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360Zine

Issue 31 | June 2009

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EXCLUSIVE HANDS-ON PREVIEW & INTERVIEW

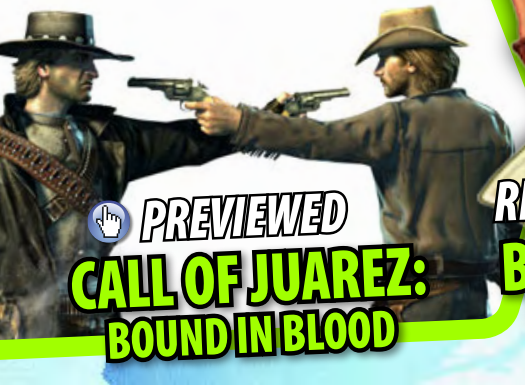
Guitar Hero Greatest Hits



PREVIEW & INTERVIEW!

SABOTEUR

PLUS!



PREVIEWED

CALL OF JUAREZ: BOUND IN BLOOD



REVIEWED

BIONIC COMMANDO REARMED



REVIEWED

BATTLESTATIONS: PACIFIC



PREVIEW & INTERVIEW!

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 4

Welcome to 360Zine



We have a stack of hands-on previews lining up for your perusal this month. Call of Juarez: Bound in Blood, Darksiders: Wrath of War, The Saboteur, Fight Night Round 4 and Guitar Hero: Greatest Hits are all fast on their way to your favourite console and all are looking worthwhile contenders. In addition we have interviews with the dev teams of Saboteur and Fight Night.

In the here and now we also have reviews of Bionic Commando, Battlestations: Pacific and the wonderful XBLA offering that is Space Invaders Extreme.

Enjoy the issue and be sure to come back next time for our exclusive lowdown on the gaming wondershow that is E3.

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



Chris Schilling
Down with Darksiders



Steve Hill
Goes hands-on with The Saboteur

Don't miss! *This month's top highlights*



The Saboteur

HANDS-ON PREVIEW! EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW!



Call of Juarez: Bound in Blood

Pistols at dawn



Darksiders: Wrath of War

Previewed



Fight Night Round 4

Knockout preview



Bionic Commando

Reviewed & rated

QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away!

MX vs ATV Reflex
Call of Juarez: Bound in Blood
The Saboteur
Darksiders: Wrath of War
Fight Night Round 4
Guitar Hero Greatest Hits
Bionic Commando
Battlestations: Pacific
Space Invaders Extreme

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Publisher: THQ
Developer: Rainbow Studios
Heritage: MX vs ATV Untamed, Cars
Link: N/A
ETA: Christmas



The right-stick-as-rider idea extends to the stunts, which are pulled off with quarter-circles and flicks, almost like Skate's tricks.

FIRST LOOK

MX vs ATV Reflex

Mud on the tracks

What's the story?

It's the fourth instalment of the off-roading series after 2007's underwhelming Untamed. There's a tacit admittance from developer Rainbow that the previous game wasn't all it could and should have been, and to fix that it has rewritten the physics engine from the ground up. The talk is all about terrain deformation and realistic rider movement – and our hands-on time with the game proved it wasn't just talk. Reflex certainly puts its muddy wheels where its mouth is, as its vehicles churn up dirt, grass and snow, carving tracks which affect handling perhaps a lot more than you'd realise.

"Ride horizontally over some freshly created ridges and every bump is felt in your hands"



The tyre tracks form a natural racing line – with the AI being so efficient, it's often a good idea to follow their lead on lap one at least.



The ATVs are better for beginners, as it's easier to stay on your ride after a collision.

What do we know?

We know that, even at this pre-alpha stage, it's looking pretty damn tasty. Its environments might not have the sheer size of something like FUEL, but for our money it's a better-looking game, with more realistic physics and handling, and a more tactile connection with the environment. Ride horizontally over some freshly created ridges and every bump is felt in your hands as the controller rumbles, while your rider and his vehicle gently judder. While it's fun to pull off several donuts in the untouched snow of Icarus Peak, in a race situation you'll find your wheels dragged left and right by the deep indentations in the tracks. The so-called 'rhythm racing' feels more satisfying,

>



Extensive tutorials explain when and where best to shift your rider's position on his vehicle.

> MX vs ATV Reflex continued

thanks to the additional rider control as you lean into turns by nudging the right stick or increase the height of your jumps by leaning backwards on take-off. Should you be grabbing a little *too* much air, you might be in for a bumpy landing, but in most cases you'll be given a brief window of opportunity to rescue the situation thanks to the new wreck recovery mechanic. When your rider wobbles, a yellow arrow will quickly flash up – push the right stick in that direction and you'll stay aboard. There are plenty of opportunities for tricks, too – a lobby screen, which is the off-road equivalent of FIFA's Arena, allows you to practice your side can-cans in a small dirt-park filled with ramps while you're waiting for the current game to load.

90 tricks are available, all executed with right-stick movements in combination with one of the bumper-based stunt modifiers. With up to 12 players competing in the online modes and a host of challenges for the Free Ride zones as well as your traditional race options, we were left very pleasantly surprised by our time with Reflex.

"90 tricks are available, all executed with right-stick movements in combination with one of the bumper-based modifiers"



Snow is the terrain most affected by the realistic deformation physics, encouraging creative players to draw pictures with their tyres.

When do we get more?

It's not out this Christmas, and it'll likely be a few months before it's ready to be shown off again. We'll definitely be bringing you a much closer look at the game closer to launch, though.

Anything else to declare?

The AI is tough. Seriously tough. After finishing twelfth (and therefore last) and eleventh in our first two races, we were absolutely elated to finish first on our third attempt, only to be told that the AI for ATV drivers hadn't been tweaked yet. If the end result is anything like the vicious MX riders, then this could offer a serious challenge to even racing veterans.

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XBOX 360

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CALL OF JUAREZ BOUND IN BLOOD

Publisher: Ubisoft
Developer: Techland
Heritage: Call of Juarez, Chrome
Link: http://callofjuarez.uk.ubi.com
ETA: 3rd July

HANDS ON

Call of Juarez: Bound in Blood

Guns, gold, girls and God – hands-on with Techland's Western sequel

"With two protagonists you could be forgiven for expecting a co-op mode, but Bound in Blood is a solo experience"



Epic vistas, lots of bodies and a bloody big cannon – what more could you possibly want?

The ageing Marshal throws his badge into the dirt as he prepares to face-off against the man who corrupted his young daughter. Circling his opponent, his hands tremble as he nervously reaches for his gun. A bell tolls, then BANG! He crumples to the ground. Even in 1865, it's perfectly clear that America is no country for old men.

The drama of that old Western staple – the mano-a-mano shootout – is taken to twitchy new heights in Bound in Blood, improving on the original's already entertaining duels by a simple change of camera angle.



Though a fair bit younger than he was in the original, Ray hasn't got any better-looking.

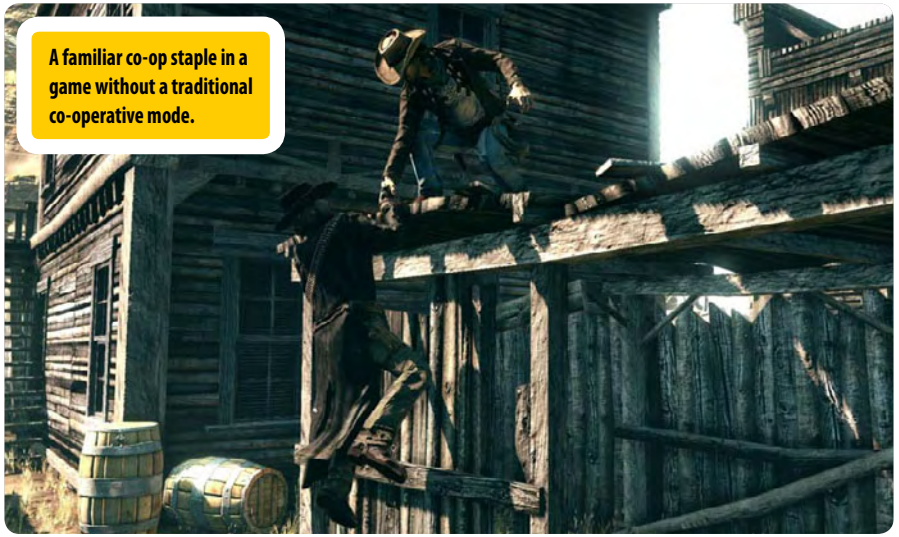
The gun and the right hand in the foreground, the enemy circling as you try to keep him dead centre – and eventually just dead. Left stick to move around, right to move that hand closer to your holstered weapon. Then that long pause before the bell finally sounds and you can draw. It's over in a matter of seconds – the original was surely a shoo-in for the Guinness Book of Records: Gamer's Edition under Shortest Boss Battles Ever, but it's just as satisfying as the wars of attrition which pass for most boss scraps these days.

Blood brothers

Bound in Blood sees the return of Ray McCall, back in the days before he started preaching fire and brimstone, and fighting in the Confederate Army alongside brother Thomas. But after disobeying an order to abandon their homestead, the pair strike out as deserters, venturing towards Mexico in an attempt to find the hidden gold which will allow them to rebuild their old farmhouse. With two protagonists, you could be forgiven for expecting a co-operative mode, but while the pair are rarely apart for more than a few minutes (at least in the levels we player in this almost-finished preview code), Bound in Blood is a solo experience through and through.

In certain stages you'll be forced to play as either Thomas or Ray, but in >





A familiar co-op staple in a game without a traditional co-operative mode.



The McCalls desert the army after the reinforcements sent to help with a potential suicide mission turn out to be just one man.



Not all gunfights see so many enemies out in the open. You'll need to use cover wisely, peeking out to loose off a couple of shots when you're facing a group of more than three or four.

> Call of Juarez continued

most others you'll get a choice between the two. In general, there's not a great deal of difference between the two – Thomas is lighter on his feet and can use a lasso to swing and climb to higher ground, while the sturdier Ray can take more damage and is able to kick down doors. The most notable change comes when Concentration mode is activated. Consecutive kills add skulls to a gun chamber – fill all six slots and you can press B to slow time. Move the Right stick over any opponents and Ray unleashes a deadly volley of shots from his six-shooters, whereas down-and-up flicks of the Right stick activate the hammer on Thomas's revolver, auto-targeting any visible enemies. The old twin-gun twin-stick trick from the original Juarez kicks in at scripted moments, too – often when the pair storm into a saloon or approach a room from opposite sides, allowing you to target enemies with both sticks and pressing the trigger to fire. There's nothing quite like bursting through a door as a dynamic duo, and seeing five or six bodies crumple to the floor seconds later – usually accompanied by a laconic quip from one of the pair.

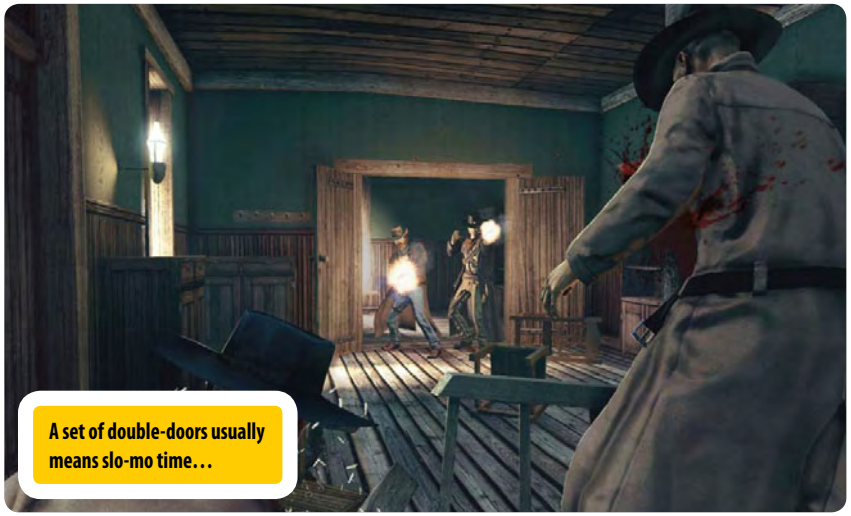
Techland has kicked the presentation up a notch or two this >

> Call of Juarez continued

time; the game's more episodic – nomadic, even – structure offering more varied environments than the first, with some terrific background detail. The opening stage in the Confederate trenches sees the McCalls ducking explosions on the Character Select screen, while bangs and booms cause screen shudder, controller rumble and knock trees across the trenches. Stumbling through the dust, Ray happens across a group of mounted units, with a bugle call sounding the charge. Later, a rain-lashed escape sees water droplets distorting the camera. It sounds great, too – the guns feel substantial by dint of the noise they make as well as their weight, while the voice acting is certainly pretty solid, especially from the memorably gruff Ray.

Indeed, it's clear from one or two of the sparky verbal exchanges that Juarez has retained its jet-black humour, though it's never quite as endearingly demented as the bible-quoting, rabbit-shooting craziness of the first game. It's our one concern about this highly entertaining and hugely polished shooter. While it doesn't seem to suffer the frustrations of the original's stealth-led stages, its lead pairing are perhaps a little too similar to prevent things getting samey before the end.

The levels we've seen mix scripted excitement – a cannon attack on a steamboat, some stealthy knife kills in a cornfield – with some excellent shoot-outs in large, open areas and on-rails sections thrown in for good measure. And it feels more straightforward than the original – or as straightforward as a game in this relatively untapped genre can be – it certainly knows the way of the gun, and for most FPS fans, that will be more than enough.



A set of double-doors usually means slo-mo time…



Bound in Blood's depiction of the Old West seems a little more noticeably traditional than the first game.





Destruction appears to be scripted, though you won't mind when it looks as spectacular as this.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK! Click here to tell us what you think of Call of Juarez: Bound in Blood

360Zine

HOW COMPLETE?	FIRST IMPRESSIONS
90%	90%

Red Dead Redemption could have a tough act to follow


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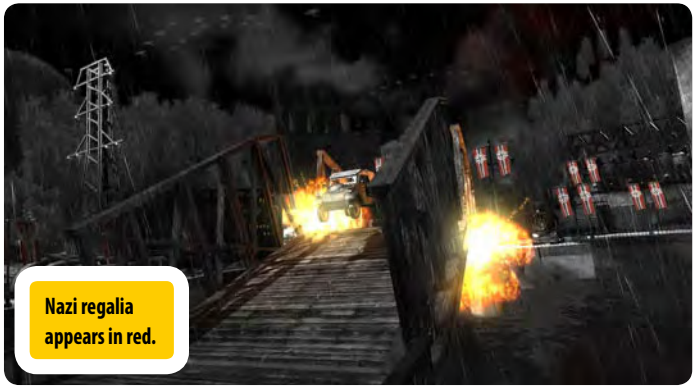
HANDS ON

The Saboteur

Black and white and red all over…

Publisher: EA
Developer: Pandemic
Heritage: Destroy all Humans!, Mercenaries, The Lord of the Rings: Conquest
Link: www.thesaboteur game.com
ETA: Summer


Those Nazis hate a slow driver.

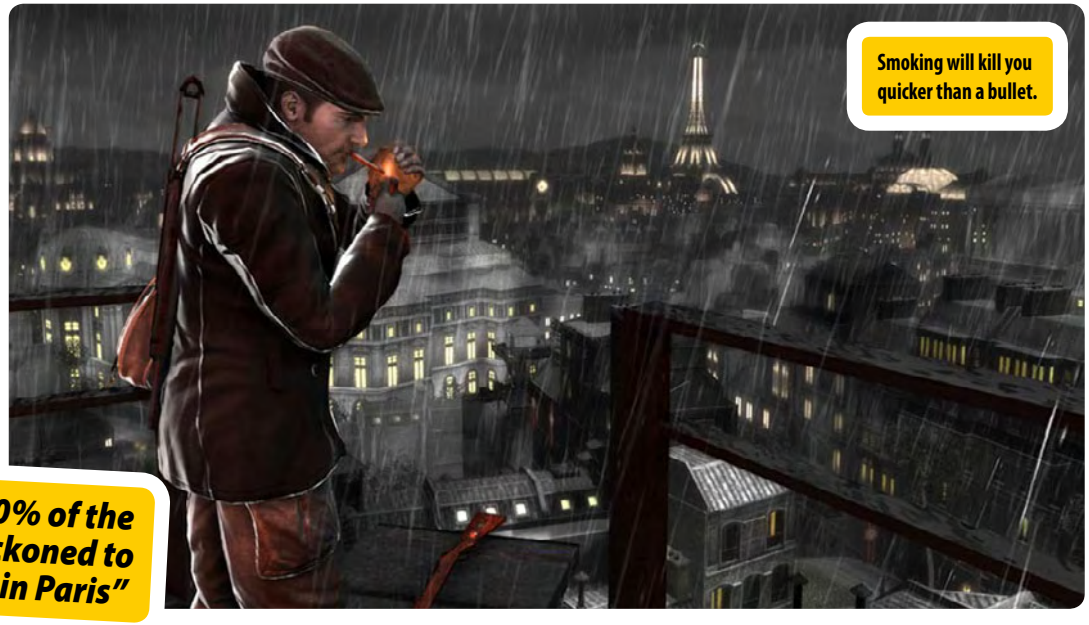

Nazi regalia appears in red.

There's a lot of stuff to be sabotaged there.

Another World War II game? That's all we need. But wait, this one's different. For starters, it's in black and white. What? Was it discovered in an attic, having been developed before the advent of colour television? No, it's been made that way as an artistic statement, the bleak monotone environment reflecting the harsh reality of Nazi oppression. That Nazi oppression takes place mainly in occupied France, and you'll spend at least half the game mincing around Paris helping out the resistance like some imaginary character from rancid Eighties comedy 'Allo 'Allo.

Okay, it's not quite as flippant as that, but The Saboteur is by no means a documentary, taking World War II as its basis and building a slightly skewed fantasy world around it. You play the character of Sean Devlin, a street-tough Irish racing mechanic with aspirations to become a driver. Working for the Marini racing team – loosely based on Bugati – you finally get a chance to race in Germany against rival-team Doppelzeig, a thinly veiled version of Mercedes, in that they also provide >







"Around 60% of the game is reckoned to take place in Paris"

> The Saboteur continued

war machines for the Nazi army. Following the race, you somehow end up getting caught in the wrong place at the wrong time, and someone close to you is killed. Distraught, alone and trapped inside Nazi Germany, you have to avoid the might of Hitler's army and get yourself back to a base in France. So begins a story of retribution, as you find yourself sucked into the war effort, attempting to foil the Nazis by blowing up Zeppelins, derailing trains, imploding bridges, and destroying armoured tanks. And of course killing humans, something that presents a steep learning curve, as while your character may be a brawler, he's by no means a killer, at least at the outset.

An open-world game, Sean has many ways of getting back to France, and he could simply set off on foot. However, as a professional driver, acquiring a car is the most obvious step, and it comes replete with a fairly forgiving driving model, ideal for negotiating the narrow Parisian streets. Around 60% of the game is reckoned to take place in the capital, which exists as a kind of fantasy version of the real thing. Apparently the French film Amelie was a big influence visually, with its vibrant, colourful, almost surreal depiction of the prostitute-ridden Mont Martre area being replicated in the game.

As for the whole black and white theme, another film was key in the game's development, with the team claiming something of an epiphany when they saw Sin City, finally understanding how to use lighting and shadow to make objects stand out and create depth. It makes a lot more sense when you see it moving, but while the >




That's going to chafe his palms…

"One of the game's mantras is that if something looks like it can be climbed then it can"


A nice bit of climbing, there. We're impressed.

> The Saboteur continued

game is largely black and white, pockets of colour do appear, representing significant objects and events. So an explosion will be rendered in all its orange glory, and blood will be red, as will the swastikas and Nazi regalia.

Bold approach

It's certainly a bold approach, and one that makes for a visually distinctive game that may deter more mainstream punters. A world away from traditional World War II fare, you're not so much in the trenches as on top of the world, able to climb tall buildings with ease, which gives you a great chance to see the sights of Paris. One of the game's mantras is that if something looks like it can be climbed, then it can be climbed. And that does include Paris' most famous landmark, as if you really want to you can clamber to the top of the Eiffel Tower and avoid the souvenir sellers below.

We were privy to an early mission, in which Sean has to use explosives to help the resistance destroy a giant cannon the Nazis have installed on a building. Scampering across the rooftops, the climbing seemed really simple, and appeared to consist of little more than pointing at a building and letting him get on with it. There was also a bit of sniping on show, with Sean picking off some obligatory exploding barrels and scattering Nazi innards all over the architecture. A few authentic weapons were on show, including MP40s, MP44s and Lugers, as well as some impressive flamethrowers. As for the remote detonation device, it consisted of one of those classic plungers, as favoured in pretty much every World War II film ever made.

However, from what we saw, The Saboteur certainly looks like a refreshingly different approach to the conflict, standing out from the crowd courtesy of a bold visual style and only a casual adherence to the facts. We can't imagine Call Of Duty being too concerned, but nevertheless we look forward to sabotaging a few Nazis later this summer.

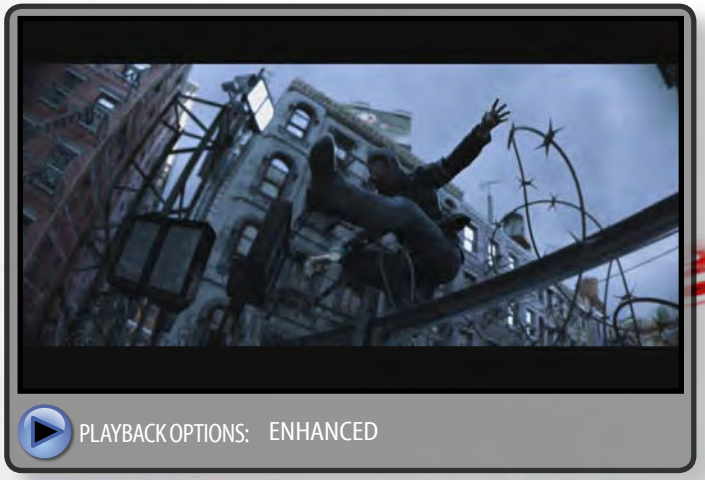

Some classic wartime searchlights in action.

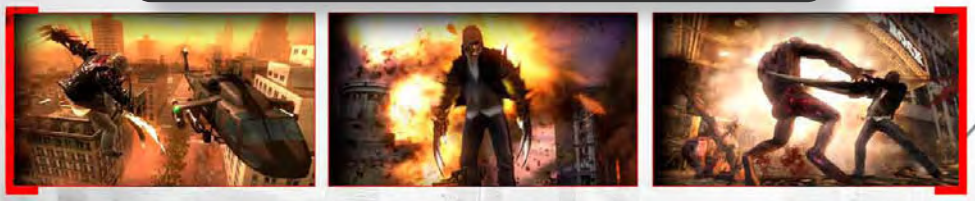
PREVIEW FEEDBACK! Click here to tell us what you think of The Saboteur

360Zine
HOW COMPLETE? 80%
FIRST IMPRESSIONS 80%
Stylish and atmospheric, this is film noir in game form

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THE FREE FRENCH

Lead designer ***Tom French*** *talks us through The Saboteur…*


The Irish love a bar-room brawl.

The game is set in World War II, but is it fair to say that it's not entirely factual?
Saboteur is not a historically 100% accurate game. We're definitely inspired by history and we take a lot of real-world historical moments and dates and kind of mash them all together. For instance, Zeppelins were decommissioned during the war but they're a great piece of the fantasy. Looking at Indiana Jones and seeing the famous picture of the Zeppelin flying over the Empire State building, it's a great piece of iconography that we really wanted to deliver and enhance our heightened reality.

How did you come up with your unique vision of Paris?
Paris to us was an extremely unique challenge. It offered that initial inspiration for the game and the idea of this occupied city. We knew we weren't going to build it to scale, as we felt that would be uninteresting for the player to explore… it's simply too much. Having something scaled down is definitely more manageable and interesting. We built all the monuments to scale, so we have this compressed kind of Disneyland version of Paris where from every monument you can see another monument and you can use them as landmarks and guiding tools when you're driving around in the game.

Did you look to cinema as an inspiration?
Film Noir is definitely a theme. It really works within our world because we knew we were going to go for that black and white tone and noir has that gritty kind of nature. It almost gives a modernised take on what we're doing but it feels retro at the same time. >


A big orange explosion. Nice.



A nice set of Nazi wheels, there.


Better red than dead.

"Some people don't like playing stealth and we want to let the player play the game how they want to play it"


He's also pretty handy on two wheels.

> Interview continued

And we definitely watched a lot of World War II movies, things like The Great Escape, those ones that are fun and big and light-hearted. I became a huge Steve McQueen fanatic because of it – I watched Bullitt probably 15 times, as the car chases are so phenomenal in that movie.

Despite the name, it's not purely a stealth game then…
When you make a game called Saboteur then there's definitely the impression of having some stealth type qualities in the game and some sneaking. It's definitely part of the fantasy that we wanted to deliver but we never really want to force the player to use stealth. Some people don't like playing stealth and we want to let the player play the game how they want to play it. So we always treat is as a tool for the player. So there's sneaking and neck breaking and that kind of stealth kills.

How does the cover system work?
Because Sean is such a key focal point for us in creating this game, we really wanted to make Sean always look cool and look like the action hero. And so we made a cover system that's purely dynamic. Instead of having to hit a button to snap into cover, you actually can just walk up to the wall and he'll snap into cover himself. That way you'll never get Sean looking blankly at a wall because the player didn't hit the right button, which will obviously make it much easier for the gamer.

What about the player's health?
We didn't want a health bar because that's kind of getting old. We wanted to have that cinematic quality; the full-screen blood effect. The game is inspired by the Bruce Willis character in Die Hard. We didn't want health packs because with Sean having so many approaches in the world it would have been impossible to make sure the player always had health. We wanted that quality where the hero could go in and take a serious ass-whooping but then also recover from it.

Publisher: EA
Developer: Pandemic
Heritage: Destroy All Humans!, Mercenaries, The Lord of the Rings: Conquest
Link: www.thesaboteurgame.com
ETA: Summer


You'll spot familiar Paris landmarks around the city.


Saboteur's Lead Designer, Tom French



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DARKSIDERS

Publisher: THQ
Developer: Vigil Games
Heritage: N/A
Link: http://community.darksidersvideogame.com
ETA: Autumn

HANDS ON

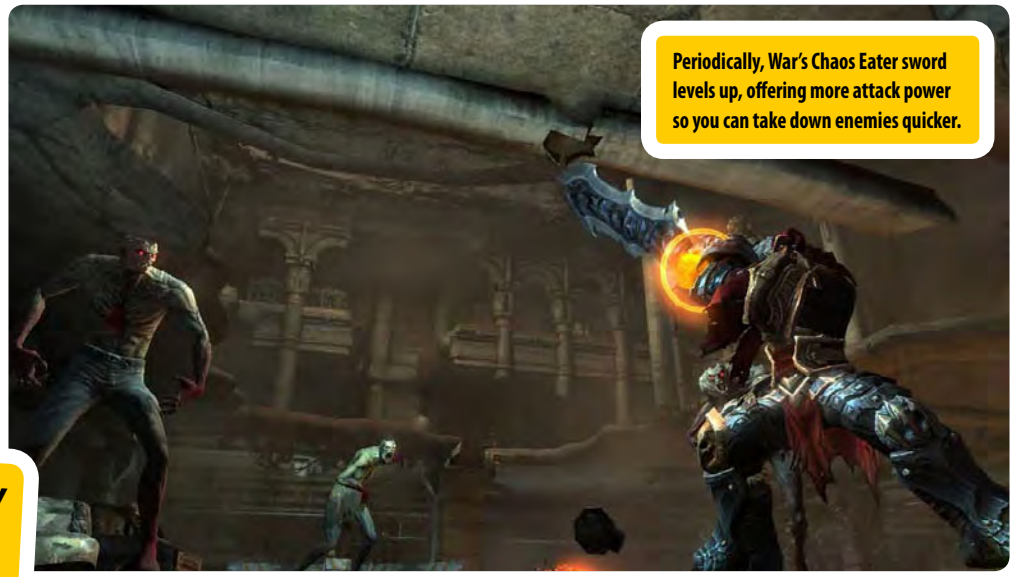
Darksiders: Wrath of War

Come, Armageddon, come

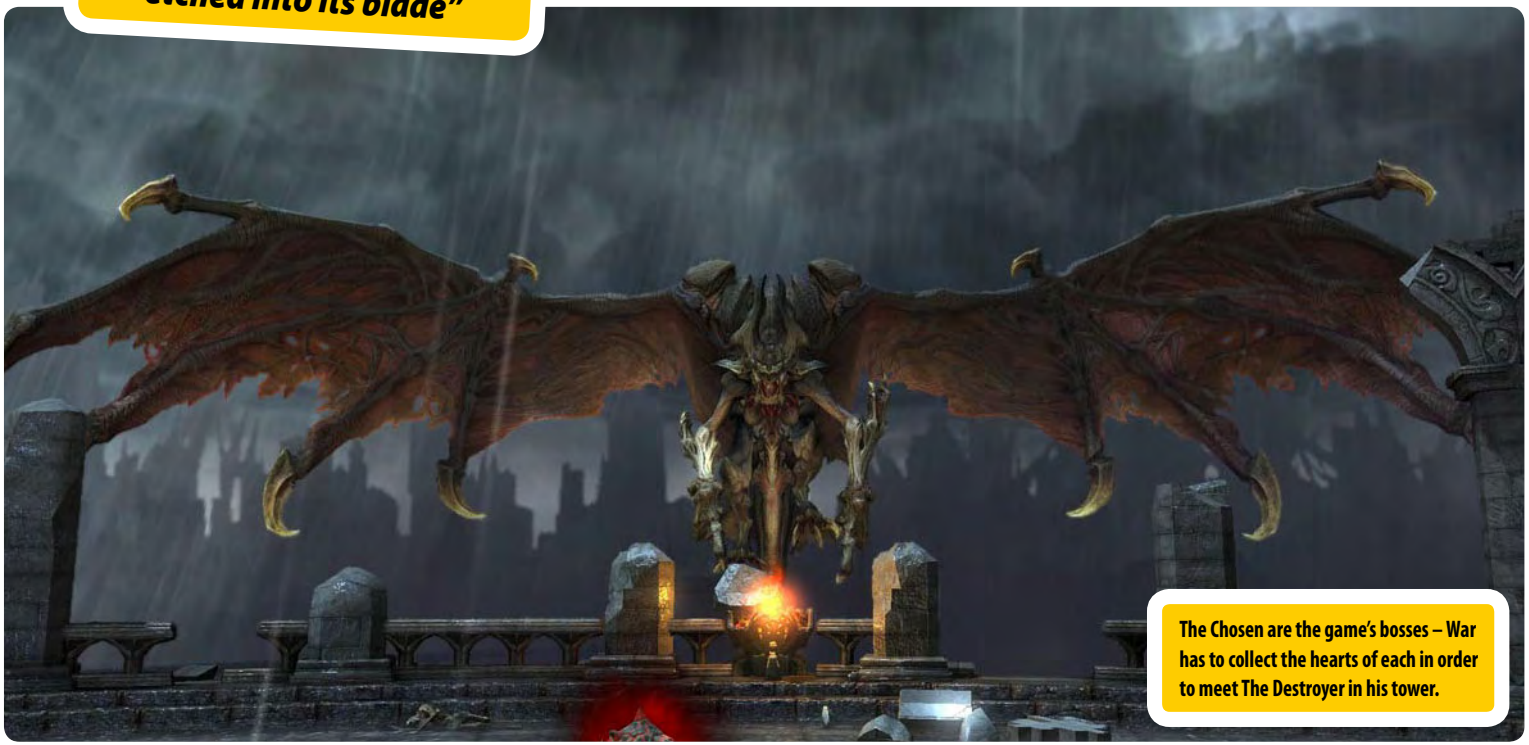
Darksiders is fond of big stuff. The game's protagonist, War, is one of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, sent to Earth to discover who set said world-annihilating event in motion a little earlier than planned. It's fair to say he's a sizeable chap, with shoulders that would make Marcus Fenix feel inadequate. His sword, the brilliantly named Chaos Eater, has screaming human faces etched into its blade. Then you have enemies like the hulking Doomfist, and the demonic Samaél, who you spend most of the game helping – these often dwarf our hero, as do the gigantic statues War has to kick, push and pull around as part of the game's fairly simplistic puzzles. Biggest of all, though, are the gaps between waypoints. Die in Darksiders, and most of the time you've got a fair old way to trek to get back to where you were.

In fairness, THQ admits that the game's balancing isn't quite right, >

"War's sword, the brilliantly named Chaos Eater, has screaming human faces etched into its blade"

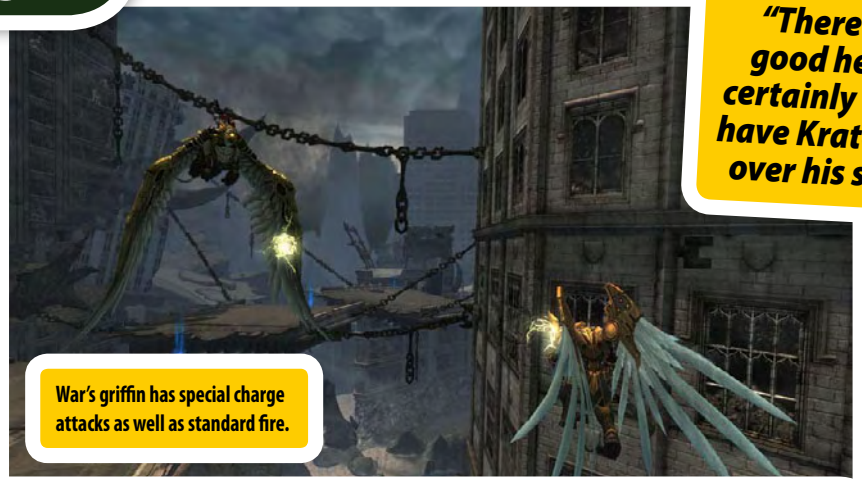


Periodically, War's Chaos Eater sword levels up, offering more attack power so you can take down enemies quicker.



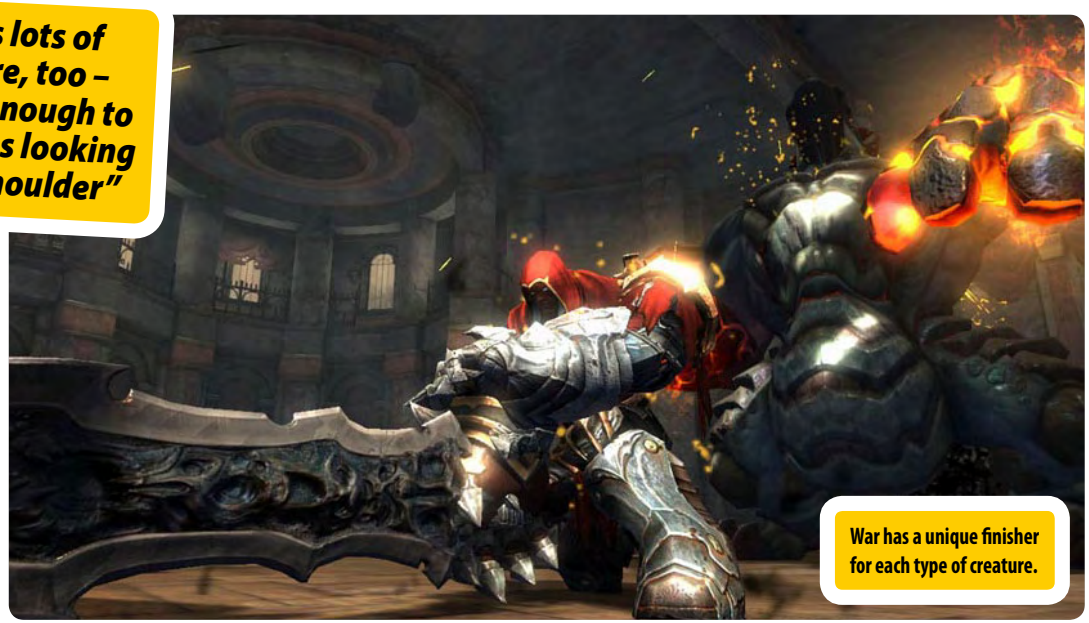
The Chosen are the game's bosses – War has to collect the hearts of each in order to meet The Destroyer in his tower.

DARKSIDERS



War's griffin has special charge attacks as well as standard fire.

"There's lots of good here, too – certainly enough to have Kratos looking over his shoulder"



War has a unique finisher for each type of creature.



The Shadowflight ability – basically, a huge pair of wings made from what looks like black smoke – lets War glide to the ground after a jump.

> Darksiders continued

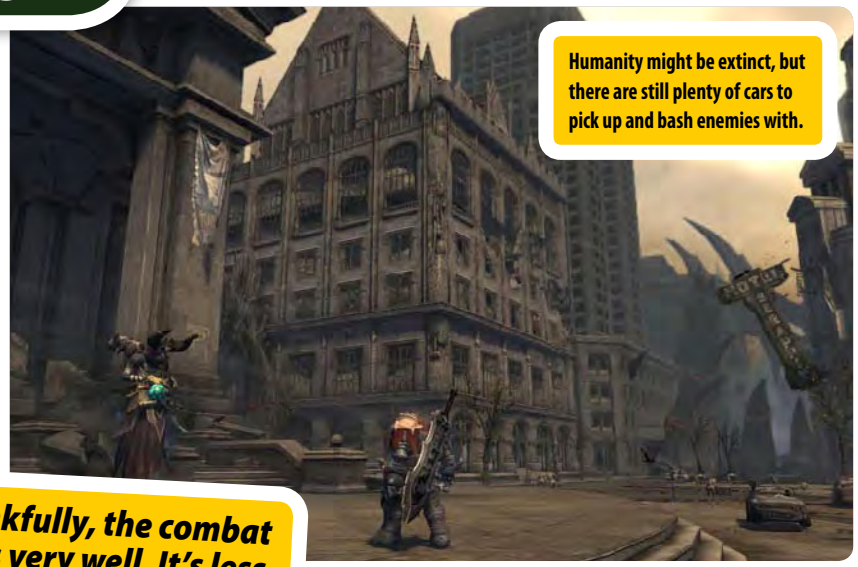
and with plenty of time before its Christmas release, developer Vigil Games has plenty of time to fix things. And there's lots of good here, too – certainly enough to have Kratos looking over his shoulder. Indeed, everyone's favourite Greek baldie appears to be the elephant in the room as far as our demo session goes, with the dev team keen to play up comparisons to Zelda, Metroid – even Panzer Dragoon during a certain on-rails shooting sequence – without once mentioning God of War. Perhaps Vigil wanted to play up the differences, though there are plenty of pretty obvious similarities, particularly in the gruff dialogue exchanges.

Turn to the Darkside

Yet in truth, Darksiders isn't nearly as linear as that comparison might make out. Getting from A to B often requires you to pick up object C to open door D, with the early level we've played requiring the player to backtrack a little in order to progress, whether it be to place a sword in the hands of an expectant statue – a mechanic which appeared once too often in our three-hour playtest – or to hurl a 'bomb growth' at a breakable obstacle. The idea that certain areas are unreachable without certain objects or powers is obviously where the Metroid comparison comes in, though Darksiders' level design rarely feels quite as elegant as Samus' best adventures, with a few head-scratching moments as we tried to figure out where we should be going next. Poor signposting? Maybe not – we'll happily admit we were prepared for something >



DARKSIDERS



Humanity might be extinct, but there are still plenty of cars to pick up and bash enemies with.

"Thankfully, the combat works very well. It's less of a button-masher than it might first appear"



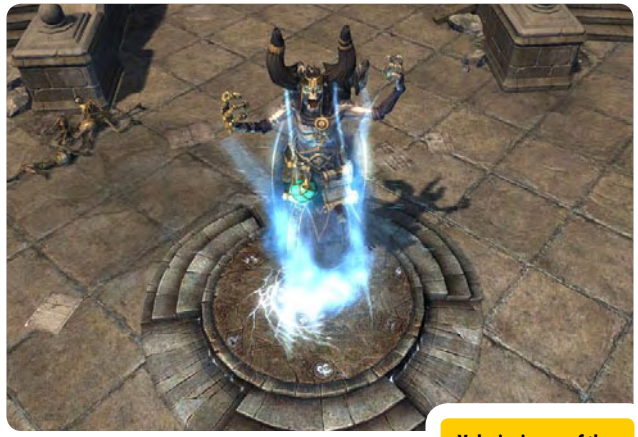
Sticky bomb-growths are the best way to deal with Tiamat.

> Darksiders continued

more straightforward, though it seems we weren't the only ones struggling to work out the best route forward.

Thankfully, the combat works very well. It's less of a button-masher than it might first appear – though you'll be stringing plenty of combos together on the basic enemies with multiple presses of the X button, for larger foes you'll have to be cleverer. Certain foes will explode if you deliver a finishing blow while they're glowing, while others' attacks will slice huge chunks out of your health meter. This can be replenished by collecting green souls from those you've killed, though the majority you'll pick up are blue – these are the game's currency and can be used to buy items or upgrades.

There are a few RPG-lite elements as you pick up additional abilities – including more powerful Chaos attacks and Wrath abilities executed by pressing a bumper and a face button simultaneously – and you can use the D-pad to switch weapons. Your sword can do plenty of damage on its own, though the first new weapon we picked up (the Cross Edge) acts as a kind of violent boomerang, a click of the Right stick putting us in manual-aiming mode as we dragged a cursor over our enemies and sent our spinning projectile slicing through them with a squeeze of the trigger.



Vulgrim is one of the first demons you'll meet – he needs 400 souls before he'll give you an essential item to progress.

While its puzzles and platforming add diversity, both threaten to take the pacing away from the suitably meaty combat, which remains the game's highlight. Indeed, so confident is THQ with Darksiders' battle system, it's done away completely with QTEs for the boss fights, instead relying on the player to counter enemy attacks and time their own to finish them off.

With some terrific enemy design, not to mention the impressive sense of scale, Darksiders certainly has an eye for the spectacular. As long as the finished game doesn't overwhelm the player with busywork, then you might have another reason to fight your way through a post-apocalyptic world when Wrath of War arrives this winter.

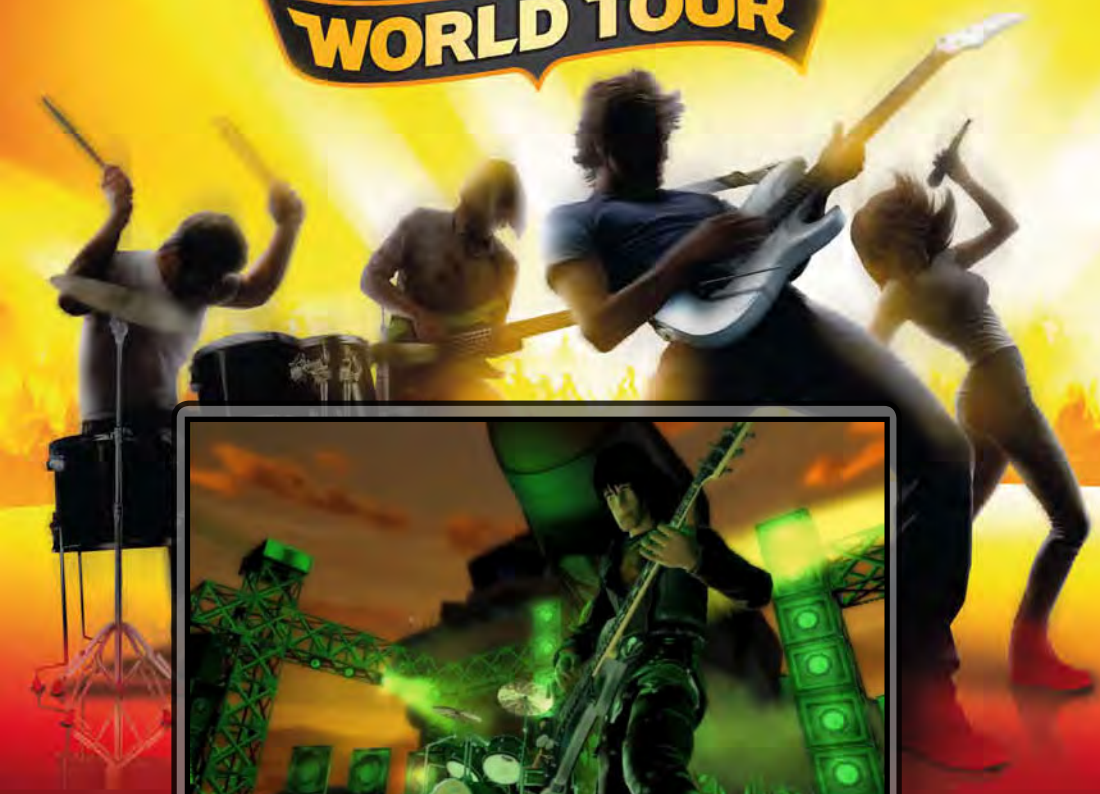
PREVIEW FEEDBACK! Click here to tell us what you think of Darksiders: Wrath of War

360Zine DARKSIDERS

HOW COMPLETE?	FIRST IMPRESSIONS
80%	80%

The End of Days is more fun than it looks

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COMING AUTUMN 2008

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HANDS ON

Fight Night Round 4

It's a knockout

Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Canada
Heritage: Fight Night, FIFA
Link: http://fightnight.easports.com
ETA: 30th June

"The Fight Night series has done a sterling job of simulating the noble art of pugilism"



Lennox Lewis, with his ear intact.



Hatton's fans make the hookers in The Excalibur look classy.

Whatever your opinion of two men punching each other about the head, face and torso with the express intention of causing physical damage, there's no denying that the Fight Night series has done a sterling job of simulating the noble art of pugilism. And while many of EA Sports' other franchises receive annual releases (or more), the boxing games have trickled out at a more respectable pace. In fact, the last instalment coincided with the appearance of the 360, and went a long way towards establishing the graphical level of the next generation console. Frighteningly realistic, it was a highly visceral experience, with boxer's faces crumpling in a macabre fashion to the sound of what appeared to be somebody aggressively chopping vegetables. And though it didn't enjoy the commercial success of FIFA or Madden, a hardcore of a hundred or so loyalists are still to be found >

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 4


The plucky Brit hits back at the Filipino.


Well done. No need to milk it.

"Fight Night Round 4 will mark the first appearance of Mike Tyson in a videogame in nearly a decade"


The greatest of all time? He thinks so.

> Fight Night continued

plugging away on Xbox Live, many with thousands of bouts to their name. There's really been nothing to replace it, and last year's cartoony Facebreaker was little more than insult to serious boxing fans. For them, the wait is almost over, with Round 4 scheduled for the end of June.

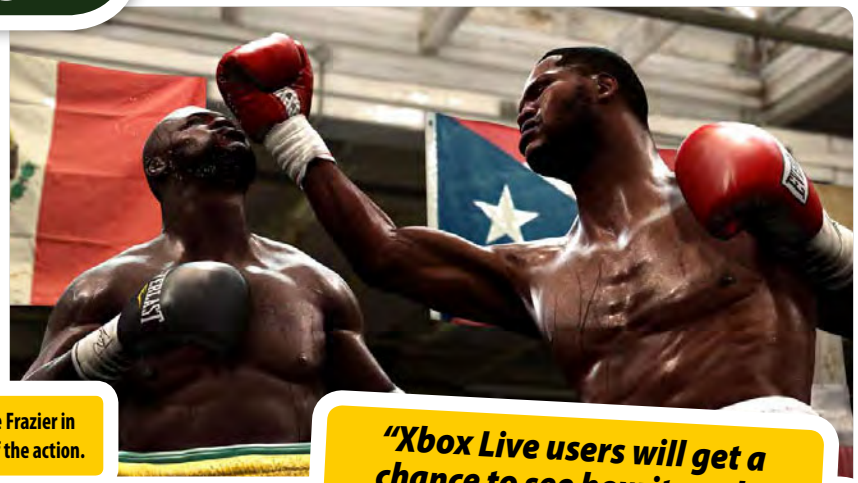
And to use the most banal gaming cliché of all time, the best just got better, with the new game set to knock previous instalments out of the ring with an even more brutal approach, an all-new physics-based gameplay system, and the small matter of one Michael Gerard Tyson. Indisputably the greatest boxer of his generation, Tyson's personal issues have been well documented, not least in a recent eponymous film. Shunned by society, Tyson has also been in the wilderness in gaming terms, and Fight Night Round 4 will mark his first appearance in a videogame in nearly a decade, a massive deal for EA Sports, whose boxing games have had a Tyson-shaped hole in them since their inception.

Iron Mike not only fills that hole, but will also be appearing on the box alongside Muhammad Ali, the implication being that you will finally be able to decide who is the greatest of all time. That said, attempting to replicate actual sporting encounters through the medium of videogames is not without its pitfalls, as EA Sports recently proved when attempting to predict the result of pasty Mancunian Ricky Hatton's mismatch against Manny Pacquia. In the videogame, the Filipino finally floored Hatton in the 11th round following an epic tussle. In reality, he went down like a sack of potatoes in the second after a sickening punch that could have come straight out of the Fight Night canon.

The right result

EA did at least get the result right, with the simulation allegedly conducted in order to demonstrate the game's all-new AI system, cleverly dubbed R.E.A.L., which of course stands for Record, Evaluate, Adapt, Learn. Ostensibly, this means that each boxer's ring strategy is based on that of his >

FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 4



Smokin' Joe Frazier in the thick of the action.



The boxer formerly known as Cassius Clay lands one on the chin.

"Xbox Live users will get a chance to see how it works with a three-round demo available from the end of May"

> Fight Night continued

real-life counterpart, and using so-called adaptive logic, the system triggers fighters to change their tactics based on their success (or otherwise) throughout the course of a bout. So if they're getting an absolute pasting it might be a good idea to defend themselves, and if jabbing their opponent in the gut isn't working, they might try and smack him upside the head. Xbox Live users will get a chance to see how it works with a three-round demo of Hatton versus Pacquia, available from the end of May.

Trading punches

Those two fighters will be joined in the main game by around 45 others from all weight classes, making for the biggest roster ever. We recently had the chance to step into the virtual gloves of Tyson himself, embarking on a rematch with his good friend Lennox Lewis. The first thing to notice is that the graphical details has somehow been ramped up, with an almost pornographic approach to the physical reality of unarmed combat. Muscles flex, flesh ripples, spittle flies, gloves deform and faces buckle. Everything moves dynamically and there appears to be genuine interaction between the combatants. It's no place for the faint-hearted, with some wince-inducing blows breaking through a mist of sweat and blood.

Again, getting up from knockdowns involves an increasingly difficult mini-game, and you can also take charge of the healing process between rounds. Online, you'll be able to create a boxer and enter regional championships with the intention of finally being named online champion of the world.

Control-wise, the Total Control system has been revamped, with the Right analog stick used to throw five or six punch combos, and the lean modifier enabling you to bob and weave for a tactical approach. We managed to throw a few punches in an extremely realistic fashion, although sadly we couldn't find the button that bites off a chunk of Lennox's ear…



When Muhammad Ali connects, you know about it.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK! Click here to tell us what you think of Fight Night Round 4

360Zine — FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 4

HOW COMPLETE?	FIRST IMPRESSIONS
90%	80%

We're looking for a knockdown in the fourth…

BOX CLEVER

We go the distance with Fight Night Round 4 Senior Producer, ***Dean Richards***





Mike Tyson is a fairly controversial character; EA is a family company. Was there ever any conflict?
Obviously this is a boxing game, and he is the most asked-for boxer that has never graced a Fight Night game. For the first time ever you can fight as Mike Tyson. We actually took young Mike Tyson when he was in his prime, before all that stuff happened.

Obviously athletes do things outside of the pitch or the ice or whatever, but we just focus on what he's done in the ring. For his time, what he did was pretty amazing, and it's the first time you actually get the dream match-up between Ali and Tyson to see really who is the greatest of all time. So that's really cool.

What does Tyson bring as a boxer? Is it just sheer physical strength?
Absolutely. We talked to people about Tyson – what is he, what does he do? So to break that down, we actually took Mike Tyson and said what would he be like, what would he look like, what would he fight like, and what would he act like in Fight Night Round 3? And when we actually put him in the game, at the time all the boxers were of a similar proportion. One of the biggest things in boxing is height and reach, and if you imagine in Round 3, he would have to have a similar arm length and similar height to Muhammad Ali to >







Bob and weave to avoid punches.

"Fight Night is truly based on the human skeleton and how you punch and physically move"



Getting up off the canvas involves a new mini-game.

> Interview continued

actually fight in that engine. In reality, he's 5' 11" and Ali's 6' 3", so Ali has a 9-inch reach difference on him. I've played hockey all my life and I've fought a 6' 5" guy, so height and reach definitely matters – I know that from first-hand experience. That was missing in Round 3.

So imagine signing someone like Mike Tyson. You want to fight Muhammad Ali and you didn't even have the core basics of what that kind of strategic element brings to the table. What you've done if you make them all the same proportions is eliminate Ali's style of stick and move.

What else have you improved from Round 3?

There was an invisible barrier that didn't allow you to get to the inside in Fight Night Round 3. You just ran around a cylinder and you couldn't get any closer mainly because everyone had the same proportions. It was a scripted engine and you had to get to the same spot in order to connect. You can imagine what a non-uniform scaling model would do to a game like that – you wouldn't even predict the height. So what we've done is get the height and reach right, and the right scaling proportions.

Can you explain the new physics-based gameplay?

There's no other fighting game that has this, as it's truly based on the human skeleton and how you punch and how you physically move. In Round 3 you couldn't have Mike Tyson look like Mike Tyson and you couldn't have him play like Mike Tyson, and the AI was limited in its decision making, which then makes the replayability feel like it's the same over and over. We actually have added an adaptive AI system that allows us to mimic exactly what the real-life counterparts can do. So imagine Mike Tyson again, but now he comes right at you; he bobs and weaves, throwing big hooks and uppercuts and stuff. He's a total animal, he really is.

EA SPORTS FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 4

Publisher: EA
Developer: EA Canada
Heritage: Fight Night, FIFA
Link: http://fightnight.easports.com
ETA: 30th June



Ricky Hatton takes a jawbreaker from Manny Pacquia.



EA Canada's Dean Richards, the Senior Producer for Fight Night Round 4

HANDS ON

Guitar Hero: Greatest Hits

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Neversoft
Heritage: Guitar Hero World Tour, Tony Hawk series
Link: http://smashhits.guitarhero.com/index_en_US.html
ETA: 26th June

A true 'best of' or a fan-fleecing cash-in?

"This is a decent enough package for those of you want all their past favourite Guitar Hero tracks"



We're quite partial to the new lightning-struck 'You Rock!' logo at the end of each successfully completed song.

A Greatest Hits usually comes along as a band nears the end of its career – often when it's going through a creative lean spell, and releasing just a couple of new tracks which compare badly to the golden oldies they're packaged with as a celebration of the group's musical history to date. Yet with several other Guitar Hero games set for release this year, is now really the time to be looking back on the franchise's past achievements, especially when publisher Activision clearly feels it has plenty of mileage left in the tank?

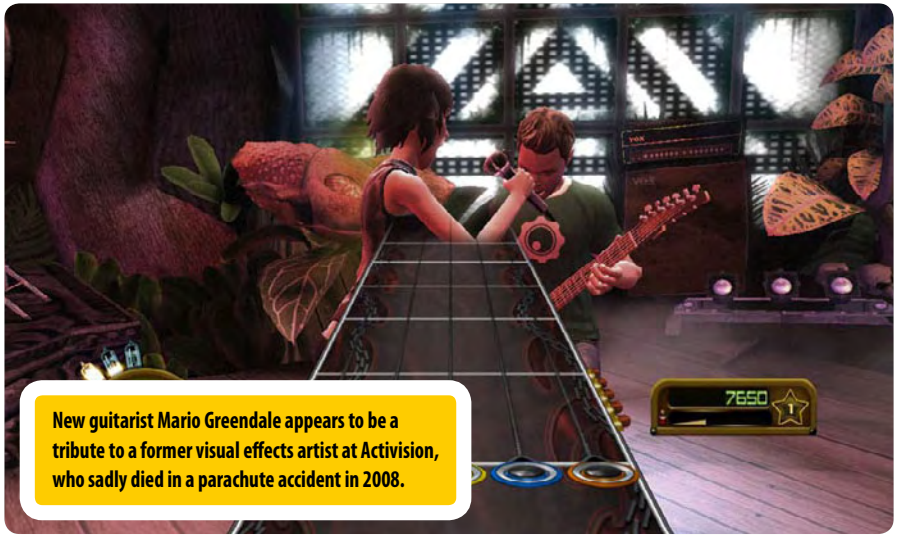


Rocking our world

In truth, the decision is fully understandable, and not just for purely financial considerations. The move to a full band experience with Guitar Hero World Tour essentially made the earlier games feel less relevant without the other instruments to bolster the admittedly solid guitar-playing, particularly of the first two titles before Harmonix jumped ship. Though it could definitely be argued that World Tour players would be better served with the old titles being made available as downloadable content (indeed this could still possibly happen), this is a decent enough package for those of you who want all their past favourite Guitar Hero tracks – assuming you managed to vote for them, that is – on the one disc.

The numbers, then. There are 48 tracks in total on Greatest Hits, with 14 from Guitar Hero, a whopping 19 from Guitar Hero II, just eight from series weak link Legends of Rock, six cheese-tastic hits from Rocks The 80s, and one from Guitar Hero: Aerosmith, oddly enough. Naturally, music taste is entirely subjective, so it'd be remiss of us to suggest this is a definitive list, but it does seem like most of the best >


A giant cow skull and plenty of dust? It must be the Grand Canyon stage!



New guitarist Mario Greendale appears to be a tribute to a former visual effects artist at Activision, who sadly died in a parachute accident in 2008.



We're not sure our band are dressed appropriately for a gig at the polar ice-caps – surely a parka or two would help?



The new plot – told in brief but amusing cartoon cut-scenes – appears to be all about discovering the 'spirit of rock'.

> Guitar Hero: Greatest Hits continued

tracks have been picked from each one – though there are some glaring misses from GHIII. It's also nice to have masters of songs which were previously only available in (admittedly decent) cover version form.

While we'd love to tell you more about the updated note-tracks, we can only go off the eight songs provided in our preview copy – and in some cases, there are a few bizarre changes. Killer Queen definitely feels less satisfying on Medium than before, while Killing in the Name has some ill-fitting sections on drums. Put it on Hard or above and things aren't quite so problematic – one or two tunes still suffer from TMNS (Too Many Notes Syndrome) but in general they follow the real tracks quite well. More importantly, the full band experience makes just about every tune more satisfying to play in multiplayer. While the game's rating forbids Rage Against The Machine's bellowed profanities to appear in lyric form, you'll still feel like yelling them into the mic – just make sure you have understanding neighbours before you add that to your setlist.

Greatest Hits uses the star-unlocking structure of GH: Metallica in Career >

> Guitar Hero: Greatest Hits continued

mode, which will seemingly propel you through to the end a little quicker than before – one song into our second gig we'd already unlocked the third arena. The locations themselves are more outlandish – and thus more interesting – than your average stadium, with arenas themed on the wonders of the world. You start out in the Amazon, which sees the camera panning past giant snapping flytraps towards the stage, while a huge snake descends before the encore (Heart's Barracuda, of course). Then there's the dusty Grand Canyon (encore: Alice In Chain's Them Bones) and the Polar Ice Caps, which heralds the entrance of Dragonforce's uber-tough Through The Fire and Flames, which is as difficult on drums as it is on guitar. On Medium, anyway – we didn't dare attempt the higher difficulty levels.

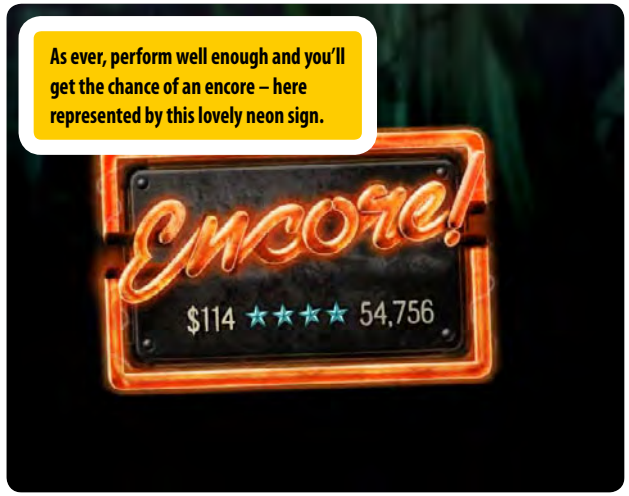


There are plenty of new unlockables including outfits and themes for each scrolling 'highway'.


We do indeed love rock 'n' roll – but with Guitar Hero 5, Band Hero and GH: Van Halen on the way, could this all be rock overkill?

New heroes

Aside from one new guitarist – the comparatively normal-looking Mario Greendale – that's about it as far as improvements go. Otherwise, it's as you were with World Tour. You've got the Rock Star Creator mode with a few new outfits, the Music Studio feature, GHTunes and the Beginner difficulty. The Expert+ mode, introduced in Guitar Hero: Metallica is also present, for those who can complete Through The Fire and Flames with their eyes closed. Whether that's enough to warrant a purchase is another matter – while Greatest Hits is undoubtedly worthwhile for those who fancy the opportunity to play some older tracks in multiplayer, the majority might just want to stick with the DLC for World Tour until Guitar Hero 5 rolls around this autumn.



As ever, perform well enough and you'll get the chance of an encore – here represented by this lovely neon sign.



It seems there won't be any star performers in GH: Greatest Hits, though Activision has promised a few for Guitar Hero 5.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK! Click here to tell us what you think of Guitar Hero: Greatest Hits

360Zine

HOW COMPLETE?	FIRST IMPRESSIONS
90%	80%

Not much new, but worth it if you're a serious GH fan

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Publisher: Capcom
Developer: GRIN
Heritage: Wanted: Weapons of Fate, Terminator Salvation
Link: www.bionic commando.com
ETA: 29th May

Bionic Commando

A swing and a miss

"Capcom has always made hard games, but rarely has it published something so knuckle-gnawingly frustrating"

Clang clang clang clang goes the alert. The legend 'game over' follows immediately afterwards. And to think, we were only trying to get a 'death from above' on that biomech. Bionic Commando is what happens when East meets West, when an open-world environment meets linear game design, and when joypad meets wall. Capcom has always made hard games, but rarely has it published something quite so knuckle-gnawingly frustrating. It's a game where improvisation is hardly ever rewarded, where one missed grapple is usually punished by instant death, and where restarts send you back huge distances, often with unskippable dialogue segments. What's more annoying is that there's a seed of something brilliant here – a flower that has no chance to blossom, thanks to the weeds developer GRIN allows to choke the life out of its good ideas. >

Roll over screen for annotations





Rocks and trees make for more interesting environments than twisted skyscrapers and crumpled girders.

GOING COMMANDO

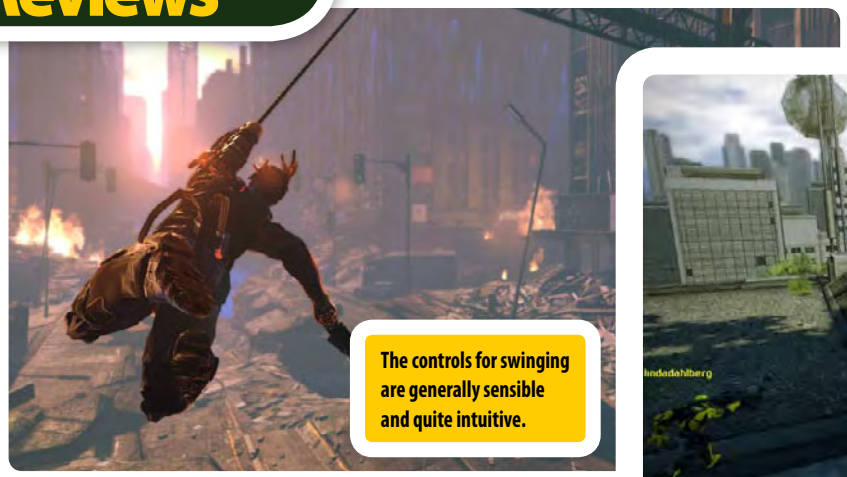
Why Nathan Spencer is all hooked up



Relay race | Look out below! | Swingshot

Relay race

These relays need to be 'hacked' – clear away the enemies from the area and you can latch on to tap into important enemy communications, or to deactivate floating mines. You'll sometimes get hints on how to deal with tougher enemies, too.



The controls for swinging are generally sensible and quite intuitive.



Multiplayer could pick up a cult audience. It's quite silly at times, and takes itself a little less seriously than the main game.



Spencer is voiced well by Mike Patton, but he's not the most likeable protagonist ever.

> Bionic Commando cont.

You play as Nathan Spencer, one of a few biometrically enhanced soldiers who have survived a government-sponsored 'purge' of their powers. Starting the game quite literally armless, he's called back into action when terrorists train a WMD on Ascension City, with the resultant explosion turning the place into a radioactive, apocalyptic wasteland. Spencer has to first locate his arm and then learn how to control it via a tutorial which – in perhaps the first of several baffling design decisions – shows you a host of moves you can't actually do yet. Because Spencer hasn't 'recalled' them.

The left trigger is your best friend – firing out a grappling hook which can attach to certain objects. It's all about swinging around the environment, releasing your grip at just the right time to quickly travel through the city. At first it feels awkward – there's a weird, off-putting pause at the end of a swing which makes the timing more difficult than it needs to be, but once you realise you have to let go a little earlier – indicated by a brief flash of blue reticule – you'll start zipping around the city like Spidey.

At least, that's the theory. In practice, this is often fiddlier than it should be, partly because it's not always obvious which bits of scenery you can attach to, while the move to 3D can make the distance of your grapple difficult to judge. Sometimes you'll be certain you can make a mid-air adjustment, only to plummet to your doom because you were just a few pixels out with your calculations. Spencer can't die from hitting the floor but more often than not, it's deadly radiation or water you'll drop into. Admittedly, you get a couple of seconds to drag yourself up before drowning, but it always seems to be that there's nothing nearby to latch onto – and the camera 'helpfully' likes to point in the opposite direction you want it to at this stage. And then, just >

"You play as Nathan Spencer, one of a few biometrically enhanced soldiers"

FREEZE FRAME

Taking you through the game one step at a time



10 MINUTES
We start in an obvious place by getting to grips with the controls. Well, trying to, at least.



1 HOUR
Still getting to grips with the controls. In fairness, it's more down to the wonky environments.



3 HOURS
Levels are starting to open out, while enemies are getting a little more interesting, too.

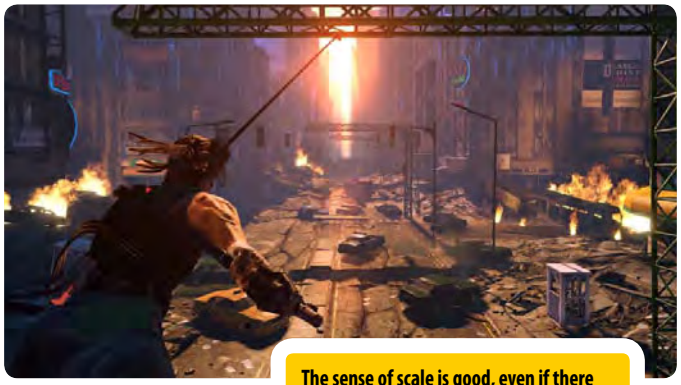


6 HOURS
In general, the more organic the environment, the more enjoyable the level.



10 HOURS
Multiplayer offers deathmatch and capture the flag modes, but they're an enjoyable diversion.



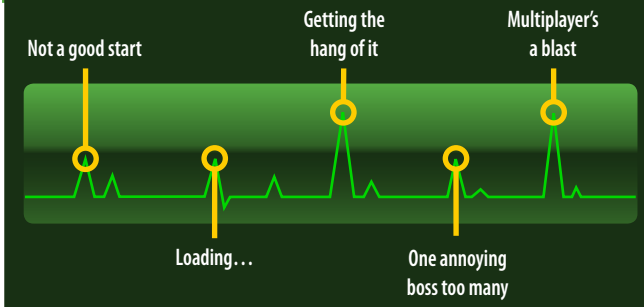

The sense of scale is good, even if there are too many areas which are off-limits – walls of fire and irradiated zones abound.

"Multiplayer is a good laugh, if only because it invariably degenerates into messy, swinging chaos"


The developer likes its big metallic robots.



PULSOMETER *Signs of life*



> Bionic Commando cont.

as you're getting the hang of things, GRIN decides to dip into the Handbook of Annoying Enemies, so you can't spend time attempting to find the best route because several snipers have their sights trained on you.

And then, just before you're about to completely give up, things start perking up. Environments open up more, offering a little more freedom of movement, while the set-pieces improve in scale and variety. Chucking forklift trucks by bashing them up into the air, then jumping and hurling them towards your foes doesn't get old, either – particularly as the exaggerated ragdoll physics and the amusing death cries raise a few guilty titters. That said, it's still a little irritating to get within spitting distance of a waypoint, only to be sent back quite a long way thanks to one tiny error – and when that mistake is down to your grapple locking onto a pipe instead of the enemy you wanted to zip kick, that's when you might well introduce your controller to the nearest wall.

Multiplayer is a good laugh, if only because it invariably degenerates into messy, swingy chaos, while those 8-bit pixellated collectibles (complete with appropriately bombastic fanfare) offer a reason to go back. And the scale of the environments really is impressive, even if it does come at the cost of frequent and excessive loading pauses. More polished than Terminator but not as fun as Wanted, Bionic Commando is perhaps proof that GRIN is spreading itself a little too thinly. It's been a long time coming, but a few more months of tweaking may have just made Nathan Spencer the king of swing.

Chris Schilling

360Zine Verdict

Swinging's fun, but we'll stick with Rearmed, thanks

- Looks nice
- Better in 2D
- Frustrating in parts

69%



Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Eidos
Heritage: Battlestations Midway, Conflict: Denied Ops
Link: www.battlestations.net
OUT NOW

Battlestations: Pacific

"Pacific isn't the fastest game in the world, particularly if you're expecting the blisteringly paced air combat of HAWX"

Naval gazing

In the PR pamphlet accompanying our review copy, Battlestations: Pacific is described as having 'breakneck gameplay'. Now unless you're suffering from brittle-bone syndrome and accidentally fall off the couch while playing, we'd have to say that we can't think of a more inaccurate description of the game. That's not a criticism, just an observation. Pacific isn't the fastest game in the world, particularly if you leap into an aircraft and expect the blisteringly paced air combat of, say, Tom Clancy's HAWX.

Like we say, that's not a bad thing. Though HAWX made things a bit simpler with its idiot-proof targeting and flight assists, most air combat games devolve into a strange, awkward airborne dance. Swoop in on your foe, fire a couple of shots, then accelerate away and turn before finding yourself right on top of an enemy who's done the same in reverse. Fire off a couple more shots and then repeat the whole process until you eventually get a lucky hit or die from turning too sharply and stalling the plane, or getting so bored you don't notice you're about to crash into a mountain, or one of your own ships, or the sea, or a tree. To be honest, we're a bit rubbish at dogfights.

So it's refreshing to see that Pacific's slightly slower pace theoretically lends itself slightly better to airborne combat. Or so you'd think. Because the targeting is so exacting and because you have to compensate for your enemy's flightpath and speed, you'll need to fire into a crosshair positioned just ahead of



After a while, we started to get the hang of the dogfights, though bombing runs and torpedo attacks remain our favourite air missions.



'Slow and low' is the instruction for torpedo runs, though you'll need to make sure you pull up in time.

SHIPS AHOY!

Why it's a sailor's life for us



Boat loads | **Jim-lad'll fix it** | **Silent but deadly**

Boat loads

It goes without saying that the bigger naval craft are the most powerful, but battleships aren't the quickest, and, as any Advance Wars player will tell you, they're at risk from those sneaky subs. So we like the cruisers – plenty of firepower and a bit nippier through the old briny.



Certain aircraft have tail-gunners, so it pays not to get too close unless you want to be shot down.



The air combat is more leisurely-paced than it looks here – you can click the left stick for a speed boost, though.



> Battlestations: Pacific cont.

them. Depending on your angle of approach, that can range from slightly fiddly to damn near impossible. So it's lucky that half the time you'll be asked to destroy slightly slower targets, diving down for torpedo runs on enemy ships, or dropping bombs from above. Here, things feel a little more graceful – diving, dropping your payload and pulling up and away from your target. You have to wait a little while for your payload to reappear should you miss, but you can always swap to another plane in your squadron and try again.

"There's a definite satisfaction to outmanoeuvring your foes on the water"

And that's only one half of the action, with the other taken up with naval battles, as you command cruisers, subs and battleships. Things get more strategic here as you set your team of boats into position, taking control of any ship in your fleet and guiding the others on your tactical map. You can just do it alone, but there's a definite satisfaction to outmanoeuvring your foes on the water – though it's wise not to deviate too much from the original plan. After an amazing flanking manoeuvre, we took out four of the enemy's five boats single-handedly, and still got a rollicking at mission's end for breaking formation. We put that down to our silver medal success for that stage – presumably gold is for sticking to the rule book and taking enemies down quickly. Your positioning is all-important when you're in the water, as it affects which weapons you can fire. Not all your guns are pointing in the same direction after all, so it pays to be mindful of where you can best unleash your flak cannons or artillery fire. Torpedo sinkings are arguably the most satisfying to execute, particularly as it's unwise to get too close to your enemies on the sea – you need to gauge >

FREEZE FRAME

Taking you through the game one step at a time…



10 MINUTES
The attack on Pearl Harbor is a good place to start, but not quite as exciting as it should be.



1 HOUR
Now it's time for your first real taste of naval combat – we love the taste of brine in the morning…



3 HOURS
By now you might be tempted to switch sides – two campaigns is quite generous.



6 HOURS
Trying to get your head around all the options isn't easy – sometimes it's just best to do it yourself.



12 HOURS
Skirmish mode will prepare you well for online battles – with five modes, there's plenty to play for.



The skirmish maps offer plenty of island bases to take.

> Battlestations: Pacific cont.

distance and the speed of the craft you're targeting, and can then hold the right trigger to follow your payload, watching the torpedoes arc through the water towards their destination. When it smacks into an enemy hull – particularly if your own craft is on its last sea-legs – you'll be punching the air in delight.

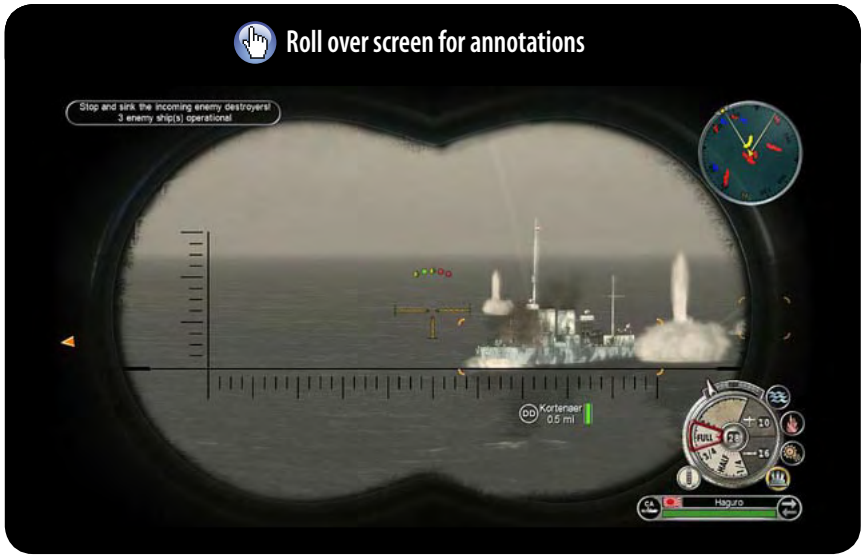
Plenty of action

While taking control of your fleet offers plenty for the action junkies – albeit ones who aren't put off by the relatively slow pace of the combat – Battlestations grows in tactical depth as the game progresses, providing advanced management options for those who like to keep busy tinkering with every fine detail. It's necessary if you want to achieve the gold medals on the later missions, though inessential for the most part if you'd rather simply hop in a boat or a plane and just blast away. That's Battlestations: Pacific all over – it's simple enough to appeal outside its strategic domain, but has plenty to keep the multitaskers sweet, particularly given that there are two fairly substantial campaigns to play through and a Skirmish mode, even before you hit the multiplayer options.

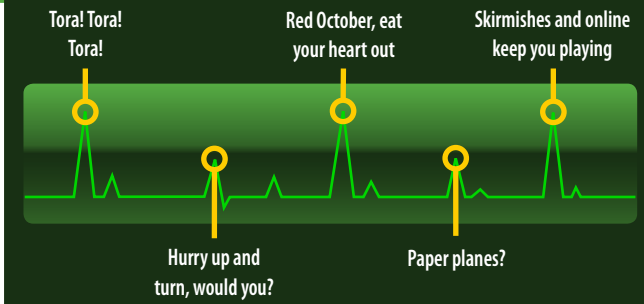
We might not have considered this our cup of tea before playing, but while its slightly rough presentation and occasional gameplay niggles didn't initially endear us, Battlestations: Pacific turned out to be a pleasant surprise.

Chris Schilling

Roll over screen for annotations



PULSOMETER *Signs of life*







360Zine Verdict

Slow but satisfying

- Surprisingly deep…
- …yet still accessible
- Audiovisuals are weak

80%

Xbox Live Arcade Round-Up

Another thrilling game available for download today…

Space Invaders Extreme

Developer: Backbone Entertainment
Publisher: Square-Enix **Price:** 800 MP (~£6.80)

"It's a fairly short game but the long-term appeal lies in the challenge of beating your best scores"

Back in the late Seventies, Space Invaders probably felt pretty amazing to play, but it's not aged nearly as well as, say, Pac-Man. Which was also recently remade on XBLA, in the form of Pac-Man: Championship Edition. That game refitted the original into a brand new shiny post-millennial suit, playing very similarly to its inspiration, but adding enough new stuff to make it feel relevant again.

Guess what? Space Invaders Extreme has gone and pulled the same trick.

Controls are still just left, right and fire. You guide a small craft positioned at the bottom of the screen while waves of invaders move left and right. This time you've no protection – it's just you versus the alien craft, as they shuffle back and forth across the screen while you try to shoot them. Except that's not all they do – some of them move around a little more, others dive down and plenty of them fire back. Occasionally you'll get a flying saucer which flies above the waves of aliens, which can be shot down for bonus points and other things we'll mention shortly. Barring the trippy backdrops and neo-retro HD sprites, it's as you were in 1979.



The bomb shot will take out several enemies in the ensuing explosion.

Stuff that's new

The new stuff, then. One, it's faster. These aliens are nippy little buggers, and it takes a brief period of adjustment to get used to their new-found quickness. The formations of the invaders changes as you destroy them all, while the numerous types offer a different challenge on each stage. They're colour-coded, too, and if you chain kills of four similarly hued enemies in a row, you get a power-up which falls from where the last one was killed. There's a bomb, a broad shot and a shield, which all do what they say on the tin, but the laser is our favourite, cutting a swathe through entire columns of invaders as you hold down the fire button.



You're not punished for failing Bonus Time, but you won't get the reward of Fever Time either.

Hit another group of four and a brightly coloured flying saucer zips across the screen. Shoot that and it's Bonus Time, whisking you away to another arena where you have a short timed challenge to complete – shooting a certain number of aliens or destroying enemies of a particular type, for example. Complete that, and then it's Fever Time, which is a brief God mode – you're more powerful than ever and each kill in this state racks up the points pretty quickly.

It's a fairly short game but the long-term appeal lies in the challenge of beating your best scores, or those of your friends, and this XBLA version is the first to have a four-player co-operative mode, while the more competitive can try a versus match. It's not quite as good as the DS version but then at just 800 points it's a lot cheaper. At less than seven quid, it's an absolute bargain.

- Fantastic audiovisuals
- Thrilling twitch-gaming
- Better with the DS paddle controller

A classic reborn **89%**

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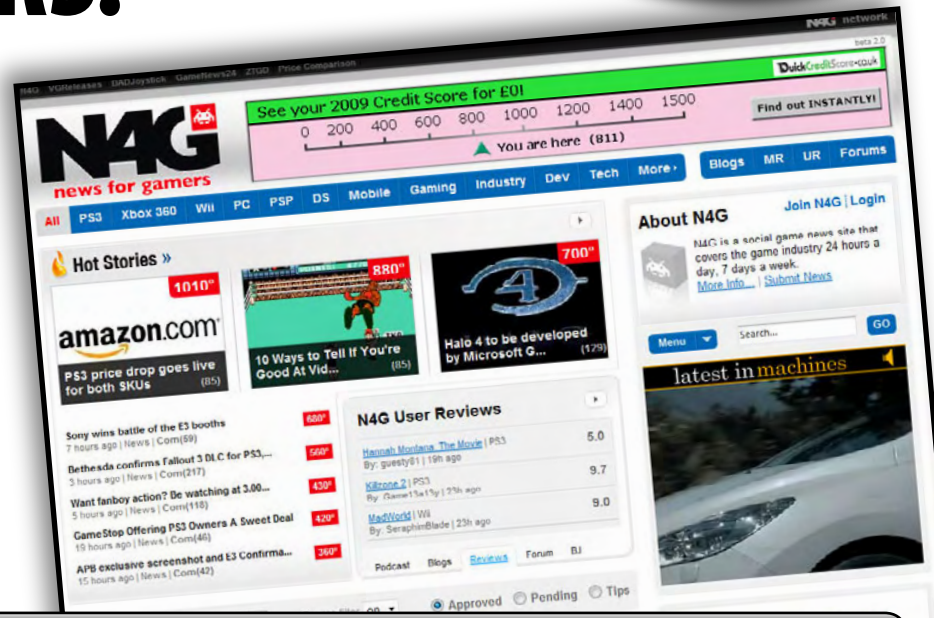
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