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360zine

Issue 16 | March 2008

Free Magazine For Xbox 360 Gamers. *Read it, Print it, Send it to your mates...*

MASSIVE REVIEW DARK SECTOR

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INTERVIEWS!

ACEYBONGOS

ALONE IN THE DARK



REVIEW!
RAINBOW SIX: VEGAS 2
Surefire sequel?



REVIEW!
ARMY OF TWO
Co-op combat!



PREVIEW!
LEGO: INDIANA JONES
Swashbuckling good fun

FIRST LOOKS!



STREET FIGHTER IV



LEGENDARY: THE BOX



BOURNE CONSPIRACY

CONTROL →





Welcome to 360Zine



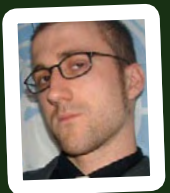
We have a trio of new shooters up for review this month with Army of Two, Rainbow Six: Vegas 2 and Dark Sector all gunning for a coveted place on your Xbox 360. See how our panel of experts have rated them before you lock and load...

In addition we have a fistful of new games coming through: headed up by none other than the much awaited Street Fighter IV you can also get the latest on Far Cry 2, Lego: Indiana Jones and Bourne Conspiracy. We also have two great interviews... First up we've been talking with Alone In The Dark producer, Nour Polloni - see what frighteners await in Central Park on page 15; and last but not least we've had a sit down with Community Manager of Xbox EMEA Graham Boyd (AKA AceyBongos) - you can listen to the full interview on page 29.

360Zine FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of the new issue.

Dan Hutchinson, Editor
360zine@gamerzines.com

MEET THE TEAM
Probably the best games writers on the planet



Kieron Gillen
Playing Rainbow Six: Vegas 2



Chris Schilling
Playing Dark Sector



Steve Hill
Playing Army Of Two



Lego Indiana Jones
In-depth preview PAGE 12

Don't miss! This month's top highlights

Dark Sector
MASSIVE REVIEW PAGE 18

Rainbow Six: Vegas 2
Shoot from the strip
PAGE 21

Army Of Two
Bring a buddy PAGE 24

Far Cry 2
Hands-on preview PAGE 10

QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away!

Street Fighter IV	Kung Fu Panda
Legendary: The Box	Race Driver: GRID
1942: Joint Strike	Far Cry 2
Bourne Conspiracy	Lego: Indiana Jones
NBA Ballers: Chosen One	Alone In The Dark
Monster Jam	Dark Sector
Enemy Territory: Quake Wars	Rainbow Six: Vegas 2
	Army of Two
	XBLA

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Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Heritage: Street Fighter series, Resident Evil series
Link: <http://www.capcom.com/streetfighter/>
ETA: Summer 2009



It's strange seeing such iconic characters look so different. In Guile's case, we're more concerned about his wimpy voice when he unleashes a Sonic Boom.

FIRST LOOK

Street Fighter IV

Shoryuken handle it?

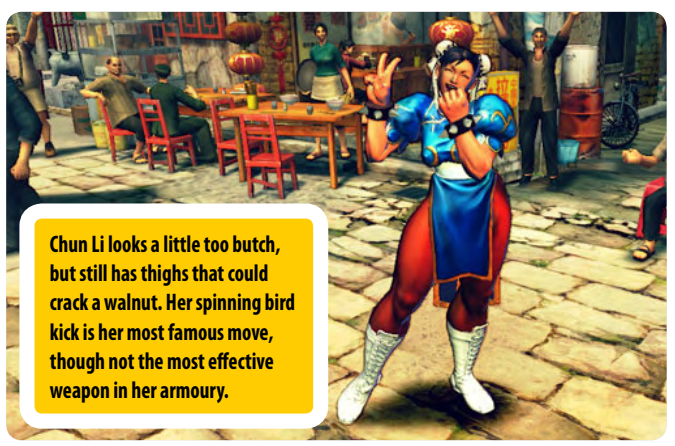
What's the story?

It's the return of the greatest beat-em-up series of all. The big one. The daddy of the genre. Since Street Fighter II enraptured arcade gamers the world over, every new variation has come under the closest scrutiny from its legions of fans. It's been eight years since the wonderful Third Strike - which, to the hardest of hardcore beat-em-up aficionados, actually managed to top SFII - and now, finally, we have a fourth full Street Fighter game. It might not be out on home consoles for a little while, but it's time to start getting very excited.



Early impressions suggest that newcomer Crimson Viper is a powerful adversary.

"The new character models are rendered in detailed 3D"



Chun Li looks a little too butch, but still has thighs that could crack a walnut. Her spinning bird kick is her most famous move, though not the most effective weapon in her armoury.

What do we know?

It's looking very much closer to II rather than III, with several old favourites returning to the character roster, and familiar environments being given a stunning graphical makeover. It's still a 2D beat-em-up, but with dynamic three-dimensional flourishes - the restless camera swoops and zooms impressively and the new character models are rendered in detailed 3D. They're still as wonderfully animated as ever, and - from the impressions of those who've had hands-on time with the arcade version - it plays just like it always did.

When do we get more?

It's out in Japanese arcades in the Autumn, but don't expect a 360 release until '09.

Anything else to declare?

Three new characters have been unveiled so far - lucha libre wrestler El Fuerte, kickboxer Abel and power-suited femme fatale Crimson Viper.



PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
 Click here to tell us what you think of Street Fighter



Publisher: Atari
Developer: Spark Unlimited
Heritage: Call of Duty: Finest Hour, Turning Point: Fall of Liberty
Link: <http://www.legendarythebox.com/>
ETA: Q3 2008



There's plenty of variety in the enemy types, and each one requires a different approach. Werewolves will try to rush you, though they can also help take out rival soldiers.

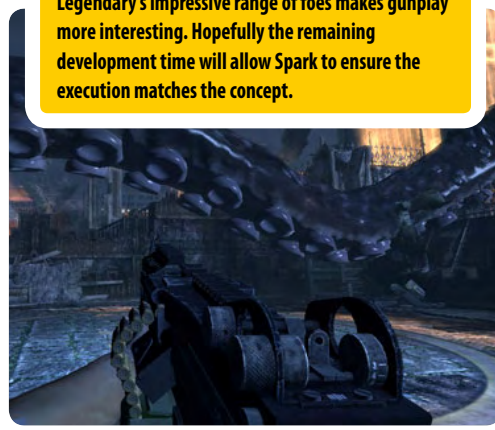
"Expect to see werewolves leaping out of the screen to maul your avatar"



Not all the creatures have corporeal form - it's unlikely that a regular revolver will be enough to destroy these evil spirits.



Legendary's impressive range of foes makes gunplay more interesting. Hopefully the remaining development time will allow Spark to ensure the execution matches the concept.



FIRST LOOK

Legendary: The Box

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of *Legendary*

Dare you open it?

What's the story?

Say what you like about Spark Unlimited's Turning Point: Fall of Liberty, there's no denying the genius of its concept. But much as the stunning sight of swastikas adorning the White House impressed us in the not-quite-WWII shooter, it doesn't compare to their next effort, which sees gryphons swooping out of the sky to attack helicopters, or werewolves leaping out of the screen to maul your avatar. It's nothing if not ambitious, that's for sure.

What do we know?

You play as a petty thief named Charles Deckard, who steals Pandora's Box from a New York museum (what have Spark got against the Big Apple?), but then makes the fatal mistake of opening the damn thing. Before you know it, mythical creatures are roaming the streets and Deckard is branded with a magical mark which inevitably means he's the chosen one to rid the world of these other worldly beasts. This mark allows him to regain health from downed enemies, while ammo can be found from the bodies of soldiers fighting for two mysterious factions who are themselves attempting to gain control of the box for their own ends...

When do we get more?

Q3 2008, so hopefully the developers will have enough time to apply a little polish to what's a very interesting concept indeed.

Anything else to declare?

The game will have a few online multiplayer options, with standard deathmatches rubbing shoulders with more inventive creature-blasting pursuits.



ONE MAN. ONE NIGHT. ONE APOCALYPTIC SECRET.

"Alone In The Dark is also one of the most ambitious games we've seen in ages, taking Half-Life 2-style physics and item manipulation and bringing them to the next level entirely."

Eurogamer

ALONE IN THE DARK

THEY SAID CENTRAL PARK WAS
FOR THE PEOPLE. THEY LIED.



ATARI



▶ **PLAYBACK OPTIONS:**

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PlayStation.2



centraldark.com





Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Backbone Entertainment
Heritage: Bomberman Live, Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo HD Remix
Link: <http://www.backboneentertainment.com/products/Games/showproduct.asp?ID=377>
ETA: Autumn



Explosions release plenty of debris, scattered in a wide arc. It makes shooting enemy planes that much more satisfying.

FIRST LOOK

1942: Joint Strike

Definitely, categorically, NOT set during World War II.

What's the story?

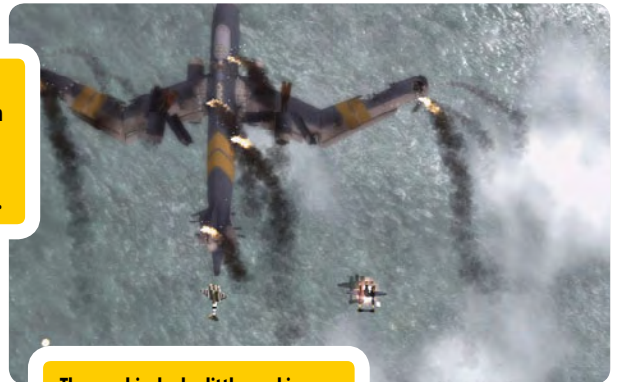
Capcom has a very busy year ahead of it, with an unusual plan of releasing several download-only titles, five of which are due to appear on Xbox Live throughout 2008. One of the most notable releases (certainly for those of us old enough to remember the original) is 1942: Joint Strike, a modern re-imagining of the 2D scrolling shoot-em-up, which had arcade junkies hooked in the

Eighties with its addictive blasting action.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of 1942

"Joint Strike will play very similarly to the original, with a lush graphical overhaul"

Ludicrously oversized bosses can be a challenge on your own - best to team up with a friend (online or off) and pull off a joint strike to take them down.



The graphics look a little murkier than the original, though everything is nicely detailed and smooth.



What do we know?

We had a good laugh at Capcom's attempts to distance Joint Strike from a certain conflict which took place at the same time the game is set. "The world in which 1942: Joint Strike takes place is not our own and the events that transpire are not historically accurate, nor are they intended to be." Well, that clears that up then. If only certain revisionist American films would be so up front about their deviations from real events. The game itself will play very similarly to the original, with a lush graphical overhaul and a two-player online mode two of the most significant changes.

When do we get more?

There's a tentative launch date of Autumn so far. We should have more concrete release information soon.

Anything else to declare?

The game features new co-operative attacks which combine the power of two planes for a devastating blow to larger enemies. Their name? The clue's in the game's title.





Publisher: Vivendi Games
Developer: High Moon
Heritage: Darkwatch
Link: <http://www.bournethegame.com/>
ETA: Q3 2008



Though many of the game's sequences feature high-octane action, there are plenty of opportunities for stealthy kills.



Bourne can seamlessly move from firing a weapon to engaging in hand-to-hand combat - using any items at hand to immobilise his foes.

"Combat sequences feel all the more real thanks to the input of Jeff Imada"



It's not just on-foot action - the series' legendary car chases are recreated here, with fender-crunching effects galore.



FIRST LOOK

Robert Ludlum's The Bourne Conspiracy

Assassins bleed - or they do when Jason Bourne gets hold of them...

What's the story?

We could tell you, but then we'd have to kill you. Actually, until next month, we don't know the precise details. What we do know is that Conspiracy is based on the first Bourne novel, The Bourne Identity. Rather than follow the plot to the letter, however, there'll be a whole host of new elements which reveal the secrets behind Jason Bourne's past.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of Bourne

What do we know?

It's a third-person action adventure with a few more explosions and gunfights than you might expect from an espionage thriller, though that's not to say it's looking anything less than seriously impressive. It's mostly a mix of gunplay and hand-to-hand combat - the former isn't too far removed from Gears of War's 'stop-and-pop' gameplay, with an intuitive cover system. Meanwhile, the latter takes inspiration from the fast-paced fight sequences of the films, with Bourne able to use unusual items like books to take out his assailants. With context-sensitive signature takedowns seeing Bourne smash enemies into walls, doors and other objects, it's reminiscent of Sega brawler Yakuza - only a lot more stylish.

When do we get more?

We'll be going hands-on with the game in the next few weeks - so expect to see some serious Bourne coverage in Issue 18!

Anything else to declare?

The brutal combat sequences feel all the more real thanks to the input of Jeff Imada, fight co-ordinator on the Supremacy and Ultimatum films.

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CONTROL →





INCOMING

A fistful of top new titles coming to 360...



NBA Ballers: Chosen One

Publisher: Midway | **ETA:** 25th April
 Go one-on-one or two-on-two with some of the world's most famous basketball stars. With its close-up cinematics and dynamic camera angles, it's a much flashier take on the sport than your average sim - and with legendary rapper Chuck D on-board, this positively reeks of cool.



Monster Jam

Publisher: Activision | **ETA:** 30th May
 Monster Jam is a racing game where the objective isn't so much to destroy your opponent by finishing ahead of them, but more about literally reducing them to hunks of scrap metal. There are nine different stadia to compete in, and three event types, including the gloriously silly freestyle competitions. Could well be great fun.

Enemy Territory: Quake Wars

Publisher: Activision | **ETA:** Summer
 Another PC conversion hits the 360, with this tactical multiplayer FPS set in the Quake universe. The Strogg have invaded Earth, and it's up to you and your cohorts to blast them to kingdom come. Though it's undeniably frantic, it's a game that relies on strategic thinking, with some excellent balancing and several memorable missions.



Kung Fu Panda

Publisher: Activision | **ETA:** 27th June
 Based on the forthcoming film from DreamWorks, Kung Fu Panda already has a genius concept, so hopefully this Jack Black-starrer can make for a decent tie-in, too. Bamboo-zle your opponents with flying fists and feet as you take control of previously lazy shoot-muncher Po and battle against the evil snow leopard Tai Lung. As the film's tagline puts it, "prepare for awesomeness".



PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
 Click here to tell us what you're looking forward to...

Race Driver: GRID

Publisher: CodeMasters | **ETA:** Summer
 With so many excellent racers on the 360, the announcement of another wouldn't seem like cause for particular cheer. GRID is different, for two reasons - one, this is from the makers behind the superb Colin McRae: DiRT. And two - a recent trailer was unveiled displaying some truly astonishing visuals. We could be looking at something very special indeed here.

UPCOMING

SPRING	JUNE	SUMMER	AUTUMN
● Bionic Commando ● Buku Sudoku	● Ninja Gaiden II ● Battlefield: Bad Company	● Fracture	● Fallout 3
● Command & Conquer 3: Kane's Wrath	● The Incredible Hulk	● Prototype ● Plunder	● Just Cause 2 ● Voltage





Publisher: Ubisoft
Developer: Ubisoft Montreal
Heritage: Splinter Cell series, Assassin's Creed
Link: <http://farcrygame.ubi.com/>
ETA: Q4 2008

COMING SOON

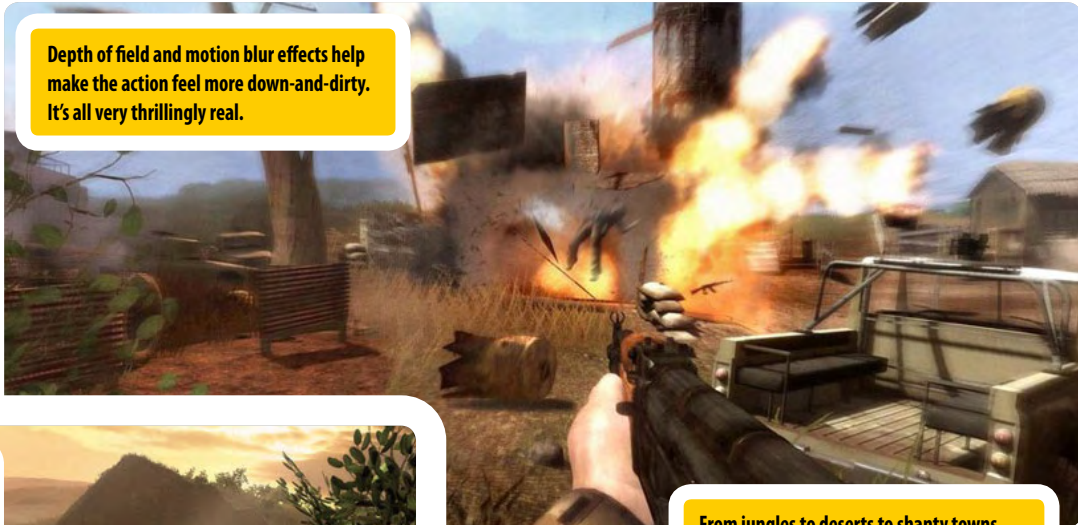
Far Cry 2

Mosquitos, malaria and madness - a journey into deepest, darkest Africa

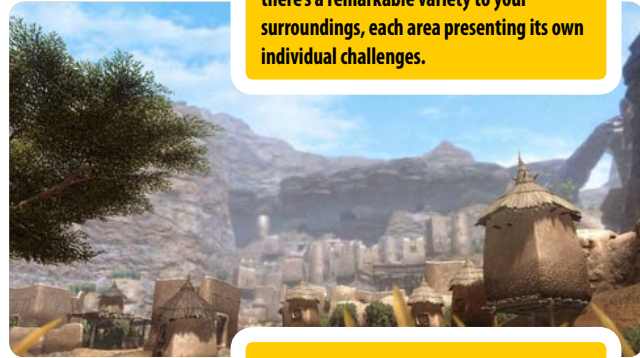
Leaving behind the lush tropical archipelago setting might seem like Far Cry 2's biggest departure, but that's certainly not the most significant move it's made. Neither, despite appearances, is the shift of development team - with series creators Crytek now under EA's wing, and making games to showcase their considerable technical prowess, it's been left to Ubisoft's talented Montreal team to pick up the pieces. Yet the fragments are coming together so nicely, that you'd be hard pushed to tell that there's been a change of developer.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK! Click here to tell us what you think of Far Cry 2

Depth of field and motion blur effects help make the action feel more down-and-dirty. It's all very thrillingly real.



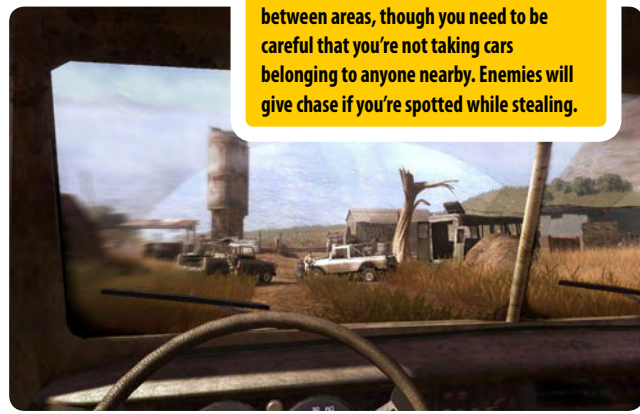
It's one of the most convincing recreations of a real-world setting we've seen in a first-person shooter. Ubisoft Montreal has certainly got the game looking very nice indeed.



From jungles to deserts to shanty towns, there's a remarkable variety to your surroundings, each area presenting its own individual challenges.

No, the key difference between Far Cry 2 and the original is one of tone. While the original descended into schlock horror, its sequel ventures into dark-hearted, morally-questioning territory. By the end of the game you'll be forced to consider the deeper meaning behind the nature of your quest, and confront the (almost literal) monster it's turned you into. This isn't your average first-person shooter.

dry grass. Like Far Cry, it's a real-world location that somehow seems alien amid a sea of urban or space-based shooters. And like Far Cry, it's a technical powerhouse, with some effects that have to be seen to be believed. The fire technology is particularly impressive - you'll often see burning huts, boxes and barrels in the villages and townships dotted throughout the sprawling desert map, but seeing tall grass and trees ablaze is a stunning sight. The new engine allows the vegetation to regenerate too - admittedly, it's speeded up



Vehicles are the easiest way to travel between areas, though you need to be careful that you're not taking cars belonging to anyone nearby. Enemies will give chase if you're spotted while stealing.





>Far Cry 2 continued

more than a little (let's face it, you'd barely notice the progress otherwise) but it's something which Ubisoft is clearly proud of, having released promotional videos showcasing such effects.

In a way, that's a shame, because Far Cry 2 offers so much more than just an immersive audiovisual experience. It's a simple story that gains depth not through scripted sequences but through its gameplay and the player's interaction with the world itself. The game features two rebel factions in conflict, after a split between the group that overthrew the previous government - and it's your involvement with these opposing forces that determines how events transpire. Eventually, you'll be firmly ensconced within one of the groups, which will lead you to the arms dealer who is profiting from this war, and whose murder is the game's main objective.

There's much more to it than that, of course. Non-player characters with no other affiliation will emerge from time to time, and can provide invaluable assistance in combat - should they receive a bullet to the head, however, they'll be killed and will stay dead. No adrenaline-shot resurrections here; death is permanent. Guns behave more realistically than in other games - occasionally jamming thanks to overuse, or from being clogged up by the swirling dirt. Another key mechanic is the need to regularly take medicine - with your avatar suffering from malaria, it's important to pay visits to doctors throughout. Eventually, your involvement in the conflict will make the medicine men reluctant to assist you, which means your approach becomes ever more underhand. Ultimately, you may have to resort to behaviour that makes you as deplorable as your intended target.

Like we said: this isn't your average first-person shooter. ●



You don't always need to shoot enemies to kill them. Creating a raging inferno will see immolated enemies staggering around for a while before they drop.



The game ensures that you won't be blasting through with the same gun all the way through by making certain weapons less reliable.

Naturally, stealth kills are still in there - though going in all guns blazing is an effective approach, sometimes restricted ammo will reduce you to stalking your prey in a similar way to the first game.



"It's a technical powerhouse, with some effects that have to be seen to be believed"



A sensational shooter with a black-hearted twist...





Publisher: Activision
Developer: Traveller's Tales
Heritage: LEGO Star Wars series
Link: <http://www.lucasarts.com/games/legoindianajones/>
ETA: 6th June

HANDS ON

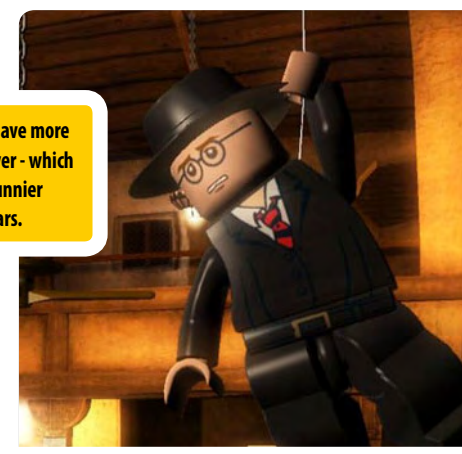
LEGO Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures

"Bricks. Why does it have to be bricks?"

The LEGO Star Wars games had a near-universal appeal - little surprise given their two key components. After all, if anything can bring out the big kid in anyone, it's LEGO, while the Star Wars films (or the original trilogy at least) have

transported millions of saucer-eyed fans to galaxies far, far away. The success of Traveller's Tales' action-adventures is testament to how skilfully the developer married the two, providing accessible, fun gaming experiences that were suitable to

gamers of any age and skill level. For LEGO Indiana Jones, it would have been easy for the developer to simply re-skin the Star Wars games with more organic environments, but in the early stages of development, it became clear that wasn't going to work. Instead, LEGO Indy is a slower-paced and more thoughtful experience, the levels filled with more puzzles, traps and exploration than the simple blasting and constructing in LSW. That's not to say that there won't be more action-packed sequences - indeed, one bar-room shoot-out we witnessed was a particular highlight - but it mixes things up a little more, and thus feels like a more varied experience. As fans of the character might expect, Indy's bullwhip plays an important part in proceedings. It's used in combat to whack bad guys, or to drag them spinning towards you, whereas a single punch will reduce them to a pile of their constituent LEGO parts. Flick it forward to grab



Character models now have more expressive faces than ever - which helps make it an even funnier game than LEGO Star Wars.



LEGO Indy's for everyone, but it's particularly great if you love the films.



The parodies of the film's key moments are superb - indeed, the darker the moment, the more effective the lampooning is.



Sadly, you can't cross the river on the alligator's back - get your sidekick to build a LEGO raft, and then paddle your way across.

"Expect an action-packed romp through the much-loved film series"



> LEGO Indiana Jones cont.

bottles or stools and you can hurl them at assailants - particularly useful for those irritating foes that keep their distance to peck-peck-peck at you with their revolvers. It can lead to some enjoyably chaotic scenes, though its use outside fights is arguably even more important.

That's because many sections are entirely enemy-free - here your whip is utilised to grab overhanging branches

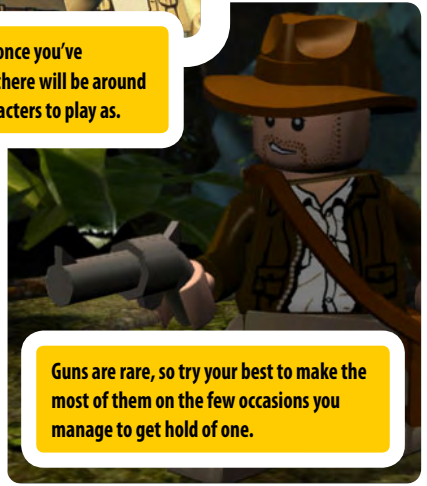
for Indy to swing over gaps, or to deactivate blowdart-spitting traps (a nice touch sees their angry faces spin to reveal a happy smile upon being hit). Though, on occasion, Indy won't have the tools to accomplish a given task, which is where your sidekick comes in. Your companion will change throughout the adventure - Marion Jones in the Raiders of the Lost Ark stages gives way to Willie Scott and Short Round in Temple of Doom - and each has their own particular strength. In co-operative mode, this is who the second player takes control of, while in single-player a simple button press



In the finished game, once you've unlocked everything, there will be around seventy different characters to play as.



All three original Indiana Jones films feature, and there are six big levels in each, with plenty of secrets to unlock, too.



Guns are rare, so try your best to make the most of them on the few occasions you manage to get hold of one.



Lighting and shadow effects are more impressive than ever - though the models and backgrounds are relatively simple compared to other current-generation titles, they have charm and character to spare.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of LEGO Indy

shifts control from Indy to his current cohort. This is also key when a character's fear kicks in - Indy is afraid of snakes, so won't go near a viper-covered switch, while you'll have to resume control of the fedora-hatted hero when Willie refuses to enter a bug-infested environment. It's a neat way to make the second player feel important, rather than just a tag-along.

Though the version we played was unfinished, it already felt like a hugely accomplished title, building on the LEGO Star Wars template while retaining the irresistible sense of fun of that franchise. It might not be the most challenging game ever, but as an action-packed romp through a much-loved film series, we're struggling to see how it could be improved. ●



Just wait until you see what Indy replaces the idol with, in the Hovitos temple section. There's a mischievous streak running through the game that can't fail to put a smile on your face.



HOW COMPLETE?	FIRST IMPRESSIONS
80%	86%
Puts the block back into blockbuster	



E M B R A C E T H E D A R K



PLAYBACK OPTIONS:



darkSector

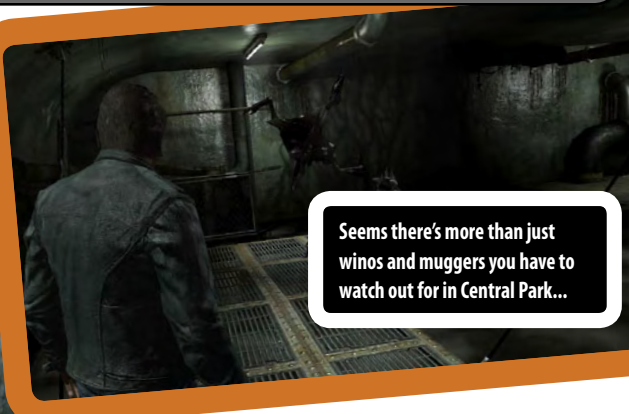
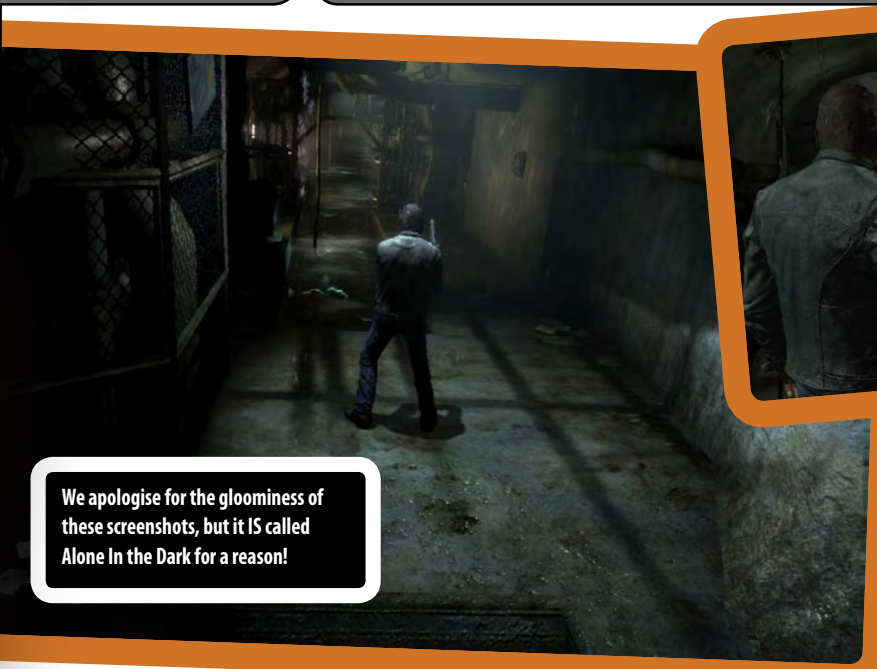


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ALONE IN THE DARK

Believe it or not, it wasn't Resident Evil that kicked off the survival horror genre - in 1992, French developer Infogrames' Alone In The Dark scared gamers witless. Fast-forward to 2008 and Test Drive Unlimited developers Eden Studios have revived the series, with more of a focus on action. We spoke to producer **Nour Polloni** about this fantastic-looking game...



We apologise for the gloominess of these screenshots, but it IS called Alone In the Dark for a reason!

Seems there's more than just winos and muggers you have to watch out for in Central Park...

hit us that we wanted players to have exactly that kind of addictive, exhilarating experience, so we studied how they did it in terms of pacing and content and applied it to the game. This means each episode has its own dynamic with action, plot twists, character development and cliff-hangers to keep the player on the edge of their seat.

Alone in the Dark was basically the first true survival horror, but you have expressed a strong desire to get away from that particular tag. Why is that?

We're making something that's much more than just a genre game and we want it to appeal to a broader audience, not just those who play those kind of games. We've done this with the presentation, and in the way we've structured the game, with big action set pieces alongside tense

exploration, driving, problem solving and combat.

The game adopts an episodic approach, with a TV-like presentation. What was the thinking behind that?

When we were first putting together the design for Alone, we were all going home at night and watching US TV action dramas like Lost and 24, then coming in the next day and talking about it round the coffee machine. It

Central Park is an unusual setting for this type of game - was there any particular reason why this location was chosen?

Firstly, our lead designer Hervé Sliwa visited New York about 10 years ago and was blown away by this huge expanse of darkness in the heart of the bright lights. Also, Central Park is a very evocative location which is familiar to

"Each episode has its own dynamic with action, plot twists, character development and cliff-hangers to keep the player on the edge of their seat"



There's plenty of variety in the gameplay - vehicle sections are just the tip of the iceberg.



The real-world physics are remarkable, and allow for a great deal of innovation, with multiple ways of handling certain situations.

> Interview continued

nearly everybody whether they've visited or just seen it in films and TV shows. Taking a familiar location and twisting it with your own version of reality is often more interesting than creating somewhere new and helps us create a more unsettling experience.

The game's real-world physics are said to be key to the gameplay. Can you give some examples of how that works?

The real world rules which we've applied to the physics is a cornerstone of the gameplay and the goal is complete environmental interactivity where every object behaves and can be manipulated like its real world counterpart. The gameplay is about intuitively applying what you know about how objects behave in the real world in the game universe - to use those objects to your advantage in creating tools and unique weapons. We want the

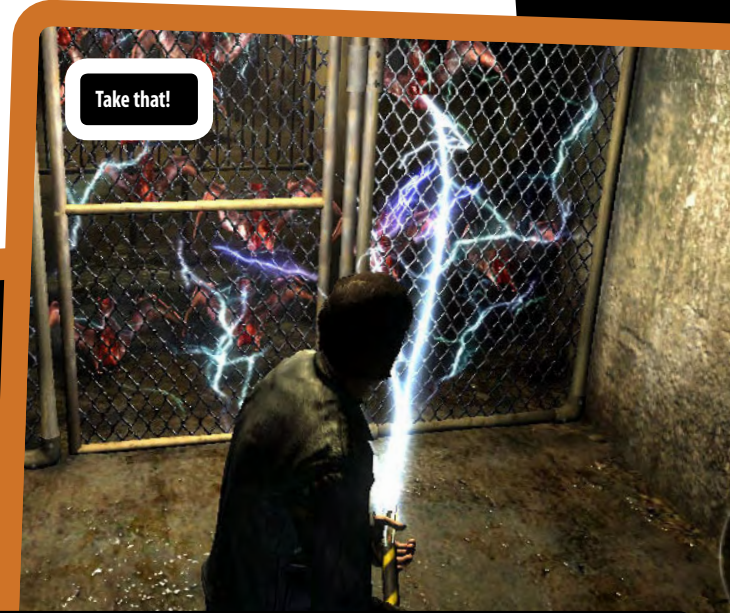
only limit to be your imagination. My favourite example is a simple cigarette lighter. On its own it's pretty harmless, but combine it with an aerosol and you've got a flamethrower, with a bottle and rag and you've got a Molotov cocktail, or with a car dripping fuel on the ground and you've got a huge rolling bomb.

Finally, what's the one aspect of Alone In The Dark that you're most proud of?

The thing we're most proud of is a combination of the way we've brought together the incredible level of environmental interaction in a streaming open environment with amazing rendering, in particular with the virtually unlimited number of real time lights. It wasn't easy to do, but we did it! ●



Publisher: Atari
 Developer: Eden Studios
 Heritage: Test Drive Unlimited
 Link: www.centraldark.com
 ETA: May 2008



Take that!

"A simple cigarette lighter on its own is pretty harmless, but combine it with an aerosol and you've got a flamethrower, with a bottle and rag and you've got a Molotov cocktail"

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Dark Sector

Off with their heads - and arms - and legs...

It's fair to say that Dark Sector is a bit of a gaming magpie, cheekily thieving elements from quite a few other titles but doing so in a way that's never objectionably blatant. Perhaps its most obvious pilfering is from Gears of War - its third-person action is visually reminiscent of Epic's blistering shooter and its cover system which sees you tapping the A button to attach yourself to walls or crouch behind loose masonry. Indeed, many of its encounters recall that 'stop and pop'

Publisher: D3 Publisher
Developer: Digital Extremes
Heritage: Unreal Tournament 2003, Pariah
Link: <http://www.darksector.com/>
ETA: April 4th

approach, as hordes of similar-looking enemies gradually encroach on your position, and you're required to take them out by emerging to let off a few shots when they're reloading. Of course, if you're not too bothered about the game's guns, you can always rely on the one element that really sets this apart from Gears - the glaive. After a moodily monochromatic prologue, hero Hayden Tenno becomes infected with the very virus that he'd been sent to destroy, courtesy of a

strange metallic creature piercing his shoulder. Though initially debilitated, Tenno's right arm soon becomes a source of strange power, as a deadly three-pronged blade appears, which is initially used as a kind of lethal boomerang. Pressing the right bumper unleashes the glaive towards any enemies - hit them once and they'll be temporarily stunned, again and they'll suffer a gory demise. The glaive is regularly upgraded as you progress, with power throws that do quadruple damage if you time your release perfectly when your aiming cursor turns orange, or a shield that can deflect incoming projectiles. It can even be used to steal weapons, functioning like a hookshot by dragging them into your arms, though the unpredictable nature of the glaive's power means that you can only use these for a short period of time. The ➤

GLAIVE NEW WORLD

The Swiss Army Knife of videogame weapons can multitask beautifully



You're Fired



You're Nicked



You're Finished



You're Fired

Launch the glaive into some flames, and it'll become even more powerful, setting enemies alight, and allowing you to burn away blockages to open new paths. Similarly, you can electrocute your foes by aiming for some dangerously sparking wires.



While staying behind cover is the best method of keeping out of harm's way, you'll often need to move forward so you're not constantly fighting the same enemies over and over.



Temporary invisibility is useful for stealth kills on pesky shooters, but be careful it doesn't run out when you're out in the open.





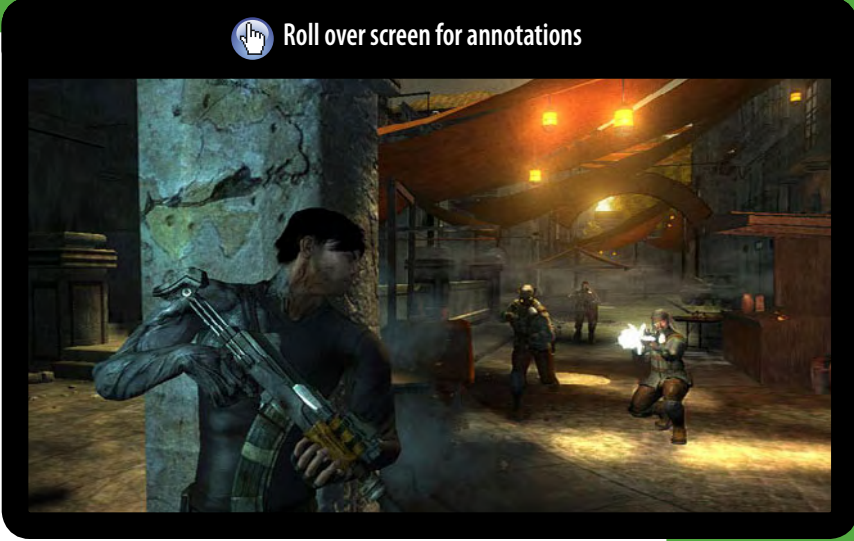
There's plenty of blood in Dark Sector, which may explain why it's been refused classification in Australia!



The game's more powerful enemies can be a pain to see off, but it'll put a wide grin on your face when you eventually beat them.



The Infection multiplayer mode is a nice idea - one player is a fully-upgraded Tenno, and the other players try to kill him - but it doesn't work as well in practice.



Roll over screen for annotations

> Dark Sector continued

only weapon you can use constantly in conjunction with the glaive is your handgun, which can be upgraded on the black market.

Easily the best feature of your glaive is the slow-motion Aftertouch - once thrown, you can press RB again to guide the weapon towards any enemies. It's quite worryingly satisfying to remove one foe's arm and then aim for his nearby ally's leg, sending him toppling to the floor and howling in agony as blood squirts from his

severed limb. The melee 'finishers' are equally brutal, with Tenno breaking arms and removing heads in glorious close-up. It's a shame that standard hand-to-glaive combat isn't nearly as praiseworthy, with the glaive suddenly seeming relatively ineffectual when it's not airborne - given that the mutants

who've been infected with the aforementioned virus are much quicker than their gas mask-wearing human counterparts, you'll be forced to retreat, or simply hammer at the B button and hope for the best when they surround you.

Sadly, that's just the start of the

game's problems. Smashing crates to pick up ammo or roubles is ludicrously convoluted - requiring you to jerk the camera sharply downwards so Tenno can effect a kick. Then you have to position yourself directly over the pickup before pressing X to pocket the item. Considering the enemies are so plentiful - the AI overwhelming you with weight of numbers rather than any real combat skill - it's hardly ideal when you're short of bullets and are desperately trying to grab some

FREEZE FRAME Dark sections...



20 MINUTES
An atmospheric prologue - we almost wish the whole game was presented in black and white.



1 HOUR
A metallic arm and a powerful blade make for a deadly combination - time to put them to good use.



3 HOURS
Near pitch black underground sections aren't particularly good on the eyes - prepare to squint.



6 HOURS
Still enjoyable, but the action is starting to repeat itself. And some of those bosses are annoying.



12 HOURS
End of the single-player mode. The weak plot means the climax feels a little undercooked.

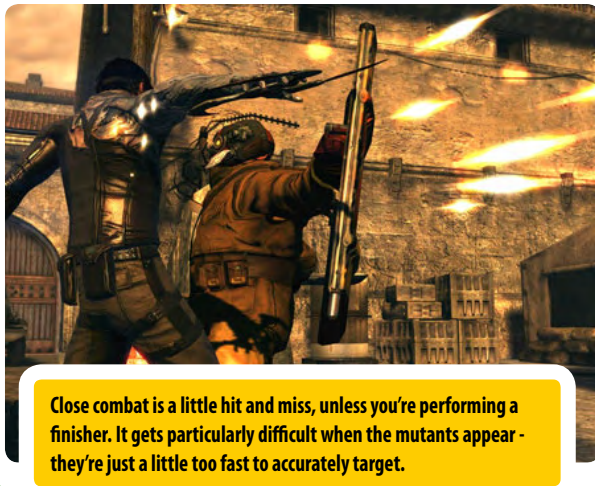




A bit of elec-trickery is required to solve some of the game's fairly simple puzzles. It's a shame they don't really get any more inventive later on.

"A more than adequate stopgap until Gears 2 arrives in November"

Sound effects are worthy of note - slicing through opponents makes a disturbingly squelchy racket, while you'll feel every hit you take in return.



Close combat is a little hit and miss, unless you're performing a finisher. It gets particularly difficult when the mutants appear - they're just a little too fast to accurately target.



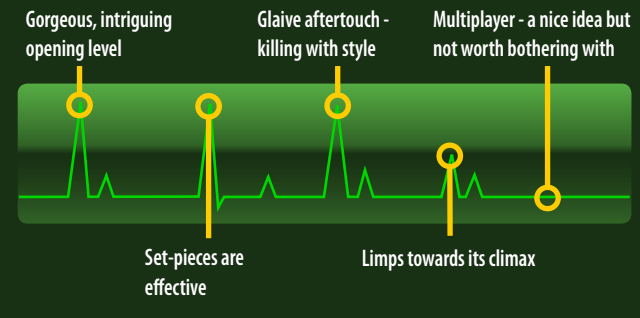
> Dark Sector continued

more while being hacked to ribbons by a machete or two. Similarly, the reliance on invisible trigger points is a little cheap - you'll occasionally be facing off against a seemingly never-ending wave of foes before realising that taking a few paces forwards stops the onslaught. And while the boss battles start off impressively enough - one

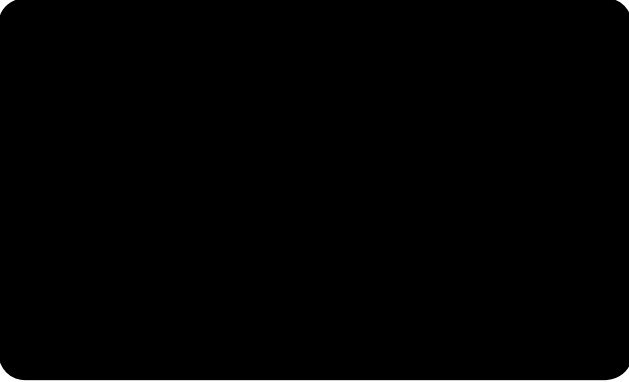
early sequence where a huge beast simply appears out of nowhere and attacks several soldiers before turning its attention to you is a real stunner - one or two require a good deal of patience to successfully destroy, and a couple of others have weaknesses that are incredibly tricky to exploit. It's also noticeable that the game starts to run out of ideas somewhere past the halfway point - a superb opening four

or five hours settles into a series of repetitive encounters, with the flimsy plot not enough motivation to persevere past the difficulty spikes. It's a great shame, as there's a terrific amount of promise here, not to mention one genuine stroke of genius in the gaive itself. If Dark Sector doesn't quite live up to the game it frequently brings to mind, then it serves as a more than adequate stopgap until Gears 2

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*



arrives in November. And, forgettable though some of the game may be, your most impressively gory gaive kills will linger long in the memory. A tighter, leaner sequel with a better story remains a very tempting prospect indeed... ● **Chris Schilling**



360Zine Verdict *Junk food gaming - tasty, but not quite filling enough*

- The gaive is a fantastic weapon
- Very impressive graphics in places
- Drags towards the end; poor multiplayer

81%





Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six Vegas 2

So... Zippy, Bungle, George, Rod, Jane and Freddy, yeah?

Once again, Rainbow Six Vegas throws you into one of the most unusual roles in gaming. No, not a highly trained counter-terrorist guy. There's millions of games featuring /them/. No, this is the other role - that is, the world's worst boss. The middle-manager who gives you a rubbish task, then takes all the credit to the superiors while cutting your wages

is but a small thing compared to what you're like to your fellow Rainbow Six agents. When a level of terrorist-shooting and tactical-manouvering is complete you can easily imagine the two computer players trundling off to the pub - clearly, you won't be invited - to bitch about what you've got up to today: "Forget all the you-open-that-

door and general menial tasks: remember when he sent us out into the open just to get a fix on the bad guy?" "Which time?" "Oh, the six or seventh" "The complete blast!" It's only sound tactics, of course - they can be resurrected with a syringe into their arse when they go down, while if /you/ die it's back to the checkpoint. But still: it's hardly heroic.

In other words, things are very much usual in the world of the Rainbow Sixers. While there's improvements over the previous Vegas, they're very much small surface things - jump-in co-op, some tweaked AIs, new levels and multiplayer modes. Oh - and a new experience point system, which we'll return to shortly. It's still quasi-authentic - i.e. You tend to die

Every gun can be equipped with a variety of handy extra bonuses, such as silencers and laser-sights.



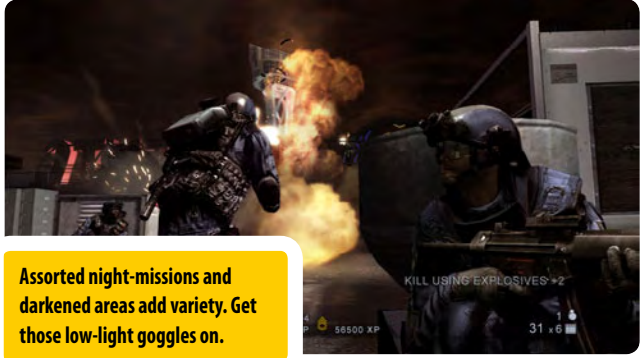
You get extra points for shooting people in the back. Presumably, a Not Very Sporting bonus.



👤 Roll over screen for annotations



Keep one person alive just so the team can spawn back in during co-op.



Assorted night-missions and darkened areas add variety. Get those low-light goggles on.



The cover taking system actually works extremely well. Usually, anyway.

> RSV2 continued

quickly, the weapons are all modelled on real worlds sorts and it's got a plot torn straight from Tom Clancy's big book of technofear... however, it's you and a few mates versus dozens of foes - shooter. As the leader of the Rainbow Six unit, you're able to order around team-mates, both in basic practical ways - go over there and get shot, stupid! - or more sophisticated counter-

terrorist measures, such as flashbombling a room and then clearing. And like last year's Vegas, this all works impressively smoothly. There's occasional moments when they'll go

astray, but when you see the pair of them moving from cover to cover to reach a distant objective you've sent them after, it's hard not to be impressed.

RAINBOW WARRIORS

As always with Tom Clancy, it's more than a straight shooter. Here's some tactical options...



LOB THINGS

SCAN THINGS

CLIMB THINGS

LOB THINGS

Grenades deployed from around a corner are a mainstay of conquering Vegas. Flashbangs are good for closed environments, while smoke can help you get make your way into an open space. Terrorists seem fond of incendiary grenades, but they're mean.

"Like last year's Vegas, it all works impressively smoothly"

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

While the campaign is the back of the game, it's not all there is to it. Here's some of the other options available.



MULTIPLAYER
In multiplayer, there's perennial favourites like deathmatch and team-deathmatch. Imagine the furore if there wasn't.



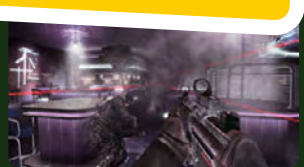
MORE MULTIPLAYER
There's more sophisticated modes too, like the conquest one pictured. You take and hold satellite transmitter thingies. Yes.



CO-OP
The main event is Co-op, however. Four player online, two player split-screen, one-player if (er) you're not in co-op.



TERRORIST HUNT
The terrorist hunt missions - going into an area with more randomly positioned bad guys - is also playable co-op. Highly replayable.



EXPERIENCE POINTS
The experience system means that you'll have a customised avatar whenever you play online with people, as well as a unique weapon load out.





High stakes action in Vegas. Or something like that, anyway.

"You're able to respawn after a delay if your comrades are still alive"



> RSV2 continued

But despite this AI cleverness, the real joy of the game is in its co-operative mode. Split-screen (for two) or four in full co-op. The game's generally better, and not just in the way that playing with a friend is almost always better than without one. For a start, it's more forgiving - you're able to respawn after a delay if your comrades

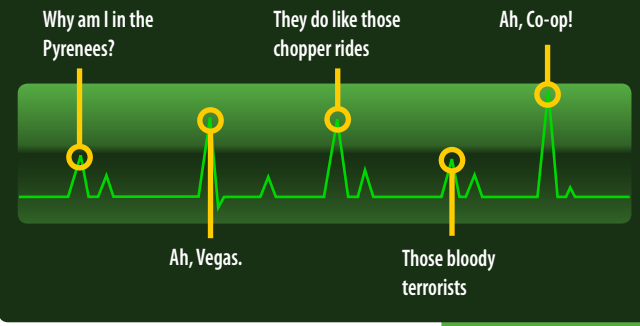
are still alive rather than just being thrown back to the checkpoint (and there's times when that'll certainly grate, normally when the systems don't work as perhaps you'd expect them to). Secondly, there's all manner of multipaths in the levels, so you can all come in from separate directions - which is useless in single-player, as you're not able to give enough orders for your computer friends. For a single-

player, it's a tad depressing when you examine the terrain and work out an attack route... before realising it's impossible with your AI mates. The atmosphere can suffer here. And while we suspect there's many who'll enjoy it, there are issues with the new Experience System.

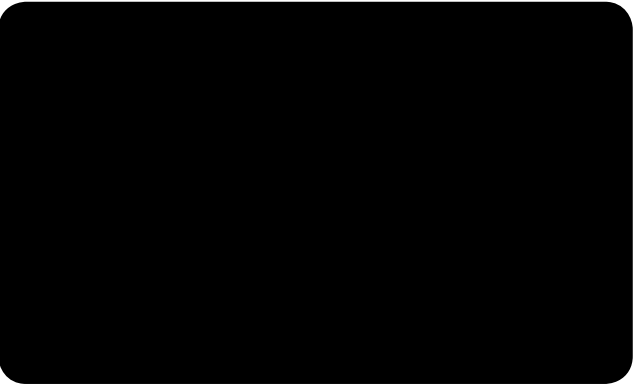
Every kill you make - in both single player /and/ multiplayer - leads to you gaining levels and unlocking new equipment (From serious guns to unserious camouflage). Firstly, for a tactical game, constantly having a score come up is a little blow against the general vibe. Secondly, the unlocking of weapons feels artificial. Previously, this has been a straight gun-porn thing. A massive armoury which you can grab what you like. Now... well, it's not very Tom Clancy. While increasing customisation options with further play is a great thing - limited to costume unlocks, it'd have been fine - this goes a little too far.

It's about the only area where the game does, however. Veterans of the previous Vegas game will find this all very familiar. In fact, familiar parts may begin to grate. For example, you'll often find conflicts in maps where something has been designed to look authentic but prevents you taking cover correctly due to being slightly mis-sized. Trying to lean around the corner and not actually leaning around the corner is

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*



frustrating, especially if you're being shot at, doubly so if that failing causes a death... which is a shame, as it takes the bloom off what's still a rose of modern warfare games. Devoted fans of Vegas will remain so. ● **Kieron Gillen**

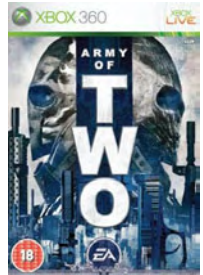


360Zine Verdict *No new colours in the Rainbow Six*

- Agreeably tense
- Techno-thriller gadgets
- lffy XP system

80%





Publisher: EA
Developer: EA Montreal
Heritage: NHL 07, SSX Blur, Boogie
Link: www.ea.com/armyoftwo
OUT NOW

Army Of Two

Two's company, but war is hell...

A contestant on Family Fortunes was once asked to name a dangerous race. Quick as a flash, the answer came back with some conviction: The Arabs. That confused contestant would probably approve of Army Of Two, which stars a pair of private military contractors seemingly intent on ridding the world of anyone caught in possession of ornate headwear, a moustache, or a foreign accent.

Following hot on the heels of Kane & Lynch and Conflict: Denied Ops, the much-delayed Army Of Two can justifiably claim to make up the final part of an unexpected – and largely

unwanted - trilogy of buddy games. Like the aforementioned two titles, there is unsurprisingly a co-op mode. However, in Army Of Two, it's not so much a mode as the entire game. Selecting either the hard-nosed mercenary or the paranoid conspiracy theorist, you have to work together and watch each other's backs as you tear through a selection of specific global hotspots, including Somalia, Afghanistan and Iraq. This is contentious enough in itself, but amidst its dubious politics, the game also makes an overt reference to 9/11, murky territory for traditionally squeaky-clean EA.

On the gameplay front, it's a third person affair with a large emphasis on cover. There's a supposed innovation in the form of so-called Aggro, whereby one player shoots constantly, thus drawing fire and enabling his buddy to flank the enemy. It's essentially a form of applying suppressing fire, but in Army Of Two it's represented by the bloke taking the Aggro glowing bright red, and his partner effectively becoming invisible. It's an example of the somewhat schizophrenic nature of the game, which falls somewhere between the tactical approach of a Tom Clancy title, and the relentless gunplay of The Club. For further proof, >

HEY BUDDY!

You're my best friend...



Twos Up



Slow Motion



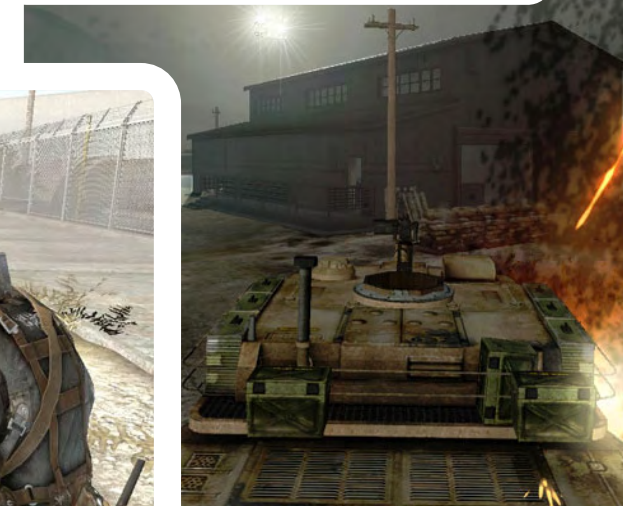
High Five



Twos Up

He's Elliot Salem, and he's Tyson Rios. They're here to protect the free world by hiding behind conveniently placed walls.

Vehicles make sporadic appearances, including this very tank.



There's a war going on, you find your comfort where you can.



It's often easier to simply snap a terrorist's neck.





> **Army Of Two** continued

see Overkill, whereby if you maintain Aggro long enough you go into a slow motion double-damage killing spree.

Throughout the course of the game

you will take literally hundreds, if not thousands of lives, but the basic gameplay barely advances from the training level. With so much shooting involved, it might have worked better as a first person shooter. Aiming is

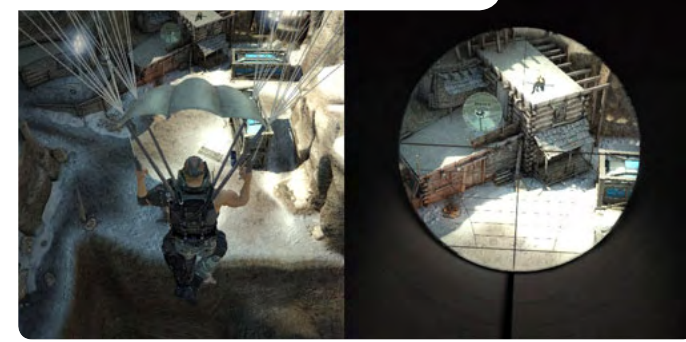
imprecise and you often find yourself face to face with the enemy, performing an embarrassing dance as you attempt to get him in your sights.

On the co-operation front, you're occasionally required to give each other a bunk-up, a move that appears to have been lifted directly from one of the Splinter Cell titles. There's also a passable dual sniping mode, and you can even swap weapons – and high-fives - but it generally boils down to both pressing A at the same time to yank a door off its hinges, or some other macho gesture. And of course there's the whole comical healing your buddy routine to go through, which in this instance involves dragging him to cover before applying the magic sponge, the key difference being that the injured party can continue shooting, albeit while sat motionless >

He was never going to win that particular battle

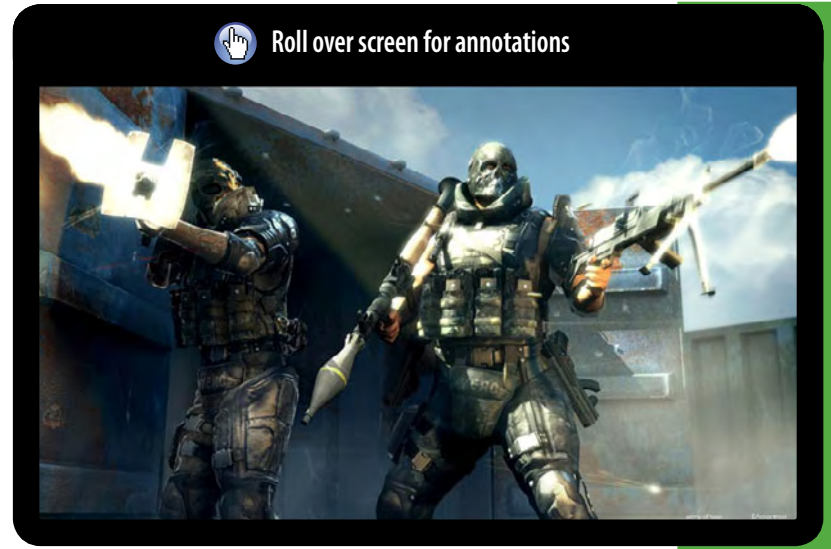


If you're too cheap for Xbox Live, split-screen does the trick.



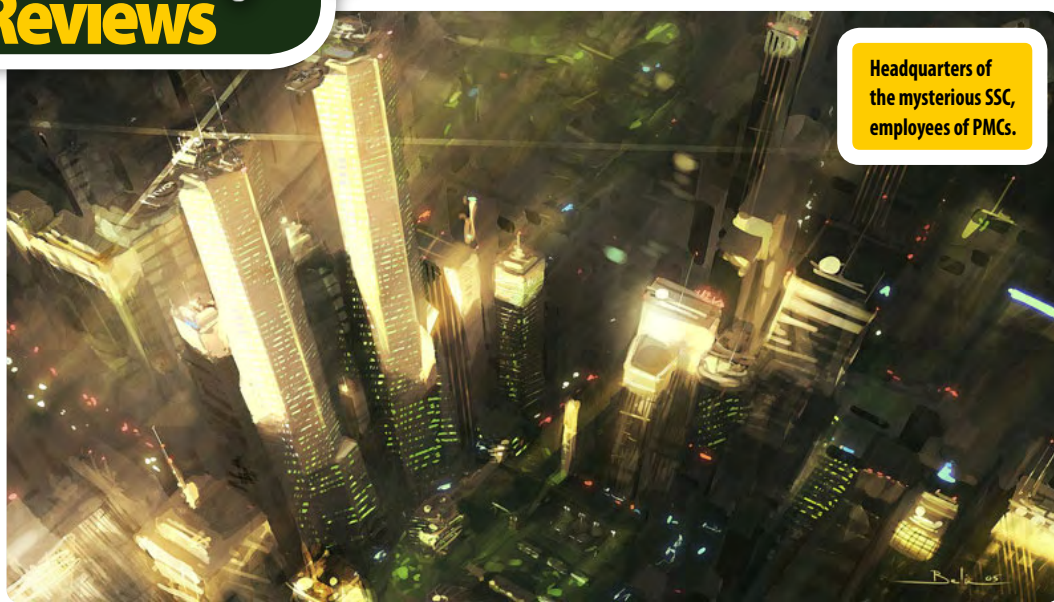
"Throughout the course of the game you will take literally hundreds of lives"

Purists were irked by the remake of The Bridge On The River Kwai.



Roll over screen for annotations





Headquarters of the mysterious SSC, employees of PMCs.



We're not in the army now, we're in the SSC.



The hide and seek contest was eventually declared a draw.

"Gun fetishists will revel in the hardware available"

> Army Of Two continued

on his arse.

Gun fetishists will revel in the hardware available, as money earned for completing objectives (killing people) can be spent during the accurately named but nonetheless intrusive mid-mission shopping. A Guns 'n' Ammo subscriber's wet dream, you can even add a bit of bling by pimping your weapon for an extra ten grand or so. It doesn't appear to make a blind bit of difference, but it does bring a bit of glamour to the battlefield.

There is an inevitable 'politically charged' storyline to contend with, but it's sometimes hard to follow, not because it's complicated, but because you can't hear it, or even read the subtitles, thanks to the relentless on-screen carnage. It all eventually makes some sense, culminating in one of the more anti-climactic and abrupt game endings for a long time. With a paltry six missions, you can whiz through the main game in a couple of days, particularly if you have a competent online partner. And if you get stuck, there's a GPS system whereby a great big flashing red line shows you exactly where to go, almost a tacit admission of the poor level design.

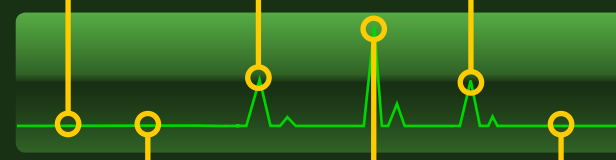
As well as the main campaign, there's a Versus mode, involving two teams of two going against each other, the clock, some objectives, and strong Counterstrike comparisons in an attempt to earn the most money. A largely chaotic affair, it does at least

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*

Training is pretty dreary

The plot thickens

The plot thins



As are the opening exchanges

Frantic action

And it's all over

give the game further legs. Ultimately though, it's a fairly soulless experience, interspersed with occasional moments of tension, and shitloads of exploding helicopters. ●

Steve Hill

360Zine Verdict

But what will they call the sequel?



Mildly innovative



Co-op works



Short

71%



Xbox Live Arcade Round-Up

Four more for download today!



Rocketmen: Axis of Evil

Developer: A.C.R.O.N.Y.M. Games Inc.
Publisher: Capcom Price: 800 MP (~£6.80)

Rocketmen's a frustrating game for us, as we can see the potential, but it's been let down by its poor execution. A four-player co-op top-down shooter in the vein of Gauntlet, Rocketmen has a nice air of cheese about it, and the comic book style cutscenes tie everything together nicely. However, while the majority of the action's fine, the camera, which moves through the level seemingly of its own accord, all too often prevents

"A four-player co-op top-down shooter in the vein of Gauntlet"

you from going where you want to go, making the game feel far too linear, and also stopping you looting power-ups. It's still a good game, but it really could have been great.

- Great style
- 4 player co-op
- Crap camera

Could've been a contender **75%**

Triggerheart Exelica

Developer: Warashi Inc. Publisher: Warashi Inc.
Price: 800 MP (~£6.80)

Triggerheart Exelica is a typical Japanese vertical-scrolling shooter, with a few nice touches to make it stand out from the crowd. Although the game features the usual array of scantily clad (and worryingly young looking) females, the ability to hook onto your opponents, swing them round, and then throw them back at your enemies is a lot of fun, and one that makes clearing large groups of ships a lot easier. However, with just five levels it's not great value for money.



- Good gameplay
- Good learning curve
- Disappointingly short

Hook, line and sinker **78%**



Brain Challenge

Developer: Gameloft Publisher: Microsoft Games Studios Price: 800 MP (~£6.80)

Much like Dr.Kawashima's Brain Training on the DS, Brain Challenge is a 360 game that's meant to help refine your grey matter into a lean, mean, calculating machine. A port of a mobile phone game of the same name, Brain Challenge lets you play mini-games in one of five different categories, as you work to harness your brains full potential. While these games may not actually make you any smarter, they're still a fun distraction, and the mini-games on offer here are nicely varied.

- Good selection of games
- Great multiplayer
- Odd duff challenge

Brain-aching good fun **89%**

Bliss Island

Developer: Pom Pom Publisher: Codemasters Online
Price: 400 MP (~£3.40)

Bliss Island is a disappointing series of mini-games, let down by its confusing control scheme. Playing as a Zwooph, a small, furry creature with a huge snout, it's up to you to complete a series of 21 mini games, by simply expelling air in a specific direction. Letting you play pool, guide balls into a hungry monster's mouth, or take part in a simple side-scrolling platformer, it's safe to say there's plenty of variety here, but the controls are frustratingly confusing at times. If you've got small kids, they'll get some fun out of this.



- Good variety
- Annoying controls
- Overly Difficult

Fluffball **65%**

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Navigation bar with icons: a hand cursor, a right arrow, a globe, an information 'i' icon, an envelope, a 'NAVIGATE' button with a right arrow, a 'CONTROL' button with a right arrow, a close 'X' icon, a question mark, a magnifying glass, a search icon, a left arrow, and a right arrow.



ACEYBONGOS INTERVIEW

James Woodcock natters with Graeme Boyd, Community Manager, of Xbox E.M.E.A. better known as AceyBongos from aceybongos.com.

Your Gamertag is AceyBongos, but what is the story behind that?

I kind of wish it was a bit more interesting and exciting than it is. I'm from Aberdeen in Scotland and I had a mate when I was at school up there and it's just a word he used to say and we always used to say things were ace and if he thought something was better than ace he would say it was aceybongos. I don't know where he got it from - it's a bit of a mystery. I thought it was quite a funny word and when I was signing up for Xbox Live I tried a couple of things, bacon crisps was my first choice but couldn't get that so then I thought AceyBongos is quite personal, it sounds a bit unique and hey that'll do.

What does your role within

Microsoft now entail?

It is my job to represent the community within the Xbox Europe team and to think about getting the community involved and how they will respond. If something is happening it's me who really takes the feedback, the opinions and the voice of the community and feeds it back to the team.

The blog, aceybongos.com, that I work on is part of that and it is nice

trying to update that as much as possible and to gather feedback on there and talk about the cool stuff that is happening.

Microsoft is a huge corporation, but how difficult is it to make sure that globally everyone is working together without excluding certain countries?

That is a real challenge. Everything >

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Want to hear all of what Graeme had to say? The full interview is 45 minutes long, so you can click here to start the interview playing, then continue to browse the rest of the magazine while it plays if you want. Audio controls will appear and remain on this page to allow you to pause, stop, rewind, etc. **CLICK HERE NOW TO PLAY!**

He has one of the longest job titles, certainly worthy of our attention!

"My Xbox Live subscription is £3.30 a month, about the price of a pint of beer"

> Interview continued

we do we think Xbox. We have got the US team, the European team, teams that do brilliant work in all the individual countries. There are just so many people to meet, to understand and how you can relate to them.

If you think about when we launched the Xbox 360 we made a commitment to launching it around the world on a specific date and we stuck to that. People may say that there were a few problems and issues but that was a real line in the sand in terms of how Xbox wants to think of the Xbox community as a global community.

Does it ever bother you that you are compared to Major Nelson?

Not at all, it's a compliment. I wish I was more like Major Nelson. Larry has done an amazing job, he really kick-started the whole Xbox blogging thing and pretty much everyone who has an Xbox has heard of Major Nelson at some point or another. I see a lot of emails from Larry flying around because he always wants to tackle

issues that are happening. If there is something that is upsetting people in the community or there is a hot topic that people are talking about, he is always very quick to push that over to the appropriate people in the Xbox team.

Do you ever feel that the UK is missing out in not hosting any similar gaming events such as E3?

I guess so. Leipzig has really gone from strength to strength in the past few years and it is a really big show. I enjoyed it more than E3 as it seemed a lot more laid back and personal. I would like to see something in the UK, but there is a lot of pressure on developers and publishers to be delivering games and when you start adding in lots of big events it makes their life even more difficult.

Xbox Live was a little troubled over the holiday season, so what happened?

What I would like to say to people is when all that was happening it was a massive deal to the whole Xbox team. Trust me there were a lot of people who basically gave up their Christmas

holidays, their families and their lives to jump on it to try and make things better. Hopefully people have seen an improvement. When people are paying for a service they expect that service and we want to thank everyone for their patience. We are doing our best to make sure it doesn't happen again.

What does Xbox Live offer that the Sony PlayStation Network doesn't?

Anyone who has tried out both of the services will already know the answer to that question. I think it is good on PlayStation for offering that free online play. For me the Xbox Live subscription works out about £3.30 a month, I live in London so that is about the price of a pint of beer, so for everything I get as well as the online play I think it is great value. People often forget all the other small really cool things like achievements, leader boards, match making, gamerscore, gamercard and so on. They all add up into this bigger picture. I understand that it would be great if everything was free, as free is always everyone's favourite word, but most Xbox gamers that I speak to, if they are honest about it, say it is pretty good value for the service.

Unfortunately for Xbox 360 users, HD DVD has been declared the loser of the high definition movie format war, so how do you see this affecting the console?



We made a clear choice from the start that we weren't going to put an HD DVD or Blu-ray drive into the console because we didn't want to make people pay for the privilege of having a drive that could potentially be defunct in a pretty short space of time. There is a massive catalogue of HD DVDs out there just now and if I am totally honest, I am quite excited about the prices coming down of the discs themselves as I am looking forward to building up quite a collection of HD movies.

I don't think it really affects the Xbox 360 in the long run. What would have been really problematic is if we had charged people for the privilege of an HD DVD drive embedded in the console and then we were in that situation. ●

"We think of the Xbox community as a global community"

In **360Zine** Issue 18

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