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Issue 16 | July 2008

P3zine

Free Magazine For PlayStation 3 Gamers. *Read it, Print it, Send it to your mates...*

ENEMY TERRITORY QUAKE WARS

MASSIVE REVIEW INSIDE... 

EXCLUSIVE

**FALLOUT 3
INTERVIEW**
Bethesda reveals
the future of RPG



REVIEW



**METAL GEAR SOLID 4:
GUNS OF THE PATRIOTS**
Solid Snake is back!

REVIEW

HAZE

Get ready to lock and load!



PREVIEWED!



The Bourne Conspiracy 

PREVIEWED!



Fallout 3 

PREVIEWED!



Resistance 2 



CONTROL →





NAVIGATE →

|02

Welcome to P3Zine



On the back of GTA IV last time around it's another bumper month for PlayStation 3. Metal Gear Solid 4, Enemy Territory: Quake Wars, Haze and Buzz! Quiz TV are all top quality titles and all available as you read this. Suffice to say we have full reviews of each and every one of them.

In addition the issue includes a slew of previews showcasing a stack of not-to-be-missed new titles... anyone for Resistance 2, Killzone 2, Fallout 3 or The Bourne Conspiracy? Thought as much!

Enjoy the issue, and remember to send us your feedback on the games that you're playing...

Dan Hutchinson, Editor
p3zine@gamerzines.com

MAGAZINE FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of the magazine

MEET THE TEAM

There's nowt they don't know about PlayStation



Steve Hill
Still in a Haze



Ian Morris
Falling for Fallout



Chris Schilling
Quaking it

DON'T MISS!

This month's highlights...

The latest & greatest titles on PS3



Enemy Territory: Quake Wars

Massive Review



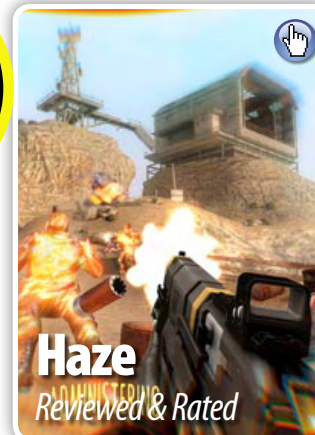
Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of the Patriots

The PlayStation 3 exclusive we've all been waiting for



The Bourne Conspiracy

Hands-On Preview



Haze

Reviewed & Rated

QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away

Killzone 2
Sonic Unleashed
Mirror's Edge
Skate 2
Motorstorm:
Pacific Rift
SingStar Volume 2
Darksiders
SOCOM: Confrontation

The Bourne Conspiracy
Resistance 2
Fallout 3
Enemy Territory:
Quake Wars
Metal Gear Solid 4:
Guns of the Patriots
Haze
Buzz! Quiz TV

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CONTROL →



KILLZONE 2

Publisher: SCEE

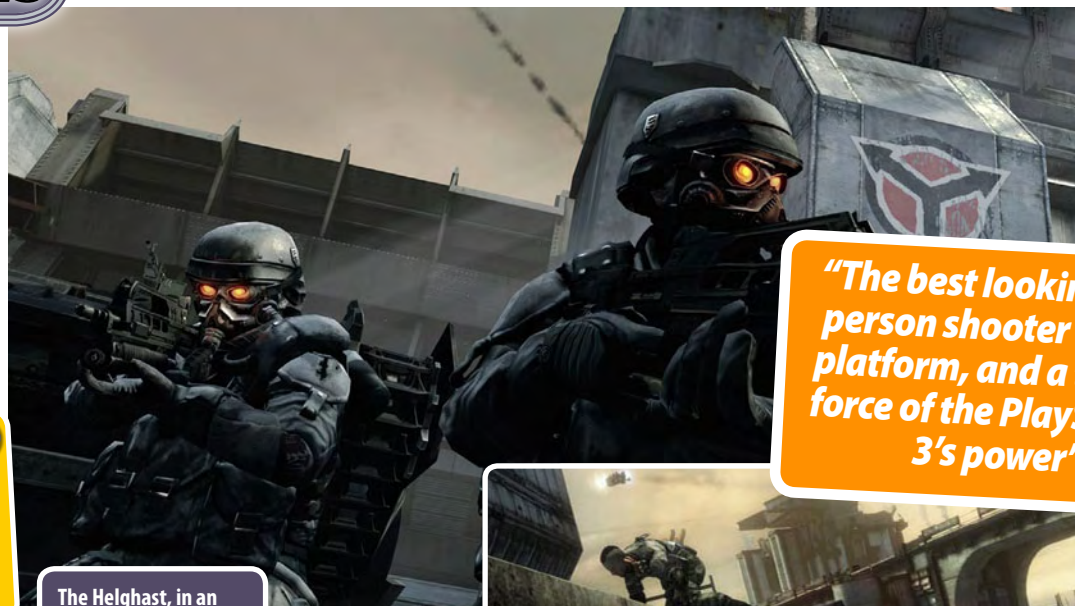
Developer: Guerrilla Games

Heritage: Killzone

Link: www.killzone.com

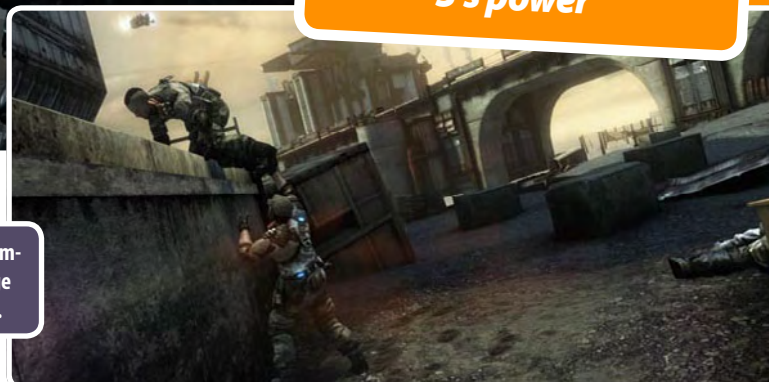
ETA: February 2009

**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to
tell us what
you think of
Killzone 2



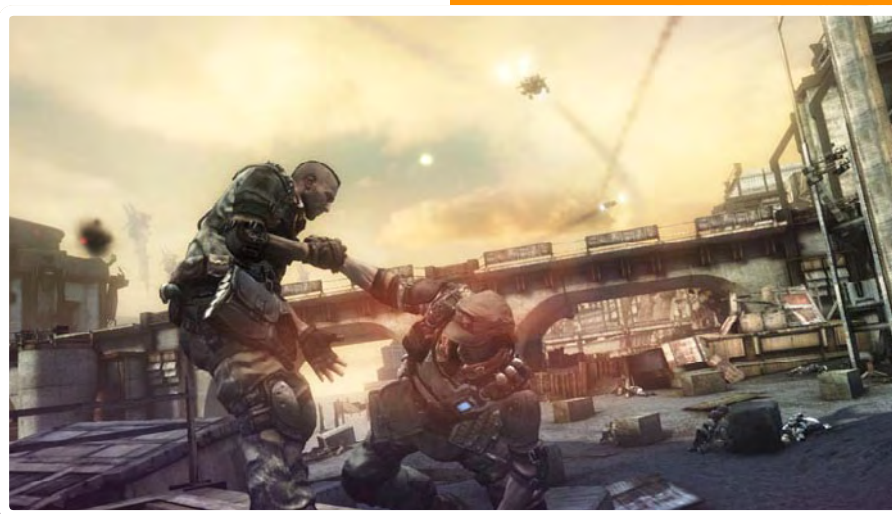
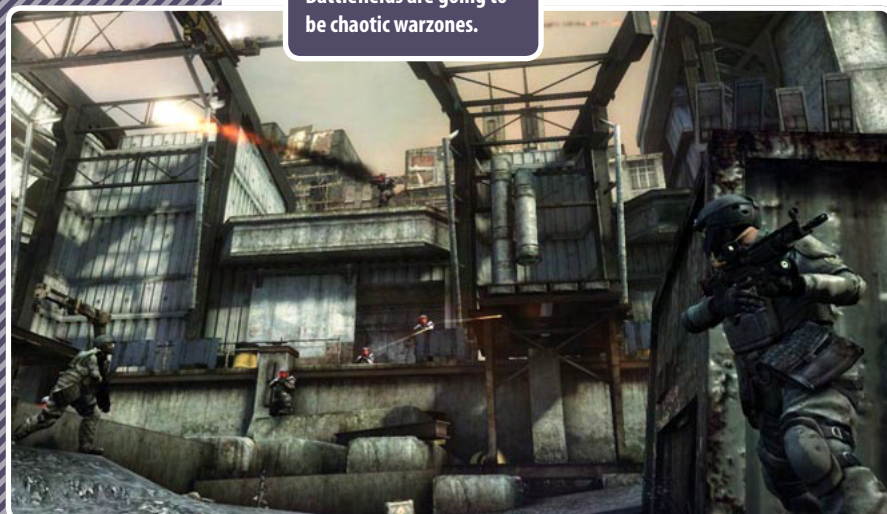
The Helghast, in an even higher resolution than before.

"The best looking first-person shooter on any platform, and a tour de force of the PlayStation 3's power"



Assisting your team-mates plays a large part in the action.

Battlefields are going to be chaotic warzones.



Killzone 2

FIRST
LOOK

The Helghast suddenly get further away...

What is it?

To be perfectly honest, if you really need to ask that question then you don't deserve to own a PS3. Killzone 2 is the game that does what they said couldn't be done – the best looking first-person shooter on any platform, and a tour de force of the PlayStation 3's power.

So, what's new?

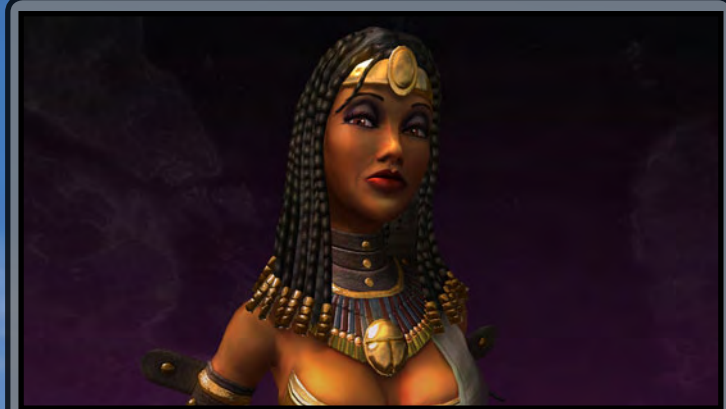
At a recent Gamers' Day event in London, Sony unveiled a new trailer for Killzone 2, which was easily the highlight of the show. Chock full of new footage, the trailer made the game look every bit as astounding as we hoped it was going to be, with the same level visceral carnage, brutal in-your-face action and intriguing narrative that we secretly wished for – check the stunning screens on this page to see exactly what we mean.

Anything else to declare?

But for every Ying there has to be a Yang, and herein lies the problem. Whereas Killzone 2 was originally meant to be shipping at the end of this year, competition from other first-party Sony game (the also very impressive-looking Resistance 2) has forced Sony to postpone Killzone's release to early 2009. Hopefully, this will give Guerrilla even more time to fully polish the game, and we'll have a shiny, spanking new shooter to ring in the new year. We'll have a full preview of Killzone 2 for you very soon.

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▶ PLAYBACK OPTIONS:

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13 June 2008



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Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sonic Team
Heritage: Sonic the Hedgehog
Link: www.sega.com/sonicunleashed
ETA: Q4 2008

Grinding plays a big part in Sonic Unleashed, and you can bet it'll be a lot better than in Sonic the Hedgehog...



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

The environments are
all based on real world
locations. Loosely based.

The blend of 2D gameplay
and 3D graphics has us
excited already.



*"Although, we've been
promised a return to
Sonic's roots before, this
actually looks like it
could do the job"*

Sonic Unleashed

Speeding onto a PS3 near you

**FIRST
LOOK**

What is it?

Try as we might, we can never stay mad at Sonic for ever, and the prospect of this is making us giddy indeed. A quasi-3D platformer – with a mix of 2D and 3D sections – this could be the game that more than makes up for the gaming atrocity that was Sonic the Hedgehog.

So, what's new?

It's a pretty standard Sonic tale to be honest: Dr Robotnik's come up with a diabolical plan to rule the world (obviously), that begins with him actually breaking it into pieces. In the process, the dozy Doctor actually manages to awaken a mysterious slumbering beast that puts his plans into peril. As ever, there's only one person (or hedgehog, in the case) who can save the world from the beast, and that's Sonic – by collecting Chaos emeralds, which'll somehow glue the world back together...

Anything else to declare?

Sonic the Hedgehog on the PS3 was a major blot on the gaming landscape, but that doesn't mean things can't change for the better. Although we've been promised a return to Sonic's roots before, this actually looks like it could do the job, delivering the same sense of speed, agility, and split-second reactions the first games were famous for. With the power of the PS3 behind the environments, it's looking special, too – this could really be the Sonic game we've all been waiting for. We'll keep our fingers crossed!



INCOMING

Six of the best coming to a PlayStation 3 near you...



Mirror's Edge

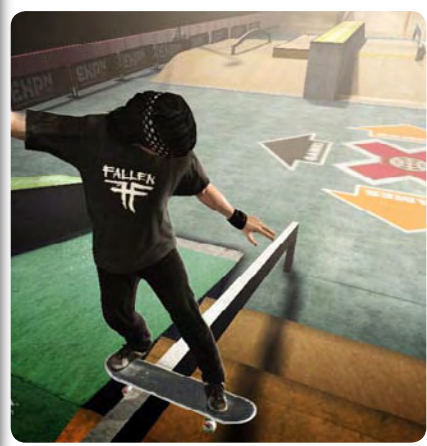
Publisher: EA | **ETA:** 2008

A game that sets to redefine the boundaries like no other, Mirror's Edge follows the story of Faith, a runner in a dystopian city, as she tries to free her sister from an evil government. Though the story's the game's main weakpoint, the free-running parkour action looks great.

Skate 2

Publisher: EA | **ETA:** 2008

The first Skate game was such a massive success that you knew a sequel was always going to be in the pipeline. And here it is. Announced in conjunction with the news that Skate would also be making its way to Wii, you can look forward to a whole new way of boarding it up later this year.



Motorstorm: Pacific Rift

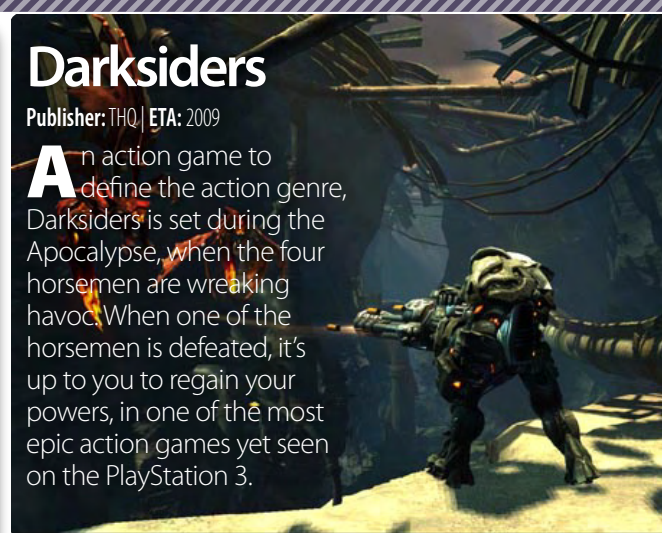
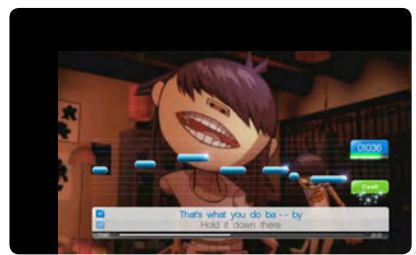
Publisher: SCEE | **ETA:** Winter 2008

Another promising sequel is making its way to the PS3 later this year in the form of Motostorm 2 – recently christened Motorstorm Pacific Rift. Look for four-player split-screen to feature in this one, alongside a beautiful island paradise. We enjoyed the first game enough to be mildly excited about this sequel. We'll bring a preview to you soon.

SingStar Volume 2

Publisher: SCEE | **ETA:** 4th July

This could easily be the greatest quiz game ever. Making its debut on PS3, Buzz! Quiz TV is packing an incredible feature set, including the ability to make your own quizzes, then host them online for others to download. It's another PS3 game that's truly going to be fun for all the family.



Darksiders

Publisher: THQ | **ETA:** 2009

An action game to define the action genre, Darksiders is set during the Apocalypse, when the four horsemen are wreaking havoc. When one of the horsemen is defeated, it's up to you to regain your powers, in one of the most epic action games yet seen on the PlayStation 3.

SOCOM: Confrontation

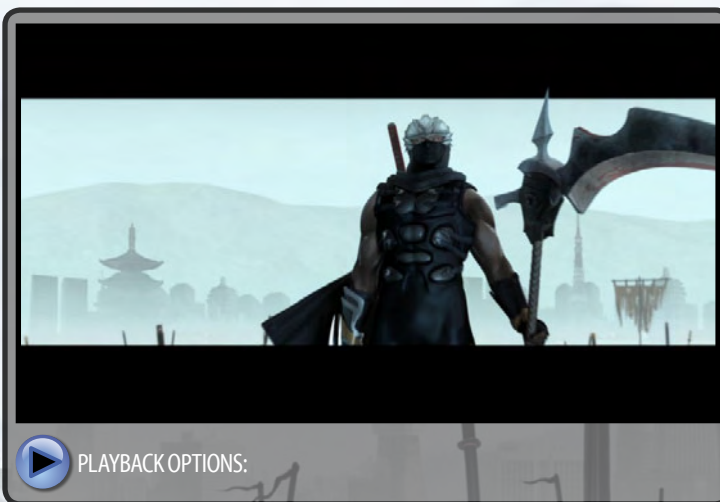
Publisher: SCEE | **ETA:** September

Delivering 32-player, squad-based tactical action via a downloadable game, we've got our fingers crossed that this could be the biggest thing to hit the PSN yet. It looks completely gorgeous, and with a variety of fan favourite maps (like Crossroads) chucked in for good measure, this should be great.



IN THE PIPELINE	SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
	BATTLEFIELD: BAD COMPANY 27th June GUITAR HERO AEROSMITH June	FALLOUT 3 Autumn LITTLE BIG PLANET October	RESISTANCE 2 November SMACKDOWN 2009 November	KILLZONE 2 February 2009 GRAN TURISMO 5 2009

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Jump in.

XBOX 360 LIVE



PREVIEW

The Bourne Conspiracy

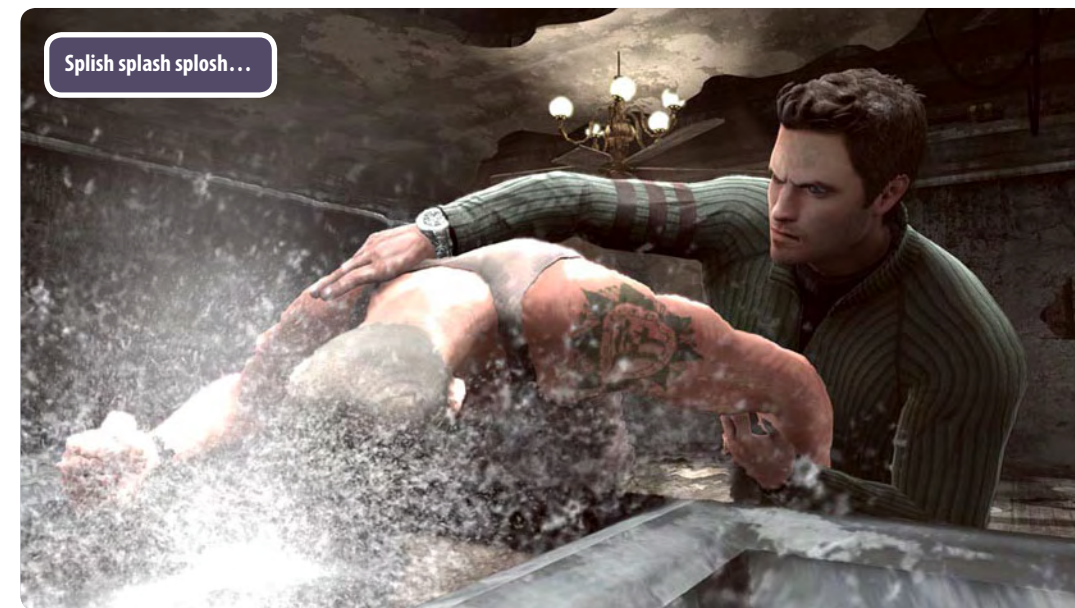
Spy hard

In the history of movie-to-game conversions, there have been few major successes. Almost unanimously viewed as a tacky cash-in, we can only remember one film-to-game conversion being any good, and that's Batman on the Amiga 500. Oh, and Lego Star Wars doesn't count.

It's lucky then, that The Bourne Conspiracy isn't actually based on the film – rather, it's an amalgam of plot that's one-part book, one-part film, and one-part original game. Though you'll be taking in various locales that

will be familiar if you've seen the films, a good portion of the game is based either on locations from the book, or are entirely original. We've also been promised a fair bit of the game will be filling in plot gaps, as according to the press release: "Only by playing Robert Ludlum's The Bourne Conspiracy will players discover Bourne's true identity and experience the very moment he became a malfunctioning weapon."

For those of you who've never seen the films, we'll fill in the plot holes now. Jason Bourne is like the

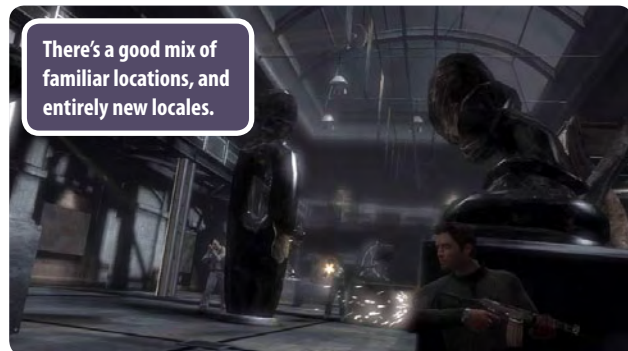


Splash splash splash...

bastard love child of James Bond and Jack Bauer – an amnesiac (who isn't, these days?) who's trying to rediscover his haunted past, while being hunted by CIA assassins, who pursue him all over the globe.

But even if you're not familiar with the story, you'll still be able to follow what's going on in The Bourne Conspiracy, as the action eases you into everything. Going for a real

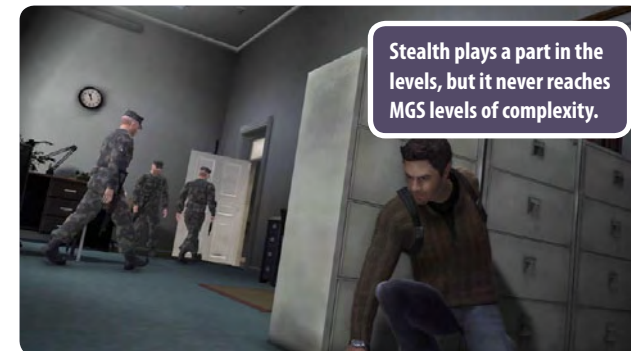
"A good portion of the game is based either on locations from the book, or are entirely original"



There's a good mix of familiar locations, and entirely new locales.



That's a nice hat...



Stealth plays a part in the levels, but it never reaches MGS levels of complexity.



> The Bourne Conspiracy continued

Hollywood feel, the gameplay in The Bourne Conspiracy is as cinematic as anything we've ever played, and packed full of moments that'll make your jaw drop.

The first section we played was set at the start of the first movie, with Jason Bourne finding himself in the US Embassy in Zurich. Of course, as you're a wanted man, the embassy quickly realise who you are and order your arrest, along with a complete lockdown of the building. However, no sooner have you started to make your escape than you're confronted by an enemy soldier, who's intent on making the arrest himself.

As soon as this happens, the game triggers a combat section – you'll lose control of your character for a second while the camera changes position, and the two begin to square off. The combat, as you would imagine, looks and feels incredibly smooth, though it is somewhat limited in its execution.

The controls are simple – Square performs a weak punch, Triangle is for a stronger one, and Cross blocks. Of course, it's possible to perform quick combos of moves, knocking your opponent off-balance, but for the most part, the hand-to-hand combat is a disappointing exercise in button-mashing until your opponent

"The gameplay is as cinematic as anything we've ever played"

Terrorists, eh. Always with the Balaclava.



Paris has never looked better.



They'd better be careful with all that broken glass around – someone's going to get hurt.



> The Bourne Conspiracy continued

stops moving. There seemed to be very little skill involved in the build we played – in fact, we managed to win the majority of fights by just hammering Square.

However, things start to pick up as soon as you notice the little meter in the bottom-right of your screen. Acting as a measure of your Adrenaline, this little gauge effectively counts down the time until you can do something cool, and unleash a Takedown attack. These are easily the highlight of The Bourne Conspiracy's combat – by tapping Circle, Jason Bourne will use a random piece of the scenery you're near, and use it to attack the enemy in spectacular fashion.

Whether it's ramming a fire hydrant into your enemies throat, driving them face-first into a radiator,

throwing them through a table, or stuffing their head down a toilet, these moves make the combat a lot more interesting and, brilliantly, they look just as cool as they sound. We'd actually go as far as saying The Bourne Conspiracy has some of the best animation we've ever seen in a game – and the sheer number of items you can use as part of your takedown moves is dizzying.

However, after being so very impressed by the takedowns, as we turned and headed up the stairs, our game was cut short as a quick-

time event triggered, showing a steel fence coming down from the ceiling. As we failed to press the correct button in time, we were left trapped in the agency, and the level restarted. There was no warning this cutscene was about to happen. All that happened was you were suddenly taken out of the game and expected to press a button within around four seconds. As failing a QTE also triggered the restart of the level (or at least, the load of your last checkpoint), this left us wondering if the final game will be a trial-and-

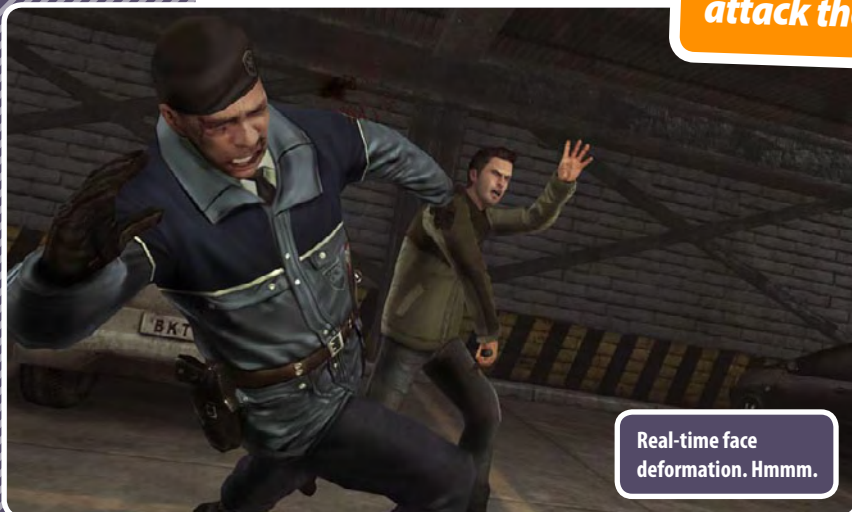
error experience, requiring you to just learn where the QTE events are.

The second level we played was set in an original scenario – an assassination attempt at an airport – when Jason Bourne had his memory. Much more of a run-and-gun scenario, and this scene was, thankfully, almost completely free of QTE events. Instead, it provided Gears of War-style over-the-shoulder shooting, first on the lines of an underground, and secondly inside an aeroplane. This section was a lot, lot better – the gunplay was every



"By tapping Circle, Bourne will use a random piece of the scenery to attack the enemy"

Brilliantly, the scenery's deformable too, Stranglehold-style.



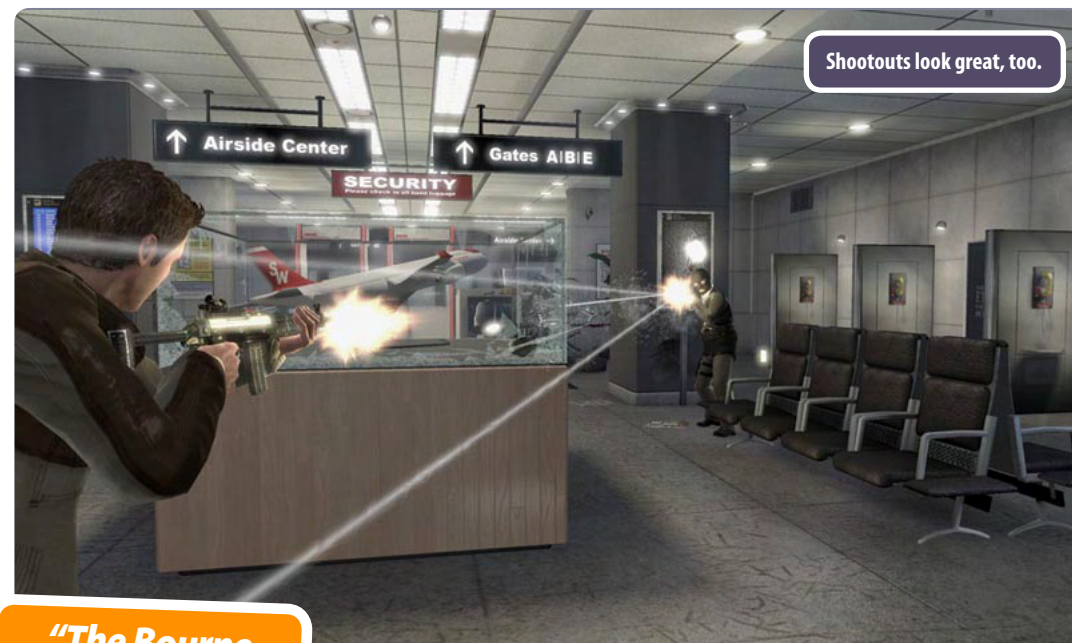
> The Bourne Conspiracy continued

bit as smooth as the combat, the graphics looked gorgeous and the cinematic feel was really ramped up.

The same was true for the final section we played, a Paris car-chase scene, which gave the illusion of granting you greater freedom than it really does. The level starts out by telling you to avoid the police – which you do – till you discover there's a roadblock up ahead. Then, instead of deciding to drive around, you're told to simply drive in circles for a bit, until the road block's clear. But although we should have been disappointed with the linearity of the gameplay, we weren't – everything was so engaging that our mind was kept off the linearity, purely because

of the sheer amount of action on-screen. The highlight came when a car came directly towards us, and we had to make a decision to swerve left or right (this was all in-game, and not a QTE or cutscene). Choosing to swerve left, we smashed through the glass front of a coffee shop, before continuing on our way. Genius.

From what we played, The Bourne Conspiracy is a game that could go one way or the other. Though its cinematic flair, amazing animation, and adrenaline-pumping sequences may impress, the linearity and trial and error approach to its level design don't. But we don't have long to wait, as the game's out on June 27th. Look for the review next month. ●

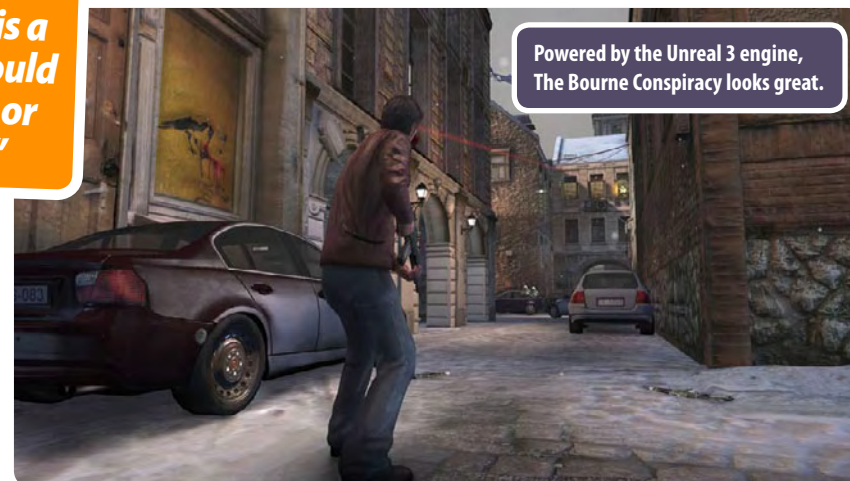


Shootouts look great, too.

"The Bourne Conspiracy is a game that could go one way or the other"



Hand to hand combat is superbly animated, if a little shallow.



Powered by the Unreal 3 engine, The Bourne Conspiracy looks great.



PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



FIRST IMPRESSIONS



Could be the first decent movie conversion since Batman



"POWERED BY ADRENALINE!"



THE OFFICIAL VIDEOGAME

SBK08

SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



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CONTROL →



RESISTANCE 2

Publisher: SCEE

Developer:

Insomniac Games

Heritage: Resistance,

Ratchet & Clank

Link: www.resistance

fallofman.com

ETA: November

PREVIEW

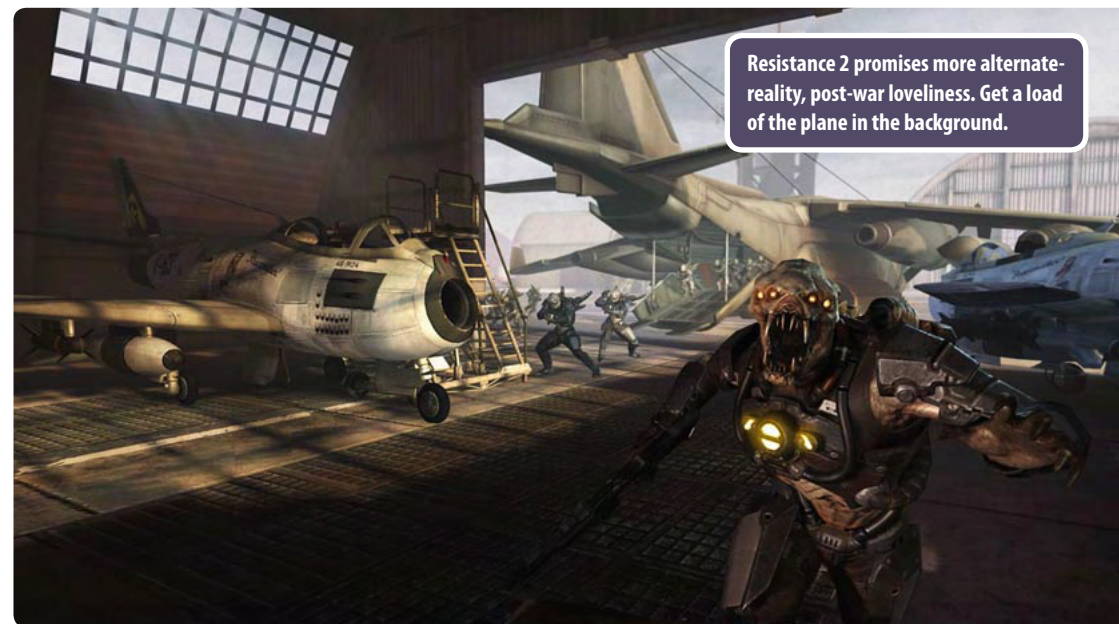
Resistance 2

Rise and fall

Okay, we'll put our hands up and admit it. Out of every PS3 launch title, and every PS3 game that's come so far, Resistance has been the game that's swallowed most of our time. With a co-op mode to die for, a great online community – which was regularly bolstered by new map packs – and a cool little achievement-style system, Resistance was easily the

best PS3 launch title – something further reinforced by its incredibly longevity. And now, Insomniac have announced a sequel.

Promising to be bigger, better and badder than the original game in every way, Resistance 2 is Insomniac's first third-generation PS3 game, and it's obvious the devs are just starting to get the most out of the hardware. Just looking at



Resistance 2 promises more alternate-reality, post-war loveliness. Get a load of the plane in the background.

**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to
tell us what
you think of
Resistance 2



Everything's so much more detailed – it really does look great. Hopefully, it'll play just as well.

**"Resistance 2
promises to be bigger,
better and badder
than the original"**

the screenshots surrounding this page illustrates how everything in Resistance 2 is on a much greater scale – the whole world's more detailed, the enemies are far greater in numbers, and the bosses are larger than ever before.

This theory of making everything bigger and better doesn't just stop with the graphics though, as perhaps the most impressive thing in Resistance comes with its online multiplayer. Supporting up to 60 players (yes, you read that right – 60), >



Depth of field effects just make Resistance 2 look even lovelier.

RESISTANCE 2

> Resistance 2 continued

quite how this is going to work, we're not sure, but the early word is these contests will be more squad-based than all-out warfare, focusing on concentrated combat between groups of players, thereby making the whole thing more manageable.

Co-op support

However, although it's not quite as impressive, the thing we're most excited about in Resistance 2 is the revamped co-op mode. With a completely separate story to the single-player campaign, Resistance's co-op supports up to eight players online, with a three-class system ensuring your team sticks together, as different people are needed for different things. Whether offline, split-screen or a mix of off and online split-screen co-op is included remains to be seen, but we're keeping our fingers firmly crossed.

Of course, having a massive online mode, and a great community is no good if you've got nothing to support it, so to this end, Insomniac are going to be launching a re-designed MyResistance.net, allowing players to track stats, network, and make use of an 'open invite system', whatever that means.

However, although we know loads about the multiplayer, what's being kept closely shrouded is the single-player campaign. All that's been revealed so far is that, once

again, you'll be playing as Nathan Hale, in an alternate reality 1953 America, where you're struggling to come to terms with, and possibly overcome, the Chimera virus.

A trailer recently released on the PlayStation store starts with Nathan forebodingly saying: "I have 19 hours left to live." We certainly hope that's not true. A series that's gaining as much momentum as Resistance, with the pedigree of Insomniac behind it deserves to keep going, and not having a complete trilogy would be criminal. After having seen Resistance 2, we now understand why Sony decided to delay Killzone 2. With a game of this quality, Resistance could well have eclipsed Killzone 2. And if the multiplayer's as good as it sounds, that may still end up being the case. ●

The environments look a lot more diverse in Resistance 2.



It seems these won't just be bosses either. These huge, mechanised units may well be enemies you'll have to take down.

"The thing we're most excited about in Resistance 2 is the revamped co-op mode"



We're told this screen's from Chicago, although we couldn't tell.



As always, the Chimera aren't exactly the most handsome of creatures.

P3Zine
RESISTANCE 2

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE



FIRST IMPRESSIONS



Resistance just got a whole lot better

grand theft auto **IV**



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Publisher: Bethesda
Developer: Bethesda
Heritage: Oblivion,
Star Trek: Legacy
Link: <http://fallout.bethsoft.com>
ETA: Autumn

Fallout 3

The massive RPG series is heading to your PS3

There are few games around with as passionate a fan base as Fallout. For better or for worse, since the first two games revolutionised role-playing back in the late 1990s, the name Fallout has been synonymous with RPGs. Much in the same way – thanks to its incredibly popular Elder Scrolls series – the guys over at Bethesda have also become known for their huge, expansive RPGs, with intricate attention to detail, and a sense of adventure that to this date remains unsurpassed by any other developer we can think of. When the two combine, you know you're onto something special. Enter Fallout 3.

Fallout fans have been promised a new game for many years, but each and every time the rug's been pulled from under their collective feet right at the last second. But ever since purchasing the rights to develop a Fallout game from the ashes of former developer, Black Isle, Bethesda have gone to work to make a game Fallout fans – and non-fans – can be proud of. From what we've seen, this could be the RPG event of the year on the PS3, and a sure contender for game of the year.

Fallout 3's set in a post-apocalyptic Washington DC, where, following a global atomic war in 2077, the entire population survive by inhabiting giant underground bunkers – known as Vaults. However, one morning, you awake to find your father (voiced by acting legend, Liam Neeson) has inexplicably chosen to exit the Vault, escaping into the harsh wasteland that surrounds. Following after your father, you too escape the Vault and embark on a quest to find your father, and discover the reasons behind his escape...

And while the game's sure to retain the post-apocalyptic feel of the earlier Fallouts, the game currently sounds like the perfect blend of Oblivion and Fallout. With a huge area to explore (complete with destroyed versions of famous, easily recognisable landmarks), you're free to roam at your own will, watching out for the various hyper-advanced enemies, mutants and pockets of radiation as you go.

For Fallout 3, the character progression takes a different direction to the 'improve as you use them' skill-based advancement of Oblivion, instead relying more

**PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!**
Click here to
tell us what
you think of
Fallout 3



Zombies. They're everywhere these days...

*"This could be the
RPG event of the
year on the PS3"*



Our hero decided too late that it might not have been a good idea to pick Ipswich as a holiday resort.

The combat in-game can be paused at any time, allowing you to target specific parts of an enemy.

FALLOUT 3

> Fallout 3 continued

on experience points, which are rewarded not only through combat, but also through completing quests. More interestingly, Bethesda are taking great care to ensure that there are multiple paths through the game – the ending alone currently has more than 500 versions, depending on the decisions you've made – and your choices can affect the world around you in many different ways.

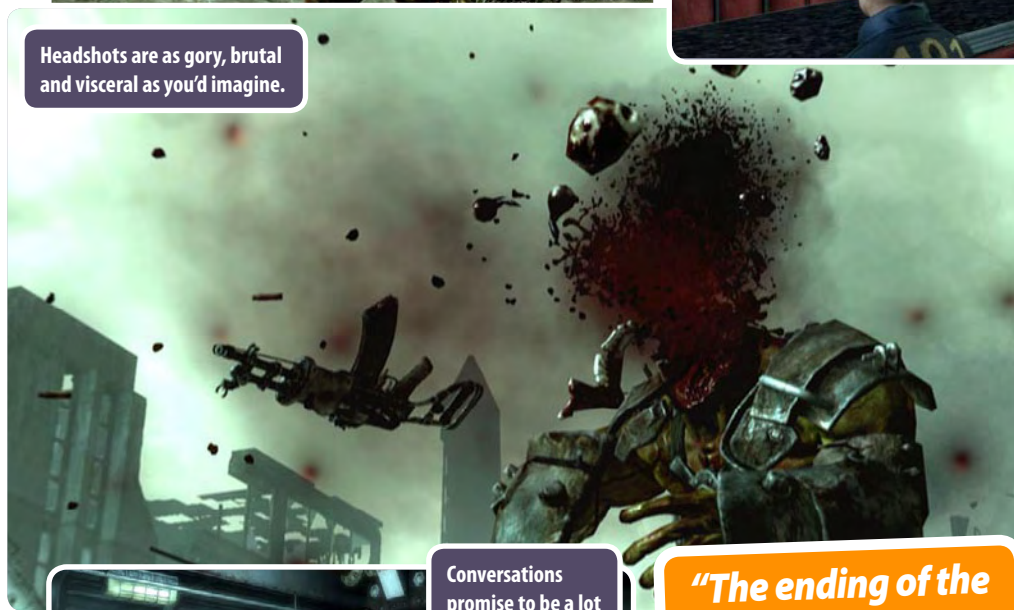
One example we were given is of the quest in the town of Megaton. The town, forged around an unexploded nuclear bomb, is home to a diverse array of residents, who each want different things. By talking to certain residents in the town, you'll find people who encourage you to either disarm the bomb, or destroy it, wiping the city clean off the map. Should you choose to destroy it, you'll lose access to all the quests in the town, but open passage to a new area. Disarm the bomb, and you'll earn 'good' points on your Karma system – the in-game log of how nice a person you're being. A neat touch.

With moral choices taking an upfront role in the game, an extra emphasis on character interaction and a totally revamped character advancement system, this is shaping up wonderfully. Fallout 3 looks set to be a game that'll live up to the Fallout name – and then some. ●

It's all going a bit Oblivion-y here...



Headshots are as gory, brutal and visceral as you'd imagine.



Conversations promise to be a lot more interesting than in Oblivion.



That's not the way it works. And it won't do to go around asking questions like that. Especially not around the Overseer.

It's party time in the Vault. People don't look very happy, though.



This town's pretty. Pretty vacant.



Here's Dogmeat – a canine companion who understand English.



"The ending of the game has more than 500 versions"

P3Zine

FALLOUT 3

PERCENTAGE COMPLETE

70%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

90%

Could easily be the RPG event of the year

FALLOUT 3

The end of the world is nigh

It's been a long time coming for RPG fans, but Fallout 3, the sequel to the seminal PC role-playing game is almost with us. We sat down with the game's developer's, Bethesda, to talk about life after Black Isle, and find out what tricks the Oblivion developers have up their sleeves...

Can you sum up for us what Fallout 3's all about?

It's a big, post-nuclear sandbox, where you can make whatever kind of character you want, and do what you want. You can be good, evil, be neutral, and make choices and based on how you want to play the game and what things you want to do.



Mmm, dismemberment. That looks nasty.



How does the character creation compare to Oblivion's?

Similar, but different. You spend the first part of the game growing up in a Vault – one of the underground shelters people escaped to when the nuclear bombs started falling.

In the beginning you'll witness your own birth and pick some aspects of your character (your sex, your name, what you look like), then jump ahead to when you're a year old, then to when you're ten years old, and so on. So it's part character creation, part tutorial, and part game. We're teaching about the different parts of the game, while also letting you decide what kind of person you want to be in this world, too.

The original Fallout was famed for the quality of its writing and dark sense of humour. How have you carried this over to Fallout 3?

That's what our lead designer, Emil Pagliarulo, has dedicated the last couple years of his life to; making sure that the characters, dialog and humour in the game is on par with the previous Fallout games. And we're certainly pleased with what we've come up with.

The first-person/third-person perspective makes things very different to the first two Fallouts – how does combat work?

Our goal with the new perspective is to better immerse the player in



"Our goal with the new perspective is to better immerse the player in the Fallout 3 world"

> Interview continued

this world. Get them up close to all of these memorable locations. So yes, we do think that makes a big difference in how the player perceives their place in this world.

The combat is a mix. There's realtime combat and a new system we've come up with called VATS. Basically, it allows the player to pause time and use action points to target different body parts on an enemy and even target multiple enemies. Then you press a button and watch your character perform the actions you've queued up using a special camera system that shows the combat from a variety of angles.

Compared to Oblivion, how big is the world in Fallout 3?

Well, we change the scale in each game, so it's a bit difficult to compare. Fallout is smaller in size, but we also alter the distances between locations and how much 'stuff' you find out there wandering around. Suffice it to say that it is a very big world and will take quite a long time to explore.

In 2003, Black Isle Studio's owner (Interplay) went bust and you acquired the license to develop Fallout 3, along with a semi-finished prototype of Black Isle's Fallout 3. How of much of a game did you begin with? Did you use this as a starting ground, or was this put to one side, so you could start afresh?



We started completely fresh in terms of the game we're making.

How does character progression work in Fallout 3?

It's experience-point based, so as you discover locations, finish quests, kill enemies, etc, you'll earn experience points. Once you earn enough to level up, you have a chance to spend skill points improving whichever skills you want to be better at. And you also get to pick a Perk, which can further enhance your character's skills and abilities.

Are there currently any plans to support the game with downloadable content?

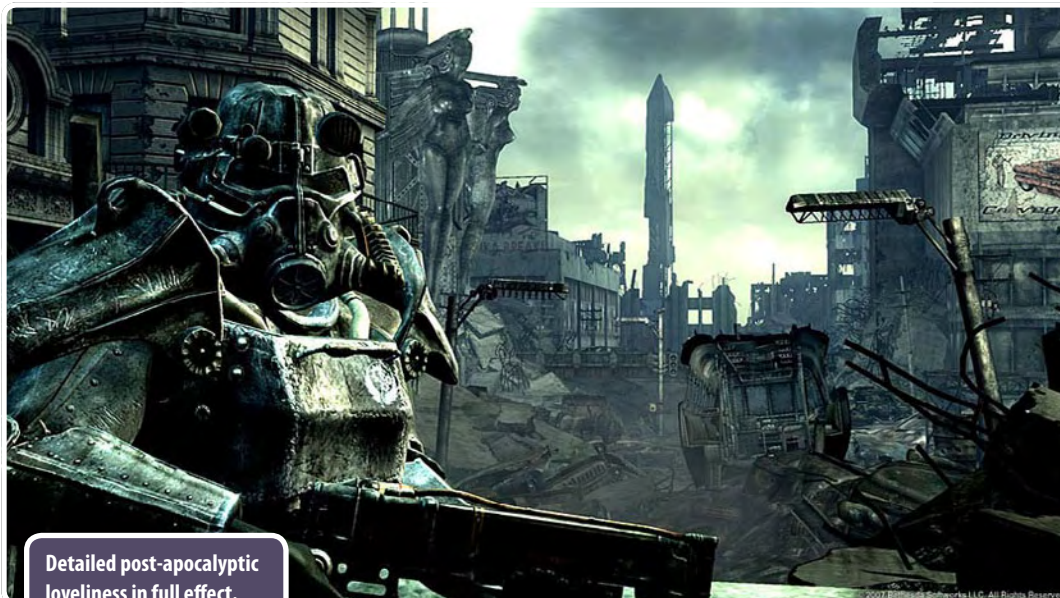
I'm sure that's something we'll look into, but right now our content folks are still hard at work on the game. We'll look into that down the road and see if it's something we can do.

And finally, when can we expect to see more of Fallout 3?

Expect to see and hear more about the game in the coming months. It's going to be a busy summer. ●

FALLOUT 3

Publisher: Bethesda
Developer: Bethesda
Heritage: Oblivion, Star Trek Legacy
Link: <http://fallout.bethsoft.com>
ETA: Autumn



"Downloadable content is something we'll look into down the road and see if it's something we can do"



NAVIGATE →

|20

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CONTROL →





Enemy Territory: Quake Wars

Publisher: Activision

Developer: Z-Axis Ltd

Heritage: BMX: XXX,

X-Men: The Official Game

Link: www.quakewars.com

OUT NOW

Will it make the earth move for you?

While the Xbox 360 is oversubscribed for first-person shooters, the PS3 has less stellar competition, particularly as one of its best titles – Valve's otherwise superb The Orange Box – was soured by a less-than-brilliant conversion. Still, it boasts two excellent multiplayer-focused

shooters in Unreal Tournament III and the superb Warhawk, which unfortunately is Enemy Territory's biggest problem. While a single-player first-person shooter would have had less to be compared against, it's bumping up against probably two of the top 10 games on the system. As such, despite its

"The beauty of the game lies in its constant updating of objectives"

undoubted qualities, it does come up a little short, unfortunately.

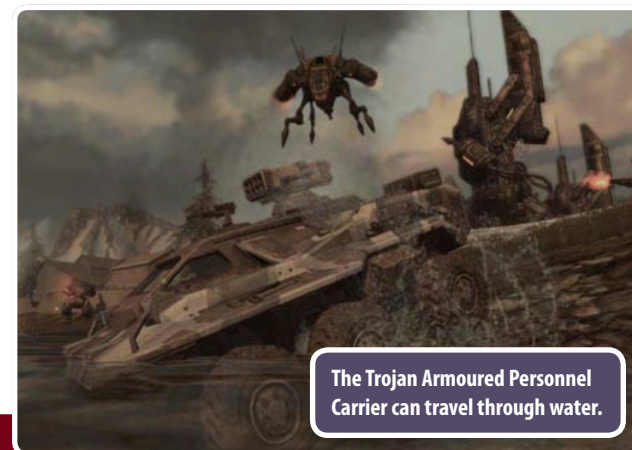
It doesn't help that it creates the worst possible first impression. It requires a fairly lengthy (around nine minutes) install, with nothing like Devil May Cry 4's backstory or GTA's artwork and music to keep you interested while you twiddle your



Roll over screen for annotations



Soldiers are equipped with explosives, which can be used to destroy certain obstacles.



The Trojan Armoured Personnel Carrier can travel through water.

CLASS OF 2008

Jobs for the boys (and aliens)



Medic



Sneakers



Oily hands



Medic

"I require a technician!" grunts a hilariously gruff Strogg voice. Which, of course, means legging it over to your prone buddy and administering a dose of meds to get him back on his feet. Medics can also drop supplies if your pals are low on weapons. Handy.



CONTROL →





At times it is reminiscent of a slightly more strategic take on Warhawk. If you wanted that game to have a little more depth, you just mind get your money's worth out of this.



Air-based vehicles can be a little awkward to control.

"The single-player mode functions as little more than a practice session for the online component"

> Enemy Territory continued

thumbs. Then, upon entering either a solo or multiplayer game, you're treated to a lengthy load time before you can get started. And after all that rigmarole you'd have every right to expect something pretty special from a graphical standpoint, but this looks noticeably worse than the PC game, with textures appearing very late, plenty of clipping and more than a few glitches here and there.

There's nothing absolutely ruinous to the gameplay, and little which will truly affect your enjoyment if and when you do eventually get drawn in by the game. But that start is bound to put a few people off. Particularly given that it's exacerbated by a front end that's totally unfriendly to FPS virgins, with nothing but a single screen showing

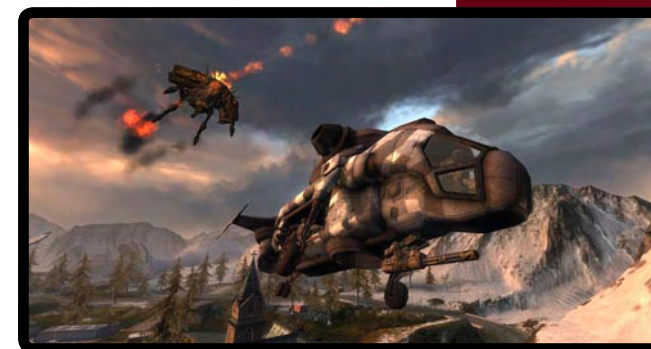
the controls and a character class video to tutor you in the ways of Quake Wars. But then again, Enemy Territory is not made for those people – it's an unapologetically hardcore tactical team-based shooter, which will almost certainly find itself a niche fanbase.

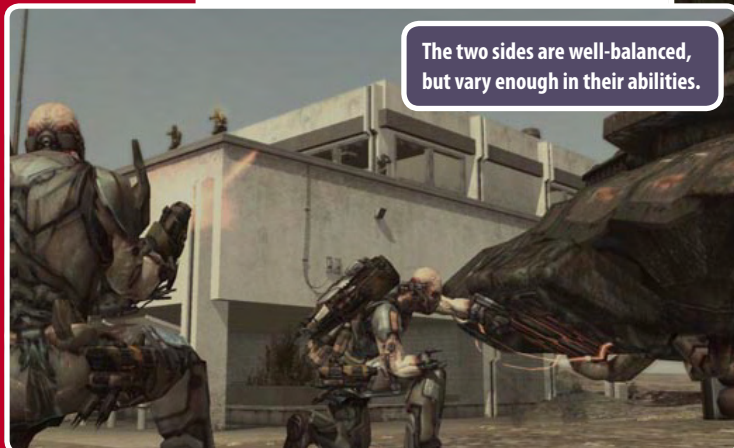
The single-player mode functions as little more than a practice session for the online component. You might expect the 'campaign' option to work as a rudimentary story mode, but there's no plot to speak of – merely a collection of stages following on from each other, moving onto different areas occasionally to mix things up. Though that's not to say that the mission objectives themselves don't change, but really, there's

not much point in spending any more time talking about the single-player game, as the AI-controlled bots range from the ludicrously accurate to the terminally useless, the complexities of the game lost on both your team-mates and the CPU-guided enemy. Fancy being team-killed three times within a minute? Then maybe the solo mode's your cup of tea. Masochists.

For the rest of us – i.e. the sensible ones – the online multiplayer's where it's at. And, after such an inauspicious start, suddenly the game starts to come to life. The beauty of the game lies in its constant updating of objectives – it's not simply a rush to rout the enemy, but often something a little more strategic, like building a bridge

while under attack, or defending a position for a given amount of time. Rather than a huge, sprawling conflict, it breaks up the games into small pockets of action, making for a faster and more intense game than you might expect from such a tactical shooter. While the framerate isn't entirely consistent, it moves at a fair lick, and though other games support more than 16 players online, it's churlish to criticise Enemy Territory for its limitations because >





The two sides are well-balanced, but vary enough in their abilities.



Map variety is impressive, even if the look of each stage is fairly generic.

> Enemy Territory continued

they make for a more balanced game. More players would almost certainly make things too busy to



Despite its tactical leanings, most players will be killed often.

make strategic decisions on the fly, as you regularly need to here. And with human players, you can really work as a team – giving and receiving instructions as you push on towards your next objective, and combining your collective intellectual nous to get one over on the opposition.

With five different character classes to choose from on either side (the alien Strogg or the human Global Defence Force), every player is bound to find a role they are comfortable with. PS3 owners will no doubt be glad that this version has one advantage over the 360 game in the rewards system, which allows you to gain experience towards improving your skills in four different categories. You can also improve your ranking across all game modes, progressing ever upwards from your

starter status as a private. These two nice touches, however, are cancelled out by a less-reliable online system than its Live-based rival, with lag and connection issues affecting our multiplayer games slightly too often to go unmentioned in this review.

Though Enemy Territory: Quake Wars is far from being the perfect PlayStation 3 game, it does enough differently to warrant a look if you're somehow bored of Call of Duty, Unreal Tournament III and Warhawk and fancy a change of pace. But among such genre greats, it can't help but look distinctly second-rate. A bit more TLC on this port and we'd be recommending it, but at a much higher price than the PC game for a less-impressive experience, we're afraid that this doesn't quite cut the mustard. ●

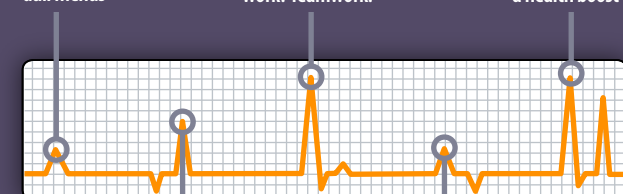
Chris Schilling

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*

A long wait for dull menus

What's going to work? Teamwork!

Ranking up for a health boost



Figuring out the intricacies

Fun online, but lag is a pain

"A bit more TLC on this port and we'd be recommending it"

P3Zine
Verdict

Sadly, not quite Strogg enough...

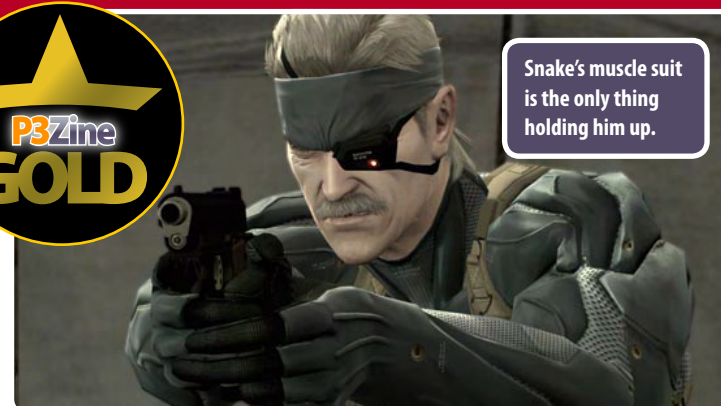
- + A few terrific ideas
- Little to offer solo players
- Online affected by glitches

79%



Publisher: Konami
Developer: Kojima Productions
Heritage: Metal Gear series
Link: www.konami.jp/mgs4/en
OUT NOW

Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns of the Patriots



Sneak peek: Snake's muscle suit is the only thing holding him up.

With the end in sight, Solid Snake goes out with a bang

The more you've invested in the Metal Gear saga over its 21 years, the more you'll recoup in Metal Gear Solid 4. It's that simple. In bidding farewell to Solid Snake, the hero who helped define the language of 3D graphics, the age of PlayStation and the genre of action stealth, Hideo Kojima has made a game almost exclusively for his fans.

Sure, there are lots of stupendous moments around almost every

corner... There are mesmerising on-rails sequences that risk drowning in special effects, cutscenes that blur the line between gaming and the silver screen, environments that shudder and smash under constant bombardment, and boss battles full of trickery and wit. But, for all the shock and awe, this is above all an emotional epic tale.

As in earlier Metal Gears, MGS4 depicts a world in which soldiers –

or, to be more precise, heroes – are no longer necessary. Armies have become corporations, privately owned with neither cause nor territory. War has become an economy, fought to keep some people rich and everyone else under control. And warriors like Snake, built to protect nations that now barely exist, have little to do but grow old.

Try telling that to his brother though, the cunning anarchist

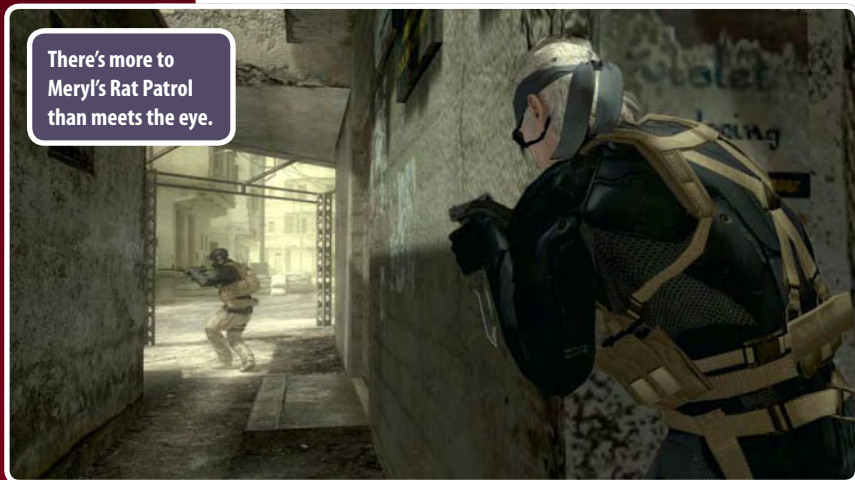


"MGS4 depicts a world in which soldiers are no longer necessary"

Egg hunt

Famed for its Easter eggs, Metal Gear Solid has always packed in content that only repeat players will discover. Tucking away bonuses like a functioning iPod and handheld camera (which a second player can control separately), MGS4 takes things to another level. The game's Drebin points – earned by collecting duplicate weapons – can be redeemed for all kinds of weapons and modifications. Other pickups seem trivial at a glance, but always serve a purpose.

There's more to Meryl's Rat Patrol than meets the eye.



Ocelot's plan in MGS4 is his most dastardly yet.



> Metal Gear Solid 4 cont.

Liquid Ocelot. Still obsessed with his dream of Outer Heaven, a military nation in which soldiers will forever have a place, he's connived his way to the top of this new world order. As head of the five largest military companies, he now commands over half the world's armed forces. Worse, he's commandeered SOP, a revolutionary new system that connects, through nanomachines, the bodies and weapons of every soldier on the Earth.

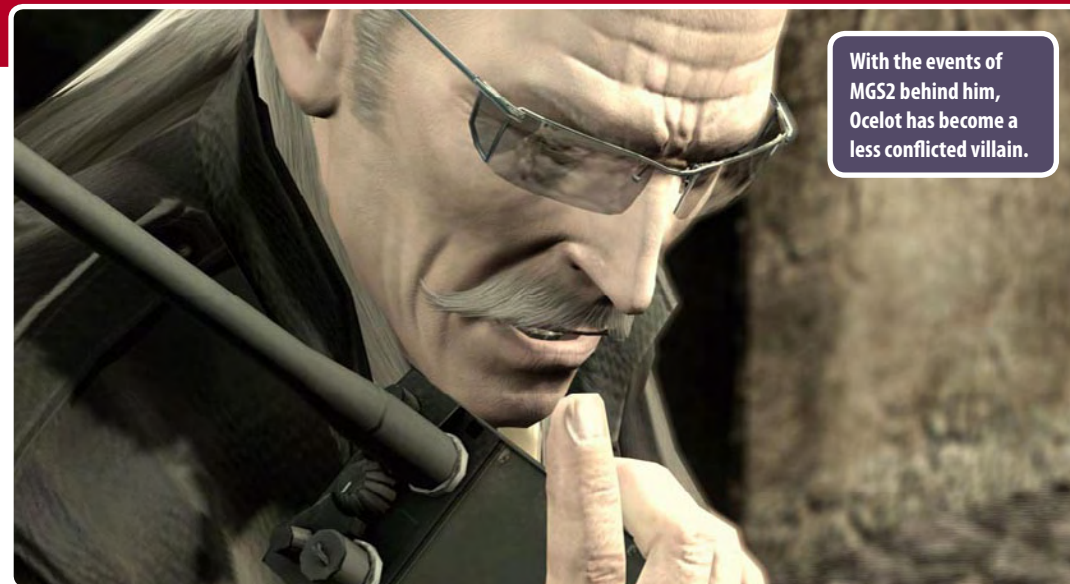
Featuring more locations, characters and playing styles than any one previous Metal Gear, MGS4 is shot through with themes of duty in the face of decrepitude. Kojima's longstanding love of spaghetti westerns has cast the two rivals, Solid and Liquid, as old men doomed to one final duel. And if the game's

events are their twenty paces, they manage to cover an enormous distance, tying up most, if not all, of the series' many loose ends.

As such, enjoyment relies heavily of knowledge of Metal Gear history. The game dashes between concepts and entities like FOXDIE, the Patriots and the legacies of Big Boss without pause for explanations. Visual flashbacks to the previous games can be triggered with timely button presses, but these serve only to refresh the memory. Of course, the cutscenes – some of which last almost 90 minutes – feature stunning cinema which anyone can appreciate, but there's so much more for those in the know.

“Enjoyment relies heavily of knowledge of Metal Gear history”

Ah, remember her? I wouldn't trust her if I were you.



With the events of MGS2 behind him, Ocelot has become a less conflicted villain.

Not to say that this is an old-fashioned game. While the promises of that first trailer haven't entirely been met – PS3 does have its limits, as evidenced by some low-res textures and shallower light and shadows – MGS4 still looks super. Its characters convey more emotion in their movements and blemished faces than any in videogame history, the action around them throwing dust and debris everywhere,

No place to hide?

Even though Old Snake's new muscle suit carries Octocamo, a new technology that 'paints' him with surrounding textures, the openness of the war-torn environments gives him little time to rest. Making matters worse is his premature old age, which brings two new health bars into play, one for Psyche and one for Stress. Factors including battle intensity affect them, at best producing a 'combat high' that strengthens and emboldens him, at worst crippling him with fatigue.

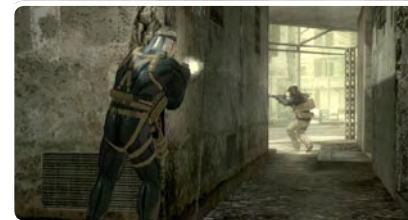


There's a stunning amount of background detail to the locations in MGS4.

For an old boy, he's still got a pretty good aim.

"There's so much in MGS4 that the game has trouble cramming it all in"

Well, at least it's not a cardboard box this time.



➤ Metal Gear Solid 4 cont.

its mechs, soldiers and cyborgs bringing excitement to every frame. Even the game's camera is rocked and jostled by the winds of the battlefield, the production values all round crushing the competition. Of special note is the score by returning composer Harry Gregson Williams, which captures perfectly the game's messages and tones.

From the off, fans will surely embrace MGS4's evolved control system and world of strategic options. In tracking Liquid across the globe, Old Snake must survive battlefields in which improvisation is the key to survival. The game excels in honouring that premise, letting you pick your allies, fire at will and toy with dozens of weapons, saving any judgements until the end. And the AI is sophisticated enough to meet whatever challenges you present – if you go in guns blazing, reinforcements will arrive to soak up the bullets. Stick to the principles of sneak however, and it's all about unpredictable patrol paths, secret passages and silent takedowns.

In fact, there's so much in MGS4 that the game has trouble cramming it all in. It gives you all the time in the world to explore its maps, the

Sneak's new suit allows him to blend in beautifully.

most exciting of which occur early in the game, but seldom gives the maps themselves space to develop. Come the second half, and so much is left to see and achieve that the game becomes a landslide of quick, intense episodes, jarring somewhat with the epic cutscenes in between.

But that's Metal Gear Solid. Kojima may not have known the complexities of PS3 development when he started out, but he sure knows his series and its fans. If none of what you've read here sounds surprising, or particularly unsettling, then MGS4 is a treasure chest. Full of curios and treats, it really is a Metal Gear to end them all. ●

Duncan Harris

**P3Zine
Verdict**

A fitting end for Kojima's peerless saga

➕ The most open and ambitious MGS yet

➕ Breathlessly cinematic

– Small maps and episodic play

91

%



Haze

Ah, the amber Nectar...

Publisher: Ubisoft

Developer: Free Radical

Heritage: TimeSplitters,
Second Sight

Link: www.hazegame.com

OUT NOW

It's been a quiet year for PS3 exclusives so far. With the only major title to speak of being Gran Turismo Prologue – and the disappointing Unreal Tournament 3. With Resistance 2, MGS4, and Little Big Planet all on the horizon, Haze was set to kick things off with a bang, but now it's finally here, is the party started with more of a whimper? Now that's a question with no easy answer.

The story in Haze revolves around Shane Carpenter, an ordinary guy

involved in an over-the-top war. Signing up to 'fight the good fight', you (initially) enlist with Mantel, a private military corporation with a super-drug called Nectar. By injecting Nectar, you'll gain super-human abilities, like an advanced zoom, improved speed and agility, and a rather cool vision mode that makes your enemies glow yellow.

However, the problem here is that none of this is explained very well in the game – if at all. The powers of Nectar, what Nectar is, and even

how you use it are only occasionally referred to in short snippets of on-screen text, meaning if you're a newbie to the world of Haze, you won't have the foggiest what's going on. A tutorial is very much needed.

While playing for Mantel, the game is very much a standard first-person shooter. You run here, you melee this guy and you reclaim your Nectar, all without really knowing what you're doing, or why you're doing it. The problem is that even though you're playing as this



Roll over screen for annotations



The vehicles are great fun to mess round in – especially in multiplayer.



At times, it really does look gorgeous.

LOS GRINGO LOCO

The online mode explained



Co-op



Story bored



Patch it up



Co-op

The best multiplayer mode in Haze is far and away the co-op, letting you and up to three mates fight through the story together, with any combination of split-screen or online. It's drop in/drop out, too.

Every game always has to end with a climactic battle.



"As soon as the change happens to Promised Hand, the entire game seems to pick up"

> Haze continued

genetically modified, drugged-up super human, even the most basic of abilities aren't there. Mantel are meant to rely heavily on technology, so why is there no radar? Even worse, when a lot of the environments are near pitch black, why don't you even have a torch? The soldiers' reliance

on Nectar seems rather forced, and rather than aiding your conquest, it actually ends up hindering it.

As you probably know by now, around halfway through Haze your character has a change of heart (this is actually one of the best bits of the game), and swaps sides to

play for the Promised Hand. It's here the gameplay really starts to pick up. Without being forced to rely on Nectar, you're free to use the cool additional abilities of the Promised Hand at your own free will. Placing a trap in the ground, then watching as the clueless Mantel troops drive

straight over it, or plunging a Nectar-covered knife into the back of a Mantel trooper, then watching as he overdoses and kills all his team-mates is every bit as satisfying as it sounds, and as soon as the change happens to Promised Hand, the entire game seems to pick up, too.

But what's worrying is how disproportionately the two sides are stacked. Mantel, who should have a clear advantage, actually feel weaker than the Promised



NECTAR CLINIC

How a soldier becomes an addict



5 MINS
You're fighting the good fight, but what's going on?



60 MINS
Equal amounts of cut-scenes and gameplay so far.



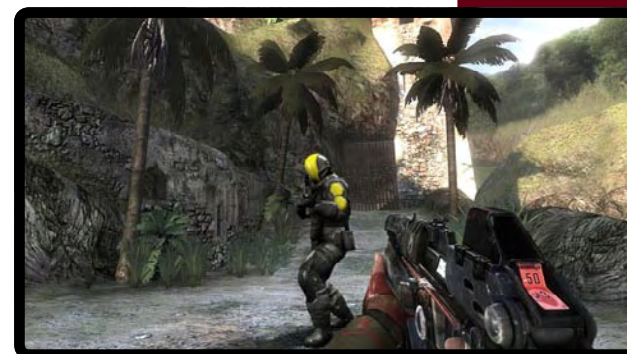
90 MINS
Go online with friends – suddenly, everything's much better.



120 MINS
Switching sides to the Promised Hand...



5 HOURS
It's a short game, that's for sure. You should be nearing the end now.



They may not have the technology, but playing as the Promised Hand is a lot more fun than playing as Mantel.



Ain't no Promised Hand gonna survive an explosion like that.



Shooting down helicopters never gets boring.

> Haze continued

Hand, and this carries over into the multiplayer. One of the big features of Haze were the story-based

online battles, but sadly, these are a huge disappointment. For starters, the game explains the story and objectives while the fight's going on in the background, meaning most players tend to skip it, and end up not having a clue what they're doing. Online, in anything but the standard deathmatch/team-deathmatch modes, Haze is a confusing mismatch of bemused players, convoluted objectives and a distinct lack of visible prompts.

But perhaps the biggest downfall of Haze is in the story, or more specifically, its execution. On paper, Haze has an interesting plot, but the way the game reveals it just leaves it feeling diluted. Using almost exclusively non-interactive, first-person cutscenes to further the plot, these sections are far too long-winded and lengthy. Why would

you want to fight with Mantel when they're all such arrogant arses? And if they're all such intolerable cretins, why is the decision to switch to the Promised Hand a hard thing? The fact that Nectar alters more than just your combat abilities is too obvious from the start, so the game's major twist ends up being a non-event.

All in all, Haze is a game of two halves. While Mantel are disappointing, the Promised Hand are every bit as innovative as we'd imagined, and it's well worth playing through just to get to their missions. And while the online multiplayer may be disappointing, the co-op's a lot of fun. In the end, we think Haze is a game that aimed a bit too high and sadly fell just short – though its objectives were noble, perhaps it tried to achieve a little too much. ●

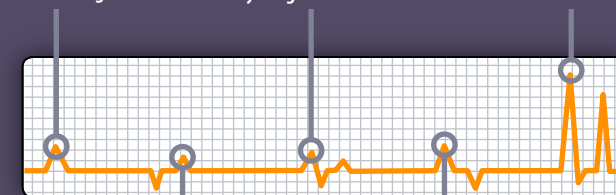
Ian Morris

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*

It starts with an interesting intro

Go online and everything's much better

Ah, but the Promised Hand are much better



But who am I? And who's feet are those?

Multiplayer... what's going on?

"All in all, Haze is a game of two halves"

Next gen?

The seamless drop-in/drop-out co-op is a shining example to all other games of what can be achieved on the PS3. The fact that you can take a buddy online with you – in split-screen – and play against up to 16 other players is also a huge technical achievement, and something more games really should look to emulate.



P3Zine Verdict

A solid shooter that's worth it for the co-op alone

- + Promised Hand are great
- + Superb co-op
- Disappointing Nectar abilities

81%



Buzz! Quiz TV



Publisher: Sony

Developer: Relentless

Software

Heritage: The Buzz! series

Link: www.

mybuzzquiz.com

ETA: 4th July

Definitely the host with the most

We've had to deal with a few delays in the release date, but finally Buzz! Quiz TV is with us and we're very happy to say that it's been worth the wait. And we really wanna see those fingers...

Imagine a quiz show getting upgraded from a local TV network to prime-time digital TV, that's how great this game looks compared to its predecessors. Sure, it's got everything we loved from the earlier

editions, however Buzz and his crew get a brand new, bigger set to play with. High-def graphics give the game a shine like never before, and with it also comes a wider range of character animations adds to its much cooler, stylish look.

On the downside, perhaps there could have been even more animations, as after a while you can begin to get irritated with your character's repetitive responses to

winning and losing rounds, but overall the negatives to Quiz TV are few and far between. Instead, it's easier to notice the nuances that improve the gaming experience, such as the more detailed audience animation; each little



If you lose a round at least you have the advantage of picking the next topic...

"Buzz and his crew get a new, bigger set to play with"

Next Gen?

Buzz!'s Mybuzzquiz online features, via the PSN, make this game truly next gen. Bringing together a global network of quiz fans, we expect to see regulars appear as people get the bug for quiz creation. Reckon you know everything? Well put together the ultimate test and see how people fair up against your questions. Plus, with leaderboards showing top scores, be careful or you may get addicted to both getting and keeping a high score.



You don't see that on Deal or No Deal.



> Buzz! Quiz TV continued

bod claps at their own speed rather than en masse as a bunch of clones. It's a little touch, but it's one that we liked nonetheless.

Then comes the gameplay. Buzz! has gone from a 'show' to a 'network', allowing you to pick which quiz genres you'd like to play: Music, Movies and TV, Sports and Science channels can be chosen, for example, or you can choose the 'Channel Hopper' option, and basically set yourself a complete knowledge quiz. Sadly it's all or one though; no picking two or three favourite genres to put together. We hope that a future update might change this however.

Moving on, updates will also help to keep this game fresh. You already start with an impressive 5,000 questions to tax your grey matter,

however gamers will be able to download tens of thousands of new questions as and when these begin to get stale. All in all, we have to say that Relentless has created a pretty impressive, future-proofed game, and with the addition of wireless Buzz! controllers, it's the ultimate quiz package for any console.

Further additions to the game, such as the new rounds like Pie Fight and the big showdown of Final Countdown are good fun to play, but the killer offering this time round is Quiz TV's online capabilities. Play other gamers online, or create and upload your own quizzes for PS3 owners to play globally – what more could you possibly ask for?

In the Sofa vs. Sofa mode



you can either play strangers in a set-up game, or invite friends on your list for some mental tomfoolery. Perhaps you've got far-flung

friends and family? Well no longer do you have to wait for winter festivities and the Trivial Pursuit box to come out, as you can now lay



"The killer offering this time round is Quiz TV's online capabilities"

BUZZ WORDS

It's your starter for 10...



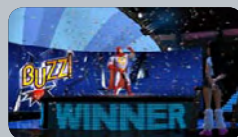
LOSER, BABY
The loser of each round gets to pick the topic for the next one. Huzzah!



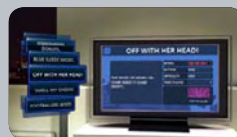
PIE SQUARED
Getting to choose who to pie when you score in Pie Fight rocks.



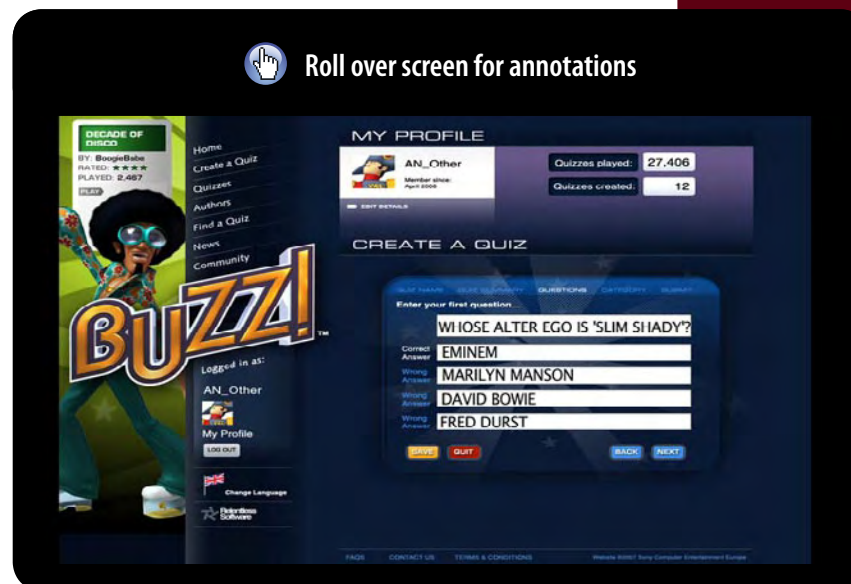
THE FINAL COUNTDOWN
Final countdown converts your score into time, and so you have longer to answer. Last one to hit the floor wins!



FAN WORSHIP
Winning puts all eyes on you as you take over the podium and bow before your adoring fans.



DIY QUIZZES
Your options when you choose a created quiz are huge. Expect more weird and wonderful topics to appear post-release.



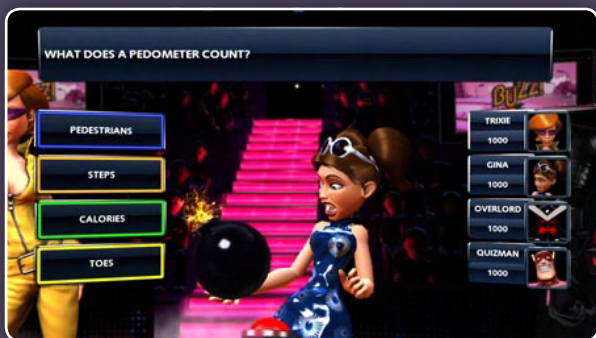


"The biggest leap forward this game makes is in its interactivity"

Check out the Sofa vs. Sofa mode.

PASS THE BOMB

Gets an overhaul...



Hysterical

Stroker

Down and dirty

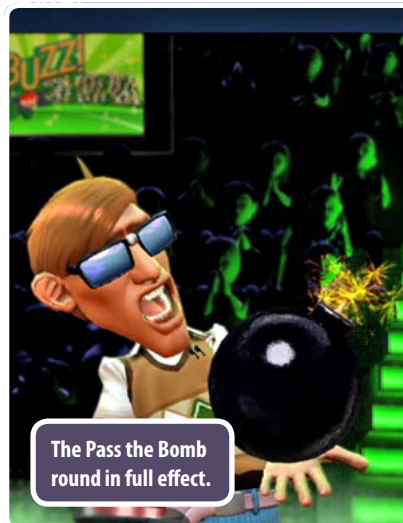
Hysterical

Depending on the character you choose, they will react differently to being passed the bomb. This lovely lady for example cannot bear to touch it and can be rather off-putting while you're trying to concentrate on your answer.

> Buzz! Quiz TV continued

down the quiz gauntlet virtually, any time you choose to.

The biggest leap forward this game makes is indeed in its interactivity, and we expect a strong network of Buzz! 'quiz masters' to appear. You can use either your PC or PS3 browser to enter the Mybuzzquiz site, and then it's simply down to your imagination to create as many quizzes as you want. Creating a quiz is very simplistic too. You'll need no more than 10 minutes to make your own masterpiece, and you just follow the on-screen instructions of adding a question, giving the correct answer and then three wrong options and you're good to go. Unfortunately, for now at least, your quizzes can only be eight questions long, making them 'rounds' rather than full-blown quizzes, however we do hope this might be another change we see a little further down the line.



The Pass the Bomb round in full effect.

Plus, we're deadly serious when we say that the limit is your own imagination. Quizzes can cover any topic, and some people are already on the site creating weird and wonderful sets of questions, some of which are a real challenge and others just a laugh – in that you'll never get them right. For example, one lovely gamer created a quiz entitled 'My Desk', with questions such as 'How many paperclips do I have?' and 'How many screens am I currently using?'. Also, those with little ones should fret not, as the game wisely includes a mature content setting and is vetoed for any bad language before going live both on the site and in-game (you can play the created quizzes on Mybuzzquiz.com).

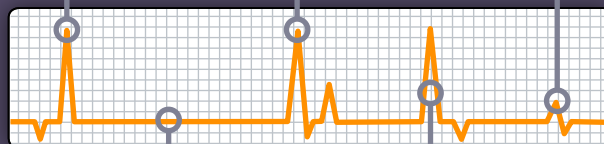
With Buzz!'s new next-gen look, added variety and swathe of online options, you can't go wrong with this game. An all-round quality quiz

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*

Wireless buzzers rock!

The game is much fairer on its competitors

Longer quizzes would've been great



Your character's repetitive animations may begin to grate

Taking the game online is great!

game, it will appeal to every type of gamer we can possibly think of, and with the new wireless controls to top it off, you'll be wanting to get those buzzers ready... ●

Keri Allan

**P3Zine
Verdict**

Online quizzing makes this an all-round top game

+ Taking the Buzz! experience online

+ Creating quizzes is fun

- More character animation needed

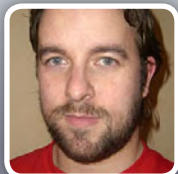
90%





A Shining Star

The PS3's unsung hero goes from strength to strength



Chris Schilling

Chris is the proud owner of all three 'next-gen' consoles. Every issue Chris will chart the progress of PS3 and commenting on Sony's latest and greatest initiatives.

If you'd told me about six months ago that I'd be standing in my front room in the middle of the day, belting out The Hardest Part by Coldplay, I'd undoubtedly have recommended a visit to the loony bin. But back then I was a SingStar virgin. Now my cherry's popped and I'm completely hooked.

I was never a big karaoke fan, and it took a trip to Tokyo in December, significant lubrication from some fine, inhibition-loosening Japanese rice beer, and the encouragement of several other games journalists present for me to realise my folly. Upon my return to Blighty, I picked up a copy of SingStar and haven't looked back since.

Granted, post-lunch Chris Martin impressions aren't the best way to experience the game, but I need to get some practice in for those

evening multiplayer sessions somehow. And the whole thing is made easy thanks to SingStar's exceptional interface – a setup so simple that anyone could use it. Which, of course, is part of the idea – with Sony wishing to appeal to the widest audience possible, as it already has with SingStar's previous incarnations on PS2.

Shopping at the SingStore

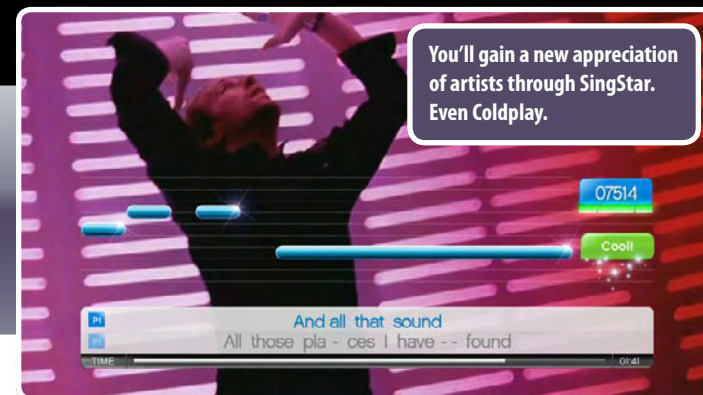
Yet the game is given a new lease of life on Sony's current console, partially thanks to the easy availability of extra tracks, downloadable from the game's SingStore. You can set up several tracks to download in the background while you play – meaning you can take requests from your guests, and then simply keep singing until it's transferred to your console. In that respect, it's not dissimilar to handing your slip of paper to a host in a pub and waiting your turn. Granted, SingStar doesn't have quite the same range of songs, but it doesn't need to – half the fun is in attempting tracks you really don't know that well, and you get the added bonus of the original music videos accompanying the track while you croon (as opposed to some cheesy soft-focus background bilge and

"I don't know why Sony hasn't made more of a fuss about SingStar"

occasionally incorrect lyrics). And for those whose voices aren't quite up to scratch, the easier difficulties and the option to turn off the game's scoring system can be real confidence-builders, as can turning the mic's volume down so you can just hear the original track. It's a bit of a cheat, but it's encouraging to those less confident about their singing.

Everything is just so slick and smooth, with plenty of achingly 'lifestyle' themes to customise your experience. Even the sound effects for switching between songs, or moving between menus are somehow pitch perfect. And the SingStore and community-based My SingStar – where you can upload clips of your best performances, or watch others make fools of themselves – are two additions which make it easily the best SingStar yet, and arguably the best social game on the PS3.

The SingStar Volume 2 disk has just been released at retail, offering another great selection of songs and one or two brilliant innovations – like remote play on your PSP, allowing you to download tracks from the



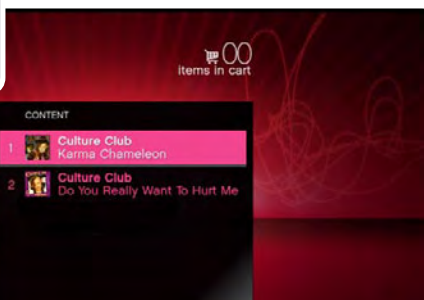
You'll gain a new appreciation of artists through SingStar. Even Coldplay.

SingStore on the way home, ready for when you get in. And with the SingStore getting regular updates too, it's a title that should last you as long as your PS3 does. Why Sony hasn't made more of a fuss about SingStar I don't know, but if you've so far resisted its charms, then I urge you to give it a try. Even if you're not a karaoke fan, you may soon find yourself desperately straining for those falsetto highs on Fix You of a balmy summer evening.

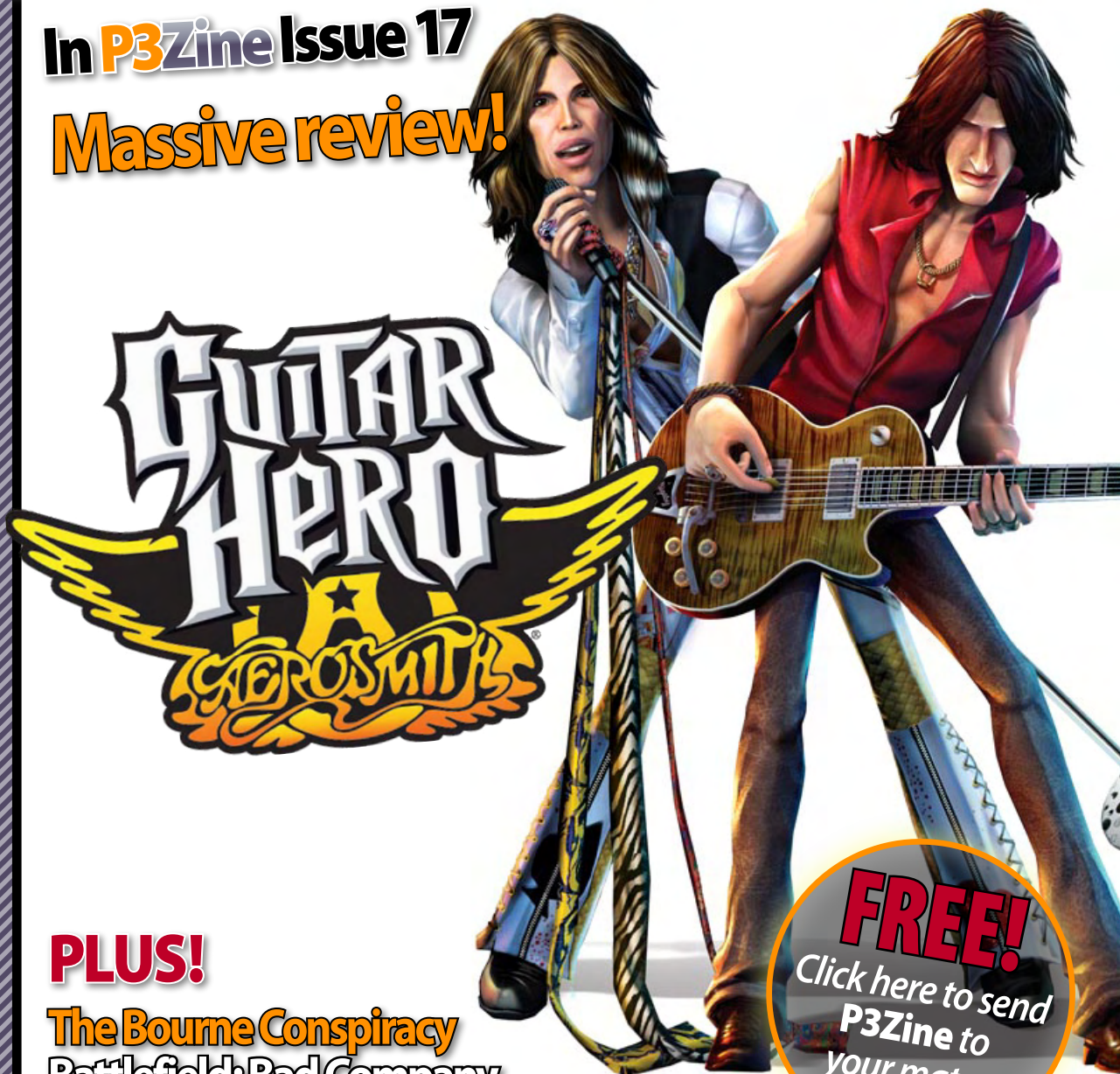
Just me, then? And I don't even like Coldplay. That's the amazing power of SingStar for you. ●

The implementation of My SingStar is terrific.

Given the problems with the PlayStation Store, the SingStore is very accessible and intuitive.



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Cranberry Publishing Limited

www.cranberrypublishing.com

Publishing Director: Dave Taylor

Email: dave.taylor@cranberrypublishing.com

Editorial Director: Dan Hutchinson

Email: dan.hutchinson@cranberrypublishing.com

Commercial Director: Duncan Ferguson

Email: duncan.ferguson@cranberrypublishing.com

Telephone: 0117 986 6550

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Contributors: Duncan Harris, Ian Morris, Chris Schilling

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