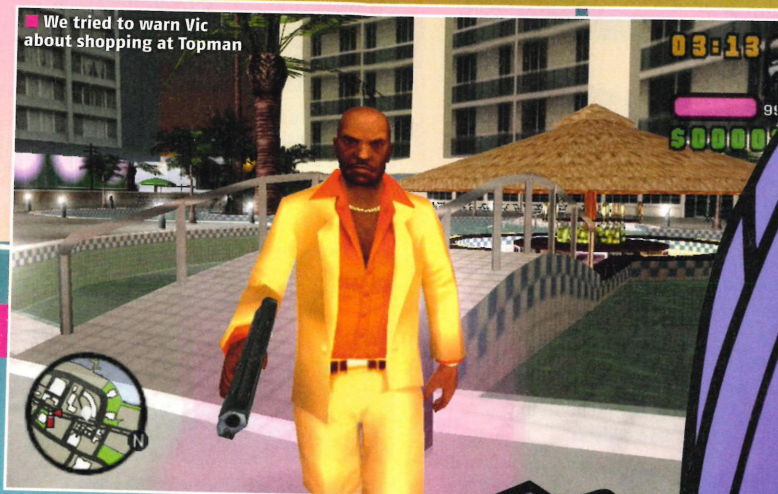


REX FEATURES

■ Balmy sunsets, beautiful palms and plenty of bullets. Hello summer!



■ We tried to warn Vic about shopping at Topman

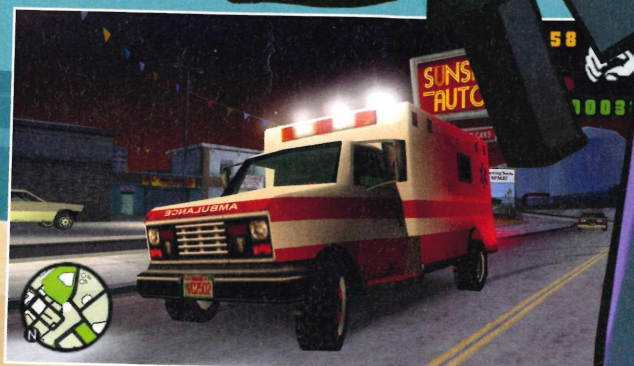


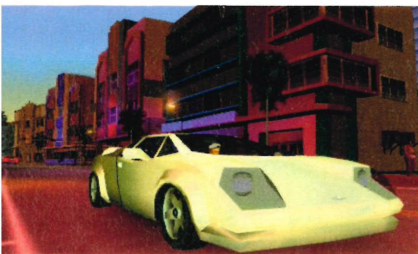
PICK OF THE POPS

Our top ten of *Vice City's* tunes



1. *Rock You Like A Hurricane* – Scorpions
2. *True Faith* – New Order
3. *It's Like That* – Run DMC
4. *Come Back And Stay* – Paul Young
5. *Everything Counts* – Depeche Mode
6. *Relax* – Frankie Goes To Hollywood
7. *In The Air Tonight* – Phil Collins
8. *Human Touch* – Rick Springfield
9. *Fool (If You Think It's Over)* – Elkie Brooks
10. *Turn It On Again* – Genesis





■ Weaving a 'copter through high rise buildings is awesome



■ 1984's World Yachting Championships were a keenly contested affair

◆ have a habit of appearing from nowhere, but generally you're too involved with completing a mission or blasting bullets into thugs to either notice or care. Where it does prove troublesome is when you're doing missions for Marty, a white trash hick with his own protection racket. He lives on a trailer park surrounded by a steel

fence, but the only trouble is that the fence doesn't appear until you've smashed into it, wrecking the bonnet of the new Cuban Hermes you've

just swiped. There are more invisible fences dotted around the city, and you'll find yourself muttering profanities every time you go hurtling into one without even a semblance of warning.

That's pretty much it for the flaws. You know you're playing something special when the only negative you can draw from 25 hours of gameplay is a few fences that appear as if from

nowhere. Everything else about *Vice City Stories* is top notch, and this eliminates all doubt as to whether the series can perform at its peak on handheld. After all, what other game enables you to cruise the streets with three 'working girls' blasting machine guns out of the windows while Frankie Goes To Hollywood's *Relax* blares from the stereo? Exactly. It's simple: If you don't go out and buy this sometime between now and Christmas, then there's really no point to you owning a PSP at all. ■ **Ben Wilson**

IF YOU DON'T BUY THIS, THERE'S NO POINT TO YOU OWNING A PSP AT ALL

PlayStation 2		VERDICT
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK		
Graphics	09	Sun and sea are sizzling; pop-up is not
Sound	10	Teeming with humour and top '80s tunes
Gameplay	10	Sharply-scripted storyline, great missions
Lifespan	10	Empire building adds new depth

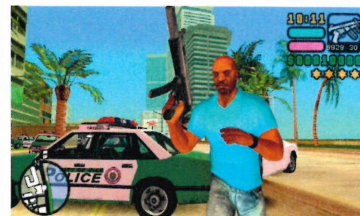
Not only is this the greatest game on PSP, it also leaves a large percentage of the PS2 back catalogue looking ordinary. Buy it right now

10/10

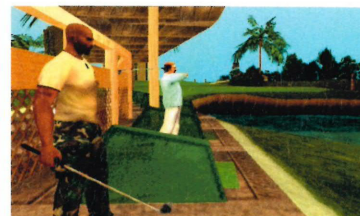


MY LITTLE EMPIRE

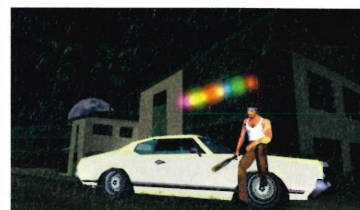
Creating a business empire, *GTA*-style



1 Being able to create your own empire is *Stories'* best innovation. Building upon the facility to own territory in *San Andreas*, you're now presented with the opportunity to make regular cash by running brothels, extortion rackets and four other types of business. Just try not to let the pigs get wind of your schemes.



2 The first step is to purchase a site with a 'for sale' sign above it. Inside you'll find a notice board, from which you can decide how much to invest, and some cronies. Talk to your underlings to trigger missions, which increase your respect and cash flow. Then watch the money roll in while you relax with a spot of golf.



3 The tasks are very much what you'd expect them to be – chasing Cholos away from a local store, if you're running a small-time protection racket, for example – but their inclusion adds further depth to the storyline and delivers a wealth of side missions.





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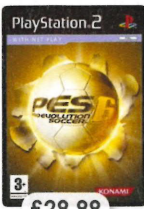
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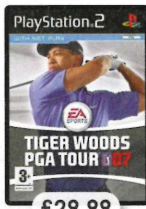
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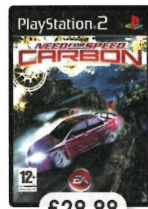
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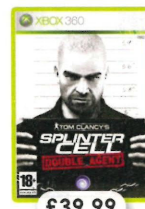
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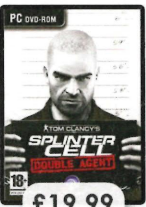
PSP

Faces of War



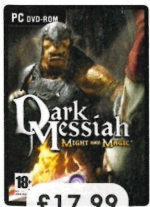
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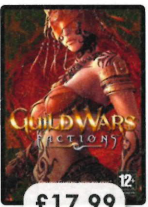
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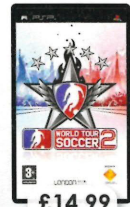
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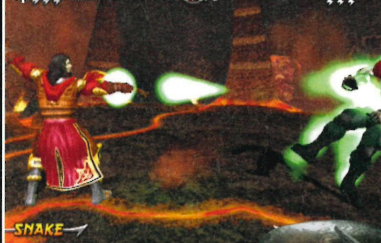
Game Title:

POKEMON SAPPHERE
POKEMON MYSTERY DUNGEON: RR/ TEAM
DEAD TO RIGHTS
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■ The ridiculously theatrical special moves are still here

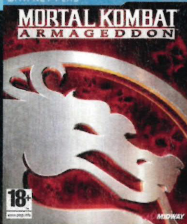


■ Liu Kang returns, only now he's one of the undead

LUNGHAKU

MORTAL KOMBAT ARMAGEDDON

PlayStation 2



DETAILS

PUBLISHER MIDWAY
DEVELOPER MIDWAY
PRICE £24.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.MKARMAGEDDON.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE YES

AT A GLANCE

The *Mortal Kombat* series comes to a PS2 climax. *Armageddon* has the biggest roster of fighters yet, including hidden characters from the past and familiar friends alike.

Every komatant in the MK universe comes to blows in this epic sequel

In the value for money stakes, *Armageddon* scores big. As well as the usual arcade brawling, there's a lengthy Story mode, online play, kart racing (see 'Race For The Prize'), character creation and more unlockables than a padlock shop. It's a big, big game and a fitting swansong for the series in its current form but, well, it just isn't very interesting. The combat (sorry, 'kombat') has barely changed since *Deadly Alliance*, which was released four years ago, and neither have the graphics. It feels like an expansion pack rather than an entirely new game and the swathes of new content and features don't compensate for this.

The adventure-flavoured Konquest mode has improved, but still feels cheap and tacked-on. The hokey plot and bland environments are incredibly unimaginative, and so Konquest has no discernable character. If they'd made it like the sporadically excellent *Shaolin Monks* our ears would've perked up, but as it stands, it really isn't much fun at all.

The new character creation is a welcome feature and, providing you've unlocked the best clothes, faces and hairstyles, you can create some unique scrappers. But at the beginning you're limited to a handful of aesthetic options



■ You can always rely on *Mortal Kombat* to drench the screen in vein gravy



and special moves that you can apply to your creation, making it feel pointless until you've earned loads of 'koins' in the other modes.

CHARACTER STUDY

You do this by completing the Arcade and Konquest modes, and there are loads of characters with which to do so. Fans will get a kick out of seeing bizarre secret fighters like Noob Saibot, Meat and Mokap rendered in 3D. Other returning faces include Stryker, Liu Kang, Ermac and Chameleon and, of course, the classics take their place in the line up – Johnny Cage, Raiden, Sub Zero, Scorpion et al. As with the *King Of Fighters* games, the thought of learning the intricacies of each and every fighter's moves makes us shiver. But some people will, and you're likely to find them online trouncing newcomers and laughing to themselves.

Armageddon winds up spreading itself a little too thin though, and doesn't have the stamina to conquer the beat-'em-up genre. It lacks the visual flair of *Soul Calibur II*, the precise combat of *Virtua Fighter 4* and the arcade perfection of *Tekken 5*. It's just a good game adrift in a sea of great games, and it's for this reason that it falls short of being essential. ■ Andy Kelly

RACE FOR THE PRIZE

In the pursuit of bonus content, *Mortal Kombat* goes the extra mile – in toy cars...

The last game had chess, *Armageddon* has kart racing. Select Motor Kombat from the main menu and you get a 'humorous' alternative to pulling peoples' lungs out through their eye sockets. Pick a character, pick a track then race, running over power-ups and performing special moves. It's simple and, ultimately, rubbish. But the fact that it's there as an added distraction is hard to knock and there is some fun to be had, if only to see the numerous fatalities in each level.



PlayStation 2 VERDICT

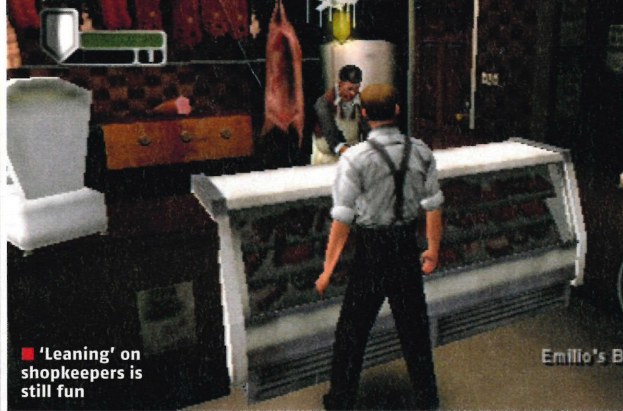
Graphics	07	Bland stages, but varied character design
Sound	05	Generic American thrash rock. Predictably
Gameplay	07	Outdated, but still fun in small doses
Lifespan	08	With so much to unlock, it could last an age

The vast amount of characters will excite fans, but MKA feels old-fashioned. The series needs to evolve if it's going to survive

7/10



Graphically, *The Godfather* makes the PSP shine



'Leaning' on shopkeepers is still fun



The Mob War strategy game shows thought but lacks punch

PSP

The Godfather

18+ EA

DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA
DEVELOPER EA
PRICE £34.99
OUT NOW
WIFI MULTIPLAYER NO
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

THE GODFATHER

Fun for some of the family

Coppola's epic, slow-burning Mafia saga didn't really work as a wham-bam PS2 game, so you'd expect it to be even worse on the PSP's tiny screen. And you'd be right, but maybe for the wrong reasons.

The fact is, the most *Godfather*-y bits – Brando, the banter, the music, and the excellent faces – have made the transition unscathed, while the rest of the game flounders. The driving sections have been snipped out and replaced by cut-scenes, so there's no huge city to explore. To pad out the game, there's Mob War, a *Risk*-style strategy mode detailing the Corleone takeover of New York that's played in-between story missions. It's reasonably tactical stuff – each racket comes with a weekly payoff, which then needs to be funnelled into bribing cops and upgrading your soldiers to better defend your turf. It's a neat alternative to squashing the whole city onto PSP, but it lacks immediacy.

The real fly in the cannoli cream, though, is control. Melee combat works fine but the shooting suffers. With just the one thumbstick, you find yourself fumbling around like Fredo Corleone. The auto-aim is more forgiving and your energy bar lasts longer to compensate, but you can only get shot so many times before the rot sets in. **Joel Snape**

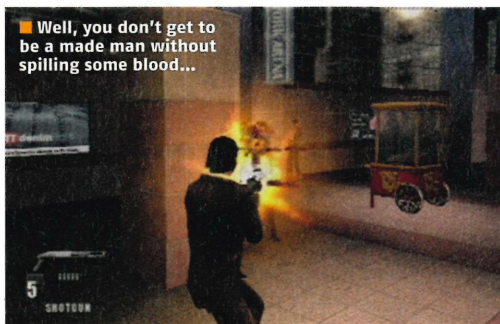
Someday, and that day may never come, I may ask to borrow your PSP

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

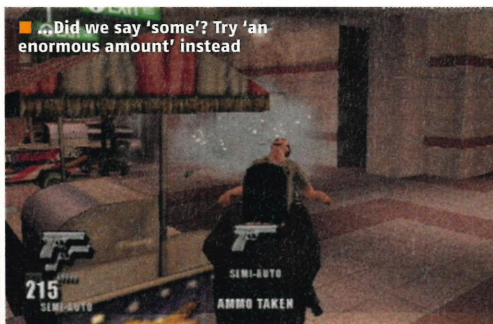
Graphics	09	Like the PS2 version, only squeezed down
Sound	09	It's great to hear virtual Brando mumbling
Gameplay	06	Suffers from a compromised control setup
Lifespan	06	Polish is no substitute for intuitive gameplay

Much more frustrating than the PS2 version, and not quite as varied to play, but more cinematic than we'd have thought possible on the PSP

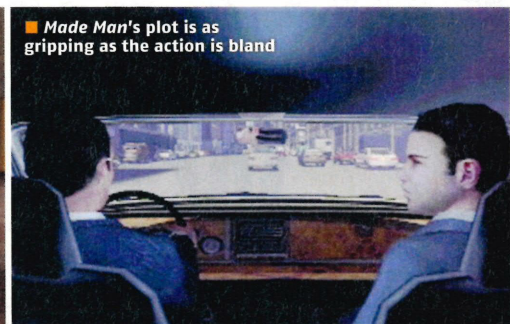
6/10



Well, you don't get to be a made man without spilling some blood...



Did we say 'some'? Try 'an enormous amount' instead



Made Man's plot is as gripping as the action is bland

PlayStation 2

MADE MAN

18+

DETAILS

PUBLISHER MASTERTRONIC
DEVELOPER SILVERBACK STUDIOS
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT 3 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.SILVERBACK-STUDIOS.COM/MADEMAN
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO

MADE MAN

An offer you can refuse

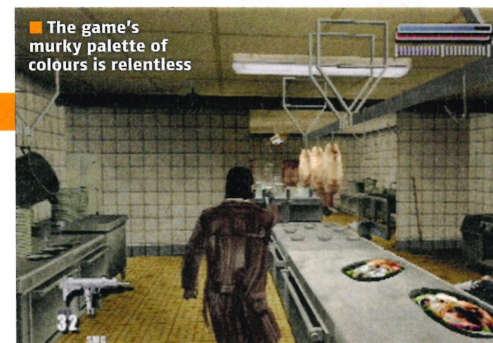
Just like *The Godfather* and *Mafia* before it, *Made Man* has its Tommy gun trained on the title of 'most authentic gangster game' ever. Well, that claim is partially true, at least as both the game's plot and dialogue are spot on. The whole game unfolds as a series of flashbacks while hood, Joey Verola, and his cousin drive to meet local Mob bosses to find out whether Joey is going to be 'made', or killed. As promised from the start, each story section is smart, and authentic. Faux-Mafioso ham acting is out; gritty and witty Scorsese-style one-liners are in.

Sadly, what *Made Man* gives with one hand, it takes away with the other. For a start, the excellent gangster dialogue is very nearly robbed of all its dignity by wooden character models that don't even open their mouths to deliver lines. Worse still, despite interesting

narrative detours into the jungles of Vietnam, the environments are depressingly uninspired, and are awash with either drab shades of brown, or generic urban grey.

Sadly, this blandness extends to the action. The twitchy controls are irritating at first but before long, you find yourself dashing between shootouts with a slick, predictable rhythm. Problem is, that's all you do. No rescue missions, no protection missions, no driving missions – just countless hours of running from A to B and squeezing off rounds with a .45. Sigh.

It's a pity. While centred on a good story, well told, there's precious little in *Made Man*'s gameplay that makes it stand out from the swathes of crime-themed third-person shooters already out on PS2. Sending people to sleep with the fishes has never felt more like doing the dishes. **Andy Hartup**



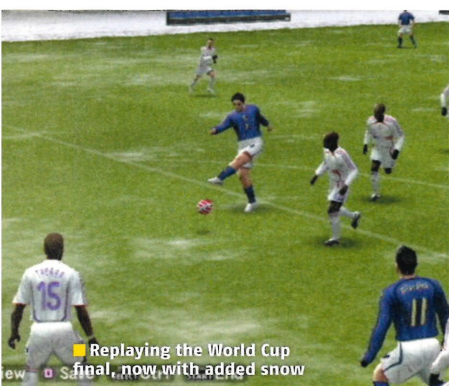
The game's murky palette of colours is relentless

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

Graphics	04	Inspid environments and dodgy characters
Sound	08	Great voiceovers and sound effects
Gameplay	06	Responsive, but repetitive, shooting
Lifespan	06	17 decently sized stages to blast through

All the natty Mafia dialogue and realistic story threads can't disguise the fact that, at its core, Made Man is bland like breadsticks

6/10



Replaying the World Cup final, now with added snow



Goal-machine Crouch has pretty rubbish stats in PES5



There are a handful of new goal celebrations

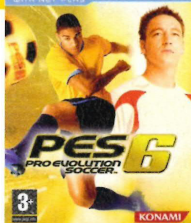
Sadly, there's no special 'bull charge' move for Zizou



PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6

PlayStation 2

Still in a league of its own



DETAILS
PUBLISHER KONAMI
DEVELOPER WINNING ELEVEN PRODUCTIONS
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1-8
OUT NOW
WEBSITE [HTTP://UK.GS.KONAMI-EUROPE.COM](http://uk.gs.konami-europe.com)
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE YES

AT A GLANCE
Konami's consistently excellent football game plays another blinder in this, its sixth season. There are plenty of improvements on the pitch, but it still lags behind FIFA in the licence stakes.

With EA finally getting its act together on the pitch with FIFA 07, while retaining nigh-on every official licence in world football bar the Venezuelan over-45s Ladies League, surely *Pro Evolution Soccer* has had its day. Perhaps it should be quietly ushered out to let the new boss of football games take its seat in the dugout to rapturous applause from the console gaming crowd. Yeah right, and Wayne Rooney is already past it.

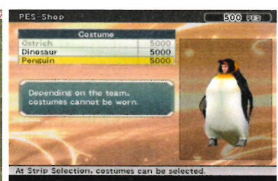
PES6 sees the series very much at the top of its game. But, as ever, there are no Earth-shattering changes since the last outing to look forward to. What you do get though, is a series of subtle tweaks and enhancements that make the game both more accessible to newcomers and more satisfying to seasoned pros.

ON ME BEAK, SON

Just in case you didn't know, PES Points are awarded for everything from simply playing a Quick Match to winning Cups and Leagues, and these can then be spent on unlocking



Not a sight you'll often see on MOTD. The ostriches are even wearing little hats.



We hadn't amassed enough PES Points to buy the penguin costume. Shame.

Top of this list has to be the referees, as the men in black in PES5 were so whistle-happy that it almost ruined the whole thing. You could barely look at an opposition player without being pulled up for it by the uber-officious

PES6 IS MORE ACCESSIBLE TO NEWCOMERS AND MORE SATISFYING TO PROS

jobsworths, let alone put in a strong tackle – a state of affairs that was obviously hugely frustrating and required a lot of getting used to. Not so here. You really have to work hard to foul someone, and it's only really vicious lunges from behind or cynical trips that refs blow up for, and

such behaviour invariably earns you a card. Games are more open and free-flowing as a result, and hence more enjoyable whether playing alone or with/against your mates.

STANCHION MASTER

Aesthetically, it's player animation that has received the greatest overhaul. Movement looks and feels more natural than ever, and attention to detail when it comes to mimicking top stars' characteristics has been upped too, something FIFA games have always struggled with.

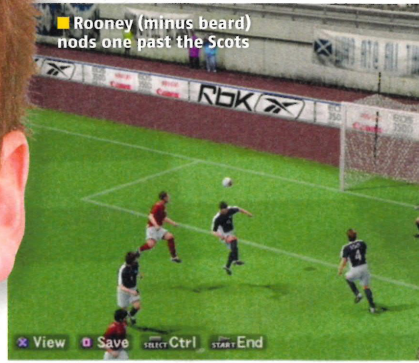
What's more, the enhanced animation has a direct bearing on the action itself, as it's essential to get the right body shape when it comes to teeing up shots and passes. If you're not set right – leaning back while on the turn, for example – then the chances are that you'll

The entrance movies have been reworked entirely

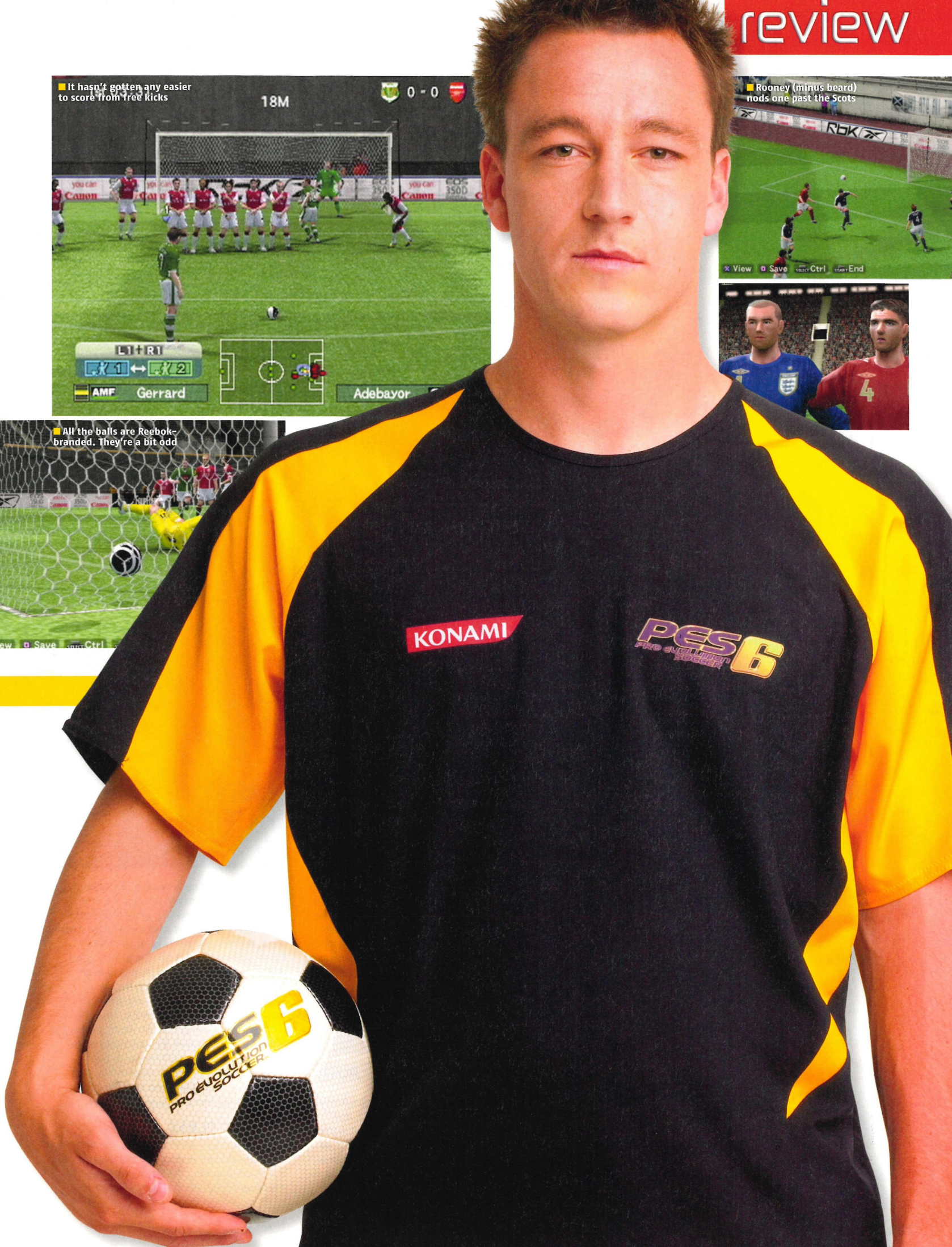
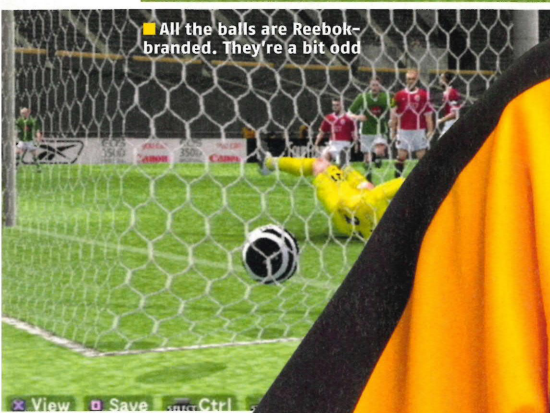


■ It hasn't gotten any easier to score from free kicks

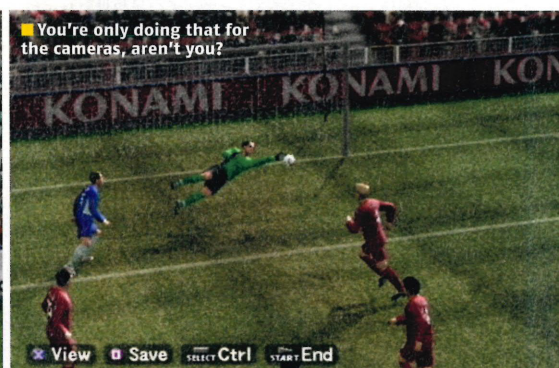
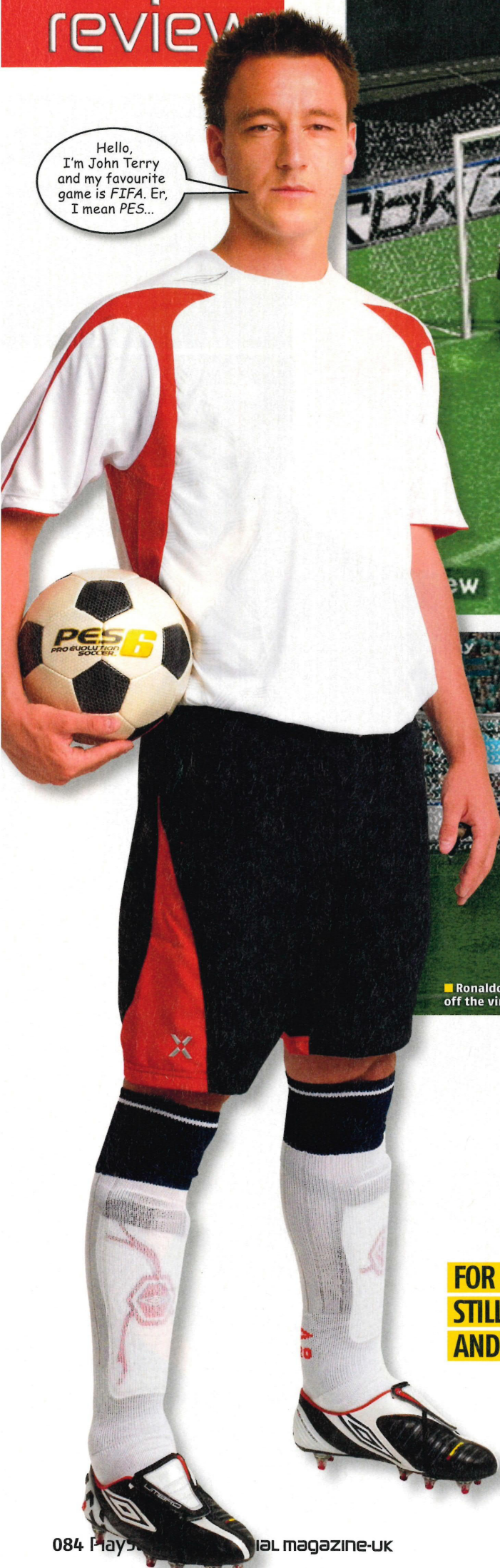
■ Rooney (minus beard) nods one past the Scots



■ All the balls are Reebok-branded. They're a bit odd



Hello, I'm John Terry and my favourite game is FIFA. Er, I mean PES...



hoof the ball way over the bar or send what was meant to be a killer long ball into touch. Headers and volleys have also been improved, but again only if your man is set right. It's all about the timing, and it's something that comes with practice as you get a 'feel' for when you should jump or hit the shoot button. The same goes for tackling. Previously, a tackled player would suffer a brief but agonising pause when a successful challenge came in, invariably resulting in a loss of possession. Not so here. It's often possible to hang on to the ball after a tackle, as

FOR THE SOLO PLAYER THERE'S STILL ONLY ONE PLACE TO HEAD, AND THAT'S THE MASTER LEAGUE

you recover instantly (unless you've been felled like a Norwegian Spruce at Christmas), and tougher players can also shield the ball, backing into and holding off an opponent. Backed up with the more forgiving refs, it all makes for a more natural and free game of footy than in previous seasons.

So it's thumbs up in terms of the action. There's more good news with regard to the game modes and tinkering options. The stand-alone cup competitions have always been a little weak, but this year we've got International Challenge mode, which has you picking from one of three territories and playing through regional qualifying rounds with the aim of reaching a big global league-and-knockout tournament. So not the World Cup, then. Oh no. There's also Random Match mode, where you select a group of players (by nationality or the league they play in) and then you're given a squad of players randomly selected from that group. It's a neat option and ideal if you're having a quick head-to-head with mates.

MASTER CLASS

For the solo player there's still only one place to head though, and that's the Master League, as it is, without question, the finest game mode in the whole history of videogames (it is, you

THE HIT SQUAD

The parameters you can set before embarking on a Master League campaign have increased greatly. We spent a few hours designing a reasonably accurate Plymouth Argyle kit, then hit the player listings to assemble what we hope will be a treble-winning dream team, because we just couldn't face using the default Master League donkeys.



We pilfered some of the Premiership's finest for our starting XI. The wage bill is HUGE.

Season results

2006

Player info

Plymouth Argyle

Division 2

Rank	Player	Goals	Assists	Appearances
11	Andrew Johnson	6.0	0.0	0
13	Crouch	6.0	0.0	0
14	Podolski	5.8	0.0	0
15	Chiwi	6.2	0.0	0
16	Caldey	6.0	0.0	0
17	Buzsaky	0.0	0.0	0
18	Heitinga	6.0	0.0	0
19	Lennon	6.0	0.0	0
20	Givens	6.1	0.0	0
21	Marchionni	6.0	0.0	0
22	Dastaka	6.1	0.0	0

There's plenty of talent tucked away in the second string. Strength in depth = important.



Akos Buzsaky was the only real-world Argyle player we could find. He's brilliant, honest.

Season results

2006

Team information

Plymouth Argyle

Division 2

W	D	L	GS	GC	GD	Pts
9	2	3	21	8	13	7

League Rank: 1

Win %: 64.29%

Club ranking: Rk72

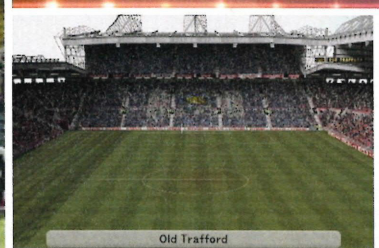
Eliminated in first match

European Masters Cup: Not participating

European Championship: Not participating

Division Two champions, now on to conquer Division One! Let us know how your side fares.

■ Are you Norwich in disguise? Yes, obviously



European Qualifiers

Fixture 2

Scotland 0 1st 0

England 0 2nd 1

Overall Best Player

CF Crouch

Points difference from the top team is 0 point



■ Thankfully, there's no Joey Barton ass-flashing

know). To be honest, not much has changed here for number six. There's greater scope for setting parameters that suit your style of play and skill level (such as the ease of signing new players) and there are also a bunch of new made-up teams (AC Gemini, anyone? FC Aquarius, perhaps?) that you can edit, should you wish to have sides from the Dr Martens Western Division competing in your league. Or Plymouth Argyle. Aside from that, it's more or less as you were. It would have been nice to see a league structure that went beyond just the two divisions but hey ho, maybe next time.

One complaint that has always been levelled at PES is that it's unfriendly for newbies, and hence FIFA is the obvious choice for the so-called casual gamer. With FIFA increasingly playing like PES though, this argument is rapidly becoming redundant. However, there's a lot of tactical depth to PES that can be bewildering if you're

encountering it for the first time, especially given the sometimes odd translations from the game's native Japanese tongue.

For those fond of spending way too much time tinkering with formations, attacking bias, mark settings and mid-game tactical switches, everything is still in place (Hurrah!). But if you just want to dip your toe into the team management features rather than your whole mind, body and soul, there's a selection of new and easily accessible – and understandable – quick settings created just for you.

So the ultimate question has to be: Is it worth splashing the cash on signing up PES6? Our answer is an emphatic 'Yes'. Sure, FIFA has got a lot better and no, PES doesn't even come close to it in terms of official licences, but if you're looking for the very finest interpretation of the beautiful game, then PES6 is still top of the league. ■ Nick Ellis



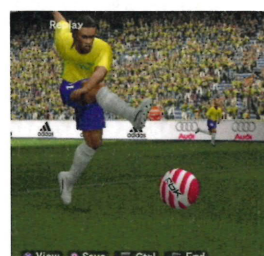
PlayStation 2 VERDICT

Official magazine-uk

Graphics	09	Reworked player animation is the highlight
Sound	07	Commentary remains weak
Gameplay	10	Simply a delicious representation of footy
Lifespan	10	The perfect definition of 'value for money'

Genuine gameplay improvements over PES5, coupled with the new International Challenge mode, make this an essential purchase

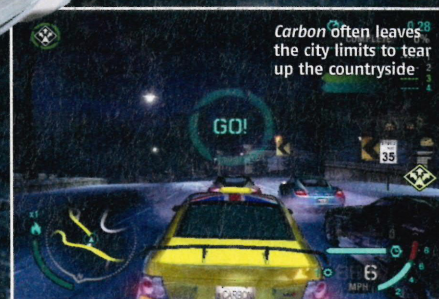
10/10



After *Most Wanted*'s daylight racing, *Carbon* sees *Need For Speed* owning the night again

Thanks to modding, even a Clio can be an object of automotive lust

For the first time in the series you race with a crew



Carbon often leaves the city limits to tear up the countryside



DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA
DEVELOPER EA BLACK BOX
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT 3 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.NFS.EA.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES
ONLINE NO

AT A GLANCE

The latest in the phenomenally successful *Need For Speed* series resurrects drifting, takes the race outside the city limits and offers new customisation options.

NEED FOR SPEED CARBON

Time to trade in your old model

First, a word to EA's health and safety department. If any gamer is moronic enough to try out some of the manoeuvres you and your crew can perform in the game in ACTUAL REAL LIFE, a verbal warning at the start of the game from the achingly beautiful Emmanuelle Vaugier (*Saw II*) isn't likely to stop them. Blimey, it wasn't until the fifth time we'd seen it that we managed to curtail our ogling long enough to hear her telling us to always wear our seatbelt and generally behave ourselves on the road. Next time, if you're serious about warning us about the dangers of driving, you may want to hire Ann Widdecombe instead. Meanwhile, for Emmanuelle fans, there's plenty more interaction with her in *Carbon*'s acceptable story, as she plays your ex.

So, you're the racer who has it all, until everything inevitably goes wrong when a street race is busted by police, who suspiciously let you get away with what you think is the swag. Your reputation is left in tatters, and the only way to claw it back is by assembling a crew, hitting the neon-lit streets in tricked-out, rozzar-enraging whips, and thrashing your Palmont City rivals in the game's numerous races and challenges.

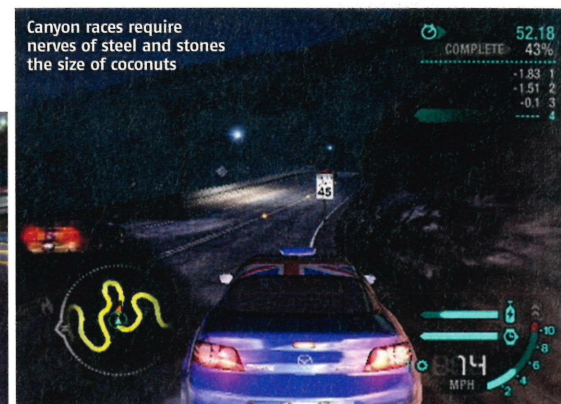
Yep, that's right – your crew is EA's big new idea. As you progress you'll come across various characters whose special ability is either to drive as a scout, blocker or drafter. Scouts prove easily the most useful, highlighting the difficult-to-spot shortcuts through the circuits, while blockers act like a missile, slamming their cars into rivals and taking them out for you. Drafters let you get in their slipstream and rocket forward, like an extra nitro boost. And just in case you think your crew will make you invincible, think again. You'll go into each crew race with just one other member, whose abilities need to time to recharge after they're used, so

you'll need to do a lot more than simply spend your race taking out the opposition.

If you're thinking it sounds gimmicky you'd be right, but to be fair it ties into the plot well and adds another dimension to the series. Not that it needs one. This is a great street racer with an awesome sense of speed accentuated by a cool artistic style that blurs street lights and shows the air streaming off your spoiler as you hoon it through the streets. We say street racer



Drifting is back and more satisfying than ever



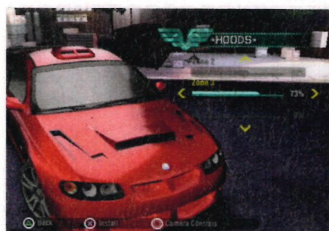
Canyon races require nerves of steel and stones the size of coconuts

GREASE MONKEY

Carbon's 'Autosculpt' car customisation mode in action. Observe...



What a boring rep-mobile you have. It could be anybody's! Show a little flair you miserable git, or go and power up your PC and start playing Mondeo Motorway Cruising Simulator (Diesel Edition).

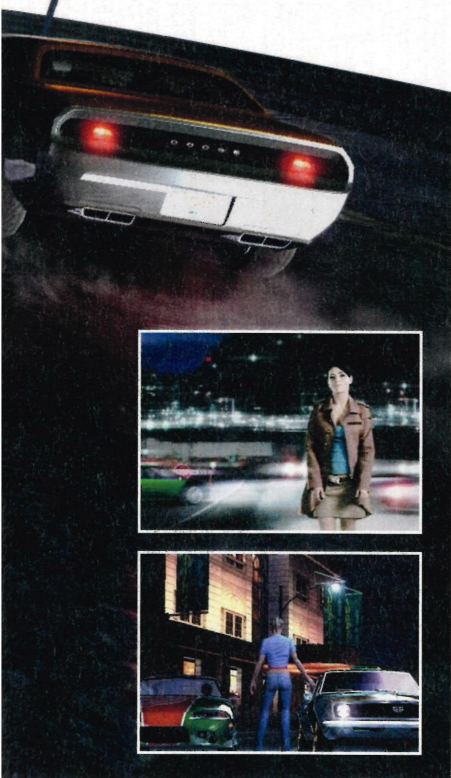
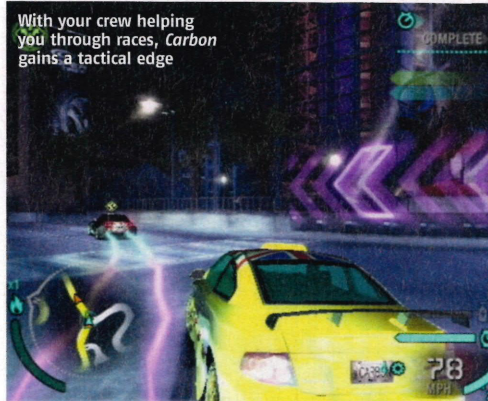


Select Autosculpt and you can individually model each car part using sliders, making your ride totally unique. The car inevitably looks cooler at its extremes but you'll have loads of fun tweaking it regardless.



With your car lower than a snake's basement, a massive spoiler and phat rims, it's time to tart it up with custom vinyls. If only we could ride this round Tesco's carpark at 10pm. Instead of our skateboard.

With your crew helping you through races, Carbon gains a tactical edge



Want to drift like a pro? Then you need a rear-wheel drive muscle car



Blockers can shunt rival cars into the middle of next week



As ever, *Need For Speed* looks indescribably lush

WELCOME TO PALMONT CITY

Immerse yourself in the dark city streets



MAP ATTACK!

There it is – the home of absurdly fast racing and the district you'll need to dominate on your way to clearing your name. Most races are set in the city but you'll also visit each of the canyons for more spectacular races.



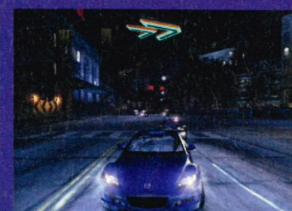
CARBON CANYON

Here's where it really kicks off. Canyon races are ace, all downhill blasts with your headlights cutting through the darkness. Skirt too near the barrier, though, and you'll crash through it, totaling your motor and your race.



DRIFT CIRCUITS

Drift racing in the canyons is tense because you've got less room to work with, but you'll have an even bigger rush on these purpose-built circuits. The first time you bust through the 100,000 point mark feels amazing. And that's just the beginning.



PC PATROL

Palmont's police don't take kindly to your hooligan race style. You'll need to move about districts and customise your car differently to keep the heat off, otherwise they'll hijack your races and you'll have to outrun them once it's completed. Or it's to jail with you.

but, as hinted at in the title, *Carbon* takes the heat from the streets of the fictional Palmont City into the surrounding Carbon Canyons, inspired by the legendary real-life bends in LA that are notorious for illegal racing. Some of the races you'll come across are held here but most important are the boss battles you need to win to take over a district of the city. You'll have to beat the boss in a street race, and then it's up to the hills. First you'll have to follow them as closely as possible in an A-to-B race, earning points for staying right on their ass. Then the roles are reversed and you have to stay ahead of them – keep it that way and you win. Adding a little spice are instant wins, achieved if your opponent careers over the edge of a cliff or if you can overtake and stay ahead for ten seconds. This danger makes them tense affairs, but in the excitement stakes *Carbon* is all about drifting.

THE LIFE OF A DRIFTER

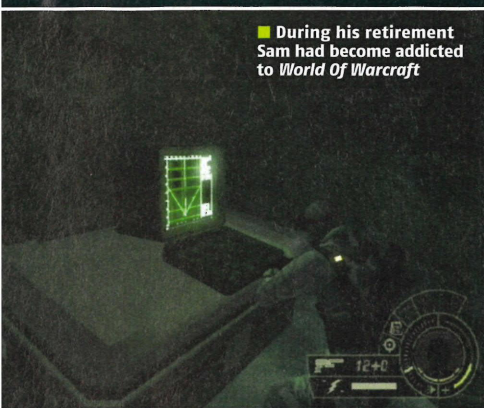
Drifts first appeared in *NFS Underground*, and they're back with a bang here. For the uninitiated, it's a case of going round the track sideways as fast as you can, scoring points while you're in the drift and racking up multipliers as you combo between controlled skids, which end

if you hit a wall or fail to start a new drift in time. They're beautifully balanced and we loved them so much they almost overshadowed the rest of the game (thankfully there's even more concentrated sideways action in the non-career Challenge Series).

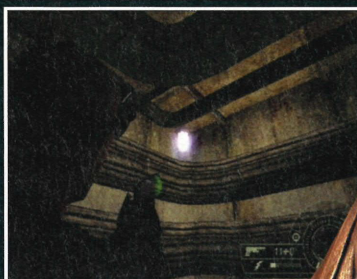
Carbon is ace, and the drifting is the icing on the cake. It's a blast from start to finish, with arguably the prettiest cut-scenes ever to grace PS2, appealingly accessible handling and a thumping soundtrack that perfectly suits the atmosphere of bubbling exhausts and whining V12s. A must for any virtual boy racer – just remember, don't drive like this on the A47 and remember to buckle up. You don't want to upset Emmanuelle now, do you? ■ Pete Webber

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK		VERDICT
Graphics	09	Easily the best looking game in the series
Sound	08	Repetitive if undeniably appropriate tracks
Gameplay	09	A ton of fun – especially the drifting
Lifespan	08	A big Career plus Challenge mode
Faster than Schumacher, dicier than driving blindfolded, and more fun than a Jacuzzi with Emmanuelle Vaugier. Well almost		9/10

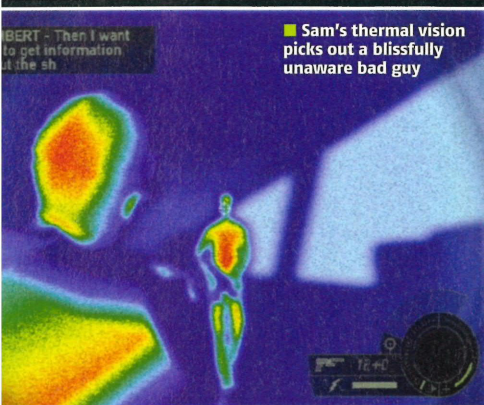
■ During his retirement Sam had become addicted to *World Of Warcraft*



■ Stashing bodies in ice caves. Just another day at the office for Sam



■ Use the secondary fire on your pistol to subtly dim the lights



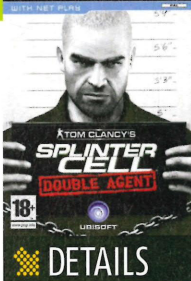
■ Sam's thermal vision picks out a blissfully unaware bad guy

SPLINTER CELL DOUBLE AGENT



PlayStation 2

Tinker, tailor, Fisher, spy



DETAILS

PUBLISHER UBISOFT

DEVELOPER UBISOFT MONTREAL

PRICE £39.99

PLAYERS 1-4

OUT NOW

WEBSITE

HTTP://SPLINTERCELL.UK

UBI.COM/DOUBLEAGENT

60HZ MODE NO

WIDESCREEN YES

SURROUND SOUND YES

ONLINE YES

AT A GLANCE

Fisher is back for more shadow-lurking stealth, and this time he's deep undercover, posing as a member of a terrorist organisation called John Brown's Army.

Sam Fisher is one angry covert operative. Well, you would be too if you'd just climbed back into the chopper after saving the world from (yet another) band of evil terrorists, only to discover that your daughter has been mown down and killed by a drunk driver. Sam's certainly angry enough to quit his spook job at Echelon (a division of the NSA). He then drinks heavily, gets into fights and mopes around until he's plucked back from the brink to infiltrate a new domestic terrorist outfit called John Brown's Army (JBA). But can he keep it together long enough to protect the US of A?

Moral choices are the *Splinter Cell* series' latest trick, and like Sam's latex combat fatigues, *Double Agent* wears them well. Throughout each mission, Sam is forced to make choices that swing the balance of trust between his true employers, the NSA (National Security Agency),

and his placed assignment within the JBA. The system works a treat, and not only does it present you with situations that will genuinely test your moral code to the limit, it also gives you the opportunity to wade through *Splinter Cell* in the way you want to play it. So if you're a sneaking perfectionist, you can try to get through each level bypassing guards and only grabbing and knocking out enemies when absolutely necessary. Play it this way and you'll gain favour with the NSA, but lose respect from the JBA.

IF YOU DO CHOOSE TO PLAY AS THE PACIFIST THEN YOU'LL BE MISSING OUT ON SOME SPECTACULAR SPECIAL MOVES

It's possible to finish the whole game without killing any innocents at all, and thanks to the welcome option to save anywhere in the level and then quickly retry if you're spotted, it's something you can attempt quite easily without tearing all your hair out.

However, if you *do* choose to play through as the pacifist then you'll be missing out on some spectacular special moves, most of which involve offing your foes in increasingly creative ways. Thankfully, the JBA positively encourages a high body count on all missions, so if you just want to blast through each level with the subtlety of a rubber-suited hippo, that's fine

too. In fact, the friendlier you get with the JBA, the more ammo they'll give you at the start of each mission – a neat touch that's only made possible by *Double Agent*'s trust system.

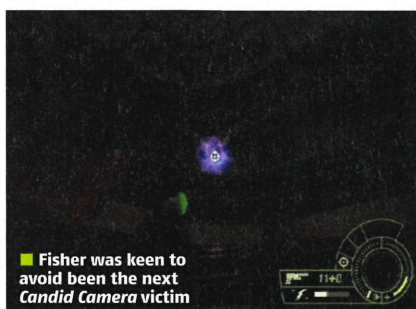
THE DARKNESS

As for your surroundings – well, it's dark, murky business as usual. Aside from a few token outside areas in a handful of levels, the game is largely obsessed with shuffling through the inky darkness in a variety of industrial environments.

Naturally you're fully equipped with night vision, thermal vision, and electromagnetic imaging, so there's no problem finding your way around, but this near

relentless darkness – combined with often epic-length missions – means that even though the sneakery is as accomplished as ever, levels can begin to drag. If we can have *Splinter Cell* in smaller chunks next time, that would be grand.

Even the improved animations and sweet lighting effects get a little tainted by the predominance of grey, brown and black, which is regrettable, because there's plenty of beauty to be found underneath the dull cloak. The way Fisher hoists himself over railings, or smoothly takes a hostage and whips out his pistol to shoot at other enemies is genius, but 99% of the time you'll need to have your screen bathed in the

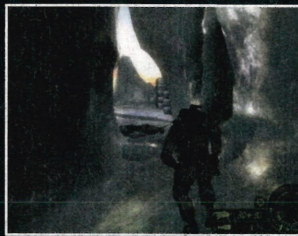


■ Fisher was keen to avoid being the next *Candid Camera* victim

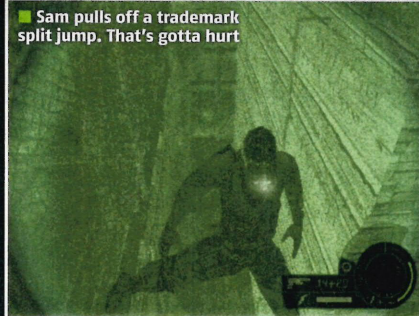
■ You'll have to pick the handcuff lock to get out of this little scrape



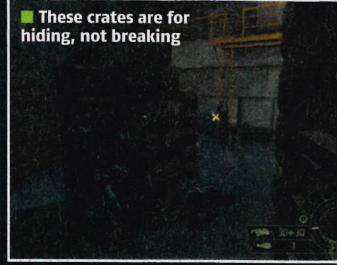
■ The trust meter swings wildly if you start killing innocents indiscriminately



■ Sam pulls off a trademark split jump. That's gotta hurt



■ These crates are for hiding, not breaking



SILENT BUT DEADLY

A look at three of *Double Agent*'s finest stealth kills



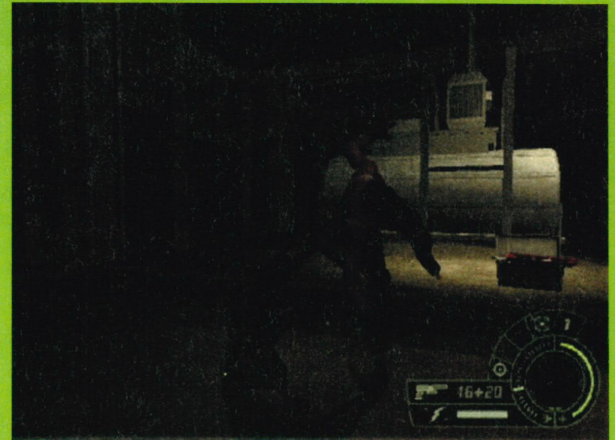
ICE TO SEE YOU

This alarmingly thin sheet of ice will keep you concealed as you approach the hapless guard and snatch him straight through it.



MAKE IT SNAPPY

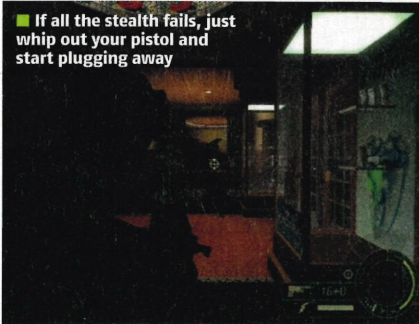
You've seen it done in all the movies, and now you can do it yourself. Hang upside down from either a pipe or a rope, and snap the neck of your unwitting quarry.



BATH TIME

Brutal and effective, this move sees Sam yanking his enemy into the water and holding him under the surface until he stops twitching. Delightful.

■ If all the stealth fails, just whip out your pistol and start plugging away



■ Nokia – phone brand of choice for the silent killer on the move, naturally



green glow of your trusty night vision to know it's happening at all.

Then again, *Double Agent* is a stealth game and not a beach volleyball sim, and the key to beating the game still lies in creating shadows to hide in. To this end it's great to see gadgets like the electromagnetic jamming pistol (use it to disable cameras and temporarily make lights flicker out) and the snake camera (for checking out what's waiting behind closed doors) making a return. Don't get too cocky though, because your enemies have obviously been at terrorist night school since *Chaos Theory*. They'll investigate *everything*: camera shutdowns, open doors, switched-off lights, the lot. And they'll bring flares and torches too, so simply hiding behind a crate and stabbing them when they wander blindly past is no longer an easy option.

With both co-op play and online spy versus mercenary action to battle through, *Double Agent* is an impressive package. It's certainly not a massive step up from *Chaos Theory*, but it is a refinement, and a minor improvement on what is an already superb stealth franchise. We just wish it wasn't always so dark. ■ **Andy Hartup**

PlayStation 2 VERDICT	
Graphics	07 Mostly dark, with some nifty lighting effects
Sound	08 Atmospheric noises and great voice work
Gameplay	08 Smooth sneaking and smart AI
Lifespan	08 There are bonus missions and online play

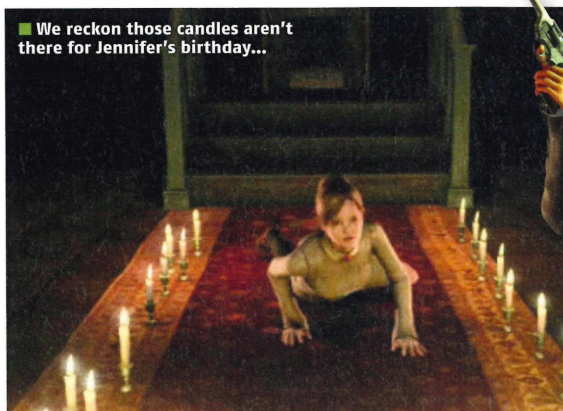
Double Agent is a slick game that demonstrates how great stealth can be when done right. It's just too damn murky to be a classic, though

8/10

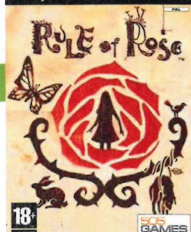
■ After their pop career folded, Girls Aloud set up a successful cleaning company



■ We reckon those candles aren't there for Jennifer's birthday...



PlayStation 2



18+ GAMES

DETAILS
PUBLISHER 505 GAMES
DEVELOPER PUNCHLINE
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT 3 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.ATLUS.COM/RULEOFROSE
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO

RULE OF ROSE

This is no fairy tale...

It's fair to say that *Rule Of Rose* is not your normal horror game; half-an-hour in and the heroine – poor, unlucky English rose, Jennifer – is being buried alive by a clique of sadistic children. Despite its Japanese roots, the game is set, surprisingly, in 1930's England, and focuses on a mysterious group known as the Red Crayon Aristocrats and their demanding ruler, the Prince.

After a freak airship accident robs her of her parents, Jennifer finds herself at an orphanage, becoming embroiled in the workings of the disturbing Aristocracy and forced to fulfil its demands or face painful reprisals. Isolated and out of her depth, Jen has to make sense of her bizarre surroundings with only a loyal canine companion, Brown, to help her discover what sort of mess she's fallen into.

Indeed, Brown the mutt is a smartly designed survival horror accessory. While he

can't fight the game's legion of monstrosities and pasty-faced junior psychos, he rapidly becomes invaluable, 'sniffing' out not only danger, but also useful items.

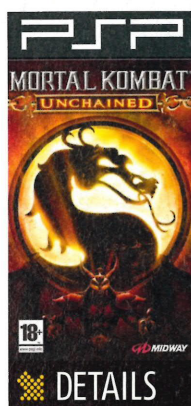
Rule Of Rose has justly gained acclaim for its stunning cut-scenes, compelling plot and spooky music. However, when it comes to



■ "Excuse me, I think my rat's underdone"

gameplay, *ROR* fails spectacularly to match like with like. This is vanilla horror exploration at its most anonymous, with ponderous loading times between rooms and surprisingly insipid combat. So while the game's unique 'kids gone wrong' premise is a winner, the execution falls several notches short. ■ **Lesley Smith**

PlayStation 2 VERDICT	
Graphics	07
Sound	08
Gameplay	05
Lifespan	06
Rule of Rose blends the stuff of nightmares with stylish sound and graphics. Sadly, the developer should have spent longer on the gameplay	
6/10	



DETAILS
PUBLISHER MIDWAY
DEVELOPER MIDWAY
PRICE £29.99
OUT 10 NOVEMBER
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO



■ The gameplay in *Unchained* is very much old-school *Mortal Kombat*



■ Here's the interesting but less than stellar *Kombat Chess*

MORTAL KOMBAT: UNCHAINED

Alright, who ordered the portable Liu Kang?

With *Tekken: Dark Resurrection* having recently ripped the 'best PSP beat-'em-up' title out of the taped hands of *Street Fighter Alpha 3 Max*, is there really any room for a *Mortal Kombat* title on our favourite handheld? Well, yes, but this is a jack of all trades, and master of none.

See, in an attempt to differentiate this from its equally esteemed rivals, a set of spin-off mini-games (originally found in *MK: Deception* on PS2) have been bundled alongside the traditional Arcade mode. *Kombat Chess* is played out on a 3D board with characters from the series replacing the standard pieces. Instead of taking an opposition piece when you land on its square, the game cuts away to a standard *Mortal Kombat*

battle, the loser of which is removed from the board. It's a novel beat-'em-up approach, as is the cuckoo *Lumines-Koloomn* crossover, *Kombat Puzzle*, but both are too shallow to offer lasting appeal. In another minus, the PS2's promising Konquest story mode is rendered unplayable here thanks to horribly dark night-time scenes – whether fighting or exploring, it's almost impossible to see what you're doing. Indeed, overall, *Unchained* is not a pretty game. Crude character models, drab environments and unusually goofy-looking blood effects mean *Kombat's* trademark gore just doesn't look convincing on such a small screen.

It's a good thing, then, that the series' bread and butter – the one-on-one arena battles – are

both frenetic and fulfilling, with the sub-two-minute fights lending themselves well to dip-in gaming. In the end, then, while *Unchained* does deliver a playable feast of face-breakage, it's an unfortunately patchy one. ■ **Ben Wilson**

PlayStation 2 VERDICT	
Graphics	05
Sound	07
Gameplay	08
Lifespan	07
It's no <i>Tekken: Dark Resurrection</i> , but baby-proof controls and some intriguing extras make <i>Unchained</i> an above-average face-rearranger	
7/10	



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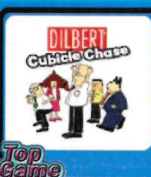
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- 3 Star Wars order 66 - 260705
- 4 Lego Star Wars - 260655
- 5 Fast & Furious Tokyo - 260366
- 6 MTV Pimp My Ride - 260706
- 7 Bruce Lee - 260691
- 8 Garfield - 260683
- 9 Black Hawk Down - 260668
- 10 Rainbow Island - 260646



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CHUCKIE EGG

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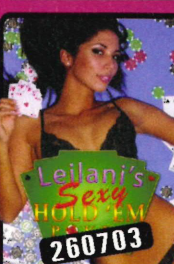
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Collect all of the eggs in each level of the hen house. Avoid the birds. 100 points for each egg collected. 50 points for each pile of seed collected.



RETRO GAMES

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Double Dragon - 260638
Paperboy - 260571
'Worms' - 260534
Lemmings - 260431



260703



260484



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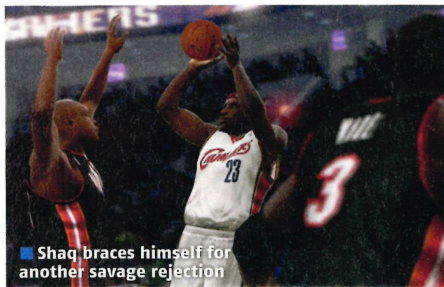


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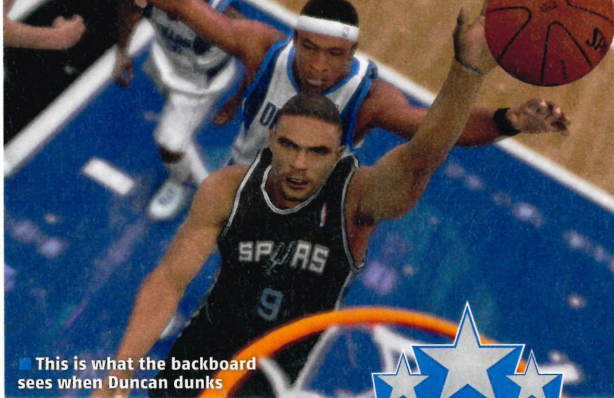
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Shaq braces himself for another savage rejection



This is what the backboard sees when Duncan dunks



PlayStation 2

NBA 2K7



DETAILS

PUBLISHER 2K GAMES
DEVELOPER VISUAL CONCEPTS
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.2KSPORTS.COM/GAMES/NBA2K7
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES
ONLINE YES

NBA 2K7

Dribbling that'll make you drool

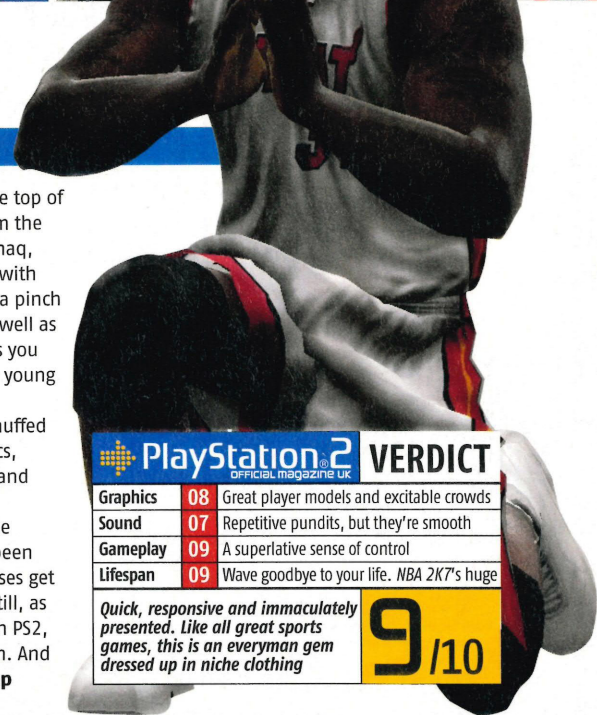
Nine out of ten? For a basketball game? Have we booked a one-way trip to the funny farm? Well, no actually – because we reckon this is the best hoop-sim ever shipped across the Pond, and if you've ever been basket-curious, now is the time to lace up those high-tops and get involved.

It may be an obvious analogy but *NBA 2K7* really is the *Pro Evo* of the basketball world. It's an absolute joy to play, and although it doesn't have the same glitzy veneer as EA's rival b-ball sim *NBA Live*, crucially it actually feels like you're playing the sport. And it's not down to one specific, match-winning feature – it's in everything. From the unbelievably silky player animation and fast-paced play through to tiny but telling details like reactive crowds that stand up and boo when their home team starts falling behind, or get up to cheer a flashy dunk.

However, whereas *Pro Evo* is hampered by a

crippling lack of licences, *NBA 2K7* is at the top of its game. Every player, team and logo from the Association is in here, and big stars like Shaq, Allen Iverson and Tracy McGrady all come with their own signature moves to add an extra pinch of realism. In terms of 'best of' teams, as well as the usual past and present All Star squads you can now choose to play as the pick of the young drafts from both Eastern and Western conferences. Also, *real* NBA fans will be chuffed to hear that features like mid-game tactics, coaching options, the VIP (career) mode, and customisation options are all spot on.

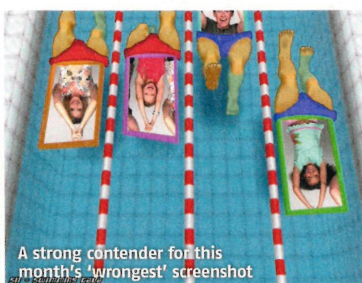
Our only real beef with the game is the commentary: The pundits seem to have been given a short script to work from, so phrases get recycled faster than the Sunday papers. Still, as this is one of the greatest sports games on PS2, we're willing to stomach a little repetition. And the clincher? It's only £20. **Andy Hartup**



PlayStation 2 VERDICT	
Graphics	08 Great player models and excitable crowds
Sound	07 Repetitive pundits, but they're smooth
Gameplay	09 A superlative sense of control
Lifespan	09 Wave goodbye to your life. <i>NBA 2K7</i> 's huge
Quick, responsive and immaculately presented. Like all great sports games, this is an everyman gem dressed up in niche clothing	
9/10	



Visually inventive? Yes. Actually fun to play? Erm...



A strong contender for this month's 'wrongest' screenshot

PlayStation 2

EYETO: PLAY SPORTS



DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER KUJU
PRICE £24.99
PLAYERS 1-8
OUT 3 NOVEMBER
WEBSITE WWW.EYETOY.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO
PERIPHERALS EYETOY

EYETO: PLAY SPORTS

Why exercise and games shouldn't mix

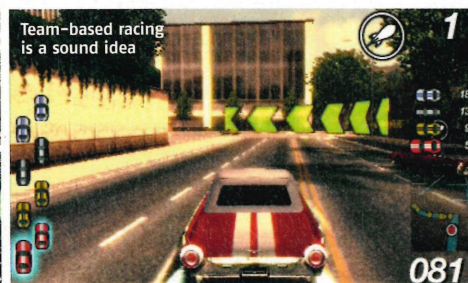
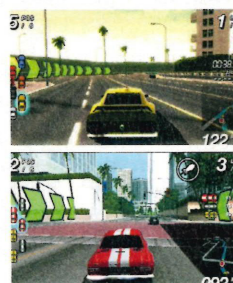
Covering everything from football and darts to fencing and gambling on horse races, *Play Sports* is stuffed full of EyeToy-assisted mini-games. It has you rowing boats, swinging clubs and dribbling balls by flapping around like you're on fire, and in the very short-term it's fun. However, despite boasting 101 different challenges, it fails to really hook you. The problem is that you can't choose which particular mini-game you play. It's pure luck of the draw, whether in the solo or multiplayer mode, and there's only so many times you can cope with playing EyeToy footy before you yearn to sit down and stick *PES* on. **JB**

PlayStation 2

VERDICT

A patchily enjoyable collection of sports-themed mini-games that might enliven a party for 15 minutes – so long as none of the guests are over six years-old

5/10



PlayStation 2

FORD STREET RACING: LA DUEL



DETAILS

PUBLISHER EMPIRE INTERACTIVE
DEVELOPER RAZORWORKS
PRICE £19.99
OUT NOW
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

FORD STREET RACING: LA DUEL

Making California as exciting as Croydon

Empire's *LA Duel* puts you in control of a pair of Fords and pits you against other duos. If your team-mate is a few places ahead, a tap of the **LB** button will order him to block. As he swerves to prevent the other racers from overtaking, you can catch up and, once you're close enough, squeeze the **RB** button to receive a boost, rocketing you ahead. It's a nice idea.

A shame, then, that the rest of *LA Duel* feels average. The handling lacks the polished feel of the best PSP racers and the tracks on offer are pleasant but unfulfilling. As such, despite the novel approach, this fails to humble the likes of *OutRun 2006: Coast 2 Coast* and *Ridge Racer 2*. **JB**

PlayStation 2

VERDICT

Decent looking racer which requires a rare shot of tactical thinking, but one that lacks the flat-out driving thrills of its superior PSP rivals

6/10



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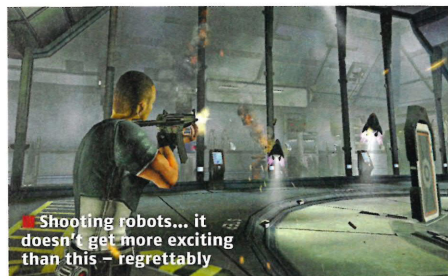
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Shooting robots... it doesn't get more exciting than this – regrettably



The explosions may be impressive, but that's about it



And press **△** to bore him with tales of your wrestling exploits

Press **○** to grab an opponent.

PlayStation 2

SPY HUNTER
NOWHERE TO RUN

16+

DETAILS

PUBLISHER MIDWAY
DEVELOPER TERMINAL REALITY
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.THESPYHUNTER.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO

SPY HUNTER: NOWHERE TO RUN

Spy Hunter speeds to Hollywood, and wraps itself around a tree

Even starting with what we can assume was a generous budget, the developer of *Spy Hunter: Nowhere To Run* has still managed to make it feel cheap. The floaty handling of your car (supposedly the ultimate gadget-mobile), the wonky on-foot bits and the ill-judged stealthing are just a few of this actioner's crimes. It really does feel more like something you'd fish from a bargain bucket than the blockbuster movie tie-in it's supposed to be. Still, the clues were there from the start. This is, after all, a game of a John Woo film starring Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson that's based on an ancient 1980s Midway coin-op.

As in the last two PS2 *Spy Hunter* games, the big gimmick is your motor, The Interceptor, and its ability to transform into a motorbike and a speedboat. It's also equipped with rockets, machine-guns and a whole host of James Bond gadgets, including *Gladiator*-

style wheel spikes. However, the simple gun and run enjoyment from previous outings has now morphed into predictable, stale arcade racing, where most of the action takes place in the cut-scenes. After a while you end up feeling a little surplus to requirements.

Then there's the out-of-car action, included, presumably, to show off the film's leading man. We say presumably, because it certainly doesn't add anything to the game. Rather than giving *Spy Hunter* depth and variety, these sections are just like any other generic boil-in-the-bag third-person action/adventure you've ever played. Instantly forgettable, they're very pedestrian in

both senses of the word. Our recommendation? Even if you enjoy the movie, seek out either of the first two, infinitely superior, *Spy Hunter* games before you blow your notes on this nonsense.

■ Andy Kelly

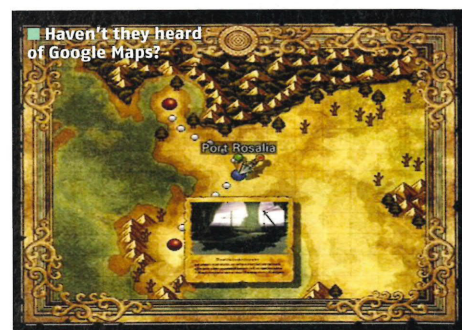
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

VERDICT

Graphics	03	Muddy and lifeless throughout
Sound	05	The Rock's a charismatic lead
Gameplay	03	Awkward and wobbly, both in car and out
Lifespan	04	It won't take more than six hours to finish

Oh dear. We've seen some drab ill-judged resurrections of 'retro classics' in our time, but this takes the pixelated biscuit

3/10



Haven't they heard of Google Maps?



We bet you are, dear

Screams of the Sacrificed

Challenge Chat

Welcome to the Arena, and the altar of flowing blood!! We're always looking for hot-blooded youths!!



Combat is played out on a new hexagonal grid

Detonation!

6900

4471

4796

5339

PlayStation 2

WILD ARMS 4

12+

DETAILS

PUBLISHER 505 GAME STREET
DEVELOPER XSEED GAMES
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.WILDARMS4.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO

WILD ARMS 4

It's the Wild West, but not as we know it

The *Wild ARMS* series takes elements of Wild West folklore and blends them with traditional role-playing. It's a strange idea but it works, and the games have always had a unique feel to them, even if they fall short of console questers like *Final Fantasy*.



Still, with every sequel there's talk of innovation, and the fourth game's big change is the combat system, which ditches the traditional turn-based line-up in favour of an overly fussy battlefield comprised of hexagons. When you're standing next to a 'hex' occupied by an enemy you can attack them, and if two enemies are in the same position you'll attack them both. The same goes for the damage you take, so it pays to think strategically and keep your party spread out.

Sadly, when you're not filling no-good varmints full of lead, you spend far too much time simply wandering around. There aren't many towns to explore, and most of the game consists of vast, lifeless prairies.

On the plus side, there's a move to inject some physical puzzling into proceedings with platforming sections, and the plot's a definite

asset – with warm dialogue between the characters and a sharp sense of humour. This is a solid, enjoyable adventure that lacks the polish of the *FF* series or *Dragon Quest*, but is easily likable enough to turn the heads of RPG completists in need of a stop-gap while they wait for *FFXII*.

■ Andy Kelly

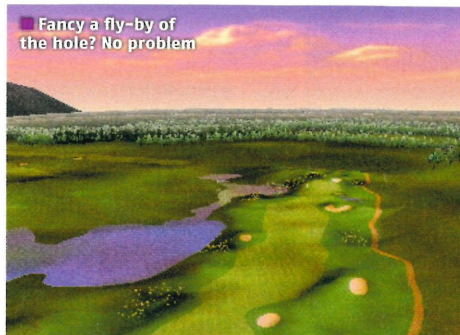
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

VERDICT

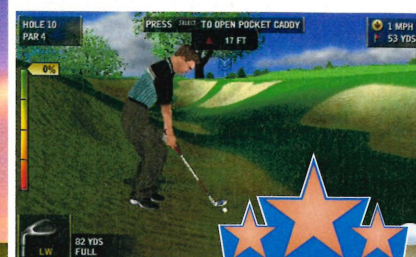
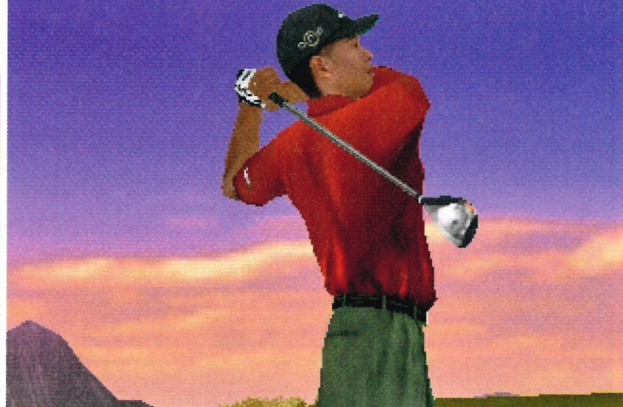
Graphics	07	Colourful animation-style visuals
Sound	06	Not offensive, but hardly memorable either
Gameplay	07	A trad RPG with a novel combat system
Lifespan	06	20 hours will get you through to the end

Wild ARMS has always been the RPG underdog, and this won't change that. However, respect is due for trying something different

7/10



Fancy a fly-by of the hole? No problem



TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07
DETAILS
 PUBLISHER ELECTRONIC ARTS
 DEVELOPER ELECTRONIC ARTS
 PRICE £34.99
 OUT NOW
 WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
 DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
 CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07

Taking another swing at your PSP

Last year's *Tiger Woods* game was all about pitting your putting against a line-up of real world golfers in a series of rival match-ups. This year's edition widens the golf-sim action to include a full three-year career mode on handheld for the first time.

Over the course of your career you'll develop your player's skills, spend winnings on new gear and dress in pink knitwear and pleated slacks in the privacy of your PSP – which leaves you less open to ridicule than donning such apparel in real life. The game also judges you, so if your putting is constantly off the mark you'll be invited to play in a putting mini-game – as you will also do for driving, escaping from sand traps and hitting from the rough.

This setup forces you to develop essential skills and play the now expanded set of PSP-only mini-games. The driver-based target practice, in particular, is a real test of skill.

Thankfully, the game's subtle nub control is perfectly suited to *Tiger 07*'s range of swings.

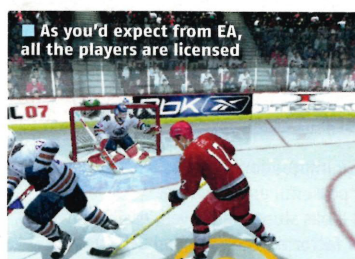
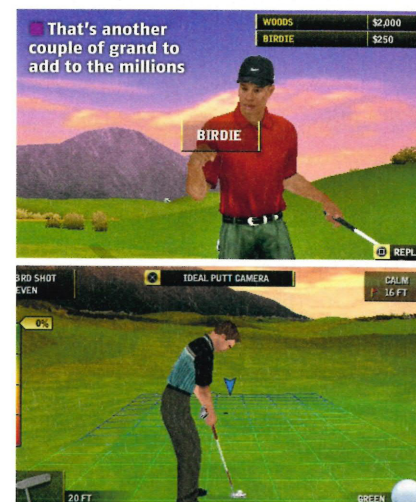
The inclusion of proper online tournaments and leaderboards tops the game off perfectly. Sure, it's not overly different from the last outing, but nevertheless, *Tiger 07* remains an essential game for all golf nuts, and comes highly recommended – even if you've never worn a tasselled loafer in your life. **■ Ian Dean**

PlayStation 2 VERDICT
 Official magazine UK

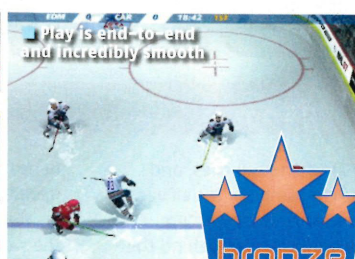
Graphics	08	Colourful real world and fantasy courses
Sound	07	EA Trax rock but the commentary's banal
Gameplay	08	Solid analogue setup and tricky courses
Lifespan	08	Easy to enter and difficult to master

EA's quality sim expands on PSP to include a deep career mode and online play. A 'fairway' ahead of its competitors

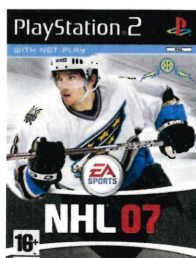
8/10



As you'd expect from EA, all the players are licensed



Play is end-to-end and incredibly smooth



NHL 07
DETAILS
 PUBLISHER EA
 DEVELOPER EA
 PRICE £29.99
 PLAYERS 1-2
 OUT NOW
 WEBSITE WWW.EASPORTS.COM/NHL07
 60HZ MODE NO
 WIDESCREEN NO
 SURROUND SOUND YES
 ONLINE YES

NHL 07

EA's puck-slapper puts its rivals on ice

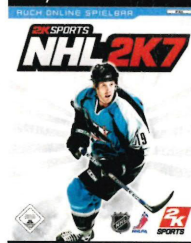
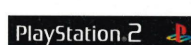
This ice hockey franchise has been having its own *FIFA* vs *PES* rivalry for years with *NHL 2K*. And while *2K*'s game has been coming out on top each season, EA's *NHL* has always been a close second. Until now. *NHL 07* skids onto PS2 looking far fitter than previous outings. Super-realistic players and a full and immersive Dynasty mode – similar to *FIFA*'s Manager mode – combine to create a very enjoyable game.

On the ice, the action feels slick as you rattle home one-timers or bust your opponent's face up against the glass. And novices to the series are warmly welcomed by straightforward menus and AI that will happily deal with complicated line changes and goalie controls. Nice one. So if you're in the market for a new sports game, give *NHL 07* a try. After all, you can have too much football. **■ NI**

PlayStation 2 VERDICT
 Official magazine UK

A superb return to form, and one that's capped off by a very slick on-ice match engine. If you're looking for the best hockey game on PS2, you've found it

8/10



NHL 2K7
DETAILS
 PUBLISHER 2K SPORTS
 DEVELOPER KUSH GAMES
 PRICE £29.99
 PLAYERS 1-2
 OUT NOW
 WEBSITE WWW.2KSPORTS.COM/GAMES/NHL2K7
 60HZ MODE NO
 WIDESCREEN NO
 SURROUND SOUND YES
 ONLINE YES

NHL 2K7

Is this classic sports series on the slide?

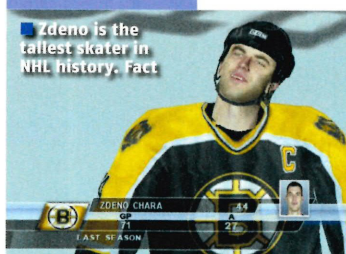
When EA stripped away *2K Sports*'s ESPN licence, they also seemed to take the developer's enthusiasm to carve out another classic ice hockey game in this best-selling series. Without the razzmatazz provided by the powerhouse sports network, *NHL 2K7* feels tired, and the whole experience lacks the entertaining punch that it had a few seasons ago. Which is a real shame.

It still delivers a competent game of ice hockey, but the usually free-flowing sport can feel a bit stop-start at times and, inexplicably, the goalies slip around uselessly like toddlers on ice. True, there are plenty of in-depth modes and tournaments, but without the oomph that the ESPN licence gave, *NHL 2K7* deserves to be slap-shot out of the NHL and into the mediocrity of the UK Elite league. **■ NI**

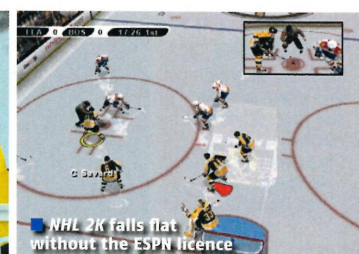
PlayStation 2 VERDICT
 Official magazine UK

If you have a thirst for foreign sports, then you could get a comprehensive ice hockey fix here. Sadly though, the total package feels soulless and, as a result, rather unappealing

6/10



Zdeno is the tallest skater in NHL history. Fact



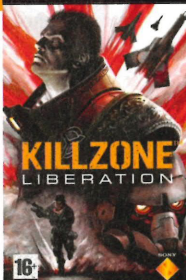
NHL 2K falls flat without the ESPN licence



KILLZONE: LIBERATION

PSP

What you call hell, we call fun



DETAILS
PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER GUERRILLA
PRICE £34.99
OUT NOW
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT YES
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

AT A GLANCE
The WW2-influenced sci-fi shooter turns 2D and sets its sights on the hardcore crowd, in a unique mix of old-skool blasting and FPS tactics.

When Guerrilla announced it was bringing *Killzone* to PSP, everyone expected a straight port of the PS2 FPS. Not an easy thing to pull off with the portable's lack of dual analogue sticks. It was something of a surprise, then, when the new top-down viewpoint was revealed.

It turns out that this change of perspective is a sensible and considered move on the Dutch developer's part. Playing to the PSP's strengths, and avoiding the compromises on control that would have been necessary if the first-person viewpoint had been retained, it works brilliantly. As a result, moving your hero around the Helghast-infested battleground is easy to get to grips with from the off.

Ducking behind crates and barricades offers valuable cover, while pressing shoot will make him pop up to fire a volley at the Helghast. By double-tapping the left shoulder button you can roll to avoid fire as you dart from cover. There's a lock-on for strafing, \odot is used to lay in with

some melee-style kicks and punches, and grenades are launched using \odot . It's all very simple and soon becomes second nature.

It's the little things that occur behind the scenes that make *Killzone: Liberation* such a blast, though. There's a very intelligent auto-lock feature working away to ensure you're never swearing at the analogue nub. The game's weapon balancing is spot on, too. Taking its inspiration from the FPS genre, each item in your

THE CHANGE OF PERSPECTIVE IS A SENSIBLE AND CONSIDERED MOVE ON THE DUTCH DEVELOPER'S PART

arsenal has a unique set of stats – accuracy, power, reload times – and they all make an obvious difference. The M4 machine gun is powerful but an arse to aim while the sniper rifle has great targeting but is slow to reload,

hence our infatuation with the Magnum – quick reloads, powerful and accurate.

It all looks stunning as well, easily matching the wow factor that the original achieved on PS2. Environments are notably detailed – like the dead Helghast's spent bodies draped over railings and puffs of smoke pluming from spent shells. It proves that the first wave of PSP titles didn't touch the sides of this console's graphical capabilities. On this front *Liberation* is ushering in a second-generation of visual quality.

Later levels introduce controllable tanks and hovercraft to the mix as well as secondary characters to order about, all perfectly realised. You'll have to adapt your tactics to each environment, too. The early concrete bases are mazes of ambush zones, the open marshland perfect for run 'n' gun conflict, while the tight mountain passes are just begging for you to get sniping.

The solo co-op stages are fantastic and, if anything, under exploited. The command interface is one of the best seen in any squad shooter. A tap of the command button will usher in bullet time, slowing the game's pace and offering positions to order your buddy to. They will then trot off to do their job and the game returns to its usual frantic speed.

Though underused in single-player, there is



LOG ON AND BRAG

The perfect platform to revel in old war stories...

Launched with the game is the new *Killzone* website (www.killzone.com), and you can access it via your PSP to unlock new weapons, items and Challenge modes. These are your main source of points in *Killzone* – points that can be used to buy new items from the website. The challenges have straightforward objectives – kill 'X' number of enemies within the time limit, for example – but they're hard to master. The website is also a place to brag. Here you can upload your high scores and in the future you'll be able to arrange multiplayer matches and compare stats too.



■ The jet pack in action – you get unlimited ammo but flit around like an excited puppy



■ Just when you thought it was safe, the game chucks in heavy reinforcements



a multiplayer co-op mode to enable you to play the game's full 16 missions with a friend. It's here that *Killzone* comes into its own, as many stages and enemy attack patterns are geared towards teamplay over lone gunman heroics. As your comrade lays down suppressing fire, you can scurry around to snipe the Helghast from a better vantage point. The game's boss battles also become a little easier with a buddy backing you up. For example, when tackling the Spider Tank in Chapter Three, your team-mate can take out the Spider Bots (walking mines, basically) as you snipe the mech's cannon.

The multiplayer options include some robust action for up to six players, with Deathmatch and Team Deathmatch, Assault and Capture The Flag all working surprisingly well in the new top-down view. Indeed, despite the new perspective, because the weapons and tactics have been influenced so much by the original, the frag-a-thons feel like classic *Killzone*.

With so much good stuff to bark on about –

we haven't even mentioned the booming orchestral score or PSP-tailored, quick-fix Challenge modes – a minor downside does emerge.

Killzone: Liberation is a tough hombre. Like *Ultimate Ghosts 'n' Goblins*, this game demands grim determination – gamers prepared to endure multiple restarts against near invincible bosses and waves of psychotic Helghast infantry – something that casual fraggers may balk at. However, this is one game that rewards perseverance.

Killzone: Liberation is a game that's a joy to play and offers little to criticise. The switch to a third-person view suits the PSP perfectly, and the wealth of extras humble many PS2 titles. Sony's done it again; this is another must-own PSP game that sits happily alongside *Tekken* and *Syphon Filter*. ■ Ian Dean

PlayStation 2 VERDICT	
Graphics	08 Lots of detail and nice animation
Sound	08 A booming score and good enemy chatter
Gameplay	09 Immediate, intuitive and rewarding combat
Lifespan	09 Loads of challenges, plus future downloads

A perfectly targeted shooter that shines on handheld due to great controls and balanced gameplay. One of the best blasts on PSP

9/10

BACK IN THE ZONE

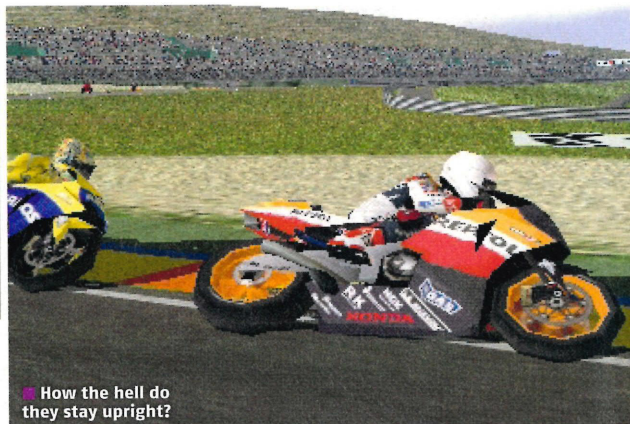
Rinsed your *Killzone* UMD? The war ain't over yet, soldier...



Some PSP games have made vague attempts to offer extended value with downloadable content, but the extra vehicles and wallpapers offered by *Wipeout Pure* and its ilk are token gestures compared to *Liberation's* forthcoming package.

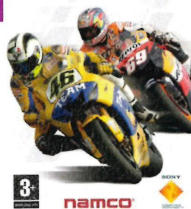
Early in 2007, *Liberation* owners can look forward to a fresh chapter of missions to download. Set in a new environment and packed with extras – such as two new multiplayer maps, extra weapons and a new vehicle – this pack should offer a serious challenge for those who've already completed the game. And, best of all, it's free.

Later in 2007 there will be a final free download, which will be a patch offering additional multiplayer maps and weapons, as well as an Infrastructure mode to play anyone in Europe online. It's great to see a developer making good use of PSP's Wi-Fi.



MOTO GP

Surprisingly sterile two-wheeled racer



DETAILS
PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER NAMCO BANDAI
PRICE £34.99
OUT NOW
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

If there's one recurring problem which haunts the PSP, it's that too many developers are using it for extending the life of their PS2 games rather than creating original content. The trouble with this is that what works at home doesn't always work in the portable world, and *MotoGP* makes for a pretty good example of this. It may be an accomplished port, but at the same time it does feel largely pointless.

MotoGP requires commitment. It asks for concentration, it wants you to make smooth, controlled turns and it practically demands that you show dedication. And while that isn't especially wrong in itself, it simply isn't conducive to the type of laid-back, bite-sized gameplay you want on a ten-minute lunch break or train journey home. For its many positives, *MotoGP* is almost entirely devoid of

personality – the presentation is sterile, the music uninteresting and the AI is so uniform that you may as well be racing against the clock.

If you are looking for a heavy-handed PSP experience, then by all means dive into *MotoGP*'s plethora of faithful, real-world tracks and unlockable licensed riders. The level of



Getting your knee down is the trick to top speeds around the corners

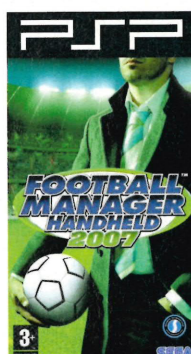
difficulty is highly customisable – so as to improve accessibility – and the technical side of those Tarmac-brushing turns is spot on. But considering that what's good here (and plenty more besides) is in *MotoGP 4* on PS2, this only succeeds in making us pine harder for more PSP-specific content. **Tim Henderson**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK **VERDICT**

Graphics	07	Very capable, but achingly dull
Sound	05	Fitting effects. Bland, repetitive music
Gameplay	06	Solid, if you've got the time
Lifespan	07	Patience is almost a prerequisite

It's definitely functional, but MotoGP is far more suited to lazing on a sofa than it is to gaming on the go

6/10



DETAILS
PUBLISHER SEGA
DEVELOPER SPORTS INTERACTIVE
PRICE £34.99
OUT 24 NOVEMBER
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT NO
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS NO

There's more to great gaming world Rankings than achingly lush graphics
Thu 3 Jun 10 PM

Rank	Nation	Continent	Points	+/-
(1)	Brazil	SAM	862	49
(2)	Holland	EUR	789	0
(3)	England	EUR	767	0
(4)	Spain	EUR	750	0
(5)	Portugal	EUR	722	0
(5)	France	EUR	722	0
(7)	Germany	EUR	721	0
(8)	Italy	EUR	677	0
(9)	Cameroon	AFR	668	0
(10)	Argentina	SAM	638	0
(11)	Paraguay	SAM	624	0
(12)	Czech Republic	EUR	591	0
(13)	Sweden	EUR	566	0

silver
PlayStation 2

Spanish First Division
Sat 14 Oct 06 AM

Overall	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1st	R. Madrid	6	5	1	0	20	5	15
2nd	Atlético	6	5	1	0	17	8	9
3rd	Barcelona	6	5	0	1	16	6	10
4th	Mallorca	6	4	1	1	11	7	4
5th	Deportivo	6	4	0	2	8	2	6
6th	R. Sociedad	6	3	2	1	11	9	2
7th	Valencia	6	3	2	1	9	7	2
8th	Sevilla	6	3	1	2	9	7	2
9th	Osasuna	6	2	2	2	9	9	0
10th	Celta	6	2	2	2	4	6	-2
11th	Athletic	6	2	1	3	10	9	1
12th	Villarreal	6	2	1	3	8	8	0
13th	Las Palmas	6	2	1	3	4	11	-7

FOOTBALL MANAGER HANDHELD 2007

Number-crunching dugout sim delivers again

Okay, confession time: on its release in April, there's a chance we were a little harsh on *Football Manager Handheld*. Having been hooked on its PC brother for years, the portable equivalent left us a tad underwhelmed. Minor issues, like the lack of reserve sides and the maximum squad size of 36 players, felt like major flaws because Sports Interactive had set its standards so high.

Our opinion changed forever on a flight over the Atlantic in June. During a mammoth six-hour session in charge of Barcelona, something clicked. With match speed set to 'Very Fast', we rattled through two seasons in what felt like minutes. See, the simplistic transfer system and smaller squads might feel a little unrealistic, but they result in a quicker, slicker management

experience. Being able to breeze through 50 games in three hours is superb, and something you simply can't do on the PC version.

As a result, we're not too fussed about this sequel's tweaks being mainly cosmetic. The already decent interface has been smartened up further, and everything runs that split-second quicker. Naturally, every summer transfer from Shevchenko joining Chelsea down to Hector Sam signing for Walsall is in, while a new data editor enables you to add

Ronaldinho to the Yeovil squad if you wish. You'll still have to do without youth and reserve sides and giving your players squad numbers, but this sacrifice is worthwhile when the result is such a fast-paced portable management game. **Ben Wilson**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK **VERDICT**

Graphics	07	Names and numbers, but smartly presented
Sound	02	Still just the click of the D-pad
Gameplay	09	Bespoke PSP options work superbly
Lifespan	09	There's a year's worth of gameplay here

Brilliantly conceived and addictive management sim that serves as a lesson in how to optimise big-name games for the PSP

9/10

NO SUBSCRIPTIONS, NO CONS, OUR GUARANTEE

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155533 OFFICE OLYMPICS	155534 BIZARRE BRAWL	155535 STICKMAN WAR	155536 GAYEST REF EVER	155700 FLYING GRANNY	155701 GYMNASTIC BLUNDERS

154586 ZOO TYCOON 2	154570 PLATOON
155253 GOODFELLAS	155429 SWAT FORCE
155446 STAR TREK	155742 LONDON VAMPIRES

FEATURE GAME OF THE MONTH

SAINTS ROW

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EIRE: TXT IRE 155763 TO 57856

WALLPAPERS

my other ride is...

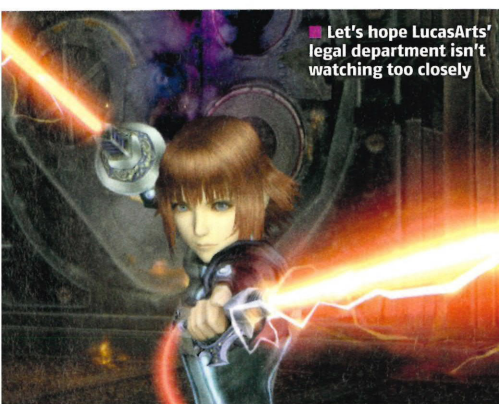
159635 PLAYBOY	155478 ALCOHOL WAS INVENTED SO UGLY PEOPLE COULD GET LAID TOO!	156562 AK-47	155398 GANGSTA DANCER	156921 WOMAN IN BIKINI	154676 BICYCLE
155714 RESERVOIR DOGS	155715 SCARFACE	155709 DIAMOND GEEZER	155712 LESS TALK, MORE NAKED!	155668 PUNK?	155670 MAN'S FACE

155348 DEFENDER	155353 JOUST	154597 CANNON FODDER	155439 METAL SLUG	154576 SABRE WOLF
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ANIMATION

155690 STICKMAN ANIM	155683 SCARFACE CAT	155682 MR MIYAGI	155686 STICKMAN WAR	155689 SCARY CLOWN	155691 BUNNY
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TERMS & CONDITIONS: All customers must be aged 16+. *Standard single videos, animations & wallpapers cost £4.50 (Ireland €6). Standard single games cost £6.00 (Ireland €8), Platinum games cost £3.00 (Ireland €4). Charge messages sent in denominations of £1.50 (€2). You will be sent a WAP link to collect your item and a small additional network charge may be incurred. Pre-pay users without enough credit will not receive items. Responsibility cannot be accepted for content ordered that is not supported by the handset or for delayed or distorted content delivery. GAME COMPATIBILITY: See Wap Site or call support line, for full details text FUN to 80155, for EIRE text FUN to 57856. WAPSITE: A network charge may be incurred from your provider during connection. Due to phone screen sizes/resolutions images downloaded may differ slightly from shown. Prices correct at time of going to print. We reserve the right to alter pricing at any time. K2 Media may contact you by SMS with the latest promotions and other products offered by K2 Media or its associated companies. DBMob is a product of K2 Media Ltd, PO Box 162, Kendal, LA8 8WW. Support line available between 9am to 5pm, Mon to Fri - +44 (0)871 200 3193.



■ Let's hope LucasArts' legal department isn't watching too closely



■ Orphans in the town of Kalm were always grateful to get fashion tips from Vince

Thank you, girl!



■ In many respects this feels like a Final Fantasy game in name only



DETAILS

PUBLISHER SQUARE ENIX
DEVELOPER SQUARE ENIX
PRICE £29.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE [HTTP://NA.SQUARE-ENIX.COM/DCFF7](http://na.square-enix.com/dcff7)
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND YES
ONLINE NO

AT A GLANCE

An action-packed spin-off set three years after the events of the PS1 classic, *Final Fantasy VII*, one of the most revered RPGs in history.

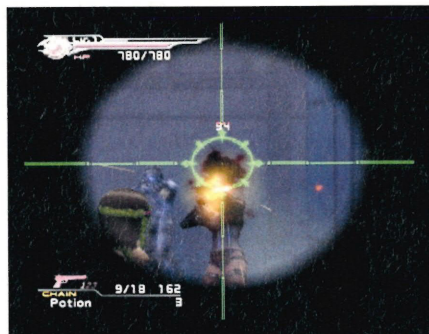
DIRGE OF CERBERUS: FINAL FANTASY VII

The classic reborn, but not quite the way we wanted it

In case your gaming life began with PS2, a very brief historical recap is in order: back in 1997 *Final Fantasy VII* blew away PS1 gamers with its a vast and detailed universe, profoundly complex RPG gameplay, and compelling, emotion-ridden plot. Fast-forward to today and we find that the game has morphed into an arcade shooter with very little depth. Great. You play as reclusive, red-cloaked miserabilist Vincent Valentine – a secret character in the original *FFVII* – who's out to tackle a group of troublesome soldiers known collectively as Deepground. They're the last remnants of the evil Shin-Ra organisation, and they've been kidnapping innocent people for some unspeakable purpose. Vincent has history with Shin-Ra. In *FFVII* lore, they exposed him to a rare energy form that infected him with Chaos, an alternate, beastly form accessible during battle.

SEVENTH HEAVEN?

It's around here, however, that the links with *FFVII* start to peter out. Save for a recurring cameo by *VII* cast member Cait Sith, plus an appearance by Yuffie and a few other familiar faces, it's a whole new game with a thin tether attached to its source material. The game begins in the town of Kalm. Deepground soldiers have attacked and Vincent has to roam the streets taking them out and rescuing civilians. The first thing you notice is how uncharacteristically linear and uninspiring the level design is. You're



funnelled down a set path at all times, while invisible barriers everywhere inhibit exploration.

Fortunately, the combat is rather more enjoyable. The chunky, responsive aiming system works well enough, even if it is a little simple. Shooting has a default auto-lock but you still have to aim in the general direction of your target and, depending on how your gun is customised, you'll have to consider distance and position as well. Happily, numerous upgrades for your gun are available to buy, such as enhanced barrel length, sniper scopes, and that elemental *FF* staple, materia. All of this lot will boost your weapon's stats. Clip a fire materia pendant to your Cerberus pistol, for example, and you can fire large flaming balls at enemies when your MP meter is full. Sniping's a grin, too.

It's not all third-person blasting though;



there are also some on-rails sections that are moderately entertaining and provide a shot of character customisation. Harvest experience points and you can either improve Vincent's stats, or exchange the lot for a large amount of gil (*FF* currency, for the uninitiated) and concentrate on upgrading his guns. Ideally this should be a tactical choice, but we just alternated each time – guns, Vince, guns, Vince – and the distribution seemed to work just fine.

No doubt about it, *Dirge* looks lush. The character models are amazingly detailed and articulate, although you'd expect that from Tetsuya Nomura, the brains behind the character



It's fair to say that Vince doesn't buy 'off the shelf' weaponry

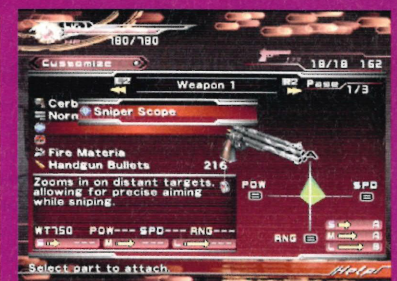


WAY OF THE GUN

Widow-maker customisation, *Final Fantasy*-style



Customising Vince's guns is one of the game's best features. First, the base model determines what type of weapon it is, be it shotgun, pistol or machine gun.



Then you fiddle with its range and accuracy by attaching barrels and sights, and give it magical properties with materia. You can store three custom guns and switch between them at any time, and if you get bored of your arsenal you can strip them all down and start again.



The upshot of all this tinkering is that some of your creations towards the end of the game will look absolutely insane, with bits poking out all over the place. They'll be deadly, mind.



Dirge's pace is dictated by the gunplay – questing comes in a poor second

design in virtually all *FF* games. The FMV, meanwhile, is in whole different league. These sequences have a genuinely filmic quality and look just as good as *Advent Children*, the *FFVII* spin-off movie released earlier this year. It's just a shame that in the CG sections Vincent is a whirling, acrobatic dervish and can destroy a Deepground chopper in seconds, while in the game he has a feeble double jump and has to shoot the buggers 100 times or more to kill it.

THE FRESH VINCE

Our main concern with *Dirge of Cerberus*, though, is how it can go from entertaining to dull in the blink of an eye. Some of the levels are bland like dry toast and go on for far too long. Routine sets in quickly too – kill loads of soldiers, pick up key card, open gate, kill yet more men, lather, rinse, repeat. Alleviating the repetition and spicing up the combat is Vincent's Chaos alter ego. Hold **△** and **○** once your limit breaker meter is full and you become an snarling beast capable of flinging fireballs around. Other than this, though, there's no tactical element here at all. Like the game as a whole, in fact – it's all a bit obvious and predictable with precious few surprises.

That's not to say *Dirge Of Cerberus* is an awful game. Die-hard *Final Fantasy VII* fans will appreciate the plot, as you get to learn more about Vincent's long-lost love, Lucretia, and the

fates of Cloud, Red XIII and other *FFVII* folk are also explored. The fact that you finally have the chance to control Vincent, one of the game's most popular characters, is a draw in itself. But if

VINCENT IS A WHIRLING, ACROBATIC DERVISH AND CAN DESTROY A DEEPGROUND CHOPPER IN SECONDS

you don't give a fiddler's pluck about *FFVII* then there's little here to hold your attention. Stripped of its towering RPG heritage this is just an average shooter. **■ Andy Kelly**

PlayStation 2		VERDICT
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK		
Graphics	08	
Sound	07	
Gameplay	06	
Lifespan	06	

A competent *FFVII* spin-off with enough ties to the past to keep the disciples happy, but for everyone else it's a decent, if uninspired, shooter

6/10



Like *GTA*, *CCF* offers a wide variety of missions, like this bike race



OPS2's Andy gives Hopkins a warm Bullworth welcome



PlayStation 2



16+

DETAILS

PUBLISHER
ROCKSTAR GAMES
DEVELOPER
ROCKSTAR VANTOUR
PRICE £39.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/BULLY
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES
ONLINE NO

AT A GLANCE

Rockstar's latest free-roaming adventure deals with one school year in the life of Jimmy Hopkins, a 15-year-old on a mission to tackle the bullies at a dysfunctional correctional boarding school.

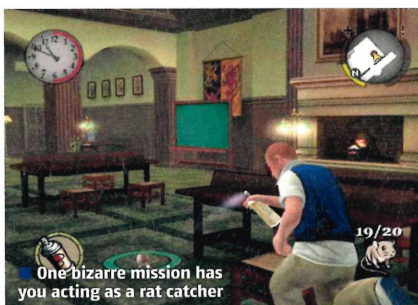
CANIS CANEM EDIT

Skool days rule okay!

So here we are, back at school. Only it's not the nondescript '70s-built concrete tomb, stinking of disinfectant, feet, dusty books and other unmentionable substances that we remember from our youth. Bullworth Academy might well be rat-infested and full of junior psychopaths, but at least it's got charm. Its inspiration is the palatial boarding schools of *Just William* or *Harry Potter*, not the urban squalor of *Grange Hill*. There's a girls' dorm and a boys' dorm, a football pitch, an auto yard and even an observatory. And as we make our way to chemistry on a frosty New Hampshire autumn morning, we get a distinct sense of nostalgia for a school that is absolutely *nothing* like the one we went to all those years ago...

BACK TO SCHOOL

What's most striking about your first term of the new school year as problem child, Jimmy Hopkins, is your surroundings. Here are a set of locations that have never really been explored in a game before: a park, a funfair, an affluent residential district, a respectable town that might as well be in Surrey... On paper it doesn't sound *that* incredible, but as a gamer so accustomed to playing games almost exclusively in big urban sprawls like LA and New York, this slice of tree-lined normality punches you in the



One bizarre mission has you acting as a rat catcher



The final chapter of the game moves to this grim industrial area

face the moment you set foot in it. If it's difficult to imagine, just think of it as the US equivalent of setting a game in Surbiton.

What throws you even further is that the framework of *CCF* is so clearly transplanted from Rockstar's *Grand Theft Auto* series. Confusing, because the experiences and locales are so completely at odds. In terms of the mechanics though, anyone who's played *GTA* will feel right at home here. First up, Hopkins' adventure is mission-based. Over five chapters, he tackles the various cliques within the Academy, stereotyped for convenience and comedy value, and reflective of the game's American origins. There are the Nerds (self-explanatory), the Preps (rich kids), the Greasers (the chavs) and the Jocks.

Then there's your means of navigation – the ubiquitous Rockstar map. As well as directing you to mission start points, it alerts you to lessons, cash-making enterprises (to buy haircuts and new outfits) and enemies like prefects and the cops (including their field of vision and state of alertness). It's one of the single greatest pieces of design on PS2, especially now it's been adjusted to lead you to the exit point of buildings *before* moving the marker to your next destination. Good job really, as *CCF*'s other ode to Rockstarification is the open world in which it exists – without a good map you could get very lost.

Not only are Bullworth's vast environs fully free-roaming, they 'live'. In *San Andreas* if you

CAUSING MISCHIEF

Four ways to get yourself expelled



1. SLIDE DOWN BANNISTERS

As you approach any bannister in the school building, hitting will prompt Hopkins to hop onto it and slide down. For added kudos, do it as close to a prefect as possible without getting spotted – as we managed in the above screenshot.



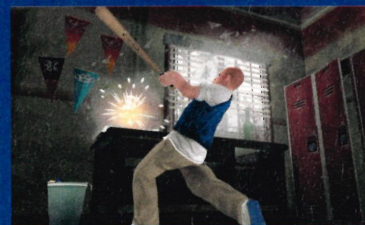
2. BREAK WINDOWS

If a teacher decides to give you grief, what better way to show your contempt than to pop round to his house with a slingshot and smash his windows with sniper precision. This forms the basis of a great mission as you play through the story.



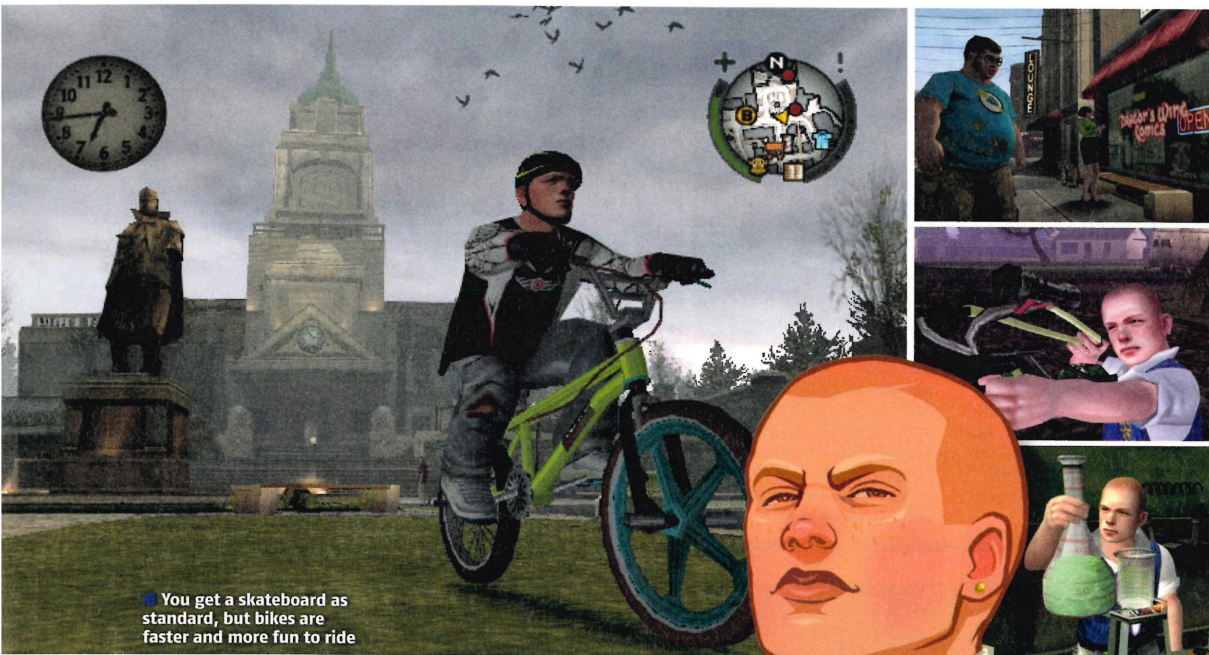
3. WEAR THE WRONG CLOTHES

It doesn't really matter what it is, as long as it isn't the school uniform. Have a root around in your wardrobe to see what you can find and stroll into the school building without a care in the world. Be prepared to hide in a locker if a prefect spots you.



4. SMASH UP THE STAFF ROOM

For added danger, attempt this after 11pm when you'll be both trespassing *and* violating curfew. Sneak past the prefects and get into the staff room, then smash the place apart with whatever you can lay your hands on. Like this baseball bat.

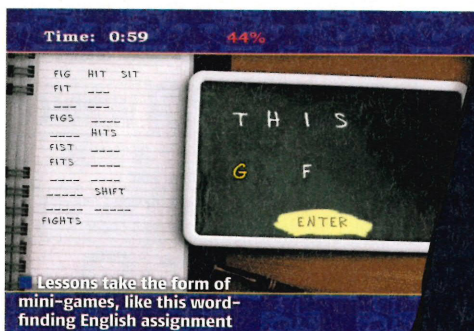


You get a skateboard as standard, but bikes are faster and more fun to ride

leave CJ standing in one place, time ticks by and night turns to day, but nothing else happens – there's no actual impetus for him to *do* anything. Hopkins however, is governed by time. Leave him alone and he'll get sleepy. Eventually, at 2am he passes out on the spot. Similarly, if you skip class, Hopkins' life is made more difficult by prefects. Not only does this constantly reinforce that Hopkins is a 15-year-old boy who needs his sleep, but the adherence to time and rules sets up the pressures of being back in a school. Which makes it all the sweeter when you get to run riot.

As the story takes place across a single academic year, seasons change too. Autumn fades to winter (you know the rest) and seasonal events figure in your missions. Halloween, for example, involves a night of pranks with Hopkins dressed in a skeleton costume. It's an anarchic evening of setting fireworks off, sticking 'Kick Me' signs on other students, leaving dog turds outside the staff room and setting off the fire alarms – that sort of thing. On Christmas Day you get a gift from your absent mother: a green reindeer jumper with a fluffy red nose. Nice.

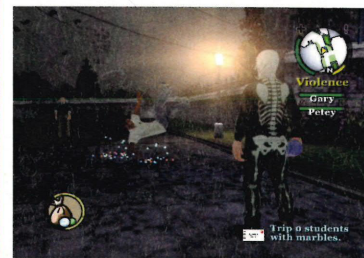
Which leads us to bullying. You can't really ignore it, as this game did used to be called *Bully*. The key is that Hopkins' story is not one of physical and mental torment. He is capable of ➔



Lessons take the form of mini-games, like this word-finding English assignment

PULLING PRANKS

The best way to get noticed is with classic japey...



THE MARBLE ATTACK

Pick up a few marbles and toss them into the path of a couple of Jocks. Just make sure you don't end up tripping up on them as well (easier than it sounds).



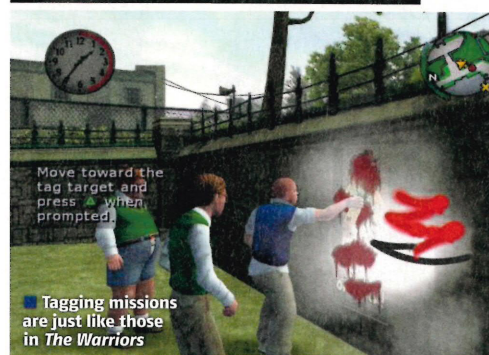
THE BULL RUN

Disguising yourself as the football team's bull mascot allows you to get away with murder – as long as you're prepared to dance for the Jocks whenever you're asked.

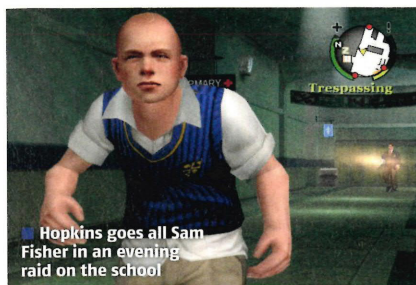


THE SOPPY DISGUISE

Dress one of your cohorts in an amusing pink rabbit suit. Kind of unfair, especially when you get to be a skeleton and your other mate's an SS General. Gulp.



Tagging missions are just like those in *The Warriors*



Hopkins goes all Sam Fisher in an evening raid on the school



The carnival is much better than going to school

"BUT JIMMY, I LOVE YOU!"

Kissing gives you a health boost and makes you feel warm inside. Here are a few of Jimmy's conquests



PINKY

Pretty much your first snog, you meet the Preppy Pinky soon after your arrival at Bullworth and take her on a date to the carnival. Has plans to marry her cousin, but only because it's illegal to marry her brother these days.



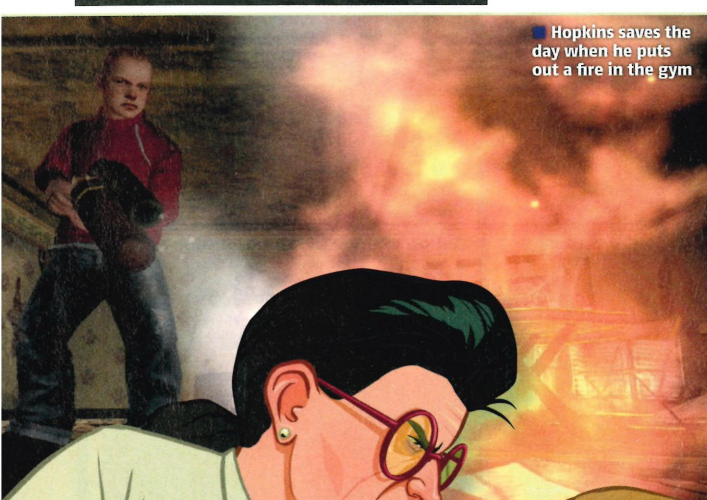
BEATRICE

After you very kindly retrieved her diary from the staff room, you get a truly terrifying lip smacker from Beatrice, who's not only facially challenged (which is being polite) but also suffering from a rather nasty case of cold sores.

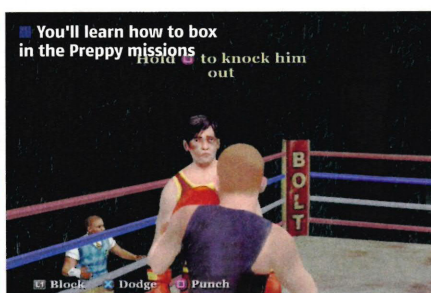


LOLA

Your first love, despite her attachment to at least three other boys. Lola gets expelled from school after she threatens to expose Mr Burton's (the gym teacher) inappropriate advances.



Hopkins saves the day when he puts out a fire in the gym



You'll learn how to box in the Preppy Pinky missions



Collecting radios for the school's hobo upgrades your fighting skills



✦ 'looking after himself' and, five minutes in, he's set upon by bullies outside the dorm (where you learn the basics of scrapping the hard way). But in almost every way, this is an anti-bullying game. There is violence, but it's never mindless, sadistic, bloody or fatal. Incidentally, combat, while simple (and confined to two buttons) is another triumph, upgradeable through lessons from the school's resident hobo. Projectile weapons, found around the grounds or manufactured with your chemistry kit, are launched using a lock-on function that's finally perfected. We can't emphasise how much fun it is climbing up a tree by the football pitch and catapulting quarterbacks from relative safety.

In fact, most of Hopkins' exploits are in place to help the underdogs and the bullied. And even if this isn't always the direct result, it's still part of Hopkins' general aim to rid the school of corruption and bullying. Far from becoming complicit in the actions of each of the cliques, your task is to overcome them and put them in their place, protecting the weaker, less-fortunate denizens of Bullworth in the process. While sometimes this involves physical violence, in equal measure it involves showing the bullies up and giving them a taste of their own medicine. Case in point is the brilliant match-day capers Hopkins undertakes to get one over on the Jocks – marbles on the pitch, fireworks in the ball, glue on the benches – all while disguised as the Bullworth Bulls bright red taurine mascot.

The one area in which *CCE* falters (and not by much) is the

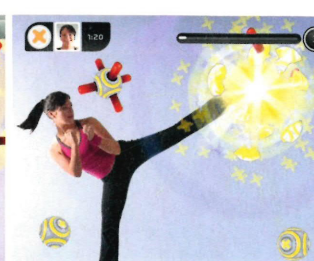
way the story plays out towards the end. While you become used to missions taking you around Bullworth's environs, the final chapter displaces you all too often to the bleak industrial district and tasks become less and less about schoolboy pranks – which is where the game is strongest. Dressed in brown jacket and jeans, hanging out in one of your acquired downtown safe houses, *CCE* veers unexpectedly from 'schoolboy romp' to 'drop-out drama' and it's in these out-of-school escapades that the game starts to lose focus.

SUMMER LOVIN'

However, on completing the main story, the endless summer which follows will remind you of the full range of youthful enjoyment *CCE* excels in. Heading over to the carnival and playing the fairground mini-games – getting kisses off the girls, entering boxing tournaments, mowing lawns for beans, playing dodgeball, etc. – are all highlights. Not all stand up as mini-games and some are more momentary distractions, but the *ConSumo* arcade game is bloody addictive.

So what have we learned today then, children? That *CCE* is an ambitious undertaking. Not only to tackle an issue like bullying over the backdrop of a 'humorous' videogame, but to make a game about something as ordinary as going to school. While it never feels as weighty as *GTA*, its humour, frat-house tomfoolery and rich characterisations of school culture are irresistible. Excellent work! A- ■ George 'Softy' Walter

PlayStation 2		VERDICT
Graphics	09	The best Rockstar has produced yet
Sound	09	Excellent incidental score
Gameplay	08	Varied and expertly designed, but easy
Lifespan	08	Main story takes about 13 hours to play
While we definitely don't remember school being this much fun, this is a brilliant return to a more innocent time. One of the year's best games		9/10



PlayStation 2

Kinetic Combat

12

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER LONDON STUDIO
PRICE £24.99
PLAYERS 1
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.UK.PLAYSTATION.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
PERIPHERALS EYETOY

EYE TOY: KINETIC COMBAT

Keep fit while playing games? Madness!

A game that is essentially the equivalent of one of those celeb-fronted workout DVDs but without the celeb sounds like the Worst Idea In History. However, *Kinetic Combat* uses Hung Gar Kung Fu to help you keep fit, and who doesn't want to become just a little bit like Jet Li?

After a live-action opening movie that talks you through the EyeToy setup – reminiscent of one of those 'well being' videos you can watch on long-haul flights – you're asked to choose from one of two instructors who'll guide you through your regime. You'll also be asked to enter your personal stats (height, age, weight, etc.) so that the game/instructor can tailor routines specifically for you, and therefore make it actually useful.

It's all put together very nicely, with a wide selection of energetic and entertaining 'games' that focus on improving everything from movement and reaction speed to stamina.

There are four 'dojos' to enter, each with a beast-themed name (Dragon, Tiger, Mantis and Phoenix) and a specific set of tasks related to the area of fitness you want to focus on, but mainly it's all about thumping, kicking and dodging on-screen targets. Whether or not you'll become a Kung Fu master after a couple of sessions is questionable, but at least it doesn't feature any of the Z-listers from *Coronation Street* or *Big Brother*. ■ Nick Ellis

PlayStation 2 VERDICT	
Graphics	07 Depends on your face and bod, sunshine
Sound	06 Decent music to thwack along to
Gameplay	07 Surprisingly fun for a fitness game
Lifespan	05 Entirely dependent on your commitment
Although it's dressed up like a game, it is a fairly serious fitness programme. We'd prefer a proper EyeToy beat-'em-up, though	
7/10	



PS2

FIFA 07

3

DETAILS

PUBLISHER EA SPORTS
DEVELOPER EA CANADA
PRICE £34.99
OUT NOW
WIFI MULTIPLAYER YES
DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT YES
CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS YES

FIFA 07

Proving that anything PS2 can do, PSP can do... pretty much the same

We suspect that *FIFA 07* is the first PSP title to challenge the assumption that any game on it is just a 'cut down' version of the PS2 one. This really is a technical marvel, proving that the PSP's capabilities are virtually parallel with those of the PS2. Well, okay, the visuals suffer a bit. Oh, and you lose a couple of buttons and an analogue stick.



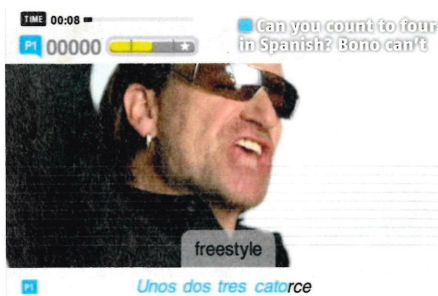
To avoid going over old ground, this year's *FIFA* story is that it's better. True, in the last three or four games it hasn't got any worse, but this year it's *substantially* better. In essence, the ball physics have been reworked to provide a less scripted game of football – and it shows, even in this miniaturised format. It's arguably the best PSP football simulation yet.

And you don't just get a decent kickabout, as you also get the full management mode (salvaged from EA's defunct *FIFA Manager*) on top, with PSP exclusive features such as training that enables you to develop your players through ball juggling and shooting.

Further digging around reveals that the *FIFA* PSP can not only match, but also surpass the PS2's tech capabilities by offering customisable soundtracks – the game just reads any MP3 files stored in your music folder. It's an option we're hoping becomes standard on PS3.

The question is, does this add up to a must-have purchase? Because that's what matters most if you've already bought or were planning to buy *FIFA 07* for PS2. The problem is that their otherwise admirable similarity nulls the necessity to own both. So don't bother. You only need one. It's just down to you to decide whether you're an 'on the go' or 'on the sofa' kind of player. ■ George Walter

PlayStation 2 VERDICT	
Graphics	08 Slightly simplified, but ample
Sound	09 Full commentary, customisable sounds
Gameplay	08 The best football sim on PSP yet
Lifespan	09 Management options are stupidly deep
FIFA 07 on PSP is the most complete football sim in a handheld format. It's irrelevant if you already own the PS2 version, though	
8/10	



PlayStation 2

singstar LEGENDS

7

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SONY
DEVELOPER SONY
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.SINGSTARGAME.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES
ONLINE NO

SINGSTAR LEGENDS

Catching the last bus out of Dignityville...

With a monicker like *Legends*, you're always going to catch more stick than a piñata at Mardi Gras, so let's make this quick. The Monkees? Pet Shop Boys? The Righteous Brothers? Someone's having a laugh here, and real legends – like Frank Sinatra and Elvis, for example – must be twirling in their graves.

Thankfully, though, once you're past the first round of tracks, things pick up. To kick off, this *SingStar*'s back to a full roster of 30 songs after a disappointing 20 in *Anthems*, taking in artists as diverse as Jackie Wilson and Nirvana.

Also making a welcome return is the Duet system, although it only works with two of the game's weaker efforts. *Let's Call The Whole Thing Off* is a funny novelty, but it's not exactly soulful. Similarly, *Park Life* is mildly amusing for a couple of goes – one person takes on Phil Daniels' cocker-knee twang, while player two handles

the Damon Albarn sections – but the spoken bits rely on the ever-twitchy Rap Meter, so it's never really competitive.

We've also mentioned before that *SingStar* rewards near-humming just as much as a confident bellow, and that hasn't changed – there just isn't any volume recognition in those



mics. But then, just as things look dark, along comes the good stuff: Marvin Gaye, Barry White, Bowie's *Life On Mars* and Lynyrd Skynyrd's *Sweet Home Alabama* make for a medley of drunken singability that'll see you through till 3am on a school night. Close out with a wailing blast on *Roxanne* and you've got a game that almost lives up to the title. Almost, but not quite. **Joel Snape**

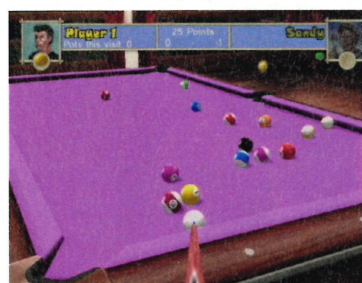
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

VERDICT

Graphics	06	Shorter on girl-pop than the other games
Sound	07	We're taking a point off for <i>Imagine</i>
Gameplay	08	More duets, less rap meter, please
Lifespan	08	One of the more essential <i>SingStar</i> updates

Better than the last one, but how could they include a medley called Born In The USA and not include Springsteen? Shameful

8/10



PlayStation 2

POOL PARADISE: INTERNATIONAL EDITION

3

DETAILS

PUBLISHER CONSPIRACY ENTERTAINMENT
DEVELOPER IGNITION
PRICE £14.99
PLAYERS 1-2
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.IGNITIONENT.COM
60HZ MODE NO
WIDESCREEN NO
SURROUND SOUND NO
ONLINE NO

POOL PARADISE: INTERNATIONAL EDITION

Paradise: lost

Initially, *Pool Paradise* looks fine. The physics are accurate, the options are extensive and you get to borrow money off a shark in a hat. There's a selection of 'crazily' shaped tables, a huge selection of rules and you get darts, a coconut shy and Skee-ball – oversized pinball, basically – thrown in as bonus games.

In fact, there's just one real problem to the game and that's the incredibly slow opponents. Watching their disembodied hands hover above the table for up to 30 seconds before every shot gets tiring very quickly.

We would suggest that you fill the gaps with booze as you would in a pub game, but your liver is likely to pack in before the end of the first frame. Shameful. **JS**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

VERDICT

Nothing happens for so long in this game that you'll think it's crashed. So unless you're going to play it with a mate, when you can dictate the pace, leave well alone

4/10



PlayStation 2

Virtua Pro Football

4

DETAILS

PUBLISHER SEGA
DEVELOPER SEGA
PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-4
OUT NOW
WEBSITE WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM
60HZ MODE YES
WIDESCREEN YES
SURROUND SOUND YES
ONLINE NO

VIRTUA PRO FOOTBALL

Virtual con football, more like...

Some games adore *PES* like a *Stars In Their Eyes* fan, but *Virtua Pro Football* wants to be *PES* like a stalker who's paid for plastic surgery by robbing his parents. It's got the same look, the same controls and the same menus, but it hasn't got the talent.

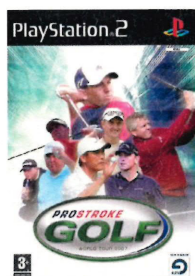
Does a normal football game decide that the person you *really* want to pass to is the one at the other side of the field, when there's a man right next to you? The one distinctive hook – a *Madden*-style playbook system that comes into effect for set-pieces – is a nice idea, but that's just the equivalent of finding out that your deranged starlet can do the splits quite well. Steer well clear. **JS**

PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK

VERDICT

There are a couple of moderately original features in what's little more than a shameless and sub-standard PES rip-off. Not even worth the budget price

3/10



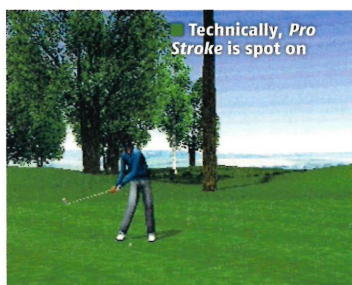
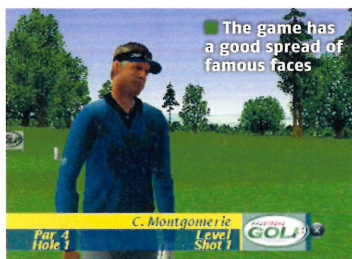
PRO STROKE GOLF: WORLD TOUR 2007

Golf that lacks *Tiger's* teeth

Think of golf games and you think of the *Tiger Woods* series – that's the benchmark by which all are judged and it's a standard that *Pro Stroke Golf* comes surprisingly close to. First and foremost this is a golfers' golf game. The gimmicks that can clutter *Woods* are absent here; instead you get a clean experience. A case in point is the game's swing system. The left thumbstick starts the swing and the right ends it, creating a neat motion from one hand to the next. Simple, but it works beautifully. This simplicity also makes it onto the green; distance is easily gauged and the correct shots and clubs always deliver the goods.

All the real world courses and proper pros are in here too, including Sergio Garcia, Ben Curtis and Monty. The whole package feels authentic, mature and accurate. The only real downside is the game's scope. Though *Pro Stroke Golf* can compete with *Woods* in terms of accuracy and realism, when it comes to the number of courses, wealth of game modes and options it doesn't have the same depth. ■ Ian Dean

The two-stick swing is an absolute joy to use



Technically, *Pro Stroke* is spot on

PlayStation 2 VERDICT
Official magazine-UK
A decent, realistic alternative to *Tiger Woods* that just lacks the wealth of options and modes EA ploughs into its sports franchise
7/10

NEOGEO BATTLE COLISEUM

PUBLISHER IGNITION DEVELOPER SNK PRICE £19.99
PLAYERS 1-2 OUT NOW



NGBC brings 'classic' (read: dated) arcade fighting back to your PS2, mixing anime art with weirdly satisfying midi music. The game's chief positive is a range of cameos from Neo Geo alumni including huntress Athena, Akari from *The Last Blade* and Mudman from *World Heroes 2*. While the tag-team action has been done before (and better) by *Tekken* and *Street Fighter*, the colourful cast rescue this from mediocrity. ■ LS

PlayStation 2 VERDICT
Official magazine-UK
A varied mix of disciplines and characters make this an entertaining if largely unspectacular fighter
6/10

SAINT SEIYA: THE HADES

PUBLISHER ATARI DEVELOPER NAMCO BANDAI/DIMPS
PRICE £29.99 PLAYERS 1-2 OUT NOW



Just like the *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai* beat-'em-ups (also developed by Dimps) *Saint Seiya* shares a special combo-based gameplay system, in which the goal is less about battering your opponent with melee combos and more about surviving long enough to charge up your Big Bang Attack meter and launch screen-engulfing super moves.

Again, as with *Dragon Ball Z* this results in a slightly stilted experience. It does, however, mean more attention can be paid to the lush and chaotic anime graphics. So while overall *Saint Seiya* is a deeply average game, it does at least capture the ambience of the anime series. ■ ID

PlayStation 2 VERDICT
Official magazine-UK
Simplistic and often frustrating beat-'em-up gameplay dressed up in colourful, brash but authentic visuals
5/10

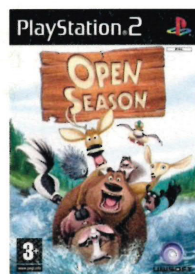
EARACHE EXTREME METAL RACING

PUBLISHER METRO 3D DEVELOPER DATA DESIGN INTERACTIVE
PRICE £19.99 PLAYERS 1-2 OUT NOW



Designed to be the perfect game for heavy metal die-hards, *Earache Extreme* gives you ten spiky monster trucks, courses set in hellish locales, and over three hours of licensed music from bands with names like Mortis, Decapitated and Morbid Angel. With this darker than black premise it's unfortunate that the violence on offer is underwhelming, and the ghoulish power-ups seldom make a difference to the one-chord gameplay. ■ LS

PlayStation 2 VERDICT
Official magazine-UK
Earache Extreme is a below-par racer with a uniquely hardcore heavy metal soundtrack, but precious little else going for it
4/10



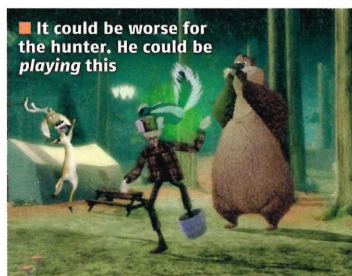
OPEN SEASON

All it has are the bear necessities

Open Season is another one of those cutesy ankle-biter adventures based on an animated popcorn flick, and just like the movie the game does things strictly by the book. With that in mind, we weren't expecting groundbreaking gameplay innovation. That said, we were hoping to be entertained at the very least.

As headlining bear, Boog, the main aim of each of the game's 25 levels is to run errands for the woodland animals. Help them and they'll join your quest to return home without becoming someone's new rug or hunting trophy. They all have uses: squirrels can be catapulted into trees and can also act as cannons, firing nuts at the hunters. Rabbits, meanwhile, can stick face-hugger style to their heads and put the bloodthirsty trappers off their aim.

Heck, we're in danger of making this sound good. It ain't. These abilities take too long to gather, the levels are sparse and dull and even the dialogue lifted from the movie has been re-recorded. If you really loved *Open Season* the movie buy a themed mug if you must, just don't waste your precious money on this. ■ Ian Dean



It could be worse for the hunter. He could be playing this

Something pongs, and it ain't the skunks

PlayStation 2 VERDICT
Official magazine-UK
A boring, bland movie tie-in that is hard to recommend even if you're seven and you really loved the movie
4/10

Mountain Biking UK

FREE 36 PAGE MAGAZINE

07 BIKES & KIT

NEXT YEAR'S HOTTEST PRODUCTS REVEALED



PLUS! THE SUN RUN

WHERE TO FIND SUPER FAST, DUSTY TRAILS... RIGHT NOW!

OLI BECKINGSALE

FIND OUT WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A WORLD CLASS CROSS-COUNTRY RACER

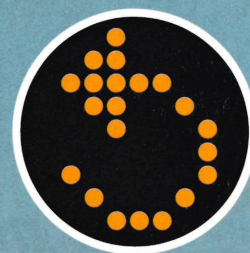
WINTER TYRES

WE REVEAL THE TREADS THAT REALLY CUT IT IN THE MUD

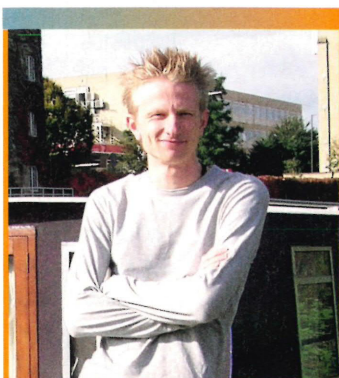


ON SALE
WEDNESDAY 25TH OCTOBER

replay



TENDING TO GAMES IN THEIR GOLDEN YEARS



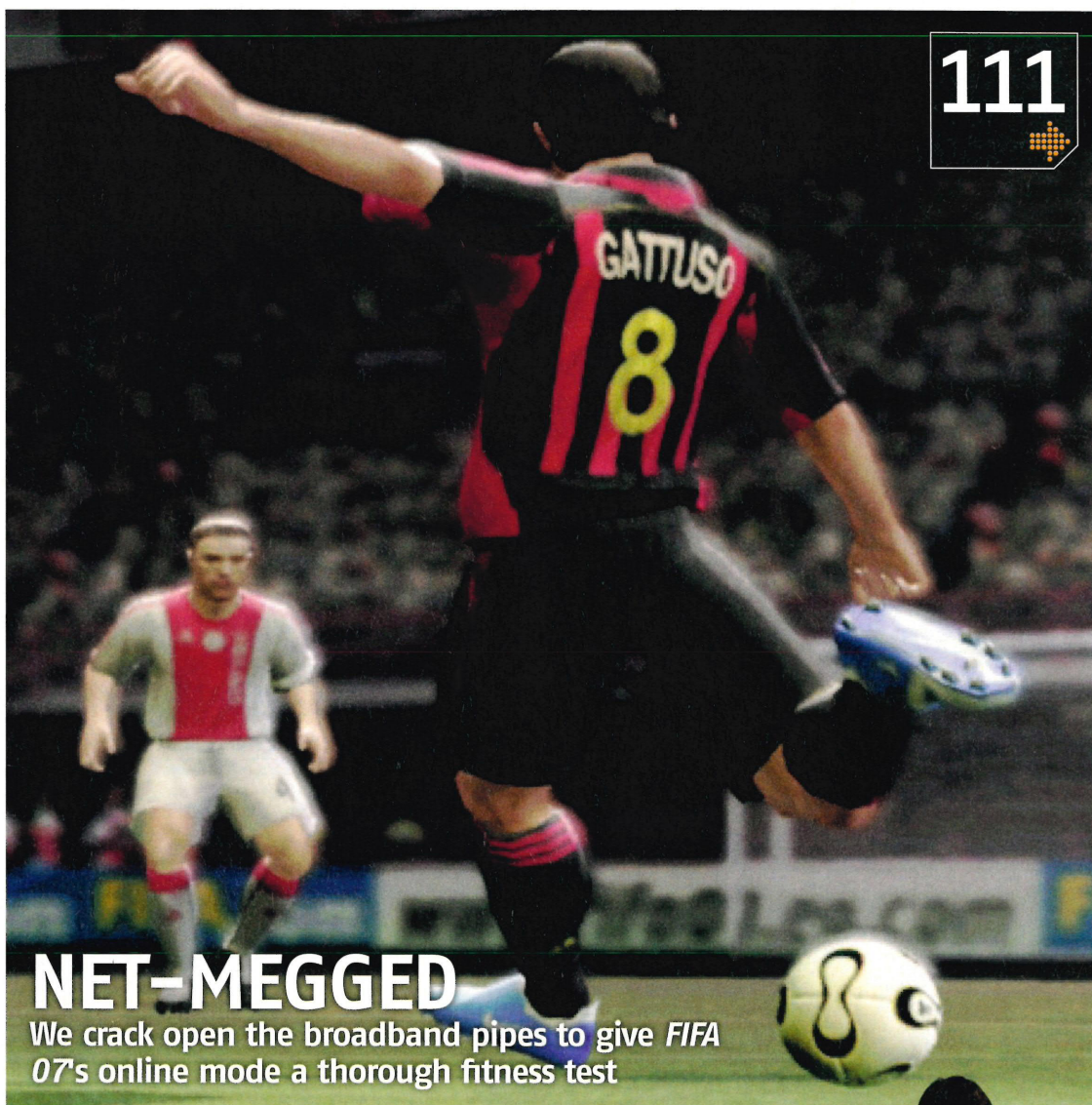
It's cold, wet and dark outside, and that means one thing: staying indoors and cosying up with your beloved PS2. And Replay is here to help you squeeze every last breath of life from your games.

This month we locked Fitzy in a small room and refused to release him until he'd delivered a comprehensive list of hints and tips for *Metal Gear Solid 3: Subsistence*. Pale of face and nearly crippled by exhaustion, he emerged days later with some showstopping advice on how to make the most of Snake's latest. That's exactly the kind of love and dedication that goes into each and every page of Replay.

Hope you enjoy the rest of the section, but with an online review of *FIFA 07*, a *LEGO Star Wars 2* competition and the always-scorching Hot 100, we reckon that's a sure-fire guarantee.

Andy

Andy Hartup,
News editor



111

NET-MEGGED

We crack open the broadband pipes to give *FIFA 07*'s online mode a thorough fitness test

110

CHARTS

You came, you bought, you played; but which games have you sent to the top of the charts?

110

SAVE POINT

Check out this month's hand-drawn joke at gaming's expense. Laughs guaranteed

111

CHALLENGES

Think you can beat us at our own games? There's swag to be bagged if you've got the skills

112

CHEATS

Become a real master of stealth with our rucksack-full of *MGS3: Subsistence* cheats

116

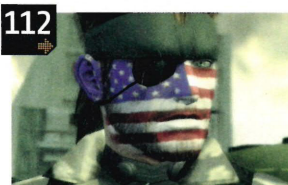
HOT 100

Our indispensable guide to the best of PS2 and PSP is hotter than a Tabasco smoothie

110



112



charts

FACTS, FIGURES AND FUNNIES

WHAT THE OTHER MAGS SAID

WE READ 'EM, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO

	PlayStation 2 LEGO STAR WARS II	FIFA 07	PlayStation 2 JUST CAUSE	RIDGE RACER 7
PSM3	"A force to be reckoned with" 91%	"In terms of gameplay, it's still not PES" 84%	"Should have been a masterpiece" 78%	"Great game - awful cash-in" 50%
PSW	"A charming, tongue-in-cheek take on SW" 8/10	"FIFA 07 plays an absorbing game of football" 8/10	"Just Cause is big, green and often great fun" 7/10	"The most impressive racer on PSP" 9/10
PLAY	"LSW II is no better than the last" 75%	NO REVIEW	"Enough action-packed thrills to satisfy" 82%	"Just doesn't add enough to its predecessor" 78%
PlayStation 2 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK VERDICT	"It's time to love Star Wars again" 9/10	"A football game with stacks to offer" 9/10	"A small game hiding in a big world" 8/10	"Great but essentially more of the same" 8/10

*Review not available at time of going to press

THE TOP 20

ChartTrack



Game Name	Publisher	Score
1 FIFA 07	EA SPORTS	9/10
2 TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 07	EA SPORTS	8/10
3 LEGO STAR WARS II: THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY	ACTIVISION	9/10
4 KINGDOM HEARTS II	SQUARE ENIX	8/10
5 JUST CAUSE	EIDOS	8/10
6 LMA MANAGER 2007	CODEMASTERS	7/10
7 CARS	THQ	7/10
8 ACE COMBAT: THE BELKAN WAR	SONY	8/10
9 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: THE LEGEND OF JACK SPARROW	UBISOFT	5/10
10 YAKUZA	SEGA	7/10
11 BUZZ! THE BIG QUIZ	SONY	8/10
12 OVER THE HEDGE	ACTIVISION	5/10
13 SUPER-BIKES RIDING CHALLENGE	BLACK BEAN	6/10
14 REAL WORLD GOLF 2007	IN2GAMES	7/10
15 MADDEN NFL 07	EA SPORTS	9/10
16 TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND	EIDOS	8/10
17 RESERVOIR DOGS	EIDOS	5/10
18 MONSTER HOUSE	THQ	6/10
19 NHL 07	EA SPORTS	8/10
20 SAMURAI WARRIORS 2	KOEI	4/10

TAKING THE MICKEY

Square's super-cute RPG debuts at number four. It's great to see that the Disney appeal extends beyond saccharine animated movies and themed lunchboxes.



SWING, SWING

And we thought we were the only ones to actually own a GameTrak. Considering you need an expensive peripheral to play it, 14th place is a real achievement for RWG.

SAVE POINT

TAKING THE LESS TRAVELLED ROUTE TO GAMING WISDOM

WORDS: KIERON GILLEN ART: JAMIE MCKELVIE





challenges

GET FREAKY AND GRAB SOME FREEBIES

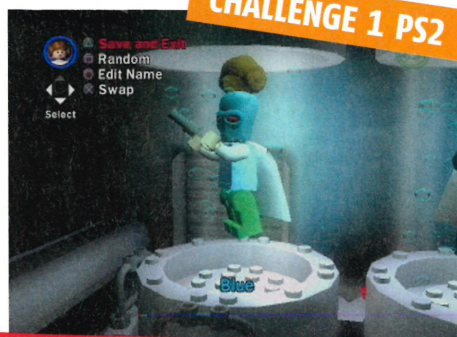
LEGO STAR WARS II: THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY



This one is all about flair. Create the freakiest LEGO character you can, take a snap and send it to us. We'll hand out the prize to the one that makes us laugh the hardest.

Best proved freak gets...

A fistful of limited-edition *LEGO Star Wars* key rings, two PS2 games and an OPS2 T-shirt.



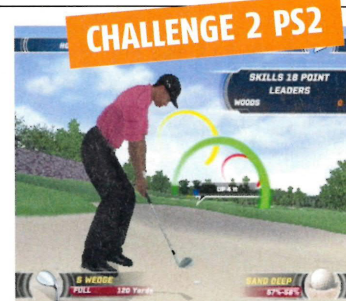
CHALLENGE 1 PS2

TIGER WOODS 07



Choose the Skill 18 mode and head over to Pebble Beach. Beat our score of 240 on the first nine holes (by more than anyone else) and you'll bag the prize.

Best proved score gets... Three of the latest EA Sports games and an OPS2 T-shirt.



CHALLENGE 2 PS2

HOW TO ENTER

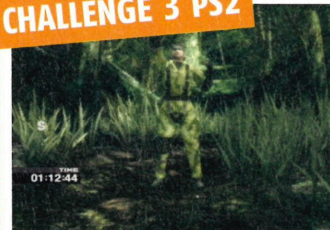
Attach your MMS picture then text either **CHALLENGE1**, **CHALLENGE2**, or **CHALLENGE3** (then a space) followed by your name and full address to **07738 647 177**

Only the entries that OPS2 judges as the best time / best score / biggest freak 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 2 November to 29 November inclusive. We will not advise non-winners of the result.*



METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE

CHALLENGE 3 PS2



On the Snake Versus Monkey mode, the player who beats our time of 1min 12.44 seconds on the Escape From The Jungle stage (by more than anyone else) will win the goodies.

Best proved time gets... Three great PS2 games and an OPS2 T-shirt.

online



IS IT WORTH GETTING BROADBAND FOR THESE GAMES?

FIFA 07



What you get: Not only is this year's *FIFA* the finest football game EA has ever produced, it also offers a potentially groundbreaking online experience. New Interactive Leagues enable you to participate in your club's real-life fixtures. Beat your opponent and your side earns a 'vote'; the side with the most votes gets the three points, and the scores are then factored into a league table.

What it's like: Initially, a mysterious bug caused us to disconnect every time we tried to start a match – just to get hooked up we had to delete our profile and squads and disable silent sign-in and then create a new profile. It appears that this is because of EA's insistence that you accept their downloadable rosters when logging on, thereby rendering any manual editing redundant. Shame.

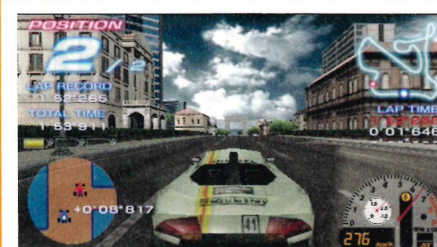
When we managed to log on, the action felt a little slow and spongy in comparison to single-player, but the engine held up okay. Sadly so did our opponent, scraping a 1-0 win, despite taking a second-half hammering.



Given that the OPS2 office comprises Plymouth, Palace, Torquay and Leeds fans, the lack of lower tier Interactive Leagues left us underwhelmed, but hopefully that can be rectified next year. For now though, a more pressing problem is the unfortunate bug, making it extremely hard for people to get involved in the first place. Until that's sorted, you're better off sticking with the game's (fortunately excellent) array of offline modes.

SHOULD I GET BROADBAND FOR THIS? X

PSP WIFI TEST



RIDGE RACER 2

What you get: Racing for up to four players over a local WIFI connection. From the word go, you can use any car, in any class, and race on any circuit in the game without having to suffer the ordeal of unlocking everything. Sadly, there's no GameShare option, so each player will need their own copy.

What it's like: We don't have any problems with the actual racing – which is supremely addictive. Our main beef is that, aside from being able to handicap other racers, the four-player races don't offer much in the way of variety over the single-player game. We expected a multiplayer knockout mode or, at the very least, a few tournament options. But really, there's nothing else to be had here. You could get your mates around for this one, but don't be surprised to see their eyes glaze over within the hour.

SHOULD I GET MY MATES ROUND FOR THIS? X

*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. In the instance of a draw, the winner will be selected on a first come first serve basis. 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. These competitions are open from 2 November to 29 November inclusive.

cheats

THIS MONTH'S COOLEST, NASTIEST AND STUPIDEST CHEATS

METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE

To unlock all the hidden face paints and camouflage patterns, do the following:

Unlock all national flag face paints

Complete the game once on any level

Animal camouflage (increases steadiness of aim)

Defeat Ocelot by depleting his stamina

Banana camouflage (makes all food taste great)

Get the top time in every stage of Snake Vs Monkey mode

Cold War camouflage (enemies won't shoot at you)

Defeat Volgin by depleting his stamina

DPM camouflage (replenishes life gauge)

Get the top score on special Duel mode

Fire camouflage (drops fire damage by 50%)

Defeat The Fury by depleting his stamina

Green face paint (gives you unlimited grip)

Get the top score on normal Duel mode

Hornet stripe camouflage (tames hornets and wards off spiders)

Defeat The Pain by depleting his stamina

Infinity face paint (gives you infinite ammo)

Finish the game with a Foxhound rank

Monkey mask (no effect, but looks cool)

Finish the Snake Vs Monkey mode

Moss camouflage (slowly restores life gauge in sunlight)

'Hold up' The End

Snake camouflage (boosts camo index)

Defeat The Boss by depleting her stamina

Spider camouflage (boosts camo index, but drains stamina)

Defeat The Fear by depleting his stamina

Spirit camouflage (gives you silent footsteps and drains enemy stamina)

Walk all the way to the end of the river

when fighting The Sorrow

Stealth camouflage

Shoot all 64 Kerotan plastic frogs hidden in the game

24: THE GAME

At the main menu screen, hold **△**, **□**, **○**, and **×** until a Security Clearance menu appears (give it about ten seconds). Use the D-pad to move around, then hold down **×** to change letters by pressing left and right. Once all the letters have been changed hit **△** and the code will turn orange. Exit with **△**. Select 'Previously On 24', then '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

AND 1 STREETBALL

Enter the following codes in the cheat menu found under Options.

Unlock all bonuses

△, **△**, **×**, **×**, **○**, **○**, **○**, **○**.

Unlock all breakdowns

×, **×**, **○**, **○**, **○**, **○**, **△**, **△**, **△**.

Unlock all outfits

×, **△**, **○**, **×**, **○**, **△**, **△**, **○**.

Unlock all courts

○, **×**, **×**, **○**, **×**, **△**, **○**, **×**.

Unlock all I-Ball moves

×, **△**, **△**, **×**, **○**, **○**, **×**, **○**.

Unlock all mini-games

○, **○**, **△**, **×**, **×**, **○**, **○**, **○**.

BATTLEFIELD 2: MODERN COMBAT

While playing the game, hold **△** and **△** and then press **→**, **→**, **↓**, **↑**, **←**, **←** to unlock all weapons.

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.

CARS

Enter the following codes into the cheats menu:

YAYCARS – Unlock all cars

R4MONE – Unlock alternative paint jobs

MATL66 – Unlock all tracks and mini-games

TRGTEXC – Unlock Speedy Circuit and Countdown Clean levels

VROO00M – Unlimited boost

WATCHIT – Unlocks all movie clips

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 **△** while entering the following codes:

Reset alert meter:

△, **→**, **△**, **△**, **○**, **→**.

Invulnerability:

○, **○**, **←**, **←**, **○**, **○**.

Infinite ammo:

←, **○**, **△**, **→**, **△**, **○**.

Infinite mind power:

△, **△**, **○**, **→**, **△**, **○**.

FIFA STREET 2

On the title menu, hold **△** 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 "fullspectrumwnage" at the cheats option to unlock all the levels. Access the levels from the Restart option.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: LIBERTY CITY STORIES

Enter the following codes during gameplay:

Big heads:

↓, **↓**, **↓**, **○**, **○**, **×**, **△**, **△**.

Shiny cars:

△, **△**, **△**, **↓**, **↓**, **△**, **△**, **△**.

Pedestrians follow you

↓, **↓**, **↓**, **△**, **△**, **○**, **△**, **△**.

Cars drive over water

○, **×**, **↓**, **○**, **×**, **↑**, **△**, **△**.

Tiny bike tyres

○, **→**, **×**, **↑**, **→**, **×**, **△**, **○**.

Full armour

△, **△**, **○**, **△**, **△**, **×**, **△**, **△**.

Fill health bar

△, **△**, **×**, **△**, **△**, **○**, **△**, **△**.

Get \$250,000

△, **△**, **△**, **△**, **△**, **○**, **△**, **△**.

No wanted level

△, **△**, **△**, **△**, **△**, **×**, **○**, **○**.

Get a rhino tank

△, **△**, **←**, **△**, **△**, **→**, **△**, **○**.

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

Enter these cheats while playing: Full health, armour and \$250,000:

△, **△**, **△**, **△**, **△**, **×**, **←**, **↓**.

Get Hitman skill level with all weapons:

↓, **○**, **×**, **←**, **△**, **△**.

Get jetpack:

←, **→**, **△**, **△**, **△**, **△**.

Bikes bunny-hop 100ft in the air:

△, **○**, **○**, **○**, **○**, **○**, **○**, **△**.

Super punch (destroys everything):

△, **△**, **△**.

THINK YOU CAN BEAT US?

WE PLAY READERS AT THE FINEST MULTIPLAYER GAMES

THIS MONTH: BURNOUT REVENGE

Ever wondered just how good we actually are at playing games? Ever thought you could thrash us? Of course you have. Well, thanks to m&m's, fellow readers are getting the chance to prove their skill, by challenging us on the best multiplayer games.

After last month's defeat on *Gran Turismo 4*, the OPS2 boys have tucked deep into their m&m's while trying out a variety of potential candidates for today's challenge. Their conclusion? The hard coating makes them the

ideal gaming snack, as your fingers don't end up covered in chocolate. And clean mitts mean clean joypads.

As for the game, though, they've decided on something with less precision but infinitely more aggression than *GT4*. Enter *Burnout Revenge*, the ultimate expression of road rage and a perfect multiplayer experience.

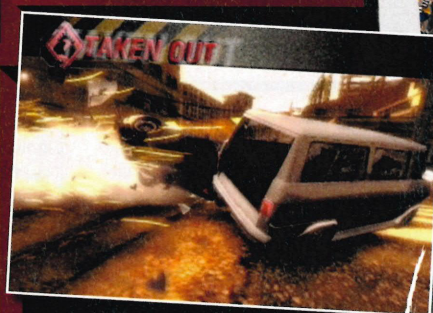
But enough talk. The network is set up, engines are revving, the nitrous is flowing... time to let the carnage commence!

THE PLAYERS

BEN (OPS2)

You won't find a better match than Ben and *Burnout*, a game that actually rewards players for dangerous and absurdly aggressive driving.

Burnout style: Violent
Longest drift: 201m
Most takedowns: 35
Favourite takedown: Vertical
m&m's of choice: Blue



"They're off!"

Given the level of tension evident, it's surprising none of the team members suffers complete heart failure the moment the race starts. Instead, they rush panel-to-panel towards the first bend and, despite much jostling, they come out of it in unison.

DESPITE MUCH JOSTLING THEY COME OUT OF THE FIRST BEND IN UNISON



The aggression isn't just limited to the game, though - after being mercilessly taken down by reader, Ben, in one masterful move, Team OPS2 decide to return the favour by forcing him to drive into Joss, sending both readers bonnet-first into oncoming traffic!

ANDY (OPS2)

Andy's natural style is a little more precise than his team-mate's, but he won't shy away from shunting the opposition into oncoming vehicles.

Burnout style: Crafty
Longest drift: 123m
Most takedowns: 19
Favourite takedown: Traffic
m&m's of choice: Red



VS

JOSS (READER)

A burning desire to build a tower taller than Eiffel's sent Joss to work in Paris. And there is no better *Burnout* practice than driving in the French capital.

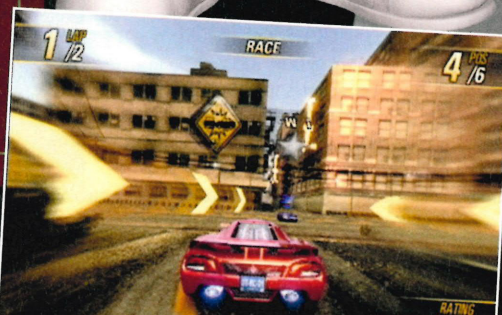
Burnout style: Relentless
Longest drift: 156m
Most takedowns: 21
Favourite takedown: Sideswipe
m&m's of choice: Green



BEN (READER)

Ben is the embodiment of road rage. But only in games - in real life he rarely exceeds the speed limit and finds overtaking grossly unnecessary.

Burnout style: Aggressive
Longest drift: 199m
Most takedowns: 41
Favourite takedown: Psyche out
m&m's of choice: Yellow



GAME TITLE BURNOUT REVENGE

REVIEWED ISSUE 064

SCORE 10/10

Promotional feature in association with **m&m's**

ANDY AND BEN GET EMBROILED IN PLAY-IMPEDING SHENANIGANS



With the number of takedowns tied, the trickery shows little sign of slowing down. While Andy and Ben get embroiled in play-impeding shenanigans, Joss wastes little time in focusing his attention on the other Ben, who he sends flying into the scenery.



But like wounded tigers, the OPS2 boys are only enraged by defeat. Joss and Ben may be bragging about their inevitable win yet clever co-op play from Ben and Andy soon sees both readers getting violently intimate with the back of a truck. Game over!



M&M'S IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF MASTERFOODS 2006.

WIN A HD 32" TV

Today's graphically glorious games deserve more than a display dating back to the last century. How appropriate, then, that the makers of m&m's are giving you the chance to win an amazing 32-inch 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 647 177), 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 until 27 December inclusive. We'll not advise non-winners of the result.*

FINAL RESULT OPS2 WINS! 4-3



TV shown may differ from prize

*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 tick the box below. Your personal data will be held on a computer and will not be passed on to any other company. Any correspondence will be entered into. No purchase necessary. Any contracts and their terms, conditions and similar photographs printed in OPS2. Editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. No purchase necessary.



THIS MONTH

Scarface's incredibly swearsy festival of crime is the most prominent newcomer to the Hot 100 this issue. However, a slightly more child-friendly entry comes in the shape of *Kingdom Hearts II*. Finally, we find Hideo Kojima's *Metal Gear Solid 3* special edition, *Subsistence*, replacing the original game, and the gleefully destructive *Destroy All Humans! 2* beaming into its predecessor's slot.



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#78
Want to try before you buy? Here's the issue where we ran a playable demo

the hot 100

IF YOU LOVE GREAT GAMES, THEN WELCOME TO THE MOTHERLODE

	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 <i>Jak II</i> 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/#76
	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 arcade 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! 2 BRONZE Globe-hopping alien mayhem set in the 1960s. REVIEWED OPS2#78 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#78 ON THE DVD
	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 Friendly cartoon visuals but seriously dazzling golfing action. 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
	FIFA 07 SILVER Finally tackling <i>Pro Evo's</i> unchallenged champion status. REVIEWED OPS2#77 / OVERALL 09 ON THE DVD
	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 <i>Charlie's Angels</i> 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 <i>GTA</i> that's a thrill-filled joy. REVIEWED OPS2#75 / OVERALL 08
	GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS GOLD Massively expansive, even over <i>Vice City</i> . 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 <i>GTA</i> -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... <i>Ico</i> 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
	JUST CAUSE BRONZE Massive parachuting fun in a 'GTA does jungle' adventure. REVIEWED OPS2#77 / OVERALL 08

THE PSP TOP FIVE

Got a PSP? Then you need these



1 TEKKEN: DARK RESURRECTION 10/10
Handheld *Tekken* is as brutally thrilling as it is addictive – an unmissable beat-'em-up.



2 GTA: LIBERTY CITY STORIES 9/10
GTA returns to Liberty City. New missions and multiplayer make for an explosive package.



3 SYPHON FILTER: DARK MIRROR 9/10
The PS1 shooter series gets new lease of life on PSP, with *Deathmatch* and 'Rogue Agent' modes providing endless WiFi joy.



4 DAXTER 9/10
Superb platform action as *Jak's* little orange sidekick gets his own fantastically varied and relentlessly enjoyable game.



5 LOCOROCO 9/10
Addictive and literally 'oddball' platformer. 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 Insane shooter with exploding zombies and schizophrenic killers. REVIEWED OPS2#61 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	KILLZONE Visually amazing FPS that'll rock your game world every time. REVIEWED OPS2#51 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#52/#55/#59	SILVER
	KINGDOM HEARTS II The Disney gang go all RPG again in this Square Enix adventure. REVIEWED OPS2#78 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	LEGO STAR WARS II Hugely enjoyable and comical retelling of the original trilogy. REVIEWED OPS2#77 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#76/#77 ON THE DVD	SILVER
	MADDEN NFL 07 One of the most accurate sports sims ever made. REVIEWED OPS2#77 / OVERALL 09	SILVER
	MANHUNT A dirty, grisly, filthy but brilliant game experience. REVIEWED OPS2#42 / OVERALL 09	SILVER
	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	BRONZE
	MASHED Got friends? Get the brilliant party racer <i>Mashed</i> . No excuses. REVIEWED OPS2#48 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#48/#49/#55	SILVER
	MERCENARIES Enjoy all the fun of free-roaming warfare. And get paid for it! REVIEWED OPS2#55 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#55	SILVER
	METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY A must-own, state-of-the-art tactical espionage stealth-a-thon. REVIEWED OPS2#17 / OVERALL 10 / DVD#17/#37	GOLD
	METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SUBSISTENCE The superb <i>Snake Eater</i> gets a new camera and an online mode. REVIEWED OPS2#78 / OVERALL 09	SILVER
	MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION REMIX Super-bling street racer, now with extra tunes and vehicles. REVIEWED OPS2#73 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	MORTAL KOMBAT: SHAOLIN MONKS The classic beat-'em-up gets a spectacular adventure makeover. REVIEWED OPS2#65 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	MOTO GP4 The fastest, prettiest and bestest motorbike racing money can buy. REVIEWED OPS2#60 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	MUSIC 3000 A virtual recording studio for £30? Can anyone say no to that? REVIEWED OPS2#33 / OVERALL 09	SILVER
	NBA STREET V3 The definitive basketball game. Shoot hoops to build your rep. REVIEWED OPS2#57 / OVERALL 09	SILVER
	NEED FOR SPEED MOST WANTED Throwing cops into the mix gives the <i>NFS</i> series a turbo boost. REVIEWED OPS2#67 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2 Vast racer with tons of mod-tastic freedom of expression. REVIEWED OPS2#53 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#53	BRONZE
	ONIMUSHA 3 If you're looking for the best 'Musha this is your boy. REVIEWED OPS2#48 / OVERALL 09	SILVER
	OUTRUN 2006: COAST 2 COAST Sun-kissed retro-racer makes a blistering comeback. REVIEWED OPS2#70 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#72/#73/#75	BRONZE
	PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG The best movie tie-in on PS2. An awesome adventure. REVIEWED OPS2#66 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#66	SILVER
	PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE TWO THRONES Only slight tweaks to the formula, but it's the best <i>POP</i> so far. REVIEWED OPS2#67 / OVERALL 09	SILVER
	PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5 Like playing real football, but with your hands. Utterly beautiful. REVIEWED OPS2#64 / OVERALL 10 / DVD#65	GOLD

	PROJECT ZERO Genuinely disturbing survival horror, dripping with menace. REVIEWED OPS2#24 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#23	BRONZE
	RAINBOW SIX 3 Squad-based shooter with a realistic edge and online missions. REVIEWED OPS2#45 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	RATCHET & CLANK 3 Weapons and flash gun-centric play make this the series' best. REVIEWED OPS2#53 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#51/#58	SILVER
	RED DEAD REVOLVER Wild West shooter that's like a cool breeze in Death Valley. Yeehaw! REVIEWED OPS2#47 / OVERALL 09	SILVER
	RESIDENT EVIL 4 Simply one of the greatest games ever made. Buy it. Now. REVIEWED OPS2#65 / OVERALL 10	GOLD
	REZ Psychedelic, music-based rhythmic shoot-'em-up. Hypnotic stuff. REVIEWED OPS2#16 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#17	SILVER
	SCARFACE: THE WORLD IS YOURS Sweary but excellent drug-dealing film tie-in. REVIEWED OPS2#78 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	SECOND SIGHT Slick thriller touched with psychic powers from the 'Splitters boys. REVIEWED OPS2#16 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#50	BRONZE
	SHADOW OF ROME A historic blend of bloody action and stealth set in Roman times. REVIEWED OPS2#56 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	SHADOW OF THE COLOSSUS Original, beautiful and haunting - nothing else feels like this. REVIEWED OPS2#68 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#69	SILVER
	SILENT HILL 3 Wet-the-bed scary survival horror. We dare you to play it. REVIEWED OPS2#33 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#34	SILVER
	SINGSTAR ROCKS! Party fun of the highest order, whether you can sing or not. REVIEWED OPS2#72 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#74/#75/#76	BRONZE
	SLY 3: HONOUR AMONG THIEVES Clever, inventive and funny, this is the best platformer around. REVIEWED OPS2#66 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#66	SILVER
	SMASH COURT PRO TENNIS TOURNAMENT 2 A new career mode makes the top tennis seed even better. REVIEWED OPS2#47 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	SOCOM II: US NAVY SEALs Move in for the commander-in-chief of online tactical shooters. REVIEWED OPS2#43 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	SOUL CALIBUR III Better than ever, this is the greatest fighting game ever made. REVIEWED OPS2#66 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#65	SILVER

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

The inevitable tie-in to Peter Jackson's *King Kong* bucks the usual cash-in trend by offering something truly different. No on-screen furniture and a cinematic, first-person presentation help to create an incredibly atmospheric jungle adventure. It may be too short, but this kind of quality beats quantity any day.

	SPARTAN: TOTAL WARRIOR Mythological hack and slash epic. REVIEWED OPS2#64 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#66	SILVER
	SPIDER-MAN 2 Free-roaming, superhero adventure fun with loads to see and do. REVIEWED OPS2#49 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY Top stealth adventure, travelling the world to surprise terrorists. REVIEWED OPS2#58 / OVERALL 09	SILVER
	SSX 3 Super-long, fast races make this an essential PS2 purchase. REVIEWED OPS2#40 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#43	SILVER
	STAR WARS: BATTLEFRONT II Fantastic set-pieces and brilliant space battles. Buy it. REVIEWED OPS2#66 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	SUPER MONKEY BALL DELUXE Steer monkeys in Pespex balls around courses in this arcade oddity. REVIEWED OPS2#59 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#60	BRONZE
	TEKKEN 5 The original PlayStation fighter beats its way back to top form. REVIEWED OPS2#61 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#61/#63	BRONZE
	THE SUFFERING: TIES THAT BIND Hardcore, ultra-bloody action-survival horror. REVIEWED OPS2#64 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2006 Like the man himself, this year's edition is on fine form. REVIEWED OPS2#65 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	TIMESPLITTERS 2 As vital to PS2 as your central nervous system is to your brain. REVIEWED OPS2#25 / OVERALL 10 / DVD#25/#31	GOLD
	TIMESPLITTERS FUTURE PERFECT Shooter with enough guns to satisfy the most trigger-happy soul. REVIEWED OPS2#57 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#56	SILVER
	TOA RACE DRIVER 3 Tones down the Story mode and ups the red-hot driving experience. REVIEWED OPS2#69 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#68/#72	SILVER
	TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND A spectacular return to form from the first lady of adventuring. REVIEWED OPS2#71 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#71/#72/#73/#74/#75	BRONZE
	TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN WASTELAND Tony's looking tired, but this is still a great place to start. REVIEWED OPS2#66 / OVERALL 07	BRONZE
	TOTAL OVERDOSE Comedy Tex-Mex shoot-a-thon with entertaining special attacks. REVIEWED OPS2#65 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	URBAN CHAOS: RIOT RESPONSE Loud, brash, highly enjoyable law-and-order shooter. REVIEWED OPS2#72 / OVERALL 08 /	BRONZE
	VIEWTIFUL JOE 2 Cartoon-style action adventure with great fighting controls. REVIEWED OPS2#57 / OVERALL 08	BRONZE
	WALLACE & GROMIT: THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT For once, a kid's game that doesn't treat you like a child. REVIEWED OPS2#65 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#65	BRONZE
	WE ♥ KATAMARI Deeply odd and very Japanese but also hugely enjoyable. REVIEWED OPS2#69 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#70/#72	BRONZE
	WRC RALLY EVOLVED Fantastic tracks with random events to test your skill. REVIEWED OPS2#65 / OVERALL 09 / DVD#65	SILVER
	WWE SMACKDOWN! VS RAW 2006 With better online play and new match types, this is essential. REVIEWED OPS2#66 / OVERALL 09	SILVER
	XIII Gorgeous PS2 version of the comic-book hero. Play this now. REVIEWED OPS2#40 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#42	BRONZE
	ZONE OF THE ENDERS: THE 2ND RUNNER The strikingly impressive robo scrapper returns. Cracking stuff. REVIEWED OPS2#38 / OVERALL 08 / DVD#38	BRONZE

PSM3 is the UK's best-selling unofficial PlayStation magazine

5 reasons to buy the next issue of **PSM3**...



Being nasty to schoolkids is fun
"Dumping kids in a bin in *Canis Canem Edit* never gets dull"
World's first review



The Tokyo Game Show is huuuuuge
"72,163 people were jostling to play PlayStation 3"
Full report inside



Cuss words are big, hard and clever
"Scarface has a button just for swearing. What more do you want?"
Our review tells it straight



Cosplay is brilliant
"Chun Li raises her leg... PaRappa compares outfits with Morrigan from *Darkstalkers*"
You won't believe your eyes



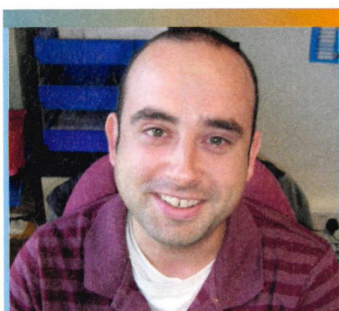
Frosties kid finally gets his just deserts
"You're gonna taste PAIN!"
We build him. Then smash his face in



Magazine + DVD every month
On Sale: Thursday October 26

comedown

THE REST OF YOUR PS2 AND PSP LIFE IN ONE HANDY SECTION



I know what you're thinking – seeing this fizzog heading up the Comedown section instead of Helen's serene lady features is a bit of a fright. But you'll be relieved to know that, as far as shocks are concerned, this is the only upheaval you'll come across this issue.

There's still a clutch of quality movies reviewed (oh, and *The Da Vinci Code*) and a selection of this month's best album releases rated for your listening pleasure. Also, as usual, we've got the latest word in PSP accessories, a smattering of Gorgonzola-ripe weirdness from the Internet and, for one month only, we show you how to edit together and upload your very own gaming highlight reel.

Last up, we've got our usual rundown of PS2, PSP and PS3 release dates in Incoming, and we also take some time out to celebrate the unsung heroes of gaming. As I said, the face may change, but Comedown's quality is unshakable. Enjoy...

Paul

Paul Fitzpatrick,
Acting production editor



film



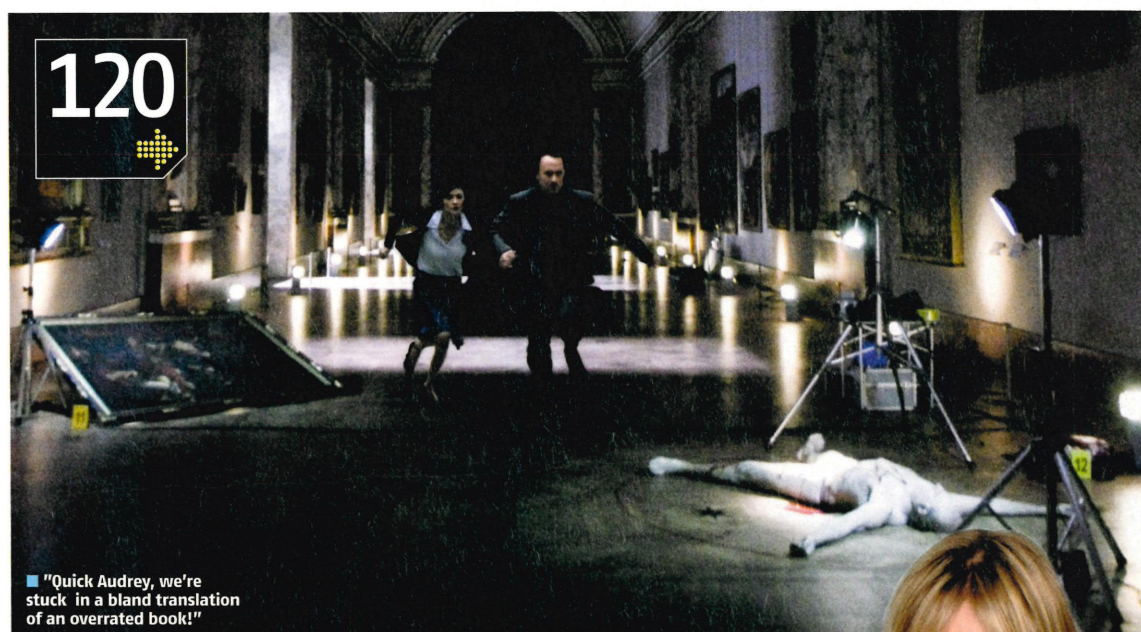
music



incoming



feature



■ "Quick Audrey, we're stuck in a bland translation of an overrated book!"

120 FILM REVIEWS

The Da Vinci Code, *Slither*, *Ultraviolet* and *Poseidon* all jostle for space in your DVD collection, but should you splash your cash?

121 HOW TO GET MOVIES ON YOUR PSP

If you can't transfer your own vids from PC to PSP, you're missing a trick. Allow our plain English guide to get you up and running

121 THIS MONTH'S WEIRDEST PSP THINGS

You want weird? We'll we've got some pungent Web-sourced oddness for you to download and enjoy. Right this way, sicko...

122 MUSIC REVIEWS

This month's ear lobe strokers come from Radio 1's Live Lounge, Lupe Fiasco, Moby and Long Blondes. We review and rate 'em here

122 PSP KIT REVIEW

Turn your sleek PSP into a window-shattering boom box, or a hands-free in-car entertainment device with this new kit

123 HOW TO... MAKE A HIGHLIGHT REEL

Kick ass at games? Of course you do, so why not use our feature to create and upload a kudos-stoking gaming highlight reel?

124 INCOMING

A comprehensive list of release dates for all the games you want to play on PS2, PSP and PS3. Why not use it as a Christmas wish list?

126 WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT...?

From exploding barrels and health packs to sniper rifles and bullet time, we salute the gaming clichés that refuse to go away

122

Just how old is Jo Whitley?

123





Tom watched with concern as his credibility plummeted to the centre of the Earth

THE DA VINCI CODE

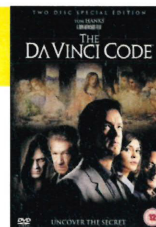
CHURCH-BAITING PUZZLER FAILS TO DELIVER

FILM: While we'd stop a long way short of calling Dan Brown's Holy Grail-chasing thriller a classic, it was a teeth-itchingly addictive page-turner. Clearly, something's been lost in the translation to film, because although *The Da Vinci Code* follows the outline of the book very closely, it's flabby like a *Celebrity Fit Club* audition, and has about the same level of urgency.

Mostly this is down to Tom Hanks, who plays Harvard professor Robert Langdon with a distressing lack of charisma and energy. Langdon, an expert in religious symbology, is asked by the Parisian cops to assist in the investigation of a bizarre murder in which the curator of the Louvre has been offed and his body arranged in a creepy ceremonial display. However, Langdon soon realises he's the prime suspect and goes on the lam with pouty code-breaking cop Tautou to discover the identity of the real killer. This should be a cracking, breathless chase but, thanks largely to the leads' spectacular lack of chemistry, it's actually more like a coach tour around Europe stuck in first gear. Puzzling, but not in a good way. **4/10**

EXTRAS: Documentary, ten featurettes. **5/10**

VERDICT: Occasional clever touches can't save this underambitious cash-in. **ND**



DIRECTOR
Ron Howard
STARRING
Tom Hanks, Audrey Tautou
DISTRIBUTOR
Sony Pictures
OUT
Now
PRICE
£24.99 DVD
£19.99 UMD

Also out on UMD

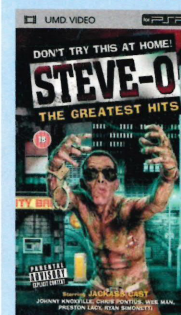
The pick of this month's releases

6 NOVEMBER

• *Shadow Man*

13 NOVEMBER

• *Steve-O – Greatest Hits*



• *Chopper*

• *Labyrinth*

20 NOVEMBER

• *Blackadder: Series 1*



SLITHER

Director James Gunn / Starring Nathan Fillion, Elizabeth Banks / Distributor Entertainment In Video / Out Now / Price £19.99 (DVD)

Film: Given the current popularity of brutal, humourless horror, *Slither's* tongue-in-cheek (but still heart-in-mouth) style is a refreshing treat. With sly winks to dozens of classic splatter movies, the movie's alien body invaders aren't exactly original, but that's hardly the point. Faced with mind-controlling parasites from another galaxy, the inhabitants of a small town respond with humour and sarcasm, as well as the expected heroics and hysterics. Particularly likeable is Nathan Fillion's self-effacing Chief of Police, a roguish and reluctant leader who negotiates all the guts and gore with nothing more than a grin and a full clip of cheeky one-liners. Brilliant. **8/10**
Extras: Audio commentary, deleted and extended scenes, gag reel, set tour, featurettes. **9/10**
Verdict: Gory but offering a ton of charm on the side. **ND**



ULTRAVIOLET

Director Kurt Wimmer / Starring Milla Jovovich, Cameron Bright / Distributor Sony Pictures / Out Now / Price £15.99 (DVD) £15.99 (UMD)

Film: So it's the future, and Milla Jovovich is a sort of vampire. Only, she's a nice one, created by a disease called hemophagia. Hearing of a government 'cure' for the afflicted, a hemophage resistance movement sends the slinky Milla to destroy the threat. Problem is, the threat turns out to be a small boy called Six. Getting all maternal, Milla uses her preposterous martial arts skills to kill everyone who tries to hurt her new friend, and uncovers a conspiracy to control the population in the process. Shallow like a puddle and boasting poorly developed characters that make it more or less impossible to care about any of the protagonists, this is hard to recommend, even as a post-booster punt. **3/10**
Extras: Commentary, deleted scenes, featurette. **6/10**
Verdict: A dull plot held together with average action. Avoid. **ND**



POSEIDON

Director Wolfgang Petersen / Starring Josh Lucas, Kurt Russell / Distributor Warner Home Video / Out Now / Price £17.99 (DVD) £17.99 (UMD)

Film: Remake of the classic '70s disaster movie about a luxury cruiser that capsizes at sea. A group of survivors, this time lead by Kurt Russell's politician and Josh Lucas' poker-playing loner, break from the main group to try to find a way out through the bottom (now top) of the ship, and encounter generous servings of peril along the way. In amongst all the fiery chasm-jumping and underwater breath-holding, though, the survivors spectacularly fail to gel. Aside from the occasional bicker there's no sense of drama-ramping conflict between this bunch at all, let alone the fellow-souls-in-danger feel that could've made the film an exercise in arse-clenching tension. **6/10**
Extras: Making of, trailer. **5/10**
Verdict: Sturdy action with massively predictable characters – you'll know who's gonna make it ten minutes in. **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

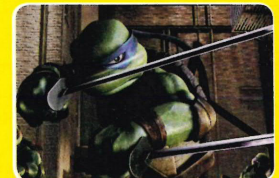
trailer park

Download trailers for hot new films to view on your PSP



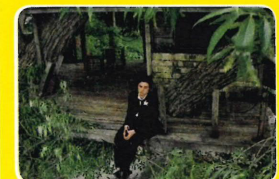
THE DEPARTED

Scorsese's remake of Hong Kong thriller *Infernal Affairs* relocates to Boston with Leo Di Caprio and Matt Damon as double agents in a cop/gang war. <http://psp.connect.com/category/MovieTrailers.php>



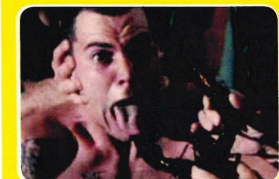
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES

Five seconds into this trailer we were convinced that it wasn't the dead horse-thrashing cash-in we were expecting. Really – this CG update looks good. www.movie-list.com/psp



THE LAST KISS

After *Garden State*, *Scrubs* Zach Braff plays another young man on the cusp of being a 'Proper Grown Up' in this sharp-looking crisis comedy. www.apple.com/trailers/dreamworks/thelastkiss



JACKASS: NUMBER TWO

The world's finest idiots come together once more to hurt themselves and each other for our enjoyment. More stupidity, more pain and more laughter. www.uip.co.uk/news/psp_trailers.asp



RATATOUILLE

Pixar's next features a food-loving rat trying to maintain a decent standard of cuisine while living in the Paris sewers. Looks smashing already. www.disney.go.com/disneypictures/ratatouille

THE WEIRDEST THINGS WE'VE SEEN ON PSP THIS MONTH

WIDESCREEN STRANGENESS CHASED OUT FROM THE WEB'S DARKEST HOLES

#3 SCHWIFTY FIVE

The Internet is filled with amateur, music-driven Flash animation, but this one stands out from the crowd thanks to a particularly gruesome photo-fit-freak picture that pops up halfway through. Don't say we didn't warn you. Find it at www.albinoblacksheep.com/flash/schwiftyfive.php



#3 Schwifty Five

#2 MEGA64 KATAMARI DAMACY

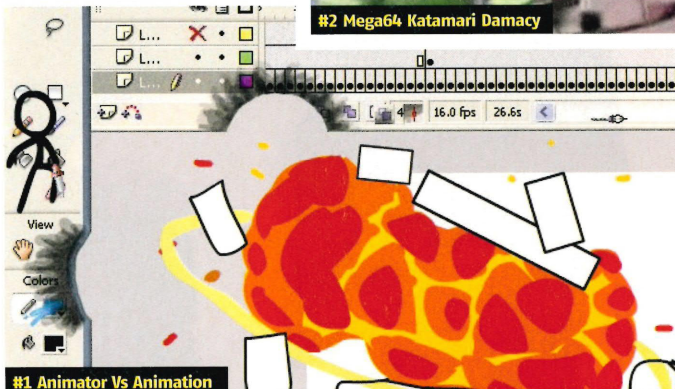
Internet comedy men Mega64 produce real-life versions of games and this is probably their best. Dressed in green and with a massive rectangle for a head, their 'Prince' hits town with his rolling ball of stuff and freaks out the locals. Find it at www.mega64.com/katamari.htm



#2 Mega64 Katamari Damacy

#1 ANIMATOR VS ANIMATION

Genius short about a Flash animation who's fed up of the way he's treated by his animator. Rebelling, the stick-man hero uses page furniture, Windows icons, and a wicked imagination to fight back. Find it at www.devilducky.com/media/46686



#1 Animator Vs Animation



music THE TUNES CURRENTLY ROCKING OUR WORLD



RADIO 1'S LIVE LOUNGE (SONY BMG)

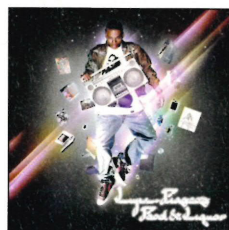
WHO? Jo Whiley's Radio 1 show has a Live Lounge section where artists perform a live track of their own and cover another artist's song. This is a two-disc set highlighting 38 of the best recordings.

HIGHLIGHTS: Jamelia's cover of Linkin Park's *Numb* is superb and The Kooks'

take on Gnarls Barkley's *Crazy* is a must-hear.

LOWLIGHTS: The Automatic have a stab at Kanye West's *Gold Digger* and fail in a really embarrassing way.

VERDICT: A brilliant live set with a wide enough range of eclectic tracks to suit everyone's taste. **8/10**



LUPE FIASCO

FOOD & LIQUOR (Atlantic)

WHO? Skateboard-loving MC unleashes some thought-provoking, complex rap.

HIGHLIGHTS: *The Cool* finds Lupe's lyrics flowing over a brilliant 80's-style Kanye West track.

LOWLIGHTS: *The Outro* is 12 very long minutes of Lupe name-checking all of his mates.

VERDICT: A serious contender for album of the year. **9/10**



MOBY

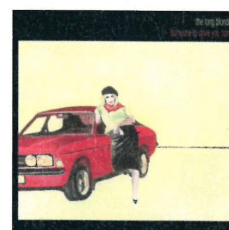
GO-THE VERY BEST OF MOBY (Mute)

WHO? Baldy dance guru Moby crams the best bits of his melancholic techno on one disc.

HIGHLIGHTS: *Go* still sounds incredibly fresh, even 14 years on.

LOWLIGHTS: New track *New York, New York* is a bit weak, frankly.

VERDICT: If you don't own a Moby album (where have you been?) this is a great place to start. **8/10**



LONG BLONDES

SOMEONE TO DRIVE YOU HOME (Rough Trade)

WHO? Lady-led glam punk rockers from Sheffield.

HIGHLIGHTS: *Once And Never Again* sounds like it's destined to be a chart smash. Very catchy.

LOWLIGHTS: *Separated By Motorways* - a great title, but the song has a rubbish chorus.

VERDICT: Icy, edgy, guitar-fuelled pop. This is a winner. **7/10**

ALSO RELEASED THIS MONTH

Robbie Williams *Rudebox* (Chrysalis)/
Damien Rice *9* (East West)/P Diddy
Press Play (Atlantic)/Kzibit *Full Circle*
(Koch)/John Legend *Once Again* (RCA)



ON THE OPS2 STEREO

Wolfmother *Wolfmother* (Island)/
Grandaddy *Just Like The Fambly Cat (V2)*/
Booka Shade *Movements* (Get Physical)/
The Pixies *Bossa Nova* (Elektra)

PSP tunes Cool music downloads for your handheld

Cascada

EVERYTIME WE TOUCH

Quality cheesy dancefloor filler from the German trio of DJ's Yanou and Manian with silky vocals from Natalie Horler
Download from www.tescodownloads.com

The Streets

PRANGING OUT

Non-album version of the latest Streets single featuring troubled troubadour, Pete Doherty
Download from www.tunetribes.com

Lily Allen

NAN YOU'RE A WINDOW SHOPPER

Brilliant Ska-esque remake of 50 Cent's *Window Shopper* by the foul-mouthed girly
Download from www.tunetribes.com

Badly Drawn Boy

NOTHING'S GONNA CHANGE YOUR MIND

New single from the hairy, tea cosy-wearing one-hit wonder
Download from www.tunetribes.com

Freddie Mercury

LOVE KILLS (SUNSHINE PEOPLE RADIO MIX)

Queen front man returns from the grave with a catchy remix
Download from www.woolworths.co.uk

Ice Cube

WHY WE THUGS

A return to form from AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted and Hollywood star O'Shea Jackson
Download from www.woolworths.co.uk

Bizzy B

CREATION

Weird regga-inspired drum and bass with crazy blips and crazier vocal sample
Download from www.bleep.com

Akala

THE EDGE

Free download of one of the standout cuts from Ms Dynamite's lil bro' Akala's brilliant debut album
Download from the iTunes music store

P Diddy featuring Nicole Scherzinger

COME TO ME

Thumping electronic first single from the new Diddy album featuring Pussy Cat Dolls' Nicole
Download from the iTunes music store

PSP KIT REVIEW

1



THE BEST BITS 'N' BOBS FOR YOUR PSP

If you thought that the key to PSP's design was slender curves and compact casing, well, you'd be absolutely right. But that hasn't stopped the tech boys at Gamexpert from making the enormous PSP Hi-Fi (£199.99 from www.gamexpert.co.uk). Easily the biggest 'handheld' peripheral we've ever seen, the Hi-Fi is a docking station-cum-big fat speaker which transforms your PSP into the beefy centre of your music setup. Rocking a 23 Watt RMS amp and a down-facing woofer for maximum fat-bass extension, the Hi-Fi features plug-and-play PSP functionality plus extra inputs for CD or MP3 players. It's big, it's noisy and we like it.

On a different (not to mention, more portable) note entirely, way back in OPS2 #73 we featured some PSP gadgets from one of our favourite iPod specialists, Griffin, and mentioned how much we'd like them to expand their PSP range. Well, now they have, with the RoadDock (Around £20 from www.griffintechnology.com). Featuring an adjustable nylon strap that belts up to any handy headrest or car seat, the RoadDock prepares the PSP for back-seat movie viewing in its cradle. While there are numerous devices like this available already, Griffin's products are always reliable and sturdy - and this is no different.

2



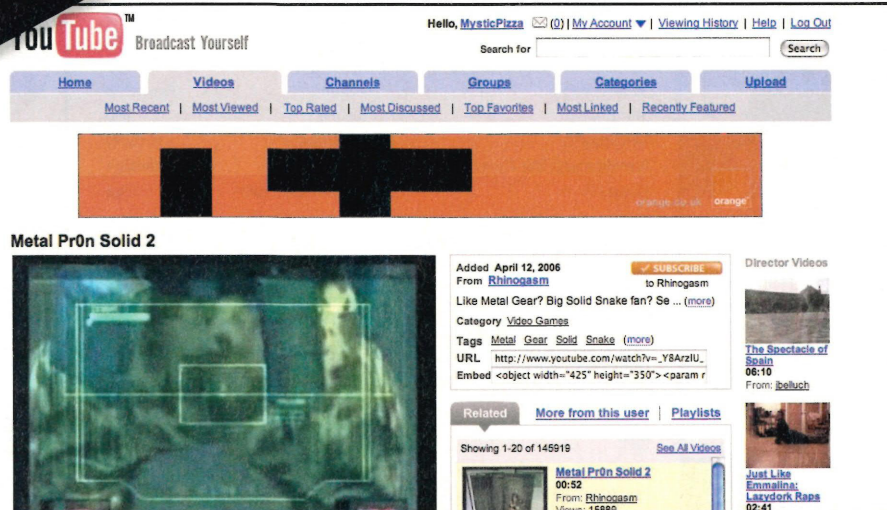
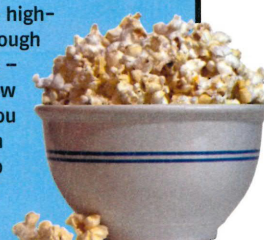
1 GameExpert PSP Hi-Fi
2 Griffin RoadDock



HOW TO... MAKE YOUR OWN GAMING HIGHLIGHT REEL

SHOW YOUR SKILLS TO THE INTERNET IN STYLE

Typing 'ASS' into the high-score table isn't enough in this day and age – if you really want to show your gaming mastery, you need to join the elite on the net by posting video proof of your skills. And here's how it's done...



1 CHECK OUT THE COMPETITION

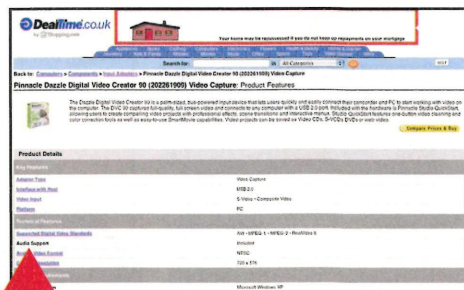
It's no use pointing your camcorder at the screen and expecting everyone to watch you play *Tak And The Power Of JuJu* – you need to show people something they haven't seen before, or at least present a familiar game in a new or surprising way. Check out what's already available: perhaps you'll simply want to make a game look cool, like Luffyonepiece's beautifully

edited *SSX Tricky* music vid (www.youtube.com/watch?v=a6VN_wZjF98). Alternatively, you might want to add a funny slant like the now infamous *Metal Gear Pr0n* video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Y8ArZIU_nM). Or you could just fanatically collect every cool secret in a game, like the slightly disturbing collection of *Resi 4* deaths at www.youtube.com/watch?v=I9Y6QUqR8XU



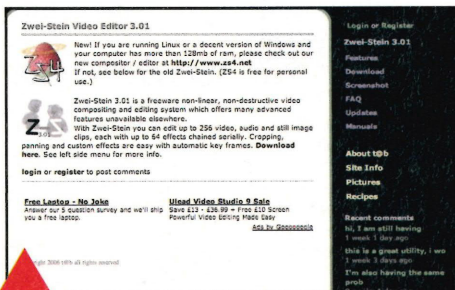
2 COLLECT YOUR RAW FOOTAGE

There are two ways of doing this. Some camcorders have AV connectors that you'll be able to hook up to your PS2 – but bear in mind that unless they've got multiple inputs and outputs, you'll have to use the camcorder screen to see what you're doing. If you haven't got video input, lower the ambient lighting and point the camera at your TV screen. Alternatively, you could just hook your video recorder up to the PS2, but bear in mind that the picture quality won't be as good.



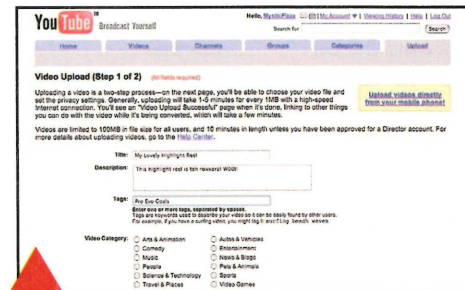
3 GET IT ONTO YOUR COMPUTER

If you haven't got a video capture card – a pricey option – the easiest way to do this is with a USB converter. This will connect your camera or video recorder to any USB-equipped PC. A cheap option is the Dazzle Digital Video Creator, which comes with free editing software for about £50. Check it out at: www.dealtime.co.uk. Alternatively, if you can't manage any of that, search for raw footage that other people have taken (for instance, www.mercurycity.com is a good source of *SSX* tricks) and re-edit that so it looks cooler.



4 SPLICE IT TOGETHER

With all your clips ready to go, you can start editing. If you're using a PC, you've probably already got Windows Movie Maker 2, but if not you can download free editing software from the net. Wax (www.debugmode.com/wax/) is a simple option, but we prefer ZweiStein (www.thugsatbay.com/tab/?q=zweistein) – the interface is clunky, but it lets you add effects like fades and single frames for that professional feel. Both come with online tutorials, but you'll need to fiddle about a bit to get the best results.



5 UPLOAD IT!

For this you'll want to create an account at a video hosting site such as www.youtube.com, then hit Upload Video after you've successfully logged in. Now simply give your vid a title and a catchy description, then 'tag' it so that people will find it on searches for the game: for instance, you might want to include 'Pro', 'Evo', 'Evolution', 'Soccer' and 'Goals' to ensure lots of hits. Then sit back and wait for the critical acclaim to flood in...





incoming

Our guide to what's coming your way

PS2

NOVEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Bionicle Heroes	Adventure	Eidos
Bratz: Forever Diamonds	Adventure	THQ
Buzz! The Sports Quiz	Quiz	Sony
Call Of Duty 3	Shooter	Activision
Capcom Classics Collection Vol. 2	Retro	Capcom
Chicken Little: Ace In Action	Action	Buena Vista
Cricket 07	Sports	EA Sports
Crusty Demons: Extreme Sports	Racing	Deep Silver
Delta Force - Black Hawk Down: Team Sabre	Shooter	Ubisoft
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2	Fighter	Atari
Eragon	Action/Adventure	Vivendi
EuroRally Champion	Racing	Liquid
Naruto: Ultimate Ninja	Beat-'em-up	Atari
Phantasy Star Universe	RPG	Sega
Sega Mega Drive Collection	Retro	Sega
Shrek Smash And Crash Racing	Racing	Activision
Spongebob Squarepants: Creature From The Krusty Krab	Platform	Blitz
Superman Returns	Action	Electronic Arts
The Sopranos: Road To Respect	Action	THQ
Thrillville	Theme Park Sim	Atari
Tony Hawk's Project 8	Skateboarding	Activision
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire: Party Edition	Quiz	Eidos
Xioalin Showdown	Adventure	Konami

DECEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Biker Mice From Mars	Racing	The Game Factory
Call Of Cthulhu: Destiny's End	Action/Adventure	Ubisoft
Cyclone Circus: Power Sail Racing	Racing	Playlogic
Demon Chaos	Action	Konami
Dirge Of Cerberus: Final Fantasy VII	Action	Square-Enix
Gangsters Ride	Action	GMX
Guitar Hero II	Party	RedOctane
King Of Fighters XI	Fighter	Ignition
NFL Street 3	Sports	EA Sports
One Piece: Grand Adventure	Adventure	Atari
PDC World Championship Darts	Sports	Oxygen Interactive
Rayman Raving Rabbids	Platformer	Ubisoft
Samurai Shodown 6	Fighter	Ignition
Tomb Raider: 10th Anniversary Edition	Adventure	Eidos
Wizard Of Funk	EyeToy	Playlogic

JANUARY	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Arthur And The Invisibles	Adventure	Atari
Jugular Downhill Skateboarding	Skateboarding	Metro3D
Jugular Downhill Street Luge	Sports	Metro3D
Lumines Plus	Puzzle	Buena Vista
World Pool Championship 2007	Sports	Sega
World Snooker Championship 2007	Sports	Sega

FEBRUARY	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Dancing Stage SuperNOVA	Dance	Konami
Dark Chronicle	RPG	Sony
Final Fantasy XII	RPG	Square-Enix
Ghost Rider	Action	Take Two
God Of War II	Action	Sony
Okami	Adventure	Capcom
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Action	Konami
Winter Sports	Sports	Oxygen Interactive

MARCH	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Ape Escape: Million Monkeys	Platformer	Sony

RADAR

Only the big games bleep really loudly

OUT NOW



SCARFACE: THE WORLD IS YOURS
Tony Montana gets resurrected and unleashed upon Miami with an acid tongue and a dizzying array of weapons. Thrilling, ballsy stuff

OUT SOON



CRICKET 07
This should be the perfect tonic for England's inevitable failure in the upcoming Ashes series down under

MILES OFF



YAKUZA 2
This time around, lead man Kazuma is fighting his way through the seedier side of Osaka, but you'll have to hang on until next year to try it

Brian Lara International Cricket 2007	Sports	Codemasters
God Hand	Action	Capcom
Hard Rock Casino	Casino	Oxygen Interactive
Heat Seeker	Flight sim	Codemasters
Samurai Warriors 2 Empires	Strategy	KOEI
SOS: The Final Escape 2	Action/Adventure	505 Games

2007	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Indiana Jones	Action/Adventure	Ubisoft
Karaoke Revolution Presents: American Idol	Party	Konami
Lost	Adventure	Ubisoft
Medal Of Honor: Airborne	Action	Electronic Arts
Parabellum	Strategy/Shooter	Acony
Rainbow Six Critical Hour	Shooter	Ubisoft
Romance Of The Three Kingdoms Online	Strategy	KOEI
Spider-Man 3	Action	Activision
Stuntman 2	Racing	THQ
TNA Impact!	Wrestling	Midway
Transformers: The Movie	Action	Activision
Yakuza 2	Action/Adventure	Sega

TBC	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
.hack//GU Part 1: Rebirth	RPG	Namco Bandai
ATV Offroad Fury 4	Racing	TBC
Cabela's African Safari	Hunting	TBC
Cabela's Alaskan Adventures	Hunting	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
Larry Boy And The Bad Apple	Adventure	TBC
NickToons: Battle For Volcano Island	Action	TBC
Pac-Man World Rally	Racing	TBC
Radiata Stories	RPG	Square-Enix
Samurai Champloo: Sidetracked	Fighter	Namco Bandai
Shin Megami Tensei: Devil Summoner	RPG	TBC
Star Trek: Encounters	Shooter	TBC
Starsky & Hutch 2	Racing/Action	TBC
Tales Of Legendia	RPG	Namco Bandai
The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Action	Midway
Tokobot Plus: Mysteries Of The Katakuri	Platformer	TBC
Total Overdose 2	Action	TBC
Truth Or Dare	EyeToy	TBC
Valkyrie Profile 2: Silmeria	RPG	Square-Enix
Xenosaga Episode III: Also Sprach Zarathustra	RPG	Namco Bandai

PSP

NOVEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Ace Combat X: Skies Of Deception	Flight Sim	Sony
Battlezone	Retro	Atari
Beatmania	Music	Konami
Biker Mice From Mars	Racing	The Game Factory
Bliss Island	Puzzle	Codemasters
Brothers In Arms: D-Day	Shooter	Ubisoft
Capcom Classics Collection Reloaded	Retro	Capcom
Championship Manager 2007	Sports	Eidos
EA Replay	Retro	Electronic Arts
Eragon	Action/Adventure	Vivendi
Marvel Trading Card Game	Strategy	Konami
Medal Of Honor: Heroes	Action	Electronic Arts
Mind Quiz	Brain training	Ubisoft
Prince Of Persia: Rival Swords	Platformer	Ubisoft
Rainbow Six Vegas	Shooter	Ubisoft
Reel Fishing: Live & Nature	Fishing	Zoo Digital
Rush	Racing	Midway
Scooby-Doo! Who's Watching Who	Adventure	THQ
Sega Mega Drive Collection	Retro	Sega
SOCOM: US Navy SEALs Fireteam Bravo 2	Shooter/Strategy	Sony
Sonic Rivals	Racing	Sega
Superman Returns	Action	Electronic Arts
Test Drive Unlimited	Racing	Atari
Tony Hawk's Project 8	Skateboarding	Activision

KEY

PS2 GAMES

PSP GAMES

PS3 GAMES



Simon (art editor) wants...
American Idol
"Peace is hard to come by when you're raising two noisy kids, but this should keep them occupied for at least three-and-a-half minutes"



Ben (games ed) wants...
TNA Impact!
"With Kurt Angle added to their roster, this could be a genuine rival to SmackDown - so long as I can create myself as a granite-moulded warrior, that is"



Fitz (freelance demon) wants...
Brothers In Arms: D-Day
"I spent many an evening blasting my way through Earned In Blood, so I'm looking forward to taking my warfare out on the road"

WWE SmackDown Vs Raw 2007 Wrestling THQ

DECEMBER	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Crisis Core: Final Fantasy VII	RPG	Square-Enix
Dungeon Siege: Throne of Agony	Strategy	Take Two
Myst	Adventure	Midway
Star Wars: Lethal Alliance	Action/Adventure	Ubisoft
Steel Horizons	Strategy	Konami
The Con	Fighter	South Peak
The Sims 2: Pets	Simulation	Electronic Arts
TOCA Race Driver 3 Challenge	Racing	Codemasters
Tomb Raider: 10th Anniversary Edition	Adventure	Eidos

JANUARY	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Arthur And The Invisibles	Adventure	Atari
Cash Money Chaos	Shooter	Sony
World Snooker Championship 2007	Sports	Sega

FEBRUARY	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Capcom Puzzle World	Puzzle	Capcom
Ghost Rider	Action	Take Two
Hot PXL	Party	Atari

MARCH	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Coded Arms Contagion	Shooter	Konami
Earthworm Jim	Action	Atari
Harlem Globetrotters	Sports	Zoo Digital
Heat Seeker	Flight sim	Codemasters
Hellboy	Action/Adventure	Konami
Ratchet & Clank: Size Matters	Platformer	Sony

2007	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
300: March To Glory	Action	Eidos
Cannon Fodder	Retro	Codemasters
Chili Con Carnage	Action	Eidos
Family Guy	Adventure	Take Two
Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops	Action	Konami
Silent Hill Origins	Adventure	Konami
Spider-Man 3	Action	Activision
Transformers: The Movie	Action	Activision
Virtua Tennis 3	Sports	Sega
World Pool Challenge 2007	Sports	Sega

TBC	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
ATV Offroad Fury Pro	Racing	TBC
Byte Hell 2000	Party	Sony
Dave Mirra BMX Challenge	Sports	TBC
Pac-Man World Rally	Racing	TBC
Star Trek: Tactical Assault	Strategy	TBC
The Dog - Happy Life	Breeding sim	TBC
Thinking Exit	Puzzle	TBC
Valkyrie Profile: Lenneth	RPG	Square-Enix
Wild Arms Crossfire	RPG	TBC

PS3	LAUNCH	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
	Alone In The Dark	Adventure	Atari
	Army Of Two	Strategy/Shooter	Electronic Arts
	Blade Storm: Hundred Years War	Action	KOEI
	Blazing Angels: Squadrons Of WWII	Flight sim	Ubisoft
	Burnout 5	Racing	Electronic Arts
	Call Of Duty 3	Shooter	Activision
	Eye Of Judgment	Puzzle	Sony
	F.E.A.R.	Shooter	Vivendi
	Fatal Inertia	Racing	KOEI
	Fight Night Round 3	Sports	EA Sports
	Formula One World Championship	Racing	Sony
	Full Auto 2: Battlegrounds	Racing	Sega
	Genji: Days Of The Blade	Action	Sony
	Half-Life 2	Shooter	Electronic Arts
	Lair	Action	Sony
	Madden NFL 07	Sports	EA Sports
	Marvel: Ultimate Alliance	Action	Activision



Andy (news ed) wants...
Cash Money Chaos
 "Not only does it look like being a seriously frenetic shooter, it's also the best-named PSP game yet!"

Medal Of Honor: Airborne	Action	Electronic Arts
Mobile Suit Gundam	Strategy	Namco Bandai
MotorStorm	Racing	Sony
NBA 2K7	Sports	Take Two
NBA Live 07	Sports	EA Sports
NBA Street 4	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
The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion	RPG	Ubisoft
Tiger Woods PGA Tour Golf 2007	Sports	EA Sports
Tony Hawk's Project 8	Skateboarding	Activision
Untold Legends: Dark Kingdom	Action/RPG	Sony
Warhawk	Action/Adventure	Sony

2007	GAME TYPE	PUBLISHER
Afrika	Safari sim	Sony
Armored Core 4	Action	TBC
Assassin's Creed	Action/Adventure	Ubisoft
Battlefield: Bad Company	Shooter	Electronic Arts
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
Gran Turismo HD	Racing	Sony
Fall Of Liberty	Shooter	Codemasters
Final Fantasy Versus XIII	RPG	Square-Enix
Final Fantasy XIII	RPG	Square-Enix
Frontlines: Fuel Of War	Shooter	THQ
Grand Theft Auto IV	Action	Rockstar
Haze	Action	Ubisoft
Heavenly Sword	Action/Adventure	Sony
Hellboy	Action/Adventure	Konami
Indiana Jones 2007	Action/Adventure	LucasArts
Killzone	Shooter	Sony
L.A. Noire	Adventure	Rockstar
Lost	Adventure	Ubisoft
Mercenaries 2: World In Flames	Shooter	TBC
Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns Of The Patriots	Action	Konami
Mobile Suit Gundam: Crossfire	Shooter	Namco Bandai
Monster Madness	Action	South Peak
Ninja Gaiden Sigma	Action	TBC
Sega Rally	Racing	Sega
Siren 3	Horror	Sony
Spider-Man 3	Action/Adventure	Activision
Stuntman 2	Racing	THQ
Tekken 6	Fighter	Namco
Skate	Skateboarding	Electronic Arts
The Club	Action	Sega
TNA Impact!	Wrestling	Midway
Turok	Action	Buena Vista
Unreal Tournament 2007	Shooter	Midway
Virtua Fighter 5	Fighter	Sega
Virtua Tennis 3	Sports	Sega

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 L.A. NOIRE (PS3)
 "I reckon that Bully (now Canis Canem Edit) and Vice City Stories prove Rockstar are back on top form, so this is gonna be great."
 ■ Dave B, via email



2 CALL OF DUTY 3 (PS2, PSP, PS3)
 "When's it out? WHEN'S IT OUT? Seriously, I'm getting antsy now. I need new COD!"
 ■ Jonny, via email



3 GUITAR HERO II (PS2)
 "I've finally mastered Bark At The Moon on expert and feel ready for a new challenge."
 ■ Deano, Taunton



4 METAL GEAR SOLID 4: GUNS OF THE PATRIOTS (PS3)
 "Much as I'm excited about Snake's latest, it simply won't be the same without any vibrato-pad action."
 ■ Dan Morrison, Lowestoft



5 FINAL FANTASY XIII (PS3)
 "Just finished Dragon Quest (about time!) on PS2. Awesome game. If next-gen FF is of the same calibre, I'll be made up."
 ■ Fido99, via email



WHERE WOULD WE BE WITHOUT...

CERTAIN GAME DESIGN ELEMENTS TURN UP WITH SUCH SHAMELESS REGULARITY THAT THEY'RE EITHER LOATHED OR TAKEN FOR GRANTED. BUT NO MORE. IT'S TIME TO SALUTE THE UNSUNG HEROES OF OUR FAVOURITE GAMES...

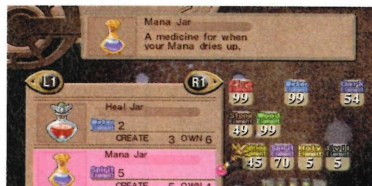


1. RPG Cooking

Or any equally complicated sub-quest based on a dizzyingly complex item combination system. Such pursuits are insanely demanding, but often an integral part of modern RPGs. If someone's taken more than 100 hours to finish a game, either they're struggling with only one finger or they've been trying to find all possible photo inventions in *Dark Chronicle*. Thankfully, most RPGs these days are beautiful, meaning your eyes won't rot away as quickly as the rest of your body if you try and finish one.

WITHOUT IT: We would have had the time to finish all other videogames ever, and would now be learning the violin.

BEST SAMPLED VIA: *Dark Chronicle*, *Atelier Iris 2*, *Dragon Quest VIII*

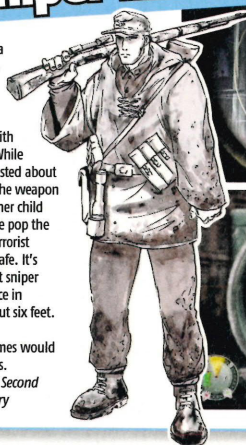


2. Sniper Rifles

Sniper rifles are a kind of magic. You can shoot a baddy from a mile away – a baddy who doesn't even know you're there [snigger] – making him fall down dead with the simple press of a button. While we're all manly and puffy-chested about our precise, militaristic use of the weapon in tough war scenarios, our inner child goes clappy-nuts whenever we pop the bonce of some fag-smoking terrorist patrol guard who thinks he's safe. It's also worth noting that without sniper rifles, the average draw distance in videogames would still be about six feet.

WITHOUT THEM: Tom Clancy games would never have sold as many copies.

BEST SAMPLED VIA: *Sniper Elite*, *Second Sight*, *Splinter Cell*, *Chaos Theory*



3. Health Packs

Ah, those little red and white bricks that fall out of a dead guy's backside, or green globs that spill out of a smashed crate. The health pack has served us well over the years, but it's slowly being phased out in the name of progress, replaced by those new-fangled recharging energy bars. Still, we salute you, little box of health, and the restorative, impossibly instantaneous goodness you bestow upon our battered heroes. Ten years from now, there'll be a song about health packs in the charts. Really.

WITHOUT THEM: Our blood pressure would have troubled a volcano. With them, it's as low as shoelaces.

BEST SAMPLED VIA: Just throw a dart at the Hot 100

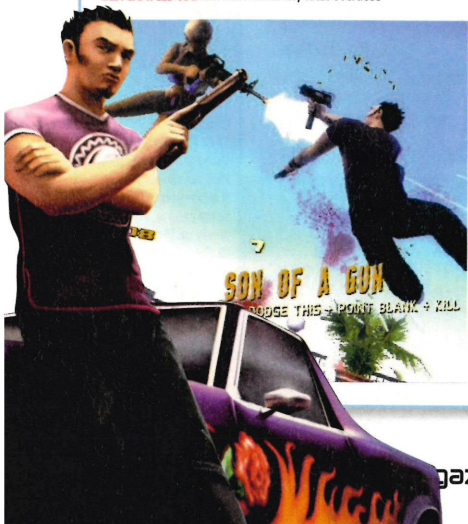


4. Bullet Time

Or slow motion, as everyone else in the world calls it. It's about two things – style and precision, which is probably everything that women want from a man. As clichéd as Bullet Time may be, it's still a great way to make the player feel like a badass – so much so that we expect Sony to unveil a dedicated Chow Yun-Fat chip within PS3. Trouble is, it makes bad games last longer, and if you've already got an RPG to play (see #1) your free time will be stretched thin enough as it is.

WITHOUT IT: We'd never know the enormous range of facial expressions a gangster can make as a bullet liquifies his guts.

BEST SAMPLED VIA: *Red Dead Revolver*, *Total Overdose*



5. 'Living, Breathing Worlds'

We've put it in inverted commas as it's obviously magic fairyland talk – when was the last time a world lived and breathed at you? But the term refers to an ideal; one of virtual cities where peds stroll the streets to give the illusion of a populace and cars continually stream past you, ripe for nicking and driving off on exciting, unpredictable adventures. And that's what's so brilliant about free-roaming games, even if some of

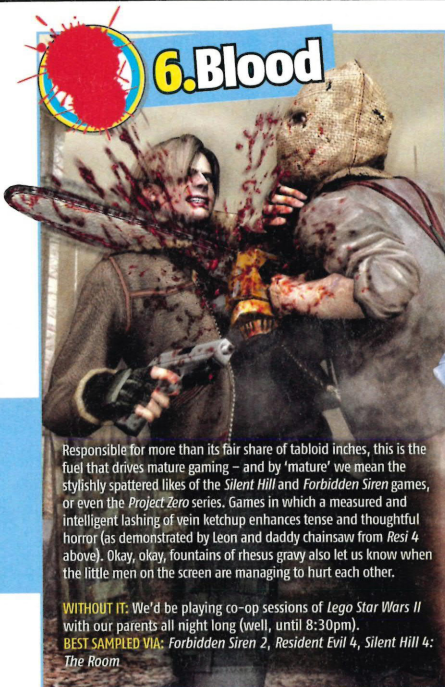
them are just dumbass *GTA* rip-offs: they give you scope to act up something rotten without the risk of getting incarcerated, killed, or worse.

WITHOUT THEM: We'd all still be walking in whatever direction the story tells us to.

BEST SAMPLED VIA: Any *GTA*, *Destroy All Humans! 2*, *Scarface: The World Is Yours*



6. Blood



Responsible for more than its fair share of tabloid inches, this is the fuel that drives mature gaming – and by 'mature' we mean the stylishly spattered likes of the *Silent Hill* and *Forbidden Siren* games, or even the *Project Zero* series. Games in which a measured and intelligent lashing of vein ketchup enhances tense and thoughtful horror (as demonstrated by Leon and daddy chainsaw from *Resident Evil 4* above). Okay, okay, fountains of rhesus gravy also let us know when the little men on the screen are managing to hurt each other.

WITHOUT IT: We'd be playing co-op sessions of *Lego Star Wars II* with our parents all night long (well, until 8:30pm).
BEST SAMPLED VIA: *Forbidden Siren 2*, *Resident Evil 4*, *Silent Hill 4: The Room*

7. Physics



Now this is the kind of thing that separates us from the animals. Newton's unpublished fourth law ('For every videogame action, a totally unequal and overblown reaction is expected, and dead bodies should fall over with their legs at funny angles') is only just beginning to be explored, as game makers fill their virtual worlds with more and more things that fall

apart when shot or punched. And with PS3 able to accurately model a thousand bulls in a china superstore to within twenty decimal places, the joy of physics can only expand.

WITHOUT IT: We'd still be opening doors with pretend keys instead of a rocket-powered knock-knock.
BEST SAMPLED VIA: *Destroy All Humans! 2*, *FlatOut 2*, *Red Faction 2*

WE CAN DO WITHOUT

Where would we be without this lot? In a happy place, that's where. Sweden, maybe.



UNLOCKABLE ARTWORK

If only someone would let us look at some pencil sketches of things that are in the game we're playing, in return for us finding every last dooberry scattered across Dr Killbast's penultimate lair. Unlockable artwork adds as much value to a game as an alarm clock does to a Ming vase.

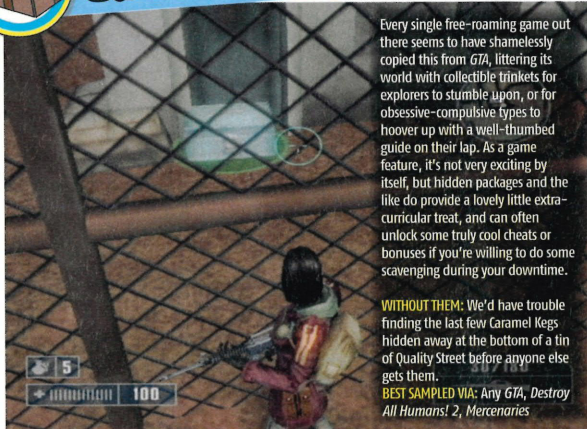
GUILTY: 50% of PS2 games ever made

BIG HEAD MODE

Nurse! Fetch the bucket, our guts have fallen out through splitted sides! Those games characters have heads that are bigger than they usually are! Big Head modes are as throwaway as a tramp's pants. Spinnny heads would have been better. Or bum heads.

GUILTY: 25% of PS2 games ever made

8. Hidden Packages



Every single free-roaming game out there seems to have shamelessly copied this from *GTA*, littering its world with collectible trinkets for explorers to stumble upon, or for obsessive-compulsive types to hoover up with a well-thumbed guide on their lap. As a game feature, it's not very exciting by itself, but hidden packages and the like do provide a lovely little extra-curricular treat, and can often unlock some truly cool cheats or bonuses if you're willing to do some scavenging during your downtime.

WITHOUT THEM: We'd have trouble finding the last few Caramel Keks hidden away at the bottom of a tin of Quality Street before anyone else gets them.

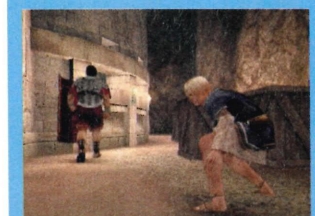
BEST SAMPLED VIA: Any *GTA*, *Destroy All Humans! 2*, *Mercenaries*

9. Explosive Barrels



Don't moan about explosive barrels. They're awesome. They're just like regular barrels, but way more fun to be around. And it's a good thing that they crop up everywhere – what part of 'explosive' don't people understand? Yep, explosive barrels definitely get a bad rap, lumped in with crates and warehouses as lazy level furniture. But each one is a highly-visible freebie grenade that sets the screen alight, igniting chains of destruction and vaporising the dumbasses crouching behind them. Kaboom!

WITHOUT THEM: Programmers would have had to find other 'outlets' for their pyromania.
BEST SAMPLED VIA: *Cold Winter*, *Black Mercenaries* plus every other third and first-person shooter in existence



IMPROMPTU STEALTH BITS

The only good stealth section is one that lasts the whole game – *Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory*, for example. If you're just going to throw some unsophisticated creeping into your action game with all the grace of a fat man getting out of a deckchair, then it's really not worth anyone's time.

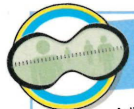
GUILTY: *Yakuza*, *The Getaway*, *Tony Hawk's Underground*, *Shadow Of Rome*

ESCORT MISSIONS

It was a dark day indeed when someone decided it would be fun to make the player have to protect something other than themselves, like, say, a slow-moving truck being assaulted on all sides by an infinite biker gang. It's just like playing a normal mission, but with more frustration and fewer smiles.

GUILTY: *Driv3r*, *GTA: San Andreas*

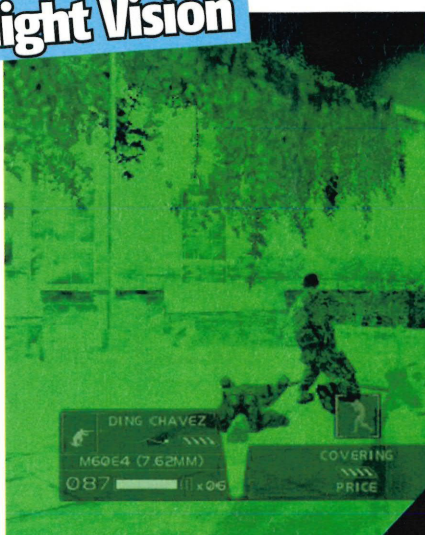
10. Night Vision



A distant relation of the sniper rifle, night vision, whether through goggles or magical eyes, turns you into a cackling superhuman. Again, the logic's unbearably simple: you mince around in the shadows, able to see everything and yet nobody knows you're there! Peek-a-booo! So, stealth (and cackling) can finally come of age, and the darkest corners of even the crummiest and gloomiest of games can be banished with a press of a button and a deep green eye-bath.

WITHOUT IT: We'd never have known the thrill of stalking surly Slavic guards around military industrial complexes at 2am.

BEST SAMPLED VIA: Any *Splinter Cell*, *SOCOM* or *Rainbow Six*



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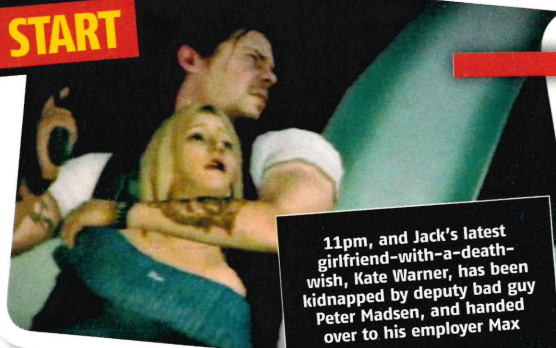
ENDGAME

FINISHING GAMES SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO. THIS MONTH: **24: THE GAME**

Jack Bauer's had one of those days. Again. What started off with a straightforward raid on a cargo ship (well, straightforward for CTU anyway) has snowballed into an attack on the US Vice President, a hostage situation at CTU, the kidnap of Kim Bauer (commence eye-rolling), a series of bombs along the San Andreas fault causing an earthquake that wipes out downtown L.A., a plan to steal nuclear weapons... and to top it all, the villain has scooped up Bauer's bird and fled to his luxury yacht. Can't have that, can we Jack?

Terrorists? Sorry, I'm on holiday until next week

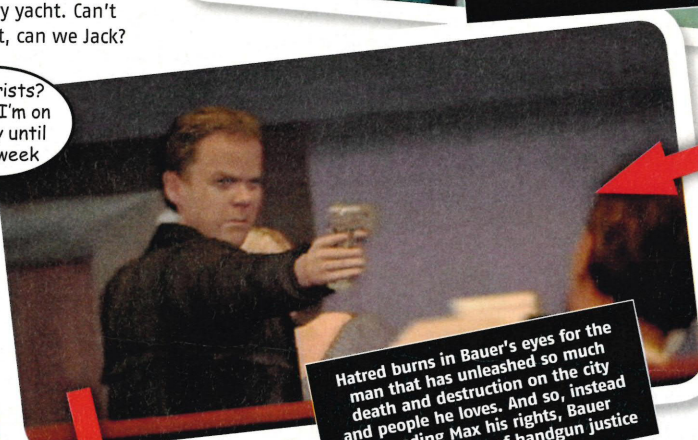
START



11pm, and Jack's latest girlfriend-with-a-death-wish, Kate Warner, has been kidnapped by deputy bad guy Peter Madsen, and handed over to his employer Max



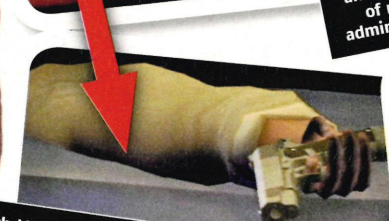
Eventually Jack trails Max to his yacht and descends to the deck to confront the uber-baddie and (time-permitting) rescue Kate



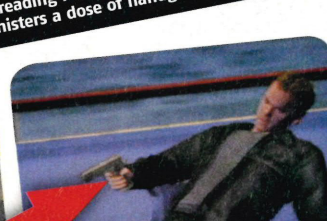
Hatred burns in Bauer's eyes for the man that has unleashed so much death and destruction on the city and people he loves. And so, instead of reading Max his rights, Bauer administers a dose of handgun justice



Having found Kate and released her from Max's grip with a shot to the megalomaniac's shoulder, our hero embraces Ms. Warner, thankful that she's finally safe. Finally safe? Jack, she's your girlfriend. She'll never be safe again



With Max neutralised, Jack turns to Kate... But wait! Max is still (barely) alive, and raises his gun in a last gasp effort to take out Bauer



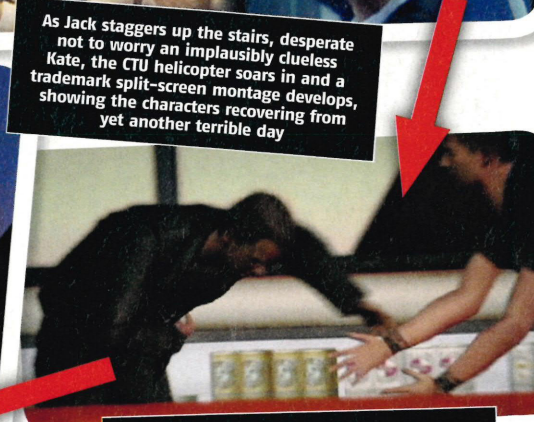
Thanks to his lightning reactions Bauer gets the drop on Max, but not before the saviour of freedom takes a shot in the side and falls to the deck



As Jack staggers up the stairs, desperate not to worry an implausibly clueless Kate, the CTU helicopter soars in and a trademark split-screen montage develops, showing the characters recovering from yet another terrible day

END

Having assisted Jack into the helicopter, his friends watch him fly off into the early morning sky. Meanwhile, inside the chopper, Jack Bauer looks out across the ocean and mentally tots up his overtime



Chase Edmunds leaps out of the CTU chopper as it lands. Weary from the trials of the day, and leaking blood like a colander, Bauer collapses as he reaches his new friend

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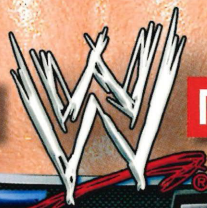
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GAMES TO PLAY

ONLY IN THIS MAG

33 GAMES REVIEWED

- WWE SmackDown vs Raw 2007
- Pro Evo 6
- GTA: Vice City Stories
- Canis Canem Edit
- Need For Speed Carbon

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FIRST SHOTS AND INFO

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PLAY ON
YOUR DISC

INCLUDING

- Pro Evo 6
- FIFA 07
- LMA Manager 2007
- Destroy All Humans! 2
- LEGO Star Wars II
- Buzz! Junior: Jungle Party



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**WWE SmackDown
vs Raw 2007**

**Pro Evolution
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PLUS REVIEWED INSIDE Need For Speed Carbon
Splinter Cell: Double Agent • Killzone: Liberation • More!

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• Mortal Kombat • Soul Calibur IV

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CANEM
EDIT**

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Rockstar's Bully
boy reviewed

**VICE CITY
STORIES**

Handheld
heaven?
Massive
review
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