

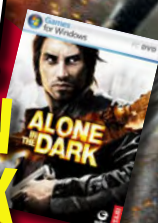
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PCGzine

Issue 19 | July 2008

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MASSIVE REVIEW INSIDE!

ALONE IN THE DARK

The twisted firestarter returns in a blaze of glory!

MORE HOT REVIEWS...

MASS EFFECT

LEGO INDIANA JONES

SINS OF A SOLAR EMPIRE

THE PROTECTOR INTERVIEW

Indy meets Lara in an Aztec adventure

FIRST SCREENS!

PRINCE OF PERSIA

A right royal return for the hardy climber using the Assassin's Creed engine

PLUS ALL THESE GAMES & MORE



Dawn of War II



Colonization



S.T.A.L.K.E.R. Clear Sky



Dark Void



Welcome to PCGZine



The original Alone in the Dark was a groundbreaking game, virtually inventing the survival horror genre and influencing hits like the Silent Hill and Resident Evil series among others. It featured a rather geeky bespectacled journalist cum private investigator called Edward Carnby and the early trilogy became a pioneer of 3D polygon models. Edward Carnby has had serious image consultancy over the years and he's a lot more buff in this latest investigation, but the long-awaited release could well be a return to form, with ambitious innovations in game structure and particularly in spreading fire effects. Check out our terrifying review and let us know what you think!

Steve Brown, Editor
pcgzine@gamerzines.com

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

Don't miss! This month's highlights...



WIN! 10 COPIES OF ALONE IN THE DARK

Alone in the Dark

Edward Carnby saves New York from the lurking horrors of Central Park



THE PROTECTOR INTERVIEW

Action and adventure in archaeology, but haven't we been here before?

QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away!

Warhammer 40,000 DoW II	Dark Void
Colonization	Prince of Persia
Aliens: Colonial Marines	The Protector
Crysis Warhead	Alone in the Dark
Dead Space	Mass Effect
Just Cause 2	Sins of a Solar Empire
LEGO Batman	LEGO Indiana Jones
Red Alert 3	Rhodan
Velvet Assassin	Roogoo
S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: Clear Sky	Dracula Origin



Prince of Persia

The Prince has a sexy new companion to make him jump higher than ever!



Dark Void

Enter this parallel universe if you dare



S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: Clear Sky

The sequel goes nuclear in our face!



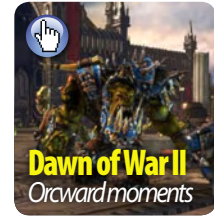
Mass Effect

Has the wait been worth it?



LEGO Indiana Jones

We're bricking it!

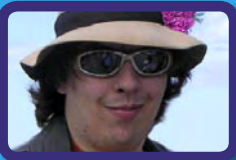


Dawn of War II

Orcward moments

MEET THE TEAM

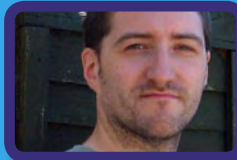
Probably the best games writers on the planet



Ian Morris
Reached critical Mass, which had a peculiar Effect.



Chris Schilling
Went for a walk in Central Park and nearly didn't come back.



Neil Mohr
Became quite the Conanist and wore out his mouse hand.

ALIENWARE

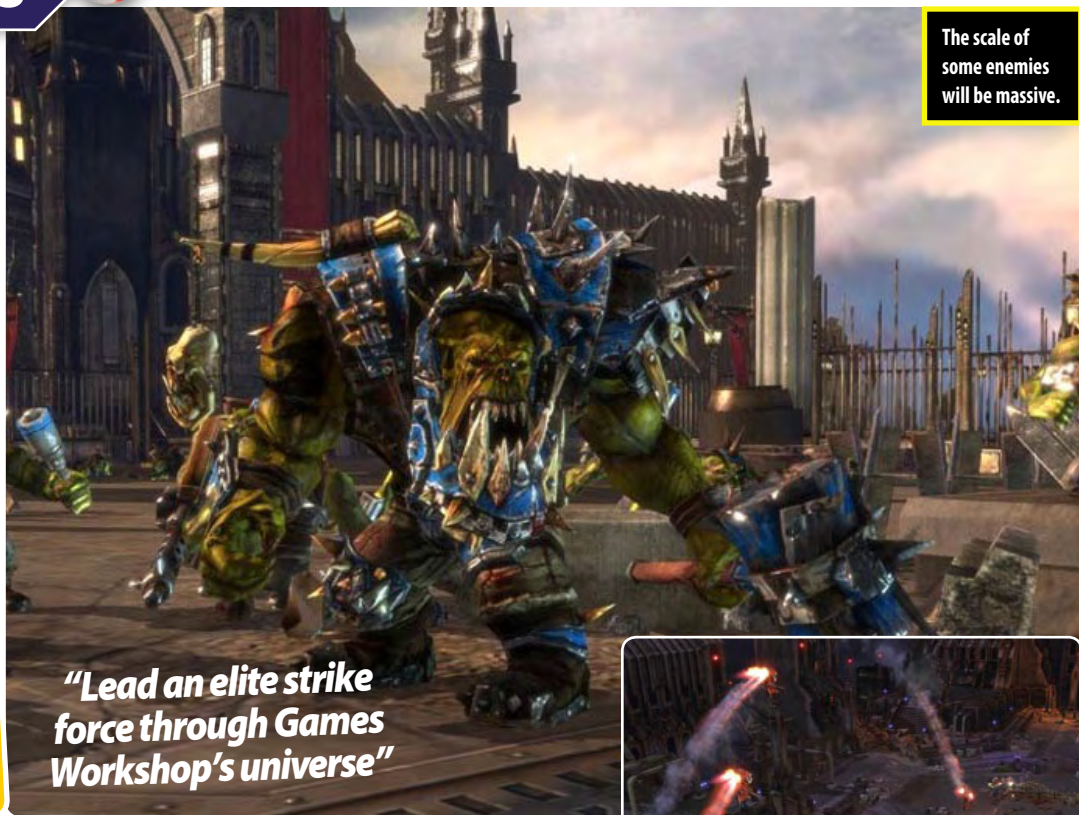
To experience games at their best PCGZine uses the Area 51-ALX from Alienware. Packed with cutting-edge power and technology, if a game can't perform on this it has to be a dud.



MORE FREE MAGAZINES! LATEST ISSUES!



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Relic Entertainment
Heritage: Homeworld, Dawn of War and Company of Heroes series
Link: www.dawnofwar2.com
ETA: Spring 2009



The scale of some enemies will be massive.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK! Click here to tell us what you think of Dawn of War II

“Lead an elite strike force through Games Workshop’s universe”



Jetpacks will get your squad out of some sticky situations.

Warhammer 40,000: Dawn of War II

FIRST LOOK

Space Marines join the company of heroes

What’s the story?

It’s the 41st Millennium and war ravages a dark sci-fi future. Space Marines battle armies of laser-wielding orcs, elves and undead spirits in a desperate fight for galactic control. Relic’s GM, Tarnie Williams, tells us that, “Gamers will develop and lead an elite strike force through Games Workshop’s war-torn universe, and engage in devastating combat among the ruins of fully destructible battlefields”.

What do we know?

Developer Relic will be using an enhanced version of the Essence Engine 2.0, as pioneered in the awesome Company of Heroes. Emphasis will be on small squad combat in fully destructible environments versus terrifyingly large enemies (in size and number).

When do we get more?

A Beta test will be open to purchasers of Dawn of War: Soulstorm later this year.

Anything else to declare?

The single-player campaign will be dynamic, players choosing which planets and battles to head off first as planetary distress calls come in. The multiplayer part of the game will feature a co-op campaign.

Don’t forget to beat your greens...



Gigantic Armies - Over 10,000 active units on the battlefield
 New Strategic Outposts - Filled with hoards of attacking enemies
 New Tactical Powers - Reinforcement, bombard and heal

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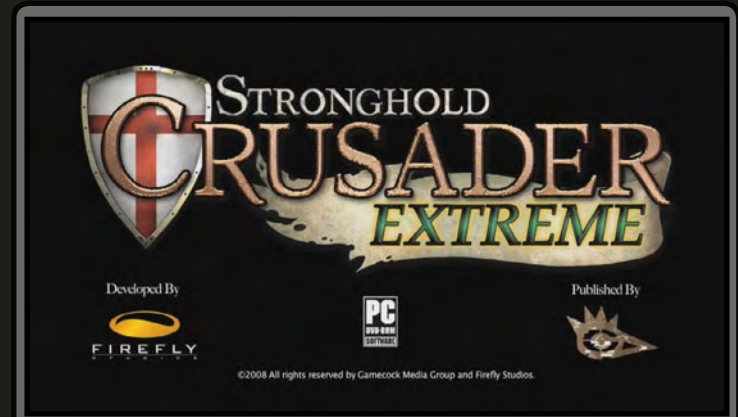


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▶ PLAYBACK OPTIONS:





CIVILIZATION IV
Colonization

Publisher: 2K Games
Developer: Firaxis Games
Heritage: Alpha Centauri, Civilization, Pirates!, Railroads!, Civil War, Sim Golf, Silent Service
Link: www.civilization.com
ETA: Autumn

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



"This is a modern re-imagining of Sid Meier's 1984 classic, Colonization"

Sid Meier's Civilization IV: Colonization

FIRST LOOK

It's a new world for an old world in this remake...

What's the story?

This is a modern re-imagining of Sid Meier's 1994 classic, Colonization. In it you'll be choosing a European nationality (English, Dutch, Spanish or French) and embarking on a quest to conquer and rule the New World.

What do we know?

This remake is a total conversion of the Civilization IV engine that will breathe new life into the 1984 strategy of Colonization, including a brand new interface, with new play-by-email, Hotseat, LAN and Internet modes for multiplayer, plus modding tools with a map editor that ships with the game. You'll not only have to conquer the New World through negotiation, trade and battle (with natives and rival invaders) but also fight for freedom and ultimate independence from your oppressive motherland. There will be historical figures available to boost your progress if acquired, including Samuel Adams.

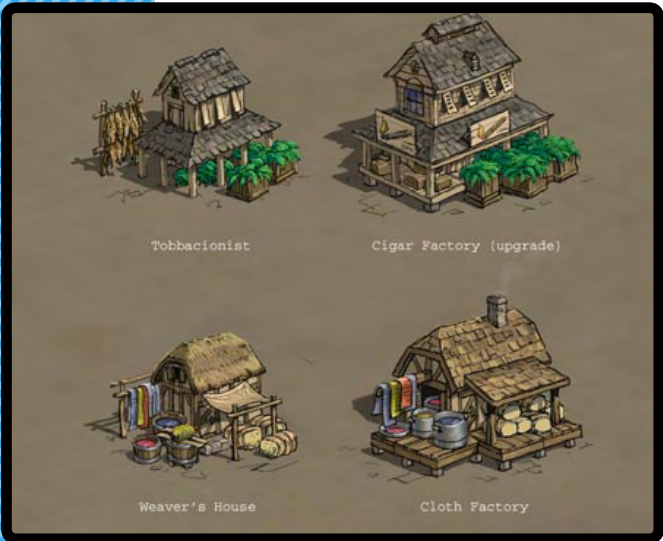
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When do we get more?

We'll have a hands-on report direct from the colonies later this summer.

Anything else to declare?

Thankfully, you won't need to have a copy of Civilization IV to play Colonization.



7 UP

More golden nuggets of gaming glory to come

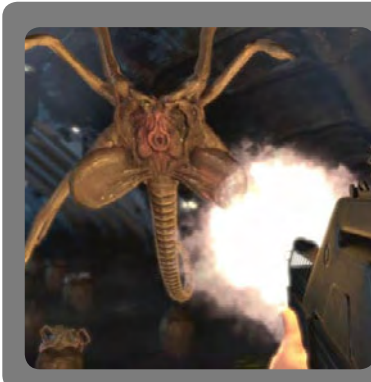


Just Cause 2

Publisher: Eidos | **ETA:** Autumn
James Bond meets GTA IV in one of the most stunt-packed open-world games you've ever seen. Grapple-hook onto helicopters, roam the sea, skies and land of massive island chains, and expect a much more solid and expansive version of the original – hopefully with the co-op play that the first game lacked, and with even more vehicles and mixed environments.

Crysis Warhead

Publisher: EA | **ETA:** Autumn
There are scant details yet for the sequel to the acclaimed 2007 shooter Crysis, other than it promises 'Maximum freedom, maximum explosions and maximum Psycho!' The sequel will be a PC exclusive and be built on a new, enhanced and optimised version of the CryENGINE 2 technology, which will probably mean that we'll all have to upgrade our PCs again this autumn!

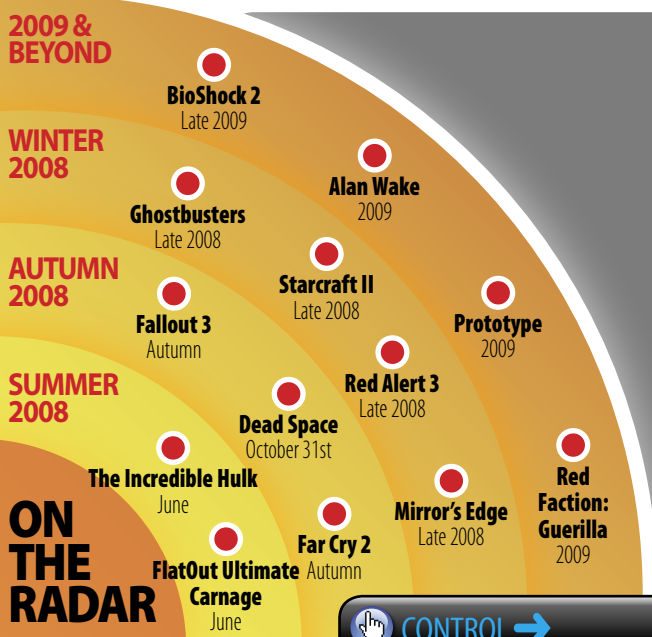


Aliens: Colonial Marines

Publisher: SEGA | **ETA:** Spring 2009
Our most anticipated co-op squad shooter, based closely on the Aliens film and in development at Gearbox, is not now going to make a late 2008 release, unfortunately slipping into 2009. This comes from the latest SEGA schedule, so it looks pretty set. On the same schedule we've also noticed 2009 slippage for Empire: Total War.

Dead Space

Publisher: EA | **ETA:** 31st October
Although less than innovative, (Dead Space's wrecked space hulk corridors and sudden scares are an obvious tribute to Doom and all its derivatives), it is thoroughly atmospheric and certainly a screamer of a shooter, with well-built anticipation setting nerves on edge before sudden bursts of clenching action. Sound plays an essential role in this twitch gaming, with the eerie noises of Necromorphs chilling the spine.



Velvet Assassin

Publisher: Gamecock | **ETA:** Autumn
Putting the ass in assassin, Violette Szabo will be one tooled-up secret agent, weapons recently revealed including a Colt 45, G-43 Rifle, Luger P. 08, Luger Carbine, MG-42, MP40, Shotgun, StG44, Grenades and a Flamethrower. Let's hope she can still walk with all that.



Red Alert 3

Publisher: EA | **ETA:** Late 2008
Who'd have thought that Lycra-clad mutants nudging each other with padded sticks would be popular again. Gladiators is back on UK TV, and American Gladiator star 'Crush' (Gina Carano) is to appear as Natasha in Red Alert 3's live action movies and as a unit.

LEGO Batman: The Videogame

Publisher: Warner Bros. | **ETA:** September
After the delights of LEGO Indiana Jones (see the review in this issue), we next have the adventures of the caped crusader to look forward to. The co-op blockbuster will star Batman and Boy Wonder Robin, and you'll be able to control some villains, too.



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TO ENTIRE
ARMIES

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CHARACTERS
EACH WITH
THEIR OWN
STORYLINE

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WITH FRIENDS
FOR TWO
PLAYER
CO-OP PLAY

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ATTACK STRATEGY
AND THEN LEAD
YOUR TROOPS
INTO BATTLE

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NEW FEATURES

S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: CLEAR SKY

"The game's in-fighting will be driven by an evolved version of the A-Life AI system"

"I can see clearly now the radioactive fallout's gone..."

Publisher: Deep Silver
Developer: GSC Game World
Heritage: Codename: Outbreak, Cossacks series, S.T.A.L.K.E.R. Shadow of Chernobyl
Link: www.stalker-game.com
ETA: 29th August

PREVIEW FEEDBACK! Click here to tell us what you think of S.T.A.L.K.E.R.: Clear Sky



Goths were illegal within the Zone.



Blondie's 'Atomic' was a s.t.a.l.k.e.r. favourite.

Clear sky is a prequel to the acclaimed Shadow of Chernobyl, and climaxes a year prior to the first game's 2011 setting. It documents the arrival of exploratory s.t.a.l.k.e.r.s at the heart of the disaster site and the factional fighting (War of the Factions) and cataclysmic events leading to the creation of the Zone. You star as a mercenary on the edge of the factions and you'll play a key role in the events that promise to answer many questions left hanging from the first game, including how Shadow of Chernobyl's s.t.a.l.k.e.r. Strelok ended up in a death truck.

But this is far more than just the backstory to the first game. Clear Sky ushers in an even more complex and open gameplay system, where you'll be able to choose any faction to join and lead to victory. There's even more advanced AI in the A-Life system that will drive dynamic factional conflict, six totally new zones to explore (including the Red Forest, Limansk and the Marsh), plus a new version of the game engine that boasts even more advanced visuals, animations and physics. Although factions were important in Shadow of Chernobyl, in Clear Sky they're core to the nuclear events. Each

faction will have a base within the exclusion zone, fighting from these hubs for disputed control points that will reward you with better resources, intelligence and territory. This in-fighting will be driven by an evolved version of the A-Life system, with NPCs

exhibiting far more varied behaviour, skirting dynamic obstacles and reacting to unexpected events on an individual and factional level as the A-Life driven War of the Factions erupts. You'll be able to choose factional hubs to visit depending on which story-driven





The head torch made night-time toilet breaks a joy.



Make up to sixteen levels of shotgun upgrades.



Reminds us of the horror of double Geography lessons.



DirectX 10 weather effects are awesome.



Factional fighting around control points will be fierce.

> Clear Sky continued

missions and side-quests you decide to take on, and which faction you're aiding before selecting one to lead to ultimate victory. Again, it's a refreshingly chaotic and muddled approach that suits the apocalyptic environment well.

Although there are six completely fresh areas to explore in Clear Sky, there are a further six familiar (but seriously re-engineered) ones from Shadow of Chernobyl. Escape, for instance, is an area now controlled by s.t.a.l.k.e.r.s. rather than the military. This is reflected in a very different environment and area layout that is no longer centred on an army fortress. Marsh, one of the new areas, is a far more untamed spread of vast wetlands, with occasional building

"Artefact detectors and weapons can now be upgraded"

shells, the landscape pierced by threatening sniper towers and populated by fierce boar mutants and dangerous bandit gangs. Here you'll find anomalies to investigate alongside story-driven missions, and it's within these that the all-important loot can be found using artefact detectors.

Artefact detectors and weapons can now be upgraded as you gain money through loot, and the common shotgun and pistol can eventually sport sixteen levels of customisation. These are added for you by faction engineers in return for payment, but

you'll need to consider carefully before upgrading, because some upgrades will preclude others available later. With all these advances, plus some truly awesome visual advances in DirectX 10 weather effects (DirectX 8 and 9 are also scaled to), Clear Sky looks like an even more radioactive melting pot of shooter innovation. ●

	HOW COMPLETE?	FIRST IMPRESSIONS?
	<i>Factional fallout goes nuclear</i>	





Buckle up for the ultimate ride...

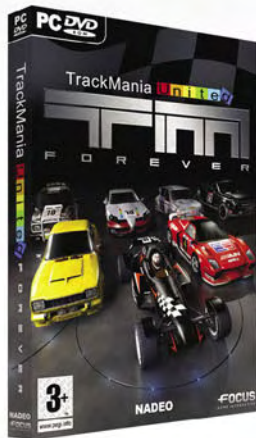


... it's about to get hectic.

▶ PLAYBACK OPTIONS:



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FIRST REVEAL

DARK VOID

Crimson Sky at night, rocketman's delight...

"Dark Void's action takes place not only on foot, but also in mid-air and up vertical surfaces"



Skyjacking saucers is going to be a blast.

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Airtight Games
Heritage: Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge
Link: www.airtightgames.com
ETA: Winter

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



Close combat melee moves look a lot of fun.



Cling to vertical cover for hair-raising cliff-face combat.

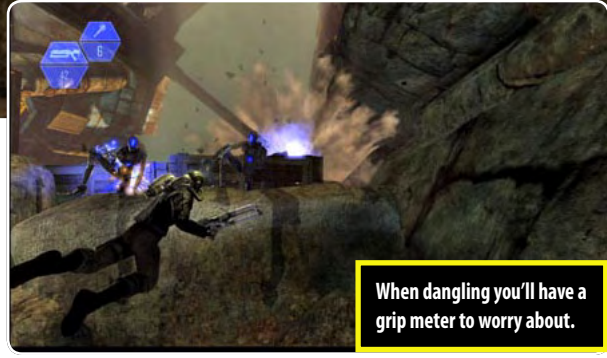
Co-founded by Ed Fries, ex-VP of game publishing at Microsoft during the original Xbox era, and staffed by many of the developers that worked on the excellent Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge, Airtight Games has much to recommend its first game release before we even get to the nuts and bolts of this all-areas sci-fi action adventure.

We say all-areas, because Dark Void's action takes place not only on foot, but also in mid-air, with hover and rocket packs, and up vertical surfaces using an innovative grip system. It's this combination of approaches to combat

that should make Dark Void a unique experience and really open up the truly three-dimensional action. The hover and rocket pack will be used by your character and ex-pilot, Will, to take to the skies for some awesome aerial acrobatics and explosive contact with alien foes. It's able to perform incredibly tight and death-defying stunts through a number of special moves – out-performing even the fighters of Crimson Skies, which were themselves a white-knuckle experience. Will is upgraded to the rocket pack later in the game, and along with the new grip system, this will allow him to

engage in fast and fun aerial mini-games, such as skyjacking alien craft in mid-air and buzzing and blasting some massive bosses.

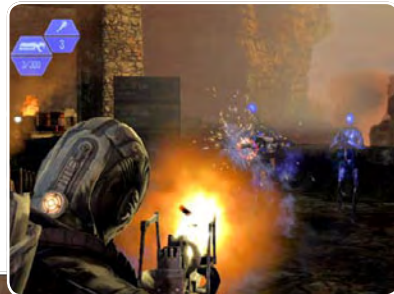
Vertical combat has become an incredibly popular dynamic now, which we've experienced in Assassin's Creed



When dangling you'll have a grip meter to worry about.



Robotic Watcher guards look a little bit Phantom Menace.



I bet they're building a fiendish dimension-crossing device!



> Dark Void continued

and will be seeing in Prototype, Mirror's Edge, The Incredible Hulk, Damnation, Bionic Commando and more. But Dark Void hopes to take it to a new level, with its unique grip system allowing aerial moves such as the UFO skyjacks that we mentioned previously, but also letting Will climb tall verticals, leaping between surfaces and attacking enemies above and below while hanging from thousand-foot drops and taking what cover is available. It's a vulnerable but thrilling experience.

The alien foes you are battling are known as The Watchers, a malevolent and ancient god-like force slowly devouring the universe. The Watchers visited Earth millions of years ago and created the subservient human race to

help their dark dominion. However, certain humans, known as the Adepts, developed superhuman powers and eventually managed to rise against the alien overlords. The Adepts found a way to banish The Watchers to a parallel universe known as the Void (unlucky for that universe, but out of sight, out of mind) and the human race was freed to develop into the planet-loving peaceniks that we've become, and thereby forgetting this troubled period of our distant past.

However, The Watchers weren't that happy with their universal eviction and have been scheming revenge ever since. It's into the Void that our ex-pilot hero Will is thrust after his cargo plane jumps universes after a crash in the

Bermuda triangle. Within the parallel universe of the Void he finds himself the unlikely leader of a resistance group called The Survivors, fighting not only for their own existence, but to thwart The Watchers' new plans for the re-invasion of Earth. It all sounds and looks to us like a cunning mixture of Prey and Crimson Skies, with a healthy dash of Duke Nukem thrown in for good measure. And if it comes close to that winning recipe, we look forward to a massive slice of action. ●

 	HOW COMPLETE? ■■■■■ 75%	FIRST IMPRESSIONS? ■■■■■ 80%
	<i>A thrilling mix of ground and aerial combat</i>	



FIRST SHOTS



Publisher: Ubisoft
Developer: Ubisoft
Heritage: Prince of Persia: Sands of Time trilogy, Assassin's Creed
Link: <http://prince-of-persia.uk.ubi.com>
ETA: Summer

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

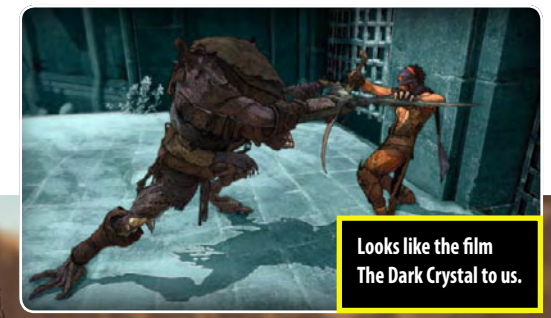
PRINCE OF PERSIA

Corruption is rife in the game formerly known as...

"The Prince is thrust into the primal battle between Ormazd, the god of light, and Ahriman, the god of darkness"



Grip-fall by digging in those talons!



Looks like the film The Dark Crystal to us.



Elika must be magic with such invisible support.

Prince of Persia has reverted to its original 1989 name for this first outing since 2005's Prince of Persia: The Two Thrones, the final part in the Sands of Time trilogy. It's been in development by most of that same Sands of Time team for the three years since, so what we're seeing now is fairly advanced stuff. The new title promises features such as a new illustrative art style, an evolved combat system, open world play and dynamic AI, with the introduction of a new computer-controlled ally called Elika.

The setting for the new game is a land rich in Persian mythology, and the Prince is thrust into the primal battle raging between Ormazd, the god of light, and Ahriman, the god of darkness and destruction. And destruction is what kicks off the story, as the Prince arrives just in time to witness the felling of the legendary Tree of Life. So what? A few angry tree-huggers, you might think. But this act precipitates the descent of the entire world into eternal darkness – we'll definitely take more care pruning the garden this summer.

The darkness spreading through the world is called Corruption, a substance of dark power that physically contaminates all it touches on land and in the air. It's the Prince's task to then side with Ormazd against Ahriman's unleashed evil and free the world of

Corruption, with the help of his new female companion, Elika. Presumably by swinging past Homebase to see if the garden department has a Sapling of Life on offer, then...
Elika is the Prince's dynamic AI companion on this quest and she'll





PRINCE OF PERSIA

> **Prince of Persia** continued

be computer-controlled only, not playable co-op unfortunately. Where the Prince is skilled in acrobatics and armed combat, Elika has magical abilities to supplement her bounding. The Prince and Elika can join forces to unleash devastating fighting combos on the enemies of light, but also combine to achieve new acrobatic moves that help to solve puzzles and send the Prince to heights he'd have been unable to achieve on his own. And she manages all this in a very revealing lacy number that should prove once and for all whether the Prince wears balloon pants as a lifestyle choice, or whether he might one day spawn an heir.

Prince of Persia as a franchise pioneered vertical play, and although every game now seems to want wall-running and ledge-gripping in it, we can expect some exemplary stuff in this new game. The Prince will be able



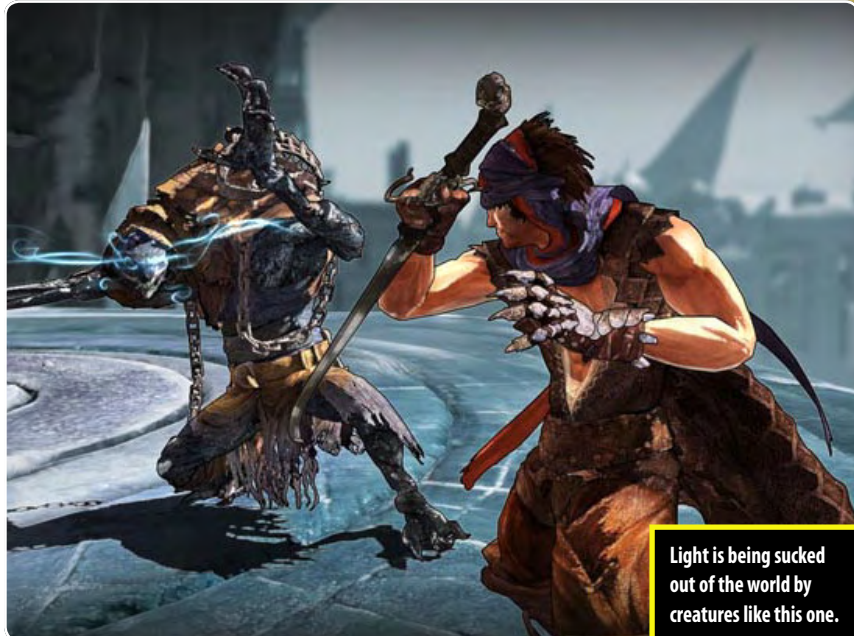
Elika will follow you with the game's advanced AI.

"Prince of Persia now plays over an open world for the first time in the franchise"

to grip-fall down building faces, swing canyons and grab and acrobatically use anything in his reach, which with Elika's help, is now considerable.

It's also an open world for the first time in the franchise, a non-linear adventure where we'll get to choose our own path to revealing the story. Probably in a similar vein to Assassin's Creed. Also shared with Assassin's Creed is the Anvil game engine, although the visuals are quite different, employing an outlined illustrative style more reminiscent of 13, or Crackdown.

Prince of Persia should provide a welcome adventure for those who enjoyed Assassin's Creed and want more, and we suspect that we'll be the first ones to applaud the developers for trying something wholly original with the franchise. Check back in our next issue for more details in our exclusive Prince of Persia interview. ●



Light is being sucked out of the world by creatures like this one.



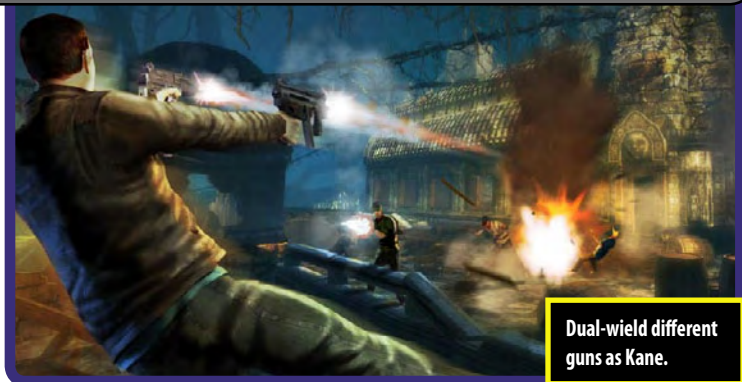
Traverse canyons like a regal lizard.

 	HOW COMPLETE? 80%	FIRST IMPRESSIONS? 85%
	<i>New style, new companion and new moves</i>	



Publisher: TBA
Developer: Gingerbread Studios
Players: 1
Certificate: TBA
Features: Dual heroes, stealth and combat. Aztec setting
ETA: TBA

The Protection Racket



Dual-wield different guns as Kane.

Terrorists, Aztec monsters and a beautiful archaeologist, but definitely no Lara...

The Protector is a new action adventure from recently formed Polish developer Gingerbread Studios. Featuring dual heroes, a South American setting and a mix of mythical and human enemies, it's certainly a spicy proposition.

Can you explain the stealth moves and abilities available to the heroine, Jennifer Guile?

Jennifer does not use firearms, and in most situations she has to hide from enemies to avoid detection. The Protector's stealth system is both intuitive and pretty sophisticated, with enemies using both sight and sound to detect her whereabouts. They also intelligently react to her actions.

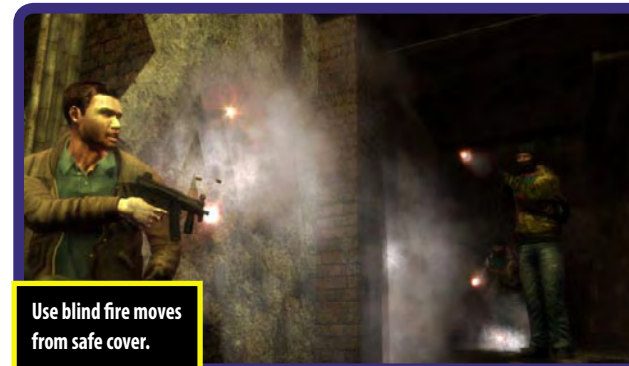
Jennifer's only weapon in the game is a stun gun, which she can use to incapacitate any enemies that she comes across. However, if another enemy stumbles upon an unconscious body they will raise the alarm and all enemies in the area will actively start

searching for her, meaning that you'll need to think carefully about when it's best to use the stun gun.

Jennifer is less visible in darkness, shadows or when crouched. Enemies also pay attention to her movement, so running is often the worst solution as this will create a lot of noise that's more likely to alert any nearby foes. Enemies also have different alarm levels, so they won't just start shooting as soon as they become suspicious of Jennifer's presence. They may think she's someone else when it's dark enough, or attribute the sounds she makes to rodents if she hides quickly. Jennifer can also use the world around her to distract enemies by completing puzzles and mini-games, and by manipulating machinery.

How does Jonathan Kane's cover system work – is it the stop-and-pop style of Gears of War, or closer to something like Rainbow Six or Ghost Recon, for example? >

"Jennifer Guile's only weapon in the game is a stun gun"



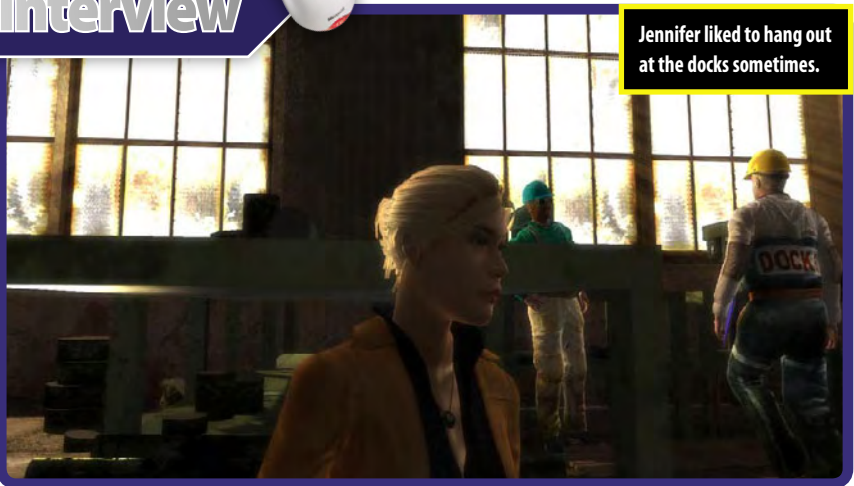
Use blind fire moves from safe cover.



Baddies always love balaclavas, don't they?



Jacek Matuszewski, Head of QA at Gingerbread Studios, and the man who kindly answered our questions.



Jennifer liked to hang out at the docks sometimes.



Aztec ruins provide ample cover opportunities.

“Jennifer most certainly isn’t a copy of any other female character out there”

> Interview continued

We are using a stop-and-use system, whereby you can enter and exit cover with a single button press. We chose this system as it seamlessly allows you to switch between first-person and third-person perspectives. Kane fights from a first-person perspective in the open and then from a third-person perspective when behind cover. He can also lean out from behind cover or blind fire if severely pinned down.

The world of The Protector is also populated by civilians. Why is this important? Are they the ones you’re supposed to be protecting?

Kane’s main aim is to protect Jennifer. However, certain levels contain civilians that intelligently react to the world around them. When a gunfight starts, they will flee or take cover. Most will be lucky enough to escape, but some could be hurt or even be taken hostage. If the latter happens, you will need to rescue them. Some NPCs can

even help you, while some can be quite bothersome – especially when you play as Jennifer, as they may call for security or give away your location.

Who, where, or what is Scarlet Vengeance’s terrorist attack aimed at, and how will an Aztec artifact manage to help them?

We aren’t currently talking about their target in the game, but we can tell you that Scarlet Vengeance is a newly formed terrorist faction intent on wreaking mass destruction. The group is seeking an ancient Aztec artefact of great power in order to help them achieve their goals.

With the ability to shoot through cover and some detailed world physics – including microcosmic environmental destruction and highly advanced enemy AI – are you using an existing game engine, or is it your own? If it’s your own, what were the advantages of starting from scratch?



She had the terrorist goons over a barrel.

We are using our own engine. We’ve been working on it for quite some time and it’s served us well in the past. We’re constantly working to improve it both in visual and gameplay terms. This is quite a demanding task, but it allows us to always be up-to-date and tune the engine to best fit our game. The advantage of using our own engine is that we can freely mould it to the requirements of our game, something that we’ve managed to extensively do for The Protector.

Can you reveal some of the mythical Aztec creatures we’ll be battling?

On the whole, The Protector is a very realistic game. There aren’t hordes of



New York will also feature in The Protector.

zombies or mystical warriors with swords, so you will be fighting against human enemies most of the time. Having said that, there are some areas that our heroes are the first people to visit for hundreds of years. Such places contain special enemies who are huge and powerful enough to survive aeons – and still be very dangerous. I can’t really go into details on these at the moment, but I don’t think that you will be disappointed!

With puzzles, mini-games, a beautiful archaeologist and Aztec/

terrorist themes, should Lara Croft be running scared?

We didn’t want to go down the Lara Croft path. Jennifer is beautiful and witty, but she’s not the type of heroine who runs up vertical walls or uses firearms. Yet she is very skilled and can take care of herself – even if it’s with a little help from Kane. The duo is very well balanced and offers an interesting and varied mix of gameplay styles. Jennifer most certainly isn’t a copy of any other female game character out there; she’s very unique both in terms of her character and her skill set. ●

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Alone in the Dark

Publisher: Atari
Developer: Eden Studios
Heritage: Test Drive Unlimited, Kya: Dark Lineage
Link: www.centraldark.com/index.php
OUT NOW

System Requirements:
Windows Vista or XP,
Pentium 2.6 GHz
processor, 1GB RAM (XP)
2GB RAM (Vista), NVIDIA
GeForce 7800 GTX or
ATI Radeon X1650GT,
4x DVD-ROM

Flashers and winos are the least of Central Park's problems

Edward Carnby is having the kind of day that makes Jack Bauer's life look comparatively mundane. Waking groggily after apparently having been drugged by some mysterious men, he can't remember who he is, nor what he is doing there. It says something that things only really begin to look up for him when an incredibly powerful otherworldly force rips the building apart, just as he's being dragged to the roof to be executed. While this supernatural power tears New York into small pieces, Carnby manages to escape the carnage, only to find himself to be the missing piece of a particularly convoluted story puzzle. In other

words, he's the one to save us all from the destruction of the world. The story might be hokum, but it's good quality hokum, with Carnby's surprisingly old everyman hero joined by art dealer Sara Flores, the two forming an unlikely bond as the game progresses – so much for being alone in the dark. While the pair's dialogue – and that of the incidentals – is peppered rather too liberally with the F-word (one extra will be particularly proud of perhaps the most profane four-line role we've ever seen), they're both likeable characters, and the story sequences throw them plenty of twists and revelations, which are dealt with well by the voice actors.



Even the New York subway system has cracks in it. Despite being based around a very small area, there's a surprising variety in the locations.



Edward Carnby, who's much older than he looks on the box.

Indeed, the entire game has a cinematic bravado about it, with the player frequently thrown into intense action scenarios filmed with a Spielbergian eye – racing sections zoom out and slow down to show crumbling buildings and prodigious leaps over giant fissures, while you'll frequently be forced to shimmy across narrow ledges or swing from cables

TOGETHER, ALONE

Some of the horrors that await you in *Alone in the Dark*...



10 MINUTES
Dodging falling masonry, as buildings crumble around you in the best disaster-movie traditions.



90 MINUTES
Weaving in and out of traffic – and more falling buildings – as you try to uncover your shady past.



3 HOURS
Bats out of hell! The 'vampirz' fight back in the heart of Central Park.

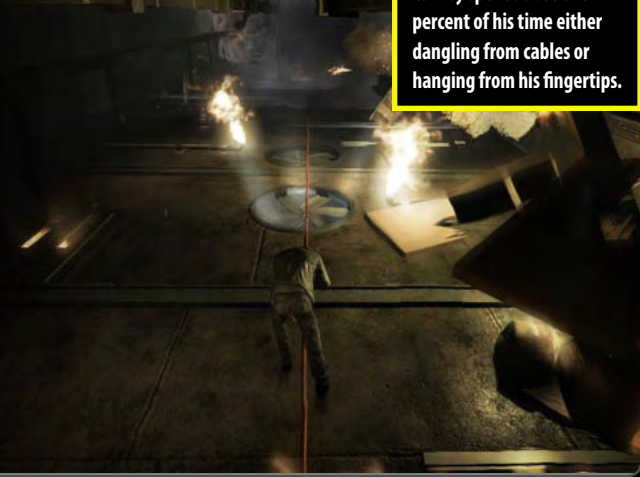


5 HOURS
Helicopters aren't meant to descend quite like this. Another dangling-ledge scenario to get through.



7 HOURS
Getting to the root of the problem, then it's off to the final gate, and... well, that would be telling.

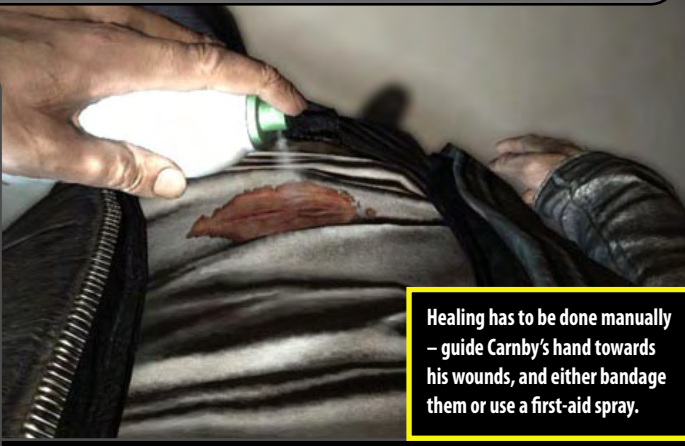




Carnby spends about 20 percent of his time either dangling from cables or hanging from his fingertips.



The opening – viewed from the first person – is quite disorientating.



Healing has to be done manually – guide Carnby's hand towards his wounds, and either bandage them or use a first-aid spray.



> Alone in the Dark cont.

as cars and buses tumble downwards toward you. Boss fights are dramatic while remaining commendably straightforward, and production values are generally high throughout the whole of the game.

Moreover, the DVD-style chapter select is brilliantly thought out, and remarkably accomplished. Should you find yourself repeating a level too many times, and simply want to progress the

“Production values are generally high throughout the whole game”

story without struggling through once more, you can skip to the next section. Chapters are broken up into multiple segments, while certain stages are split yet further into several checkpoints. You'll never miss out on any key story elements, particularly as you're given a 'previously on...' recap when you return. The same applies when you reload a saved game – a real boon if you've not played it for a few days. The structure works extremely well for the most part – although lengthy sessions mean the near-constant peril becomes almost numbing, it's not intended to be played through in one or two

sittings. It's the perfect game to put on for an hour or two and return to the following evening. Though occasionally those plot cliffhangers will tempt you into playing on.

While Alone in the Dark takes a few notes from the survival horror handbook, its puzzles are a cut above the jarringly incongruous examples in the likes of Resident Evil. Progress is rarely a matter of backtracking a significant distance to find a key item, because the chances are that Carnby will either possess the materials required, or will find them present in the same room or just a short walk away. And even when you're seemingly in need of something you dropped half an hour before, the game encourages you to improvise. Combine double-sided tape, a bottle containing

ETERNAL FLAME

Come on baby, light my fire...



The plan

The set-up

The pay-off

Fuelish boy

An obstruction to get rid of? A group of enemies to take out? Fire is the best way to deal with the problem. Start off by jabbing an abandoned car's fuel tank with a screwdriver so it starts dripping onto the ground.





Jumping from ledge to ledge, or gathering enough momentum from a swing is surprisingly tricky.

> Alone in the Dark cont.

flammable liquid and a bandage, and you've got yourself a sticky Molotov cocktail – for blowing down doors or, alternatively, a very messy way of despatching your enemies.

Alone in the Dark gets so much right that it's with great regret that we have to harshly criticise it for failing so badly on what should be the basics. It's the kind of game that, with a few extra months of development time, would almost certainly be much better. As it is, the movement is very clunky indeed, with Carnby unable to turn very well in close quarters. He can do an immediate about-face, but that's not always helpful when an enemy is nibbling at your left leg. Worse still is the inventory system – a convoluted metagame that

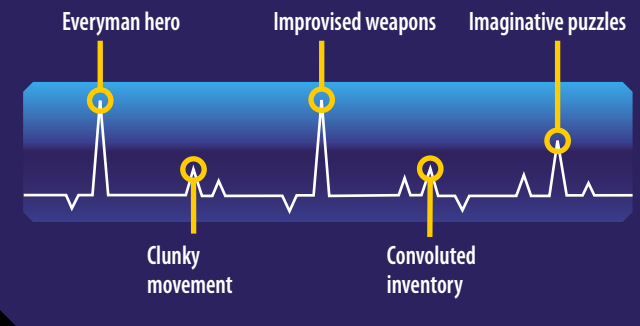
“There are moments with Alone in the Dark that you won't soon forget”

sees Carnby reaching into his coat pockets to equip and combine items, or to heal his own wounds. It wouldn't be quite so bad if the game paused while you did this, but you'll often succumb to frustrating deaths simply because you were trying to administer



Eden is clearly proud of its fire tech, and uses it wherever possible.

PULSOMETER *Signs of life*



first-aid spray and the game wouldn't let you do it quick enough. Admittedly, this frantic fumbling adds to the tension, but Alone in the Dark is not an easy game, and with a more intuitive menu system, these problems could have been avoided.

These elements, and a series of small but noticeable glitches, betray a rushed end to the four-year development of a game that thinks outside the box often enough to merit purchase. While you may be left slightly disappointed come the climax, there are moments spent with Alone in the Dark that you won't soon forget. And for those moments, it's just about worth the asking price. ●

Chris Schilling

PCGZine Verdict

A flawed gem – ambitious but awkward.

- 👍 Tremendously exciting in places
- 👍 New ideas – many of which work...
- 👎 ...while some *really* don't

80%





WIN!

10 COPIES OF ALONE IN THE DARK!

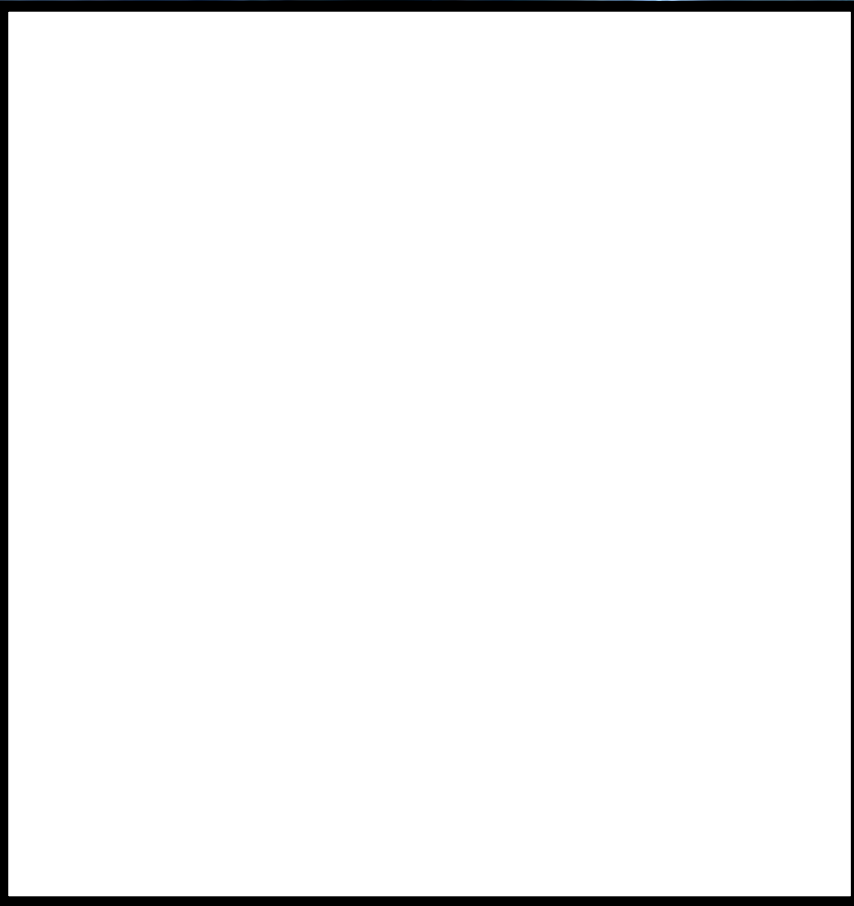
Win the nightmare of a lifetime in New York's Central Park...

Competition closes 24th July 2008. See website for full T&Cs.

● To celebrate the long-awaited release of *Alone in the Dark*, the cutting-edge horror set in the supernaturally-infested Central Park, Atari has generously set us up with 10 copies of the game to give away. As you'll read in our review this issue, *Alone in the Dark* marks the red-hot return of our favourite

fire-starter Edward Carnby, and he's got a burning desire to rid New York of its least-welcome denizens.

To be in with a chance of winning one of these 10 game prizes, simply answer the question opposite...



ALONE IN THE DARK





Publisher: EA
Developer: BioWare
Heritage: Neverwinter Nights, Jade Empire, KOTOR
Link: www.masseffect.com
OUT NOW

System Requirements:
2.4+ GHz Intel or 2.0+ GHz AMD CPU, 1GB RAM (XP)/2GB RAM (Vista), NVIDIA GeForce 6 series (6800 GT or better) or ATI X1300 XT graphics card

Mass Effect

A true space epic

As bad as it may sound, we were a bit cautious when we first came across Mass Effect. Having experienced the dizzy heights of Knights of the Old Republic, we were looking forward to playing a third instalment in the series, but instead we got this. Mass Effect. An epic space opera, without the Star Wars license. And for some reason, this worried us.

Maybe it was just our previous experience with 'epic' sci-fi games tainting us, but without the Star Wars license, we were concerned Mass Effect may have been a bit of a dud. It's lucky

for you then, that our paranoia was badly misplaced, as Mass Effect is, quite simply, one of the greatest RPGs of all time. And here's why...

To use an old cliché, the world of Mass Effect is like nothing else out there. By stepping away from the Star Wars license, BioWare has been granted the freedom necessary to let their creativity shine. The whole world (or galaxy, even) feels like a living, breathing place – the species you come across are all incredibly varied, the characters multi-dimensional, and the writing is top-notch.

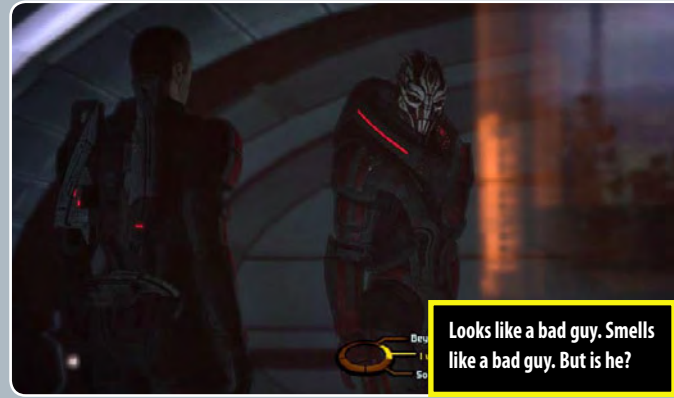


"Mass Effect is one of the greatest RPGs of all time"



Travelling the galaxy in your huge spaceship, landing on planets and exploring at your own free will. Stuff dreams are made of.

And the quality of the writing is something of a sticking point here, as it lends itself perfectly to Mass Effect's refined conversation system. Rather than choosing the line you want to say, you simply pick the gist of where you want your character to take the conversation, and Shepard (the main character in the game) responds as you command. This not only eliminates the problem of having to read through three huge choices, and then sit as your character reads it out, but it also makes conversations flow a lot quicker, helping it all feel more natural. In fact, the only real problem we had with the conversation system is that, occasionally, we'd choose an option and our character would say something in a completely different tone to how we'd imagined. Annoying alien diplomats because your character said something you hadn't intended them to say isn't all that much fun, and is a glaring oversight in an otherwise brilliant system.

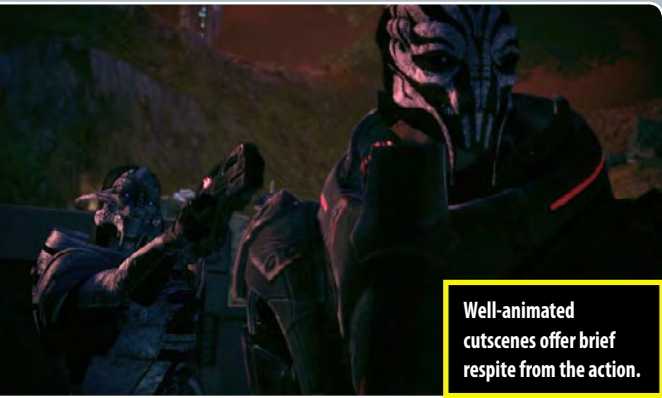


Looks like a bad guy. Smells like a bad guy. But is he?



At times, the graphics in Mass Effect are beyond beautiful.





Well-animated cutscenes offer brief respite from the action.

> Mass Effect continued

The fighting in Mass Effect is as solid as you could hope, with all manner of bells and whistles added to the standard realtime combat. Playing out a lot like Tabula Rasa, the battles feel like a slightly slower Gears of War – you can crouch behind cover, strafe and try all sorts of other athletic manoeuvres, and this helps combat move a lot faster. Issuing orders to your teammates is simple, and intuitive, though it's certainly not needed, as the AI is more than capable of taking care of itself.

And although it's come many months after the 360 release, the PC edition is by far the definitive version, and comes with all sorts of added extras. For one, the downloadable content, which 360 users had to pay for, is available free of charge, and there's been a selection of other impressive enhancements too, from nicer graphics, to a more precise

control system, which is all thanks to the intuitive mouse and keyboard.

All in all, Mass Effect is one of the finest RPGs we've played. Everything about it just oozes brilliance, creativity, and fun. Up there with Oblivion, this should give PC owners a reason to stay locked up indoors over the summer. Who needs that sunshine anyway? ●

Ian Morris



You can't say the environments aren't varied.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Three reasons why Mass Effect is a very special game indeed



- Freedom
- Chatty
- Level up

Freedom

If there's one word that describes Mass Effect, it's freedom. When you take control of a spaceship then there's an entire galaxy waiting to be explored, with each new world potentially holding new treasures, weapons, quests, and even entire races.



He's behind you!



In space, all women will wear tight, shiny catsuits.

PCGZine Verdict

Epic really doesn't begin to describe it.

- Great story
- Creative characters
- Epic space adventure

93%



Publisher: Kalypso Media
Developer: Ironclad Games
Heritage: Homeworld:
 Cataclysm
Link: www.sinsofasolar
 empire.com
OUT NOW

System Requirements:
 Windows XP SP2/
 Windows Vista, 1.8 GHz
 Single-Core Processor,
 512 MB RAM (1GB for
 Windows Vista), 128MB
 DirectX 9 3D Video Card
 (Radeon 9600/GeForce FX
 6600 and above), DirectX
 9.0c Compatible Sound
 Card, DVD-ROM Drive,
 3GB Hard Drive Space



Sins of a Solar Empire

Your space or mine?

It's fair to say that the realtime strategy genre is full of games which are all about racing to build as many offensive units as possible and annihilating your opponent as quickly as possible. And while there's nothing actually wrong with that, it's refreshing to find that Sins of a Solar Empire adopts a much more thoughtful, tactical approach to the genre.

After some fairly lengthy but thorough tutorials (a hint: be sure to study the advanced ones in detail if you want to get anywhere, as you'll really need the advice it gives you later in the game) you can pick from a series of games, ranging from short two-race kill-or-be-killed races to lengthy, three-on-three battles where you've a whole

"Sins is a game provides just enough for you to get your teeth into without having to micro-manage a million things at once"

galaxy of stars to conquer. Don't be fooled into thinking that even the tiniest games will be over in a flash though, as this is strategy at its most glacially-paced... and it benefits enormously from the reduction in speed.

The reason why it needs to be so slow is that there's a lot to take in, particularly given that you're operating in realtime. While it doesn't have the same depth as Galactic Civilisations 2, it simply wouldn't have worked at that level. Instead you've got a game which provides just enough for you to get your teeth into without having to micro-manage a million things at once. It's tricky enough to flit between your colonies, researching, upgrading, defending and attacking simultaneously – when things get intense you're bound to lose track of half the stuff that's going on as it is.

It's a pity in some ways that there's no dedicated campaign mode, though strategists of all mentalities will find a



There's a bewildering array of areas to research – some of which, for example, will allow you to colonise previously uninhabitable ice and volcanic planets.

THREE DEADLY SINS

A brief indispensable guide on how to guarantee success in Sins



Create

Share

Destroy!

Go to Homebase

Your space army will take some time to build up – and don't be tempted into simply developing an armada of attack ships, otherwise you'll likely fall prey to pirates or sneaky enemy raids. Sins is a real balancing act, right from the off – make sure at least your home base is well-defended before moving out.





The fully zoomed-in view isn't that useful for strategic purposes, but it provides a great view of the more intense battles.

> Sins continued

game type to suit them, and there are plenty of options to tweak – you can increase or decrease build speed, the rate at which your culture increases, whether raiding parties of pirates are involved or not – about the only audience not catered for is the casual gamer, who'll likely be overwhelmed five minutes into the tutorial.

Sins benefits hugely from a very user-friendly interface, which is a credit to the game's designers. While there's plenty of screen furniture, it's all

"While the slow pace of Sins won't be for everyone, it makes the strategy game feel epic again"

necessary, giving the player access to their entire empire from the one screen (though you'll have to enter menus to go into research trees and such). And the graphics are terrific – it's always clear what's going on, and simply hovering the mouse over any unit or planet instantly lets you know its condition. The sound samples are a little repetitive, but we love the way the music changes according to your current situation, fading in the bombastic brass as you zoom in towards a planet with a battle taking place above the surface.

The game's learning curve may be fairly steep, but that just makes your eventual victory all the more satisfying. And Sins is full of goosebump-inducing moments, too – like when a set of enemies venture into your home planet's gravity well, and a wave of lasers rains down on their position. Or when one of your weak frigates is getting a hammering in battle, only for your capital ships to phase jump into the action to protect the bullied craft. While its slow pace won't be for everyone, Sins makes the strategy game feel epic again. ●

Chris Schilling



Cleaning up the straggling enemy forces after dominating the galaxy is quite time consuming.



Pirates hunt in packs of fairly small ships, but they can do a lot of damage in numbers.

PCGZine Verdict

It would be a massive sin to miss this brilliant RTS.

- 👍 Terrific interface and deep gameplay
- 👍 Hungrily eats away your spare time
- 👎 Hungrily eats away your spare time

90%





LEGO Indiana Jones: The Original Adventures

Publisher: LucasArts
Developer: Traveller's Tales
Heritage: LEGO Star Wars
Link: www.lucasarts.com/games/legoindianajones
OUT NOW

System Requirements:
P3 1GHz; 256MB RAM (512MB for Vista); 128MB graphics card with Shader Model 2.0 Compatibility, Windows XP/Vista

Grab your whip and hat as Indiana Jones gets the LEGO treatment

If you've never played a Star Wars-themed LEGO game then you've really been missing out. Taking the best scenes from the movies and setting them in a LEGO world teeming with humorous characters and fun puzzles, the franchise was a complete and utter triumph. Next up for the LEGO makeover is Indiana Jones...

Just like its space-based predecessors, LEGO Indiana Jones is a triumphant mix of action, puzzle solving and combat that'll be instantly familiar to anyone who's played LEGO



Many puzzles require two characters to work cooperatively.

Star Wars. However, while the Star Wars games were heavily reliant on combat, the bias here tilts more towards exploration and puzzle solving. That's not to say that there's not plenty of combat, which mainly revolves around melee action (fists, whips, shovels, spears and the like) rather than long range firefights.

There's an eclectic collection of enemies to pulverise into little LEGO bricks, ranging from giant spiders to spear-wielding tribesmen. While the combat has its moments, the scarcity

of ranged weapons ensures that battling enemies is never quite as satisfying as it was in LEGO Star Wars.

LEGO Indy's action often deviates from the trilogy's plot far more than its intergalactic cousins. However, this looser translation of the celluloid versions works exceedingly well, as you never quite know what's coming next. When you do reach a familiar passage, you're hit by a wave of satisfying nostalgia as the action is driven forward by John Williams' original and rousing musical score. So far so good then. ➤

One of the most iconic scenes in action movie history.



THE BONES OF JONES

Unearthing the game's hidden gems



Together as one

Scene is believing

Back to school

Double trouble

Some puzzles require two characters to work in tandem, with the AI often taking care of the second character's actions. However, there's also an option for a second player to jump into the action at any time. Playing cooperatively ensures the game becomes even more entertaining as you and a friend work together, rather than you having to rely on the occasionally stagnant AI.





"All of your favourite characters from the movies are present and playable"

You get to play as some of the bad guys too.

> **LEGO Indiana Jones** cont.

All of your favourite characters from the movies are present and playable, including Indy's dad (who can translate ancient texts), Marion (who can jump higher than males) and even pint-sized sidekick Short Round makes a brief appearance to fit through small gaps that Indy cannot reach.

Fittingly, Indy remains the most satisfying character, using his whip to

attack enemies, swing over ravines and pull objects that are out of reach. He's also adept at fist fighting, with a few well-executed and entertainingly animated throw moves adding some variety to the knuckle pounding.

As you'd expect, collecting LEGO bricks is a key factor throughout, and a few great touches, such as some characters possessing phobias (e.g. Willie is terrified of bugs, while Indy's dad can't abide vermin) ensuring there

are always plenty of obstacles to work your way over, through and under.

Despite its high entertainment values, LEGO Indy isn't without its problems. Some clumsy design issues – such as having to run out of an area to reset a puzzle if you get it wrong the first time – and some suspect camera angles mar an otherwise polished product. There's also no keyboard and mouse control options, leaving you struggling with the clumsy keyboard setup or resorting to a controller.

Niggles aside, The Original Adventures is another triumphant collaboration between Lucas and LEGO. Its forgiving nature (the game gives you infinite lives) and lashings of tongue-in-cheek humour are perfectly complemented by a host of brainteasing – though never infuriating – puzzles and lashings and lashings of combat. If you found the latest Indiana Jones movie a disappointment, then this might be the perfect tonic to remind you just how entertaining our favourite archaeologist's earlier adventures were. ●

Steve Brown



If you don't have a bag of sand to use...



Many scenes will be instantly familiar from the films.



Most of the combat consists of melee action.



PCGZine Verdict

A rip-roaring ride for gamers of every age.

- 👍 A great mix of puzzles and humour
- 👍 Faithful to the movies
- 👎 Some annoying glitches

85%





Lost Cases of Sherlock Holmes

Publisher: Legacy Interactive
Developer: Legacy Interactive
Price: £9.99

More of a casual game than a true adventure, the Lost Cases of Sherlock Holmes is an interesting, if limited, collection of puzzles that's a lot more addictive than it sounds. There are 16 cases for you to solve here, each of which can be completed by mostly spotting the difference between two pictures, and then completing a simple 'Guess Who' style game. With 100 puzzles on offer, there's plenty to keep you going here, but admittedly, it won't strain your cranium too much.



Roogoo

Publisher: SouthPeak
Developer: SpiderMonk
Price: £9.99

With primary school colours, and a cute teddy bear as its main star, you could be forgiven for thinking Roogoo's been aimed at children. Basically, it's a simple enough concept, as all that Roogoo requires you to do is match the shaped blocks to the correct hole (nothing too taxing on the brain there, then), but in practice this is anything but easy. And then, when multiple blocks start falling like some kind of painful thunderstorm and the requirements get higher, Roogoo becomes one of the more insane games you'll ever stumble across. It's a good way to waste a few hours, but it's certainly not a peaceful one.



Rhodan: Myth of the Illochim

Publisher: Deep Silver
Developer: 3D-IO
Price: £14.98

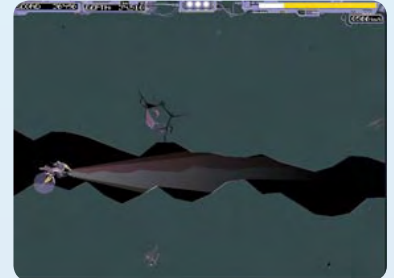
Based on the sci-fi adventures of Perry Rhodan (no, we've never heard of him either), this is a standard point-and-click adventure, which does very little to differentiate itself from the pack. Though it does feature some stunning pre-rendered vistas that often bring back memories of Beneath a Steel Sky, Rhodan's gameplay is about as generic as they come, with unintelligent puzzles, and an over-reliance on the try-everything-with-everything-else-until-something-clicks approach.



Dracula Origin

Publisher: Ascaron
Developer: Frogwares
Price: £19.99

The second point-and-click adventure this month, Dracula Origin is practically the complete opposite of Rhodan. While it may be visually dismal, the game actually has some decent and moderately intelligent puzzles, although the overall pacing and general yawn-worthy nature of proceedings is sure to put many off. At times, the game's vampire-hunting story can be engaging, but what little interest there is in the plot is almost completely eliminated by the shockingly bad voice acting, and London accents worse than you'll hear in most school plays.



Thrustburst

Publisher: <http://umlautgames.net/thrustburst/>
Developer: Umlautgames
Price: Free!

This is the first game from brand new independent developers, Umlautgames, and it's a decent slice of old-school gaming that's also enormously playable, too. Thrustburst is a thrilling, cave-exploring game, with more than a slight hint of the old game R-Type to it. Tasked with heading towards the core of an asteroid, it's up to you to skim the sides of a narrow shaft, avoiding the automated defences as you go. The initially tricky controls make an already challenging game even harder, but the graphics and old-school gameplay more than make up for it. There are many worse ways to waste your lunch break than this.

- Great presentation
- Varied puzzles
- Not hard enough

Elementary... **80%**

- Offline multiplayer
- Great concept
- No online multiplayer

Cute, but deadly **88%**

- Great visuals
- Nostalgic stuff
- Disappointing gameplay

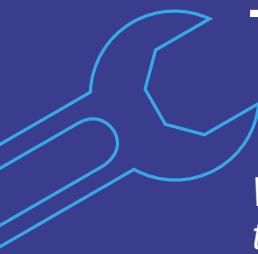
Perry who? **65%**

- Good puzzles
- Dull story
- Awful voice acting

It sucks **60%**

- Looks great
- Tense
- Steep learning curve

Deeper underground **75%**



Tech Support

We've received so many emails asking for advice, we thought we'd better open up a dedicated help desk. Send your questions to help.pcgzine@gamerzines.com



Neil Mohr has been playing with and playing on PCs for over a decade

THE CONAN CONNECTION

I bought the new Conan game recently and haven't been able to play it yet. I've installed the game but I can't install the patches. I keep getting the message 'Fatal Error: could not connect to patch server'. I've tried reloading the game three times and running the Config Verifier. What's going on?

> We've heard a number of Vista users having the same problem, and the solution appears to be either incorrect firewall settings or not running Vista as an

administrator. To check the firewall, select Start Menu > Control Panel > Control Panel Home > Allow a program through Windows Firewall – which is under the Security section. Check the list for Conan, and if it's not there use the Add program... button to do just that.

If you're not logged on as an administrator you won't be able to change the firewall settings. To check if you're an administrator or not, open the Start Menu, type User Accounts and press Return.

CONAN THE AGED

I've tried all the fixes I could find so far but can't get past the patch updater deal. As soon as I hit play it closes and a few seconds later I get this error: 'Failed to initialize rendering subsystem'. I tried deleting the preferences for Conan but that folder was empty.

> The game requires a Shader Model 2.0 compliant card with hardware T&L. Typically, a system with integrated Intel graphics – many laptops or low-end desktop PCs – will fail this basic requirement. Otherwise all you need is either a Radeon 9800/GeForce 5800 or newer graphics card.



It's the most beautiful-looking MMO to date and that means graphical problems.

"I bought the new Conan game recently and haven't been able to play it yet"

However, you can try the following. Make sure hidden files are visible by choosing Control Panel > Folder Options > View and selecting See hidden files and folders. Browse to the Conan preference folder found on Vista at Users\[user name]\AppData\Local\Funcom\Conan\Prefs with XP: Documents and Settings\[username]\Local Settings\Application Data\Funcom\Conan. Open the prefs_2.xml file in Notepad and edit the line < Value name="RenderSetting_ShaderModel" value="1" /> changing the 1 to a 0. We'd also recommend you choose as low a resolution as possible.

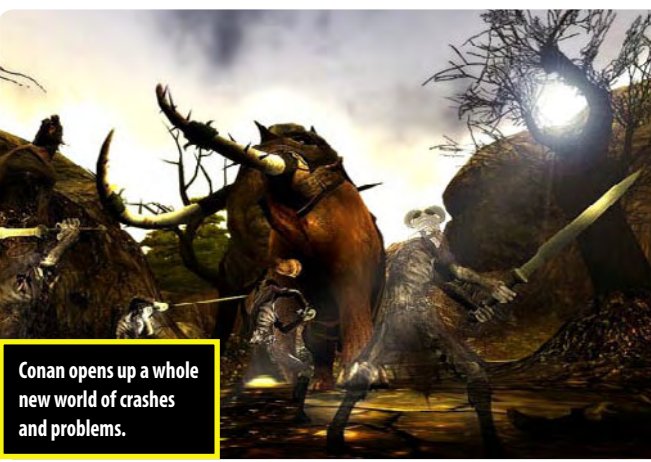
CONAN THE CORRUPT

After my system crashed playing Age of Conan, it wouldn't reappear. I spotted the ConanPatcher in the Taskmanager but nothing was happening. I've uninstalled and reinstalled but the patcher just hangs.

> It seems you've corrupted some part of Conan. The best solution is to remove the directory and start again from scratch, but you'll need to use the command prompt. Press Windows + R > Type CMD > Click OK. Type CD USERS > CD "yourusername" > CD AppData > CD Local. To remove the Conan directory type



There's a high chance of an epic loincloth failure here.



Conan opens up a whole new world of crashes and problems.





Tech Support

> RD /s FUNCOM and press return. Reinstall and it should work.

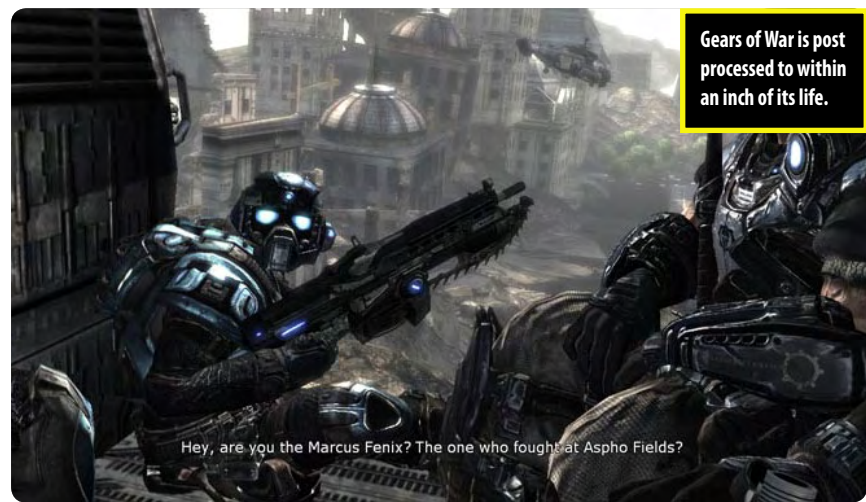
JAMMED GEARS

I've been playing single-player Gears of War for a little while now but I've got to a point in the game when it's repeatedly locking up, and it's obviously starting to irritate me hugely. It's the section where you're proceeding to a power station through a car park. I can Alt-Tab out of the game with no problem and the music still plays but otherwise I'm stuck!

> We've seen this before with GoW and AMD cards. You'll need to reduce your graphics settings to solve the problem. We'd suggest reducing the two Post Processing Effects settings to their minimum, and if that fails try reducing the screen resolution.

WHEELY NOT FUN

I've been looking forward to Race



Gears of War is post processed to within an inch of its life.

Driver GRID for ages, and now I've got my hands on it my Logitech steering wheel won't work with it properly. There's no force feedback and the axis seem to be the wrong way around.

> Logitech indicates there are two problems. One can be if you plugged in the wheel before installing its drivers. The

axis issue has a fix at www.wingman-team.com – grab the new Clear Calibration utility. Codemasters also say the next GRID patch should help clear up the force feedback issue, but that could also be resolved if a fresh version of the wheel's Gaming Software (5.03) is released. Again keep an eye on www.wingmanteam.com for this.



Force feedback wheels are awesome fun, when they work.

"Codemasters say the next GRID patch should clear up the force feedback issue"

TWO IN ONE

I have a single AMD Radeon HD 3870 and I'm using both DVI outputs with the S-video going to a TV. Can I add an additional VGA card for a projector? Will the display output to all of these work? If so, do I need to stick with AMD, so the Catalyst Control Center will see and control the new video output?

> Windows XP supports up to 10 individual monitor outputs. These can be generated from any sort of onboard card, PCI, AGP or PCIe. They don't even have to be the same make, so you can mix NVIDIA or AMD. However, if you want to improve 3D acceleration and your motherboard has two 16x PCIe slots dropping in another AMD Radeon will add another three outputs.

More cards, more fun...



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