FREE!

Issue 22 | November 2008

PLAYZINE

Free Magazine for Handheld and Wii Gamers. Pass it on to your friends and family

HIP HOPPER!

LOCOROCO 2

The series rolls on!



REVIEWED!



PES 2009

Can it beat FIFA this year?

EXCLUSIVE!

CALL OF DUTY WORLD AT WAR

Could this be the best one yet? Find out in our massive preview and exclusive interview!

EXCLUSIVE!



GEON

Pac-Man updated?

PREVIEWED!



HOT NEWS!



GUITAR HERO: ON TOUR DECADES

Axe murdered?

FIRST LOOK!



DEADLY CREATURES

Exclusive info and interview!

PREVIEWED!

ANIMAL CROSSING: CITY FOLK

The hit game comes to the Wii!





POPSTAR GUITAR

Guitar Hero gets another rival!

PLAYZINE

Welcome



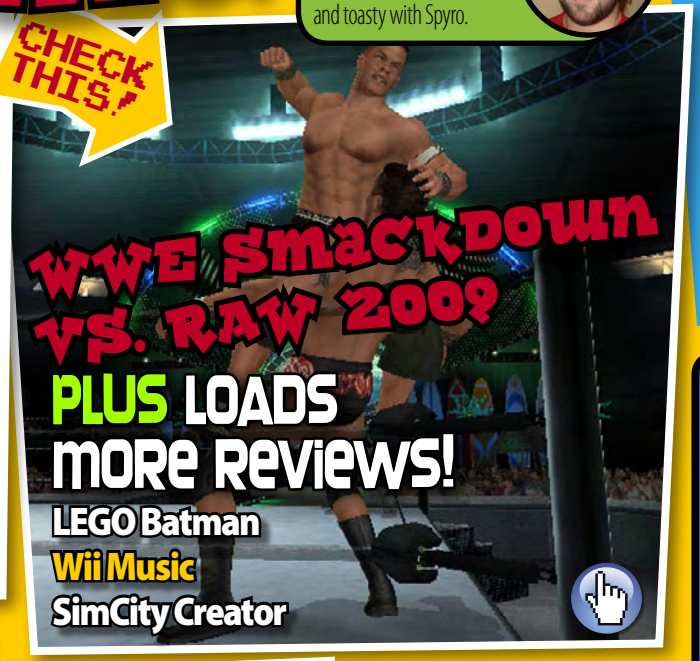
Made your present list for Christmas yet? If so, then I reckon some of the games in this issue could be on the list, as we've got another batch of gems for you. If not, then you should dive straight into the mag, as there's sure to be something here for everyone. As always, enjoy the mag and keep in touch!

Dean Mortlock, Editor
HGZine@gamerzines.com



Chris Schilling
PlayZine's regular reviewer got swinging with Spidey and toasty with Spyro.

CHECK THIS!



WWE SmackDown vs. Raw 2009

PLUS LOADS MORE REVIEWS!
LEGO Batman
Wii Music
SimCity Creator

DON'T MISS THIS!



Call of Duty: World at War

PLUS TONS MORE PREVIEWS, INCLUDING...
PES 2009 (Wii)
PopStar Guitar
Animal Crossing (Wii)

Guitar Hero: On Tour Decades

DS to get timely Guitar Hero sequel!



PES 2009 Reviewed!





Damien McFerran
. . .is definitely not scared of spiders!

QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away!

PREVIEWS

NINTENDO WII
Animal Crossing: City Folk
Call of Duty: World at War
Deadly Creatures
Geon
PES 2009
PopStar Guitar

NINTENDO DS
Guitar Hero: On Tour Decades
Call of Duty: World at War

PSP
LocoRoco 2

REVIEWS

NINTENDO WII
SmackDown vs. Raw 2009
LEGO Batman
Wii Music
SimCity Creator

NINTENDO DS
Spider-Man: Web of Shadows
The Legend of Spyro: Dawn of the Dragon

SONY PSP
PES 2009
R-Type Tactics



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If you are reading this, then you didn't choose "Play" when Adobe Reader asked you about multimedia when you opened the magazine.

Without the multimedia playing, the magazine will look correct, but you will be missing out on all of the extra content built into each issue, like videos, animated screenshots, annotations, quizzes, competitions and more.

We recommend you close and re-open the magazine and select "Play" when asked about the multimedia to enjoy the magazine as intended.

Animal Crossing: Let's Go to the City



info

FROM: Nintendo
A BIT LIKE...
The original Animal Crossing
WEB: www.nintendo.co.uk/NOE/en_GB/games/wii/animal_crossing_lets_go_to_the_city_9586.html
OUT: 5th December

Wii

If Wii could talk to the animals...

Latest News

WHAT'S THE STORY?

Animal Crossing comes to the Wii, and it looks like it's coming in style. Most important of all is the WiiSpeak connection, allowing you to talk to up to three other mates at the same time.

WHAT DO WE KNOW SO FAR?

The joy of the game is that you'll have an incredibly large amount of freedom in your city – from decorating your house to checking out a show and going Trick or Treating.

WHEN DO WE GET MORE?

The game's out next month, so we should be able to squeeze a review in the next issue. We're quietly confident about this one, though.

ANYTHING ELSE THAT WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT?

The secret to success in the game is making friends with the many animals in the various cities you travel around. Give animals gifts and letters (they can read, apparently) and you've got a friend there for life. Oh, and have we already mentioned the WiiSpeak chat facility? Oh, okay then...



Best Bit

If you attach the new WiiSpeak microphone – which you place on the top of the sensor bar – and invite three friends online, then you can have a realtime chat with your mates while you play the game. We reckon that this could be communal gaming at its very best.



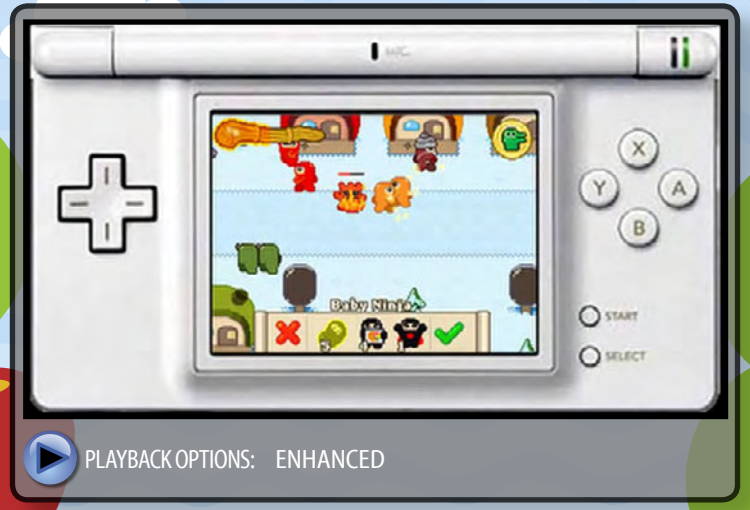


"A must have for strategy game fans everywhere"
9.0/10 GameZone

"A genuinely fun and addictive experience"
9.0/10 Game Informer

THEIR TOWN IN YOUR HANDS

Editor's Choice Award
IGN.COM EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD



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www.ninjatown.com

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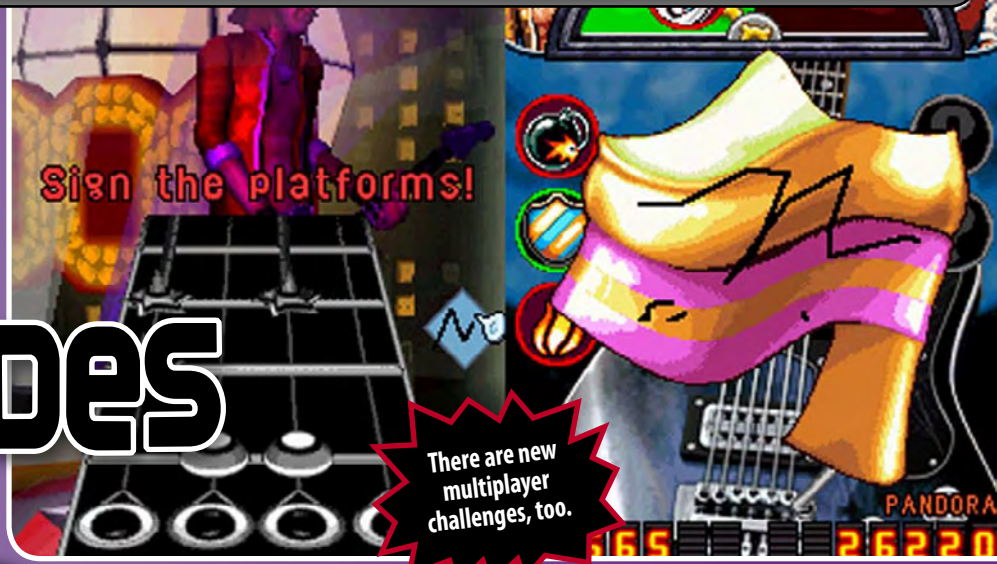
CONTROL Close Issue Print Page Search Issue Zoom In Zoom Out Toggle Full Screen Previous Page Next Page

GUITAR HERO: ON TOUR DECADES

info

FROM: Activision
A BIT LIKE…
Guitar Hero: On Tour
WEB: www.guitarhero.com/ghot
OUT: November

DS



For those about to rock… we salute you!

Latest News

WHAT'S THE STORY?

For those of you not totally crippled by the Grip adaptor for the DS version of Guitar Hero, here's the sequel. There are 28 new songs, covering the 70's right up to the modern day. And while they're not all classics, there are some real gems to be found.

WHAT DO WE KNOW SO FAR?

The main new feature of the game is 'Song Sharing', which allows you to share songs from both Decades and the original On Tour with other users via a wireless connection. Neat.



WHEN DO WE GET MORE?

The game's out very shortly, so we'll have the full and definitive review for you in the next issue of PlayZine.

ANYTHING ELSE THAT WE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT?

There are now three Career modes to play through – Lead Guitar, Bass Guitar and Guitar Duel. Rumours are that the next version will include a pair of miniature drumsticks are, as yet, totally unsubstantiated…

Best Bit

As its name suggests, Decades takes some classics from the 70's right through to the present day. This means you get tracks from the likes of Queen, REM, Red Hot Chili Peppers and Fall Out Boy. There's some real gems in the list too, so there's sure to be something for everyone.





PLAYZINE on its way

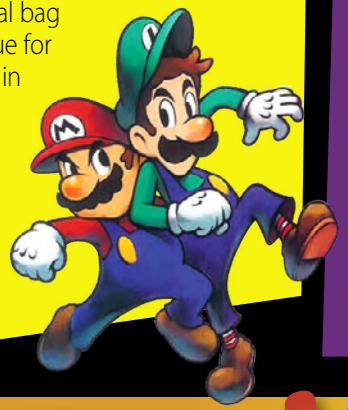
incoming

We've seen the future of gaming, and it's good!

Mario & Luigi RPG 3

FROM: Nintendo **OUT:** 2009

If you liked Mario & Luigi: Partners in Time then this recently announced sequel should have you excited. Very little is known about the game at the moment, but an early sneak peek suggests that the same riveting gameplay is present, and you'll even be able to play as perennial bag guy Bowser. It's due for release sometime in 2009 – we're guessing the latter half – so Nintendo has plenty of time to pack it with goodness.





Punch Out

FROM: Nintendo **OUT:** 2009

Few of you will be old enough to remember the NES version of Punch Out, but it was pretty great – so great in fact that many fans insist that it hasn't been bettered in 20 years. That might change soon though, as Nintendo has revealed it's working on a sequel for the Wii. With a 3D 'cel-shaded' look that apes the cartoonish appearance of the original game, this has the potential to take EA's Facebreaker to the full 10 rounds.

Shrek Carnival Craze: Party Games



FROM: Activision **OUT:** 21st November

The popularity of the Shrek franchise shows no sign of waning, and this latest adventure involves partaking in a variety of multiplayer party games, each with a 'carnival' theme. All of the regular characters make an appearance, and the popular license is likely to ensure this gains some decent recognition, but we can't help but think that the bottom of the Shrek barrel has already been scraped.

Castlevania Judgement

FROM: Konami **OUT:** 2009

To say Castlevania Judgement has caused concern among fans of the series would be something of an understatement, but we're quietly confident that taking the Castlevania universe and placing it in a 3D fighter will result in a blood-curdling and brilliant videogame. Graphically it's looking very sharp and there will even be motion-sensitive controls to sink your teeth into. Could this be the Wii's answer to Soul Calibur?



Future Releases

Best start saving! Here are the top games coming soon…

- Tamagotchi Connection — DS — November
- Metal Slug 7 — DS — November
- Star Wars: Clone Wars — DS, Wii — November
- Dynasty Warriors 6 — PS2 — November
- Need for Speed: Undercover — Wii, DS, PSP, PS2 — November
- High School Musical 3 — Wii, PS2 — December
- Dragon Ball Z: Infinite World — PS2 — December

Playzine on its way

The Hardy Boys: The Hidden Theft

FROM: JoWood **OUT:** 2009

This might surprise you, but The Hardy Boys is a long-running detective series that actually kicked off in the 1920's and is immensely popular in the US, with over 100 million books sold. This adventure title attempts to recreate the tension and suspense of the novels while ensuring the game is easy to pick up and play but also offers a brain-taxing challenge. If you like 'point and click' adventure titles then keep an eye out for this in 2009.





Spyborgs

FROM: Capcom **OUT:** 2009

On the surface this looks like just another Saturday morning cartoon cash-in, but the fact that the developer is made up of staff that have previously worked on games such as Resistance: Fall of Man and Ratchet and Clank should make you sit up and take notice. The game will feature a two-player co-op mode that requires teamwork to succeed, and each of the playable characters has different skills, ranging from slick martial arts to extreme skateboarding.

Secret Files 2: Puritas Cordis

FROM: Deep Silver **OUT:** 2009

Secret Files: Tunguska might not have been to everyone's tastes but it succeeded in carving out its own niche in the market, as this upcoming sequel proves. Designed to make use of the unique features of both the Wii and DS, Purtias Cordis promises to captivate the player with taxing puzzles and a plot packed with spooky surprises. The Wii version even contains a two-player co-operative mode, so both you and friend can uncover the secrets of game together.

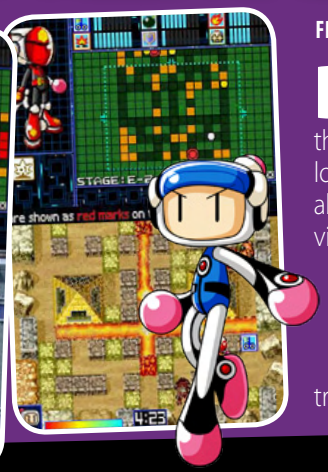




Bomberman 2

DS





FROM: Konami **OUT:** 2009

Despite the rather inaccurate title (this certainly isn't the second game in the Bomberman series, as there's been loads of them) we're still pretty excited about this. It boasts a refreshing new visual style with a futuristic look and feel. Thankfully the tried and tested gameplay that the series is famous for also looks set to make a return as well. We're hoping this can continue the tradition of great Bomberman games.

Future releases

More games heading your way in the not-so-near future

- Samurai Showdown Anthology — PSP — December
- Sonic and the Black Knight — Wii — 2009
- Muramasa: The Demon Blade — Wii — 2009
- No More Heroes 2 — Wii — 2009
- Sin & Punishment 2 — Wii — 2009
- Monster Hunter Freedom Unite — PSP — 2009
- Star Ocean: Second Evolution — PSP — 2009



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PREVIEWS

THE HOTTEST GAMES, COMING TO A CONSOLE NEAR YOU!



CALL OF DUTY: WORLD AT WAR

CALL OF DUTY GOES BACK TO WORLD WAR 2. READ OUR EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW IN THIS MONTH'S BIG HIT GAME!



DEADLY CREATURES



PES 2009



GEON



LOCOROCO 2



POPSTAR GUITAR

Call of Duty: World at War

Get your boots on soldier, your Wii is returning to the Call of Duty

info

FROM: Activision
A BIT LIKE: Call of Duty 3
WEB: www.callofduty.com
OUT: November 14th
ALSO ON: DS, PS2



As well as regular tanks, there will also be crocodile tanks that spit fire.



The Japanese give you a warm welcome at the beach landings.



You'll find it safer to flank your enemy from the side.

To say that we were totally gutted when Call of Duty: Modern Warfare abandoned the Wii would be a something of a massive understatement. Developer Infinity Ward dreadfully chose to concentrate all its firepower towards the meatier PS3 and 360 tanks, but we're happy to say that war atrocity is not being repeated with World at War.

The series has warped back to World War 2, but rather than retread all of those overly familiar West European battlefields, this time we're off to the Pacific to jostle with the Japanese. On the plus side, there's more sun to bask under. On the downside, the Japanese were considered the most vicious and formidable soldiers in the entire world war (so tough the Americans had to use nukes!) You'll also get to fight in the Russian army and take Berlin in the final days of the campaign.

CALL OF THE WILD

Anyone expecting to fight the same kind of enemy they fought in Call of Duty 3 is going to be in for a shock. The Japanese hide in dense jungles, waiting patiently to strike for days. They're like coiled-up snakes who lash out when you're least expecting it, behaving more like monsters you find in survival horror games. They also lack any fear of death – some will pretend to be dead and let off a grenade as you

WAR IS HELL

But good war games are heavenly…

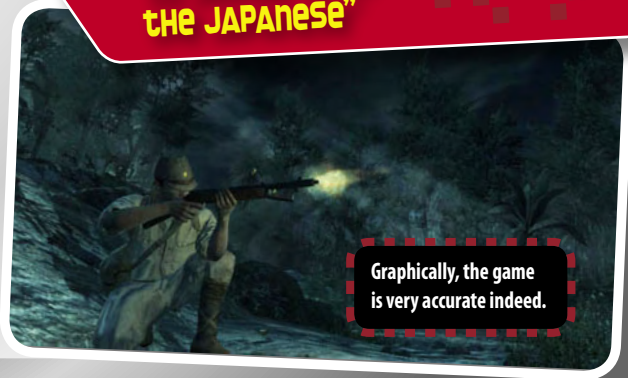


FLAMING 'ECK! | DIRTY DOG-FIGHTING | RED ARMY

FLAMING 'ECK!

Fire is notoriously hard to make look good in games, which is why most developers try to avoid it. Not only will you be able to use the flamethrower to burn people senseless, but there will be Molotov cocktails and napalm dropping from the sky, too. Run away!

"This time we're off to the Pacific to jostle with the Japanese"

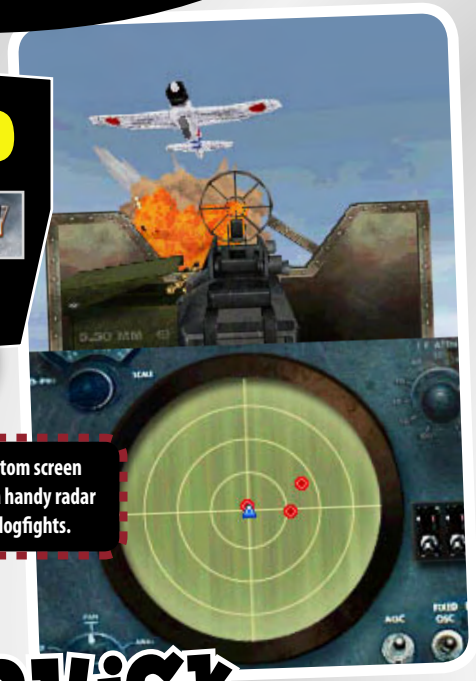


Graphically, the game is very accurate indeed.

info

CALL OF DUTY WORLD AT WAR

Wii



The bottom screen makes a handy radar during dogfights.

Quick Quiz!

"TREYARCH IS BRINGING US A SHOOTER WITH MORE OOMPH AND POLISH THAN BEFORE"

Roll over screen for annotations



walk past – different tactics are needed to fight these lunatics.

Using the same game engine that powered CoD4, developer Treyarch (who made CoD3 on Wii) is bringing us a first-person shooter with more oomph and polish than before. It's possibly the single nicest-looking game on Wii, with lush tropical jungles and horribly realistic swamps. One minute glorious sunbeams will pierce the tree tops and blind you, the next thick gloomy rain will pour from the sky and offer visibility cover as you try and creep up on an enemy position. This is a huge technical leap for Wii, and at a distance you could confuse it for the 360 version (until some HD zealot sticks his face into the screen and starts counting pixels). It also runs much smoother than CoD3 – Treyarch has had two years to learn how to get more juice from the Wii, and looking at World at War they've not wasted a single day.



Pointing your finger at them isn't going to do much!

SPLIT PERSONALITY

CoD3 on Wii was a shooter that split audiences. When compared to the PS3 or 360 versions it looked like a very ugly sister, having tiny environments and trees so blocky they looked like green phone boxes. It also failed to have any multiplayer mode. It just didn't

Call of Duty: World at War

interview

Read on, soldier. It's your duty

The game is set over a number of different World War 2 scenarios. How realistic are these to the actual events, and what research did you have to do to ensure authenticity?

Call of Duty: World at War spans several different landscapes across the Pacific and Europe. In recreating these locales and conflicts, much research was done to ensure historical accuracy.

At the onset of a project our Military Advisor, Lt. Colonel Hank Keirsey (US Army, retired) seeks out and interviews veterans from the various conflicts we are attempting to recreate. He will get us first-hand details on what the soldiers witnessed, felt, and even smelled on the battlefield. The level of detail this adds allows us the level of authenticity that Call of Duty is known for.

Also, our design teams here do their fair share of research and Google has proven to be a useful tool in finding reference material for the battles and era we are working with.

How close do you think the Wii version is to the 360 and PS3 ones?

Our goal was to make the most realistic, best-looking Wii first-person shooter yet. For these reasons, we decided to put our engineers to work on bringing the awesome Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare engine to the Wii.

PLAYZINE Feature

info

CALL OF DUTY WORLD AT WAR

Wii



The final Russian push into Berlin is sure to be dramatic.

Best Bit

There can be no doubt about it; the flamethrower is the best new feature. It's got to be the most horrible death imaginable, so we're looking forward to putting this fiery contraption to good use. As they say, it's all fair in love and war… we're not looking forward to being on the receiving end of it, though.



"THERE IS A NEW TWO-PLAYER CO-OP MODE CALLED SQUADMATE"



The mist effects are a particularly neat touch on the Wii.

feel like it'd been designed for Wii and all but the strongest players thought their arm was going to break after half an hour holding the Remote.

Thankfully, at least some of these problems have been fixed. While the Wii version is never going to have the wealth of online options the 360 and PS3 has, there is a two-player co-op mode called Squadmate so you and a buddy can play the campaign together.

The controls have been revamped, too. Playing World at War is closer to Medal of Honor, and there are a few sensitivity options you can pick from.

As expected, the Nunchuck moves your soldier, and the controls are nicely mapped. Holding A puts you into a sprint, while C has you crouching. You can even slap the 'mote into a zapper shell (which makes it more comfy) Check out the review next issue.

Wii

HOW READY? ANY GOOD?

We have high hopes this could be the best one yet

interview continued…

In so doing, the same assets you see in the other platforms are also present on the Wii (same weapons, characters and, for the most part, levels). Some trade-offs had to be made given the different hardware, and some minor gameplay was altered to fit the specific Wii control scheme. For example, the unique co-op mode we designed specifically for the Wii (Squadmate) puts a second crosshair on the screen, allowing a second player to jump into the action arcade-style.

How 'open' are the levels (eg, how much control do you have over where you want to go)?
Call of Duty has always been a very cinematically intense experience. We have a story to tell and want the players to experience it.

There are occasional variants in paths you can take as you progress through a level. This is a result of adding in co-op into our game. We wanted to make sure scenarios could play out with multiple players, so for example you could take the path along the ridge, or cut around through a forest.

This offers a great deal of replayability to the solo players as well, who may replay the campaign to takes these alternate routes by themselves – perhaps even on a different difficulty!

And do you think open levels are important, or should people have a better idea of where they should be heading?
Personally I am a fan of the cinematic experience. I love movies, and if I can get the fidelity of a great movie in an interactive medium, that's the ideal solution for me. Sandbox games do have their place in the industry, but I'm just not sure they have their place within the Call of Duty sphere.

Read part two of our interview next month!



Ellen Whitaker's HORSE LIFE



Coming Soon

http://horselife.deepsilver.com









PLAYBACK OPTIONS: ENHANCED

Wii NINTENDO DS.

DEEP SILVER

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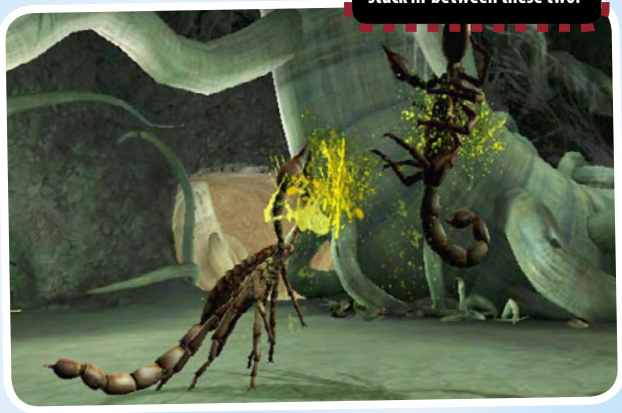
CONTROL Close Issue Print Page Search Issue Zoom In Zoom Out Toggle Full Screen Previous Page Next Page

info

DEADLY CREATURES

FROM: THQ
A BIT LIKE... God of War
WEB: www.deadlycreaturesgame.com
OUT: February 2009

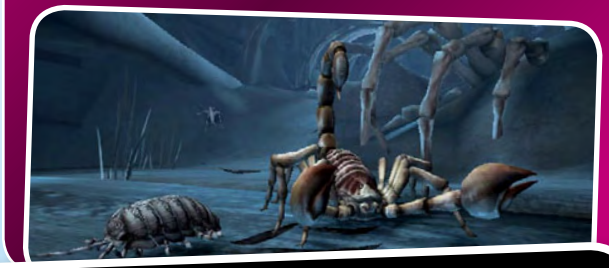
Wii



We sooo wouldn't want to be stuck in-between these two!

Best Bit

Very little has actually been revealed about the plot, but what we do know is that both creatures will cross paths on more than once occasion and there's a sub-plot involving two humans searching for treasure. And these two characters will be voiced by Hollywood big-shots Billy Bob Thornton and Dennis Hopper.

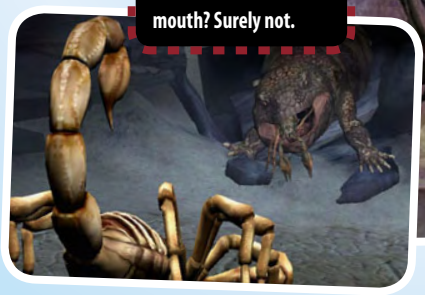


Deadly Creatures

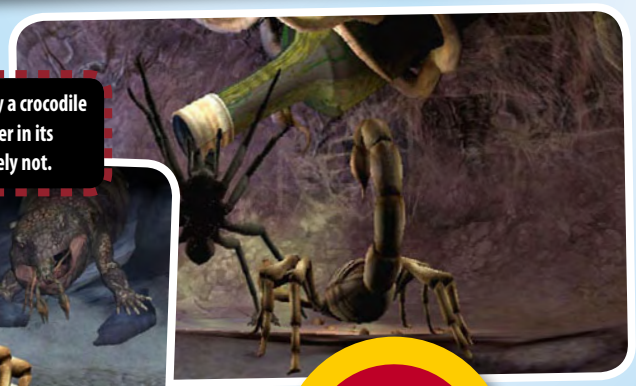
Get ready for a walk on the wild side

Now here's a pretty unique videogame concept – instead of assuming the traditional role of a muscular human hero, you're trust into the shoes (not literally of course) of two of mankind's deadliest enemies – the scorpion and the tarantula. The play style is different for each animal, with the scorpion favouring direct combat and its eight-legged counterpart taking a stealthier route.

Expect to face off against a whole host of aggressive arthropods, malicious mammals and hostile humans. The premise certainly has the potential to be very special indeed, so put your squeamishness aside and keep your eyes peeled for this one!



Is that really a crocodile with a lobster in its mouth? Surely not.



Exclusive!

Interview

Brent Ashe and Anthony Silva from Deadly Creatures' developers, find a bit of time to tell us more about the game...

How are the Wii Remote and Nunchuck used in relation to each creature?
Both creatures use the analog stick for movement, but also both support motion-based quicktime events in certain parts of the game.

The idea behind the game is certainly unique – where did your inspiration come from?
The original concept came from the idea of controlling a snake using the Wii Remote. This led to discussions about controlling all kinds of different creatures in this fashion. We took further inspiration from our surroundings here in Arizona where some of the most iconic and deadly creatures in the world were right here in our own back yard.

Once we settled on the Tarantula and the Scorpion, we created an environment that was equal parts hostile, beautiful and foreign. It was important to create interest, distinction and atmosphere at every step of the way, whether the player was traversing on the walls, ceilings or on the ground.

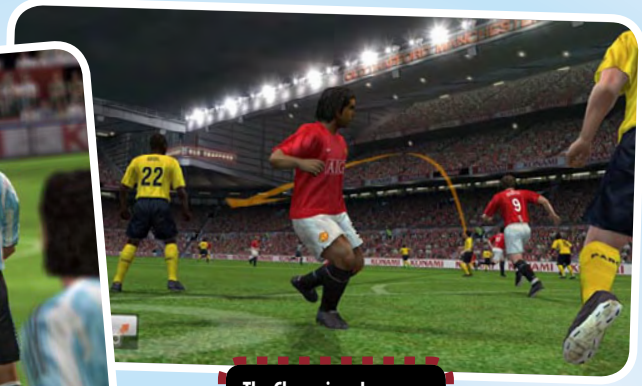
Will gamers warm to playing creatures that are usually represented as 'bad guys'?
Absolutely. Deep down, everyone wants to play as the 'bad guy' once in a while, right?

Wii

HOW READY ●●●●●●●●●○ HOW GOOD ●●●●●●●●●○

A refreshing change to the 3D action genre


England versus Argentina could get ugly.


The Champions League comes to Old Trafford.

info

PES 2009 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

FROM: Konami
A BIT LIKE... PES 2008
WEB: www.pesunites.com
ALSO ON: PS2, PSP
OUT: Spring 2009

Wii

Pro Evolution Soccer 2009

Wii are by far the greatest team, the world has ever seen...

When a Wii version of PES was first announced, the purists refused to believe that the world's greatest football game could be squeezed into Nintendo's wedge-shaped box. However, upon playing PES 2008, words were duly eaten, and at Konami's recent annual European shindig (held this year in Rome) Wii producer Akiyoshi 'Greyhound' Chosogabe was clearly top dog as he unveiled plans for the 2009 version.

While the basic concept remains in place, it has been tweaked to offer even greater control all over the pitch. For example, when defending, pressing the Z button causes your player to actively attack the ball. At the other end of the pitch, shooting has been enhanced, so instead of simply shaking the Nunchuck you can actually aim where you want to place the ball, something that also applies to free kicks, and indeed to the under-fire goalkeeper. For a less physical approach, you can now turn the controller on its side and play in the traditional manner.

On the licensing front, the Wii version joins the rest of the PES franchise by incorporating the UEFA Champions League. And the legendary Master League will make its Wii debut.

> "While the basic concept remains in place, it has been tweaked to offer greater control"

Wii Love Football

It's a whole different ball game...



Defend | Attack | In the Club

Defend

As this handy graphic demonstrates, as well as using the Nunchuck to track an attacker, pressing Z causes your defender to throw himself at the ball.

Wii

How Ready ●●●●●●●●●●

How Good ●●●●●●●●●●

It's in safe hands. Roll on next Spring



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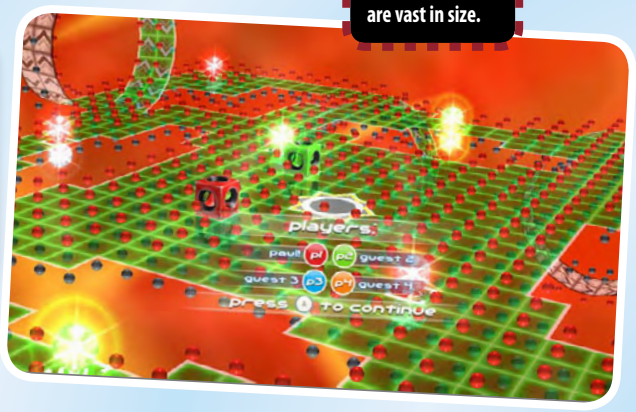
info

FROM: Strawdog Studios
A BIT LIKE... Pac-Man!
WEB: www.strawdogstudios.com/geon
OUT: February 2009

Geon

Exclusive!

Instant addiction: just add friends!

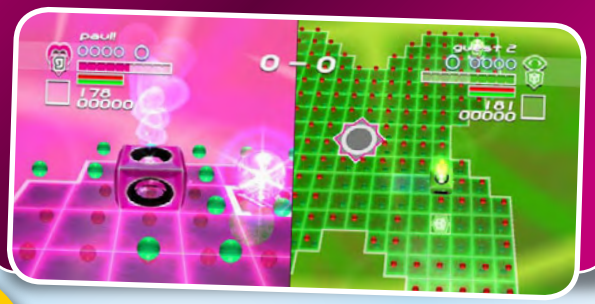


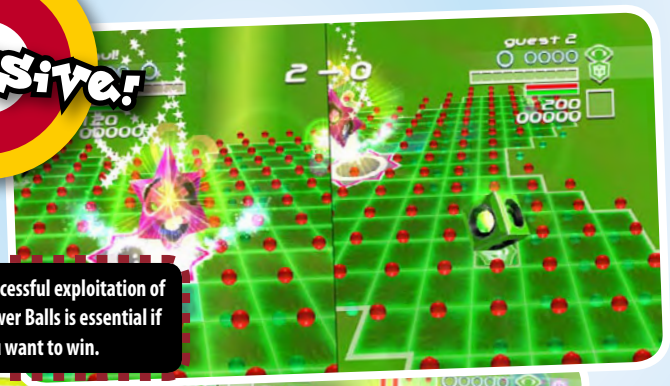
Some of the grids are vast in size.

We love a game that presents a decent multiplayer challenge, and from what we've seen so far of Geon, it's shaping up to be one of those games that we're going to be cracking out whenever we have mates around. The concept is simple – you have to guide your 'Geon' (a cube with holes on each side) around the grid collecting pellets until fill your power bar. Get your Geon to your opponent's goal and you score a point. Bag five points and you win – but naturally you foe is attempting to do exactly the same thing...

Best Bit

Your Geon isn't totally powerless – you have a jumping attack that will send your rival reeling. You also have a shield which temporarily prevents your foe from using the same tactic against you. In addition to this, you can collect various 'Power Balls' that appear on the grid, each of which grants a different power.




Successful exploitation of Power Balls is essential if you want to win.


The four-player mode understandably gets rather hectic at times.

Interview

We wanted to find out more about this intriguing game, so who better to ask than its creator, Paul Smith.

What games influenced Geon?
The game makes a subtle nod of inspiration towards Pac-Man, but visually it has a style all of its own. Our aim was to create a game that is highly addictive, easy to pick up, and is a great with mates, too.

Can you tell us a little about the various multiplayer modes and how they will work?
The main multiplayer mode that we're all excited about is the two-player split-screen 'duel', where players race and fight to score five goals. It's a great way to settle a grudge! The other multiplayer modes are four-way split-screen, such as 'last man standing' and 'team Geon', which are played on four unique grids, and are a real frenzy of action.

What does the game have to offer on the single-player side of things?
The single-player 'league' offers players the chance to hone their skills against increasingly difficult AI opponents while also unlocking eight single-player mini-games, which are played against the clock with enemy hazards attempting to block your progress. We also have single-player 'time attack', where players must choose a power up and race to score five goals in the fastest time possible.

HOW READY	HOW GOOD

A game destined to ruin friendships





info

LocoRoco 2

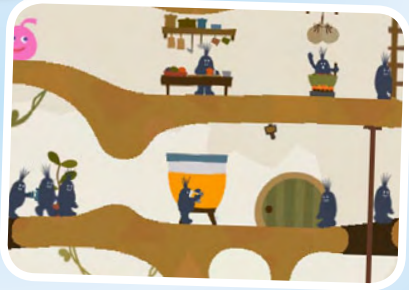
FROM: Midway
A BIT LIKE... LocoRoco, Little Big Planet
WEB: www.locoroco.com
OUT: November

PSP

LocoRoco 2

Sony's genius platformer returns





The original LocoRoco was very close to being a work of art. You could pretty much take any still shot from any level in the game, blow it up, frame it and hang it in an art gallery. It seemed almost greedy to expect great, original gameplay too, and yet LocoRoco also delivered on that front.

Two years on and, while this inevitable sequel may lack originality, it's shaping up to be even more relaxing and heartwarming than its predecessor. While the first game focused on feeding the eyes, LocoRoco 2 is a true feast for the senses, with an integral musical gameplay element massaging the ears while those arty, screen-tilting visuals work their magic. There are also a number of new abilities for the game's bouncing hero, while a new competitive multiplayer mode adds just a soupcon of aggression (schock, horror) to the mix.

Mostly, though, LocoRoco 2 is concerned with making the original premise even brighter, breezier and more sugar-coated than its predecessor, while substantially upping the replayability factor of its 25 new levels. And that's just fine by us. obviously. Sure, of course everybody wants something shiny and new from a sequel, but you don't get greatness by messing with perfection too much.

"While the first game focused on feeding the eyes, LocoRoco 2 is a true feast for the senses"

Going Loco

You don't have to be mad to play this...



NOW HERE THIS | BAD HAIR DAY | SWEET MERCY

NOW HERE THIS

The nasty Moja are back in LocoRoco 2, and this time they've come armed with a particularly bad song that sucks the life out of living things – sort of like one of Andrew Lloyd Webber's show tunes. Enter our hero, on a mission to get the LocoRoco's singing sweet music and so return peace and happiness to the world.

PSP

HOW READY ●●●●●●●●●○
HOW GOOD ●●●●●●●●●○

LocoRoco + sweet music = mellow gaming heaven

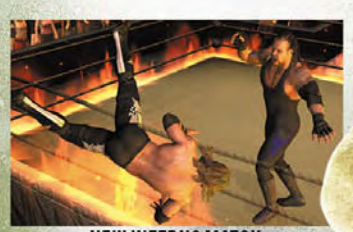
TAG TEAMS EXPLODE ONTO WWE SMACKDOWN VS. RAW 2009...
IT'S JUST YOU AND YOUR PARTNER, BACK-TO-BACK
AND READY TO FACE THE ONSLAUGHT.



HIGH IMPACT DOUBLE TEAM MOVES



NEW CREATE A FINISHER



NEW INFERNO MATCH



ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA CO-OP



PLAYBACK OPTIONS: ENHANCED

SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2009

ALONE, YOU'RE GREAT.
TOGETHER YOU'RE UNSTOPPABLE



15

PSP. XBOX 360 LIVE PlayStation.2 PLAYSTATION 3 NINTENDO DS. Wii

FEATURING ECW POWERED BY gamespy. JAKKS Pacific YUKE'S THQ WIRELESS THQ

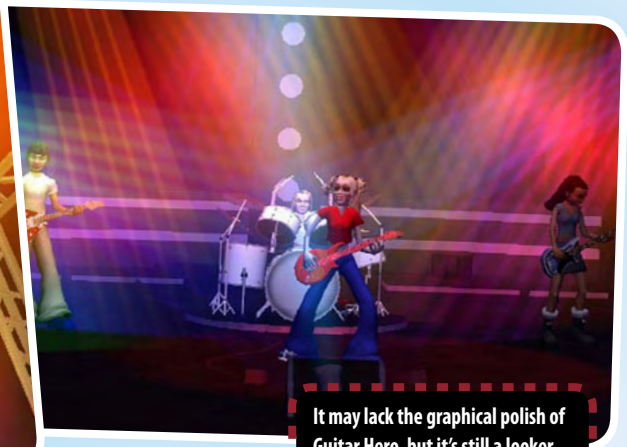
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Yes, he does look a bit like U2's The Edge, doesn't he?


It may lack the graphical polish of Guitar Hero, but it's still a looker.

info

PopStar guitar

FROM: Midway
A BIT LIKE... Guitar Hero
WEB: www.popstarguitar.com
OUT: December
ALSO ON: PS2

Wii

PopStar Guitar

Get ready, as it's time to turn your Wii all the way to 11

It used to be that we all played out our rock star fantasies in the privacy of the shower, but then some smarty pants had the great idea of bringing back those old Simon Says games from the 1970s, adding a touch of air guitar, and wham-bam-thankyou-ma'am, the 'music rhythm' game genre was born.

"PopStar Guitar has been designed to be more of a family-friendly affair"

Rock band equipment comes at a price however, even when it is fashioned from moulded plastic. Which is why Midway has come up with a fairly innovative alternative in the form of PopStar Guitar. Rather than requiring an entire fake guitar to play, this instead includes a pair of Air-G add-ons, which cleverly make use of the Wii's own motion sensing brilliance. All that's missing is the solid guitar-shaped body in-between.

With a track selection that avoids the rock dinosaurs graveyard and instead



mines the pop and indie rock musical seams for its rich pickings, Popstar Guitar has also been designed to be more of a family-friendly affair. "Sure to bring the family together this holiday season," says Midway. Be warned, though. Once Aunty Gladys has knocked back her third sherry, starts windmilling wildly and doing her best Avril Lavigne sk8ter girl impression, that may no longer seem like such a good idea.

KiSS MY AXE

How to play guitar, without really trying...



AiR GUiTAR | COVER me BAD | KEEP ON ROCKING

AiR GUiTAR

These days you can't move for fake plastic Stratocasters, but PopStar Guitar does things a little differently. Packing two Air-G devices – each basically a set of four fret buttons that slip over the standard Wii controller – two would-be axe grinders can then use Nunchuck controllers to strum to their heart's delight.

Wii

HOW READY ●●●●●●●●●○ HOW GOOD ●●●●●●●●●○

Affordable, family-friendly guitar heroics? We like

NINTENDO DS™

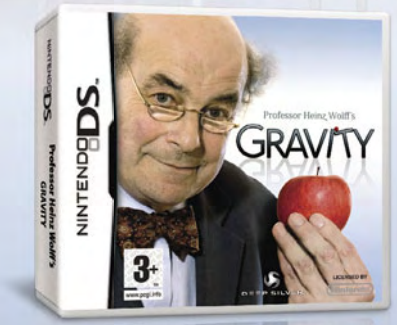
Professor Heinz Wolff's

GRAVITY

LANDING 28th NOVEMBER 2008

http://gravity.deepsilver.com





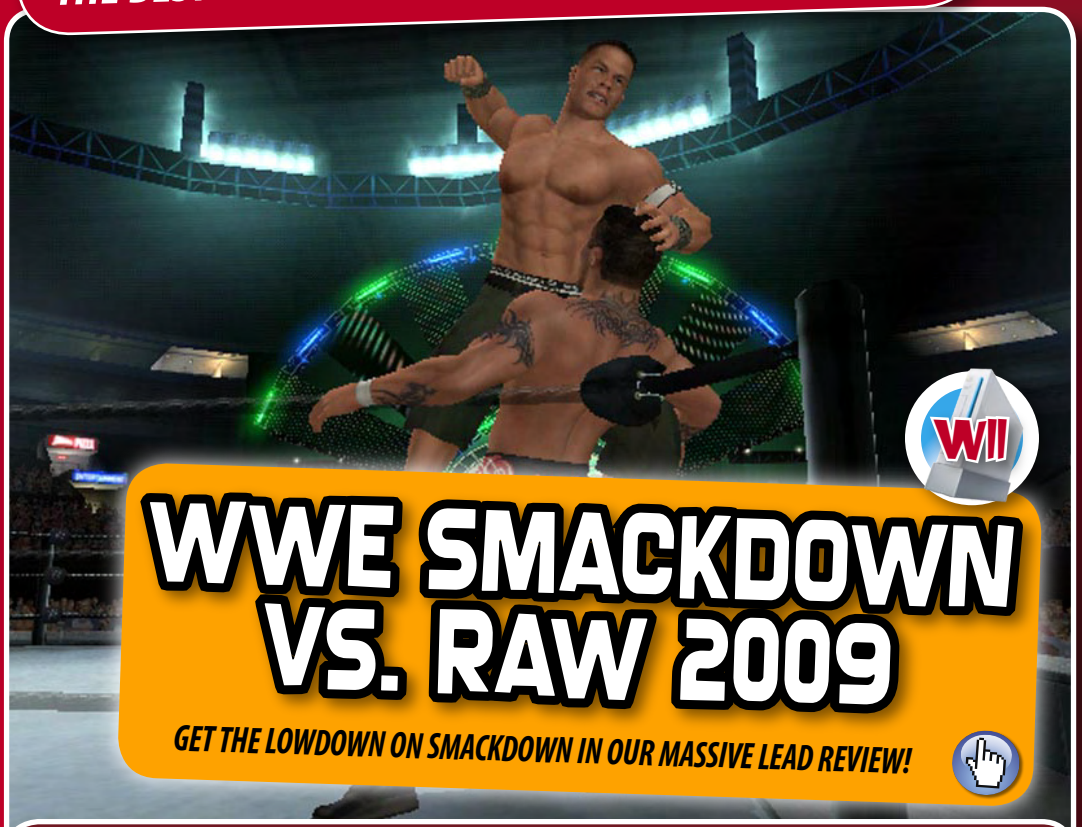
DEEP SILVER

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Reviews

THE BEST VERDICT ON THE BIGGEST GAMES AROUND!



WWE SMACKDOWN VS. RAW 2009

GET THE LOWDOWN ON SMACKDOWN IN OUR MASSIVE LEAD REVIEW!

THE PLAYZINE FOUR-POINT REVIEWERS PLEDGE

1. If a game's rubbish then we're not afraid to say so
2. Our reviewers are hand-picked from the very best
3. We always play a game long enough to form an opinion
4. We love our games more than life. Well, almost



LEGO BATMAN



WII MUSIC



PES 2009



SIMCITY CREATOR



SPIDER-MAN: WEB OF SHADOWS



R-TYPE TACTICS



SPYRO: DAWN OF THE DRAGON

info



FROM: THQ
A BIT LIKE... SmackDown vs. Raw 2008
WEB: www.smackdownvsraw.com
ALSO ON: DS, PSP, PS2
PRICE: £39.99
PEGI AGE RATING: 16+

Wii

PLAYZINE GOLD



The graphics are a notable step up over previous years' games.

SmackDown vs. Raw 2009

The greatest wrestling game of all time?

Let's face it – SmackDown and the Wii are a match made in gaming heaven. I mean, who hasn't dropped a People's Elbow when their friend's been particularly annoying?

But we think that the great thing about SmackDown is the way it lets you play out your wrestling fantasies, with none of the pain that comes from landing head first on a block of concrete. In fact, we think buying SmackDown should be made compulsory for all parents. It's really that good.

The thing that really makes SmackDown on the Wii stand out from the crowd is just how involved the game makes you feel. With the Wii Remote/Nunchuck combo, it's actually you power bombing your friends, you performing the taunts, and ultimately you picking up the win. The way the controllers are used perfectly captures the feeling of play wrestling with your friends, and with four people it's a riot.

The Career mode's easily the highlight of this year's game, letting you follow one of six characters' Road to Wrestlemania, taking you through from the Royal Rumble to the 'Grandest stage of them all'. Where previous games let you play as anyone, the restricted selection here allows the storylines to be a lot more in-depth, and,

WORLD in MOTION

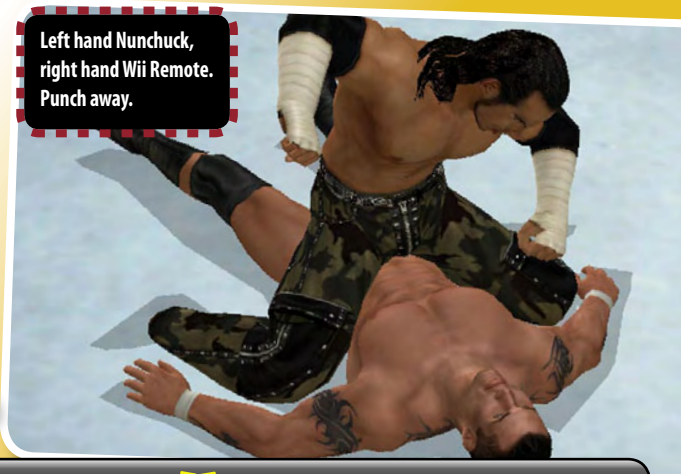
Taking control of your beefcake!



TAUNTS! SPECIALS! THE REST!

TAUNTS!

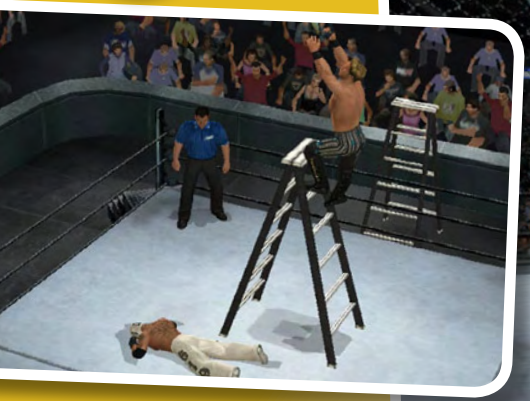
As we mentioned in the review, the controls are a big part of what makes SmackDown so great, and a big part of this is the taunts. If you want to Crotch Chop your opponent in the match, simply press the button and make the gesture. Don't let your granny see you doing it, though!

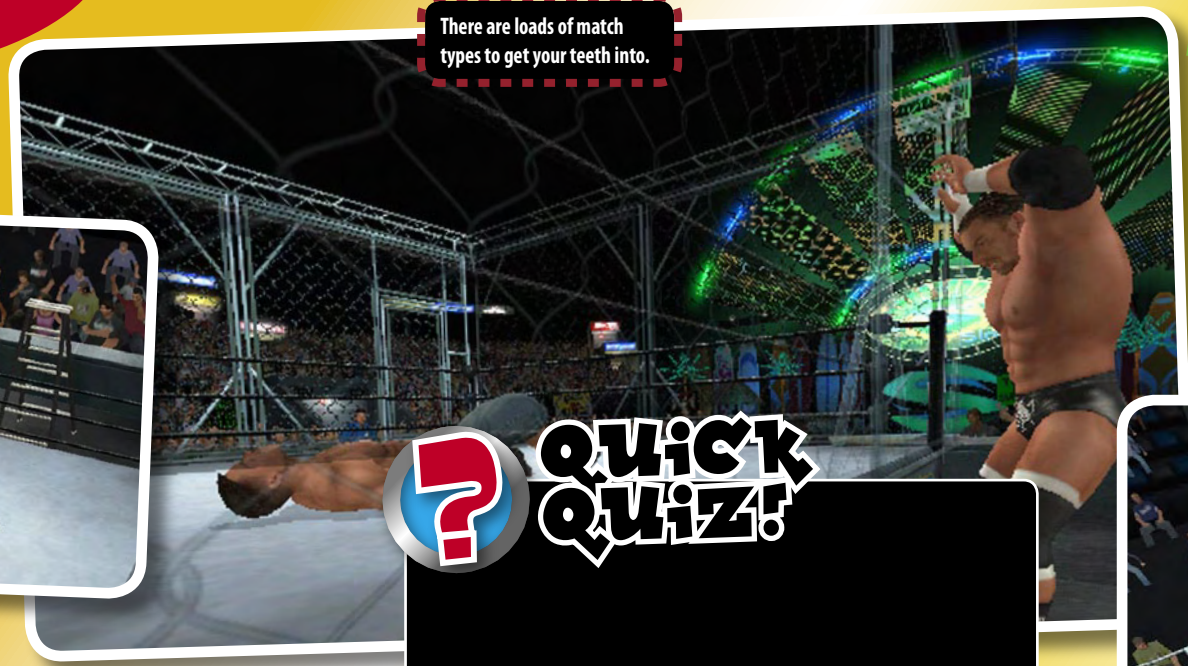


Left hand Nunchuck, right hand Wii Remote. Punch away.

PLAYZINE Review

Wii





There are loads of match types to get your teeth into.

Top Tip



When you start a match, you'll want to wear your opponent down quickly. Go for short moves, like punches or quick grapples – things to catch your opponent off guard. When they start to wear down, then hit them with your bigger moves.



Quick Quiz!



No! Don't do it Triple H! It's a long way down…

ultimately, a lot more fun. You'll have tough decisions to make, and rivalries will flare along over the course of the three months, with the commentary always providing accurate details.

The Create-a-Superstar mode also makes its fully fledged debut in this year's game, with all the pieces you'll need to create your own madcap wrestler. Cheekily, the game also features plenty of parts to build wrestlers from TNA, letting you put together all kinds of dream matches between the two promotions.

"The Create-a-Superstar mode also makes its fully fledged debut this year"

But perhaps the thing that makes this year's SmackDown so much better is just how rounded an experience it feels. The Career mode's one of the best ever, the commentary makes the matches feel a lot more realistic than before, and the sheer quantity and variety of match types on offer will ensure you never get bored. With some of the most responsive controls on the Wii and a cavalcade of nice touches, SmackDown vs. Raw 2009's a superstar. World Heavyweight Championship material.

Ian Morris

Briefly Speaking

Taking onboard criticism from last year's version of the game, the developers (Yuke's) have crafted a game that's very close to infection. That 16+ PEGI age rating will mean that you've got to be older to play it, though.

Play Time
Hours | Days | Weeks

Difficulty
Easy | Medium | Arrgh!

Fun Factor
Dull | Cool | Yippee!

Verdict
Grapple-tastic!

10

win goodies!

compo corner

Want something for nothing? Then enter our fab competitions!

win!

LEGO Batman for DS, Wii and PSP!



We rather liked LEGO Batman. It featured on our cover two months ago, and we gave it 9 out of 10 in our review this month. Better still, we've got two copies of the Wii, DS and PSP versions to give away to six lucky winners, so check out the question below and enter now!

win!

A Wii and other goodies up for grabs!

This year's SmackDown vs. Raw game is, thanks to a clever control method and some worryingly addictive game modes, the best one yet. And while it's certainly fun on the DS, it's a whole different game on the Wii. But what if you don't have a Wii? Ah, we can help you there…

Thanks to the lovely people at THQ, we've got a Wii to give away, along with a copy of SmackDown vs. Raw 2009 to play on it. More than that though, we're also throwing in a Randy Orton action figure that's signed by the man himself!

If you want to stand a chance of winning all this for yourself, just answer the question on the right, send in your details, and the very best of luck.





Competition closes 2nd December 2008. See website for full T&Cs.

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LEGO Batman

The Caped Crusader swings onto the Wii!



"Fans of the LEGO games will feel right at home with LEGO Batman"

info



FROM: Warner Bros.
A BIT LIKE... LEGO Star Wars
WEB: http://legobatmangame.com
PRICE: £34.99
PEGI AGE RATING: 7+

Wii



LEGO Batman is fun on its own, but it's even better when you can rope in a mate for a two-player game.

Fans of the LEGO games will feel right at home with LEGO Batman, as all the things we loved about the previous games are here, too. So you get bags of humour, cute graphics, tons of secrets, unlockables and bonuses to find and neat Wii-specific controls too – you have to point the Remote at the screen to fire off your zipwire.

It's a totally original storyline too, as all of Batman's enemies have broken out of Arkham Asylum, which means you have to fight against everyone from The Joker to Killer Moth (and no, we hadn't heard of him either).

There's a slight 'seen it all before' feeling with the game, as there are so many similarities to the previous games, but we certainly don't consider that to necessarily be a problem.

Dean Mortlock

PLAYZINE Challenge

When you've collected enough studs you then reach Super Hero status, and this is actually possible on the first stage (You Can Bank on Batman). You will need to collect 38,000 of them though, so you'll need to be quick. It took us a few attempts to do it, but how many will it take you?



Robin, being originally from the circus, will walk across the top of the rope, while Batman will shimmy along underneath it.

Briefly Speaking

The LEGO gaming juggernaut thunders on, with yet another gem. There are familiar themes from the previous two games, but more than enough original neat touches to make it stand out, too. And Batman fans will love it.

PLAY TIME
HOURS | DAYS | WEEKS

DIFFICULTY
EASY | MEDIUM | ARRGH!

FUN FACTOR
DULL | COOL | YIPPEE!

VERDICT
Holy fun, Batman!

8

Wii Music

Music made in Heaven, or a Hellish noise?



The bouncing notes on the right are Be-bops – they give you hints as to the ideal place to change your rhythm.

info



FROM: Nintendo
A BIT LIKE...
Nothing else!
WEB: www.nintendo.co.uk/NOE/en_GB/games/wii/wii_music_9603.html
PRICE: £39.99
PEGI AGE RATING: 3+

It's true that you can't really 'fail' at Wii Music. You're not given a score to aim at, nor can you really play a 'wrong' note. Whether it's shaking the controllers alternately to hit the keys on a piano, tapping the 1 and 2 buttons to play a saxophone, strumming an invisible guitar or bowing a virtual violin, whenever you do something, Wii Music will fill in a note appropriate to the key of the tune and the timing of your motion or button press. Having said that, there's still plenty of gameplay tucked away in here to keep you interested.

There are 50 tunes, ranging from nursery rhymes to videogame tunes, classical tracks to more contemporary songs, and the idea is that you play along to one of six parts – either with friends or alone. There are two percussion parts, a melody, a harmony, a chord and a bass part to attempt. Fill in the six parts and you can create a 'CD' of your song to send to your friends, who can then take inspiration from that and send you their own version. It's a neat idea that works well.

With 60 instruments to choose from, you'll never lack for ways you can adjust the sound of a song, especially once you get used to freeforming. Educational, genuinely inspiring and thoroughly different, Wii Music offers a wonderfully creative alternative to the other music games on the market.

Chris Schilling



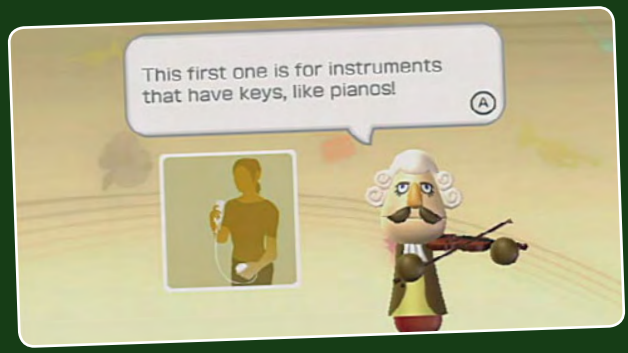
You can bring up note charts which tell you when to press or shake for a straightforward rendition of the song you're playing.

GOLD

"Wii MUSIC OFFERS A WONDERFULLY CREATIVE ALTERNATIVE TO OTHER MUSIC GAMES"

THE SOUND OF Wii MUSIC

Improvisational inspiration



TUte toot | MUSIC LESSONS | MINI MAESTRO

TUte toot

If you don't fancy tickling all six parts of a jam, then the Muppet-like Tutes will fill in the necessary background detail. If you really want to change the sound of a song – perhaps to give a classical theme a contemporary feel, or to give a Hawaiian spin to the Mario Bros. theme – you'll need to play each part separately yourself.

Briefly Speaking

Wii Music is easy to pick up and play, and requires no musical knowledge. This means gamers of any age and ability can enjoy it. With 60 instruments and 50 tunes, this could well be the perfect game for those family Christmas parties!

PLAY TIME
HOURS | DAYS | WEEKS

DIFFICULTY
EASY | MEDIUM | ARRGH!

FUN FACTOR
DULL | COOL | YIPPEE!

VERDICT
Beautiful music

9

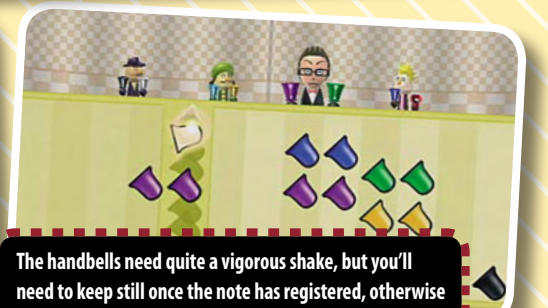
PLAYZINE game guide

Wii Music guide

How best to create your own mini-masterpiece



Check out the advanced controls when creating your CD cover.



The handbells need quite a vigorous shake, but you'll need to keep still once the note has registered, otherwise the upswing can count as another attempted ring.

Roll over screen for annotations



Wii Music isn't quite as simple as you might think. Sure, a two-year-old can mess around and improvise simply by shaking and pressing buttons, but if you want to create something listenable, you're gonna have to work at it. While it's fun to jam in multiplayer, it's far easier to create something by yourself, and then you can re-record different parts many times, changing instruments and testing out rhythms.

It's important to make sure you open up the lessons as soon as you're notified there's a new one available. Not only are they educational in a more traditional sense, but they'll also enable you to broaden your range a little, detailing the more complex commands associated with playing along. And before you start a jam, make sure you play along with the song in the menu, to practice what you're going to play if you're not planning on slavishly following the notes you're given.

Remember to keep things simple – there's no point in having a go at the F-Zero theme before you've tackled slower, easier tunes. Mix things up initially by just swapping instruments for ones which provide a different sound before you start changing rhythms and adding or subtracting notes or beats. Finally, if a song seems a little fast, you can slow the tempo right down, then ramp the speed back up once you've recorded a part. Ideal for the tunes which pack in several notes in short order.

Well composed

To master music, follow this guide…



PRACTICE | REPEAT | TUTORIALS

PRACTICE

Make sure you know the intricacies of an instrument before starting to mute or shorten notes, or add chords to harmonies and melodies. Rely on the Tutes to back you up while you take each part one at a time. And be ruthless – if you mess up slightly, then don't just continue, because that could throw your rhythm out with the other instruments.

PES 2009

GOLD

info



FROM: Konami
A BIT LIKE... FIFA 09
WEB: www.pesunites.com
PRICE: £29.99
PEGI AGE RATING: 3+

PSP

A world of football in your hands

Squeezing the intricacies of the masterful Pro Evolution Soccer onto the PSP would seem an impossible task, and initially this appears to be the case. Perseverance is the key however, and over the course of a few hours – which soon become days – PES 2009 proves itself to be every bit as subtle and absorbing as its big console counterpart.

It also holds its own on the features front, with largely flawless wireless play and the inclusion of the legendary Master League. While the PSP version doesn't boast the Champions League, it does have a World Tour mode, which is essentially a sequential series of the old-school Scenarios. In common with big PES, new this year is the Become a Legend mode, where you control a single player, which is a concept that transfers remarkably well to the handheld format, putting you right in the centre of the action, and proving to be more than a match for FIFA's similar Be a Pro feature.

Ultimately though, this is all about the sublime PES gameplay, a potent combination of exhilaration and frustration that almost defies you not to have one more game. Get those batteries charged, this is the football game your PSP was waiting for.

Steve Hill



Graphically, it's just about spot-on for the PSP's power.





We think that's Ryan Giggs, but we're not entirely sure.

"PES 2009 PROVES itself to be every bit as absorbing as its big console counterpart"



Top Tip



You should ignore the more dramatic camera angles and opt for the zoomed-out wide view. This will enable you to see more of your teammates and pick out their runs more precisely, thus enabling you to unleash those defence-splitting through balls.



Briefly Speaking

An improved PES comes to the PSP with most of the features of its big brother – including the Master League and the Become a Legend mode. It compares very well to FIFA too, so if you're a big fan of the series then you'll surely go for

PLAY TIME
HOURS | WEEKS | MONTHS

DIFFICULTY
EASY | MEDIUM | ARRGH!

FUN FACTOR
DULL | COOL | YIPPEE!

VERDICT
Get in, you beauty!

9

SimCity Creator

"YOU'LL STRUGGLE TO FIND A BETTER VALUE WII GAME THIS CHRISTMAS"

info



FROM: Electronic Arts
A BIT LIKE... FFCC: My Life as a King
WEB: http://simcity societies.ea.com/creator
PRICE: £39.99
PEGI AGE RATING: 7+

Wii

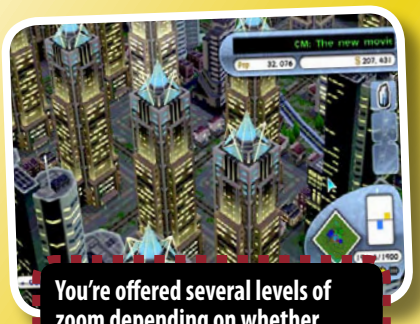
Build 'em up, then knock 'em down

It's called SimCity Creator, but SimCity Destroyer would have been just as apt a title. Fully realising that the most fun part of building a sandcastle is kicking it in once your masterpiece is finished, EA has given you a number of tools to systematically take apart your lovingly constructed metropolis. Fancy hitting it with hammers? You can do it. How about creating a destructive whirlwind to whisk your SimCitizens away? Fine. The fact that all are activated with motion controls makes them even more fun to perform.

Yet while it's enjoyably cathartic to smash your city to smithereens, it's even more satisfying to build. You'll start gradually, creating a few residential areas and linking them by road, building pipes and transport networks and then expanding outwards... it's all intuitive with the remote pointer, and the ability to essentially 'draw' roads means you can put together an almost perfect recreation of Spaghetti Junction.

It's very slow-paced, and occasionally the menu system is a little clunky, but you'll struggle to find a better value Wii game this side of Christmas. Fun, satisfying and worryingly addictive, SimCity Creator mixes sandbox gaming with enjoyable challenges for a feature-packed title which will take up residence in your Wii's disk slot for quite a while.

Chris Schilling

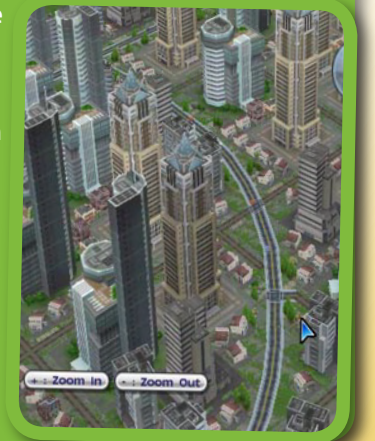


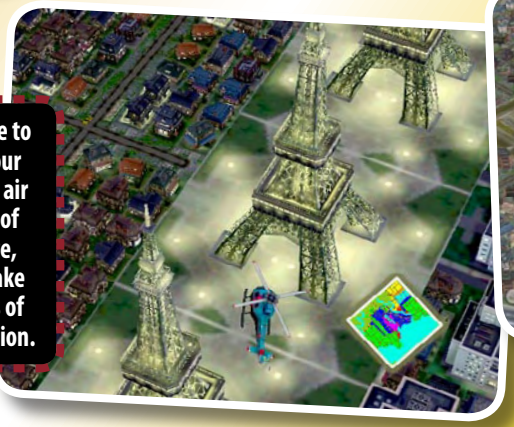
You're offered several levels of zoom depending on whether you're focusing on a specific problem or just want an overview.

Top Tip

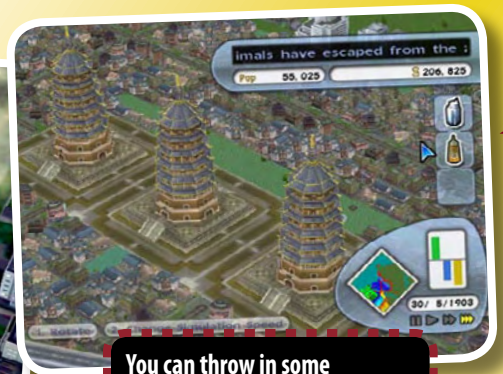


If you're having trouble managing your city as it gets larger, be sure to recruit some assistants. Stick them in the problem areas and they'll sort out the residents' issues in a jiffy. They're not perfect, but if you keep half an eye on them things will improve, leaving you to get on with the job of summoning robots to demolish buildings.





You're able to fly over your city in the air transport of your choice, and can take snapshots of your creation.



You can throw in some different architectural themes to give your city a bit of variety.

Briefly Speaking

SimCity comes to the Wii in classic style. The developers have used the console's most unique features to perfection, meaning that creating and developing your city is now even more intuitive than ever before.

PLAY TIME HOURS | WEEKS | MONTHS
DIFFICULTY EASY | MEDIUM | ARRGH!
FUN FACTOR DULL | COOL | YIPPEE!

VERDICT
A triumph!

8

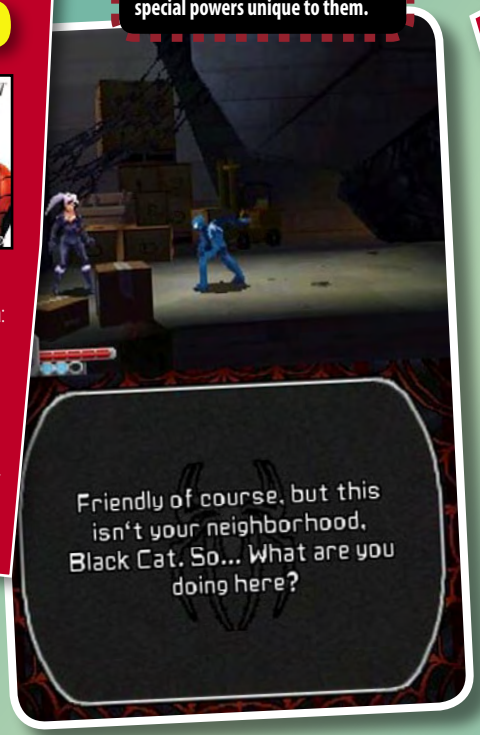
Spider-Man: Web of Shadows

Portable web-slinging beats its bigger brothers

info



FROM: Activision
A BIT LIKE... Castlevania: Order of Ecclesia
WEB: http://seizecontrol.marvel.com
PRICE: £29.99
PEGI AGE RATING: 12+



Spidey can switch from his red to his black suit – both of which have special powers unique to them.

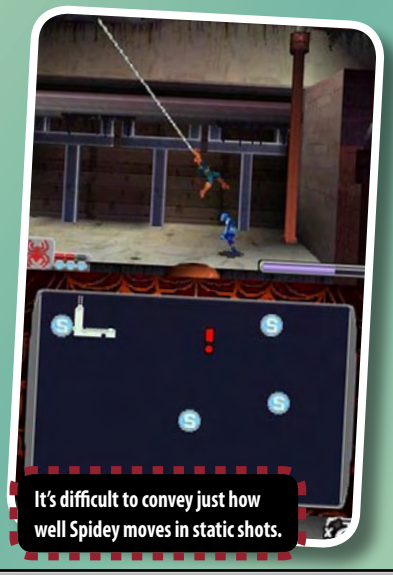
With Web of Shadows disappointing on the HD consoles, our hopes weren't high for the DS version. Yet while far from perfect, the game offers a much more enjoyable experience than its home console counterparts.

It's essentially a side-scrolling brawler that also mixes in exploration and puzzle elements. Yet there's definitely more of a focus on action here, with Spidey taking on bad guys with the face buttons, with the stylus used in boss scraps and a curious mini-game which allows you a chance to revive our hero when he falls in battle. It's all done on a much smaller scale than the home console versions, and while its difficulty is pitch-perfect, it's over all too soon – it took us less than five hours to complete.

Yet despite its brevity, we enjoyed Web of Shadows. The fighting is good, the animation fluid, there's a surprising amount of voice acting, and it's all presented beautifully. If it was a little longer and had a couple of additional locations, this would be a nailed-on 8. As it is, you've got a short but sweet portable action-adventure that has us hoping for a meatier sequel.

Chris Schilling





It's difficult to convey just how well Spidey moves in static shots.

PLAYZINE Challenge

There's a clue to this one in the review text. We took just shy of four-and-a-half hours to complete the game, but then we died a few times along the way. See if you can complete the game in under four. You're allowed to do this on your second or third playthrough if needs be, though.

Briefly Speaking

Spider-Man keeps on swinging, in an action-packed game that is tailored well to the DS format. It's not the longest or toughest game you'll ever play, but if you can put up with the short lifespan, then we guarantee you'll enjoy it.

PLAY TIME HOURS | DAYS | WEEKS

DIFFICULTY EASY | MEDIUM | ARRGH!

FUN FACTOR DULL | COOL | YIPPEE!

VERDICT
Tiny but mighty

7

R-Type Tactics

This is r-type of game!

info



FROM: Rising Star Games
A BIT LIKE...
Final Fantasy Tactics
WEB: www.risingstargames.com
PRICE: £19.99
PEGI AGE RATING: 3+

PSP

Reinventing a franchise isn't easy – just ask the guys behind Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull. If you deviate too much from the norm then you risk annoying fans, but if you play it too safe you get accused of being stuck in the past. That said, when it's done correctly, the rebirth of a well-liked series can be a joy – and that's certainly the case with R-Type Tactics.

In place of the traditional 2D blasting action seen in previous R-Type games we have a methodical turn-based strategy title. That may sound pretty dull compared to whizzing around the screen and unleashing plasma death on alien hordes, but it actually turns out to be an incredibly engrossing prospect.

Not only do you have multiple units to command – each with its own strengths and weaknesses – you can also develop new ships as you progress. Each craft has a specific purpose (some are used for attacking, others for reconnaissance) and understanding each one is vital.

The developers clearly took a massive gamble with this game but the switch of genres has paid off handsomely. R-Type fans will love the familiar setting, and budding interstellar admirals will appreciate the deep and engaging gameplay.

Damien McFerran



Although there's a lot of information on-screen, it never gets too confusing.



Fans of the series will no doubt recognise this familiar face.

A type of warfare

Planning your attack



YOUR enemy | Set to Kill | Stop for Repairs

YOUR enemy

Any half-decent field commander will tell you that before making a move, it's vital that you know your enemy's weak point. For example, scout units are nippy and have long-range weapons but their armour is paper-thin. By destroying these craft you will rob your foe of information relating to the whereabouts of your own vessels.

Briefly Speaking

The arcade classic takes the odd route of becoming a tactical game, but it works really well. It might be a bit tough for younger gamers, but fans of the original and tactical shooters should absolutely lap it up!

PLAY TIME
HOURS | DAYS | WEEKS

DIFFICULTY
EASY | MEDIUM | ARRGH!

FUN FACTOR
DULL | COOL | YIPPEE!

VERDICT
Great stuff!

8

The Legend of Spyro: Dawn of the Dragon

"YOU CAN SWAP TO DRAGON PAL CYNDER, WHO HAS UNIQUE POWERS OF HER OWN"

info



FROM: Activision
A BIT LIKE... Spider-Man: Web of Shadows
WEB: http://lair.spyrothedragon.com/dawnofthedragon/us
PRICE: £29.99
PEGI AGE RATING: 7+

DS

He's a firestarter, twisted firestarter

It's flippin' typical isn't it? You wait ages for a 2D side-scrolling handheld action-adventure and then two come along in the same month. Yet the third Spyro game on DS marks a pretty significant departure from series tradition, neatly binning the slower-paced isometric trappings for something that's more action-packed and, we'll be honest, a whole lot more interesting in the long run.

You've a choice of standard attacks, charged moves and elemental specials – while many of your opponents can be dispatched by mashing the basic attack button, it's much more fun to mix things up, chaining moves into combos and executing finishers. It's not as easy as you might think though, as there are some larger foes in the game that take quite some effort to take down. You can also swap to dragon pal Cynder who has some unique powers of her own to play with – brilliantly, this can be done mid-combo, which looks and feels fantastic. Then there are some 3D flying stages to add a bit of variety – they do look decent, although they're not quite as much fun as the 2D sections.

VIOLENCE IS GOLDEN

So it's definitely more violent (although this isn't Mortal Kombat or anything) and more of a challenge than you'd expect from such a cute character. Sadly, the game's length is the only evidence of a game that's targeted at a younger audience. And just like Web of Shadows, there's little incentive to play through again.

Chris Schilling



The 3D sections are interesting diversions, with the stylus used to attack enemies with taps (for Spyro) or holds when you're playing as Cynder.

Top Tip



Juggling your opponents is the best way to start chaining – launch them into the air with an up attack and then hit them while they're airborne. Tag out if need be to let your partner continue, and you'll soon be racking up those experience points.





The fighting mechanics really are satisfying.

Briefly Speaking

The platform legend that is Spyro comes to the DS for the third time, along with some new features and a second playable character. And while there's a lot of fun to be had, it's sadly not long enough to warrant an essential purchase.

PLAY TIME HOURS | WEEKS | MONTHS

DIFFICULTY EASY | MEDIUM | ARRGH!

FUN FACTOR DULL | COOL | YIPPEE!

VERDICT
Doesn't drag-on

7

PLAYZINE Review

Review round up

Small but perfectly formed, it's the rest of this month's reviews



The old dude in the hot air balloon is the Master Ninja.

Ninjatown

AGE RATING 7+

FROM: SouthPeak **PRICE:** £29.99

Apparently this game is based on a range of stuffed toys – stuffed ninja toys? It's all the rage apparently – but rather that a cutesy platformer, what you actually get is a pretty sharp and playable strategy game.

The object of Ninjatown is simply to protect your city from attack by demons. This is done by building ninja huts (which create ninjas) and then sending them out to battle the advancing demons. It sounds easy, and initially it is, but it very quickly becomes very addictive indeed.

8

Lego Batman

AGE RATING 7+

FROM: Warner Bros. **PRICE:** £24.99

If you've played LEGO Batman on any of the big consoles, then you'll be delighted to know that the PSP version is basically the same, only smaller. Obviously. So you get all the sharp stud-collecting gameplay and Thwack, Ka-pow beat-'em-up gameplay, just on a smaller scale. The graphics are great too, so there's no danger of losing track on what's happening on-screen. Recommended.



Batman looks very cool here, while Robin just looks constipated.

PLAYZINE GOLD

9



The graphics are great for a DS game, and importantly, it's really easy to play, too.



PLAYZINE GOLD

SmackDown vs. Raw 2009

AGE RATING 16+

FROM: THQ **PRICE:** £29.99

After last year's bizarre Elite Beat Agents hybrid, SmackDown vs. Raw 2009 DS is a breath of fresh air, as like the Wii version, this too is a fully featured SmackDown game that pushes the DS to its limits. With great graphics and sound, and an easy to pick up and play control scheme that makes the most of the touchscreen and D-pad, there's a lot to like here – and with the create-a-wrestler mode making its debut, you'll be able to make your own Superstars too!

9

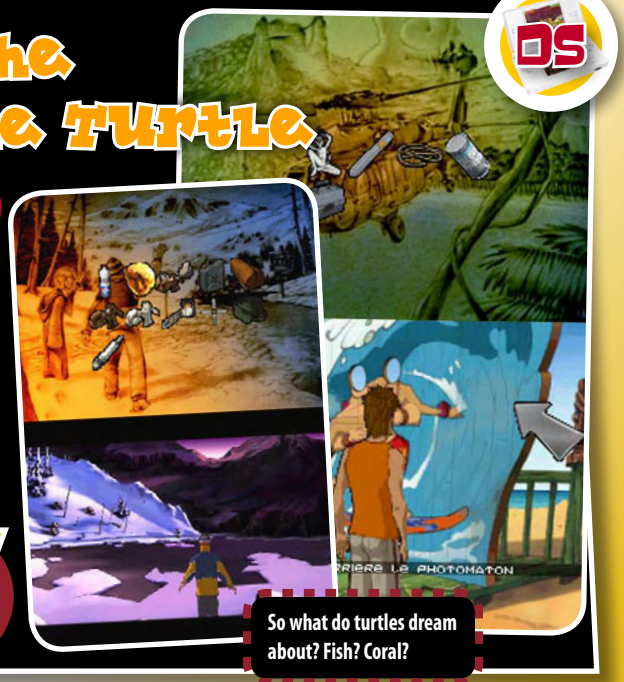
Runaway: The Dream of the Turtle

AGE RATING 12+

FROM: Ascaron **PRICE:** £29.99

There aren't many point-and-click adventure games on the DS, which seems to be a crime when you consider that the console is perfect for them. Runaway is a conversation of a PC game from 1997, and manages to cram in a lot of the style, speech and cut-scenes of the original. Some of the puzzles don't work particularly well, but it's still worth considering.

7



So what do turtles dream about? Fish? Coral?

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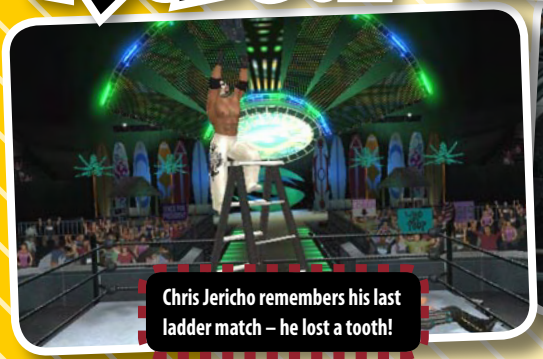
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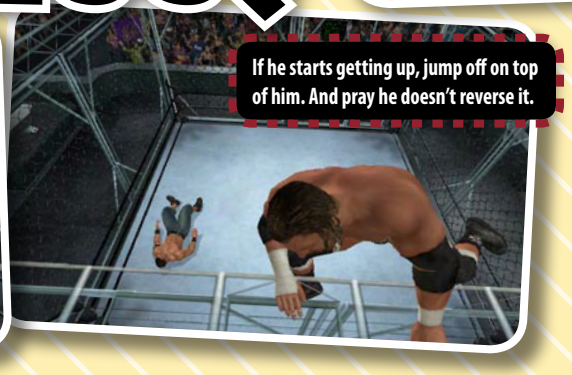
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SmackDown vs. Raw 2009

How best to dish out the pain!


Chris Jericho remembers his last ladder match – he lost a tooth!


If he starts getting up, jump off on top of him. And pray he doesn't reverse it.

Roll over screen for annotations



GETTING STARTED

If you're new to SmackDown, or you've never played it on the Wii before, you'll probably want to start with an Exhibition match. If you've got a friend round, choose to play against them while you get the hang of the controls. As always, it's best to start with the small moves as you build momentum and wear your opponent down. When they get into orange, it's time to go for the pin.

MAKING A LIVING

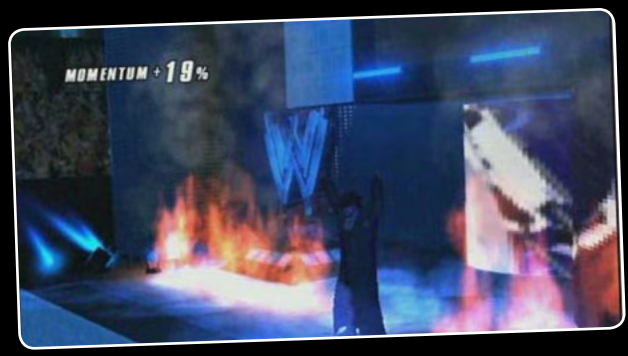
Now head to the Road to Wrestlemania mode, and delve into the finest story mode a SmackDown game's ever delivered. You can play as people like the Undertaker, CM Punk, and Chris Jericho, or, if you'd prefer, you can even play through a tag-team storyline with a friend. We'd recommend starting with the tag team. It's always good knowing someone's got your back.

PERSONALITY

After that, it's nothing but onwards and upwards as you climb to the top of the WWE experience. . If you want more things to try, why not create an eight-man tournament for you and your friends, with the prize being the World Heavyweight Championship. But with our tips, you've got a real headstart!

THE WAY OF THE GAME

Getting to grips with the grapple



HEAD START | FINISH HIM! | PRIDE AND RESPECT

HEAD START

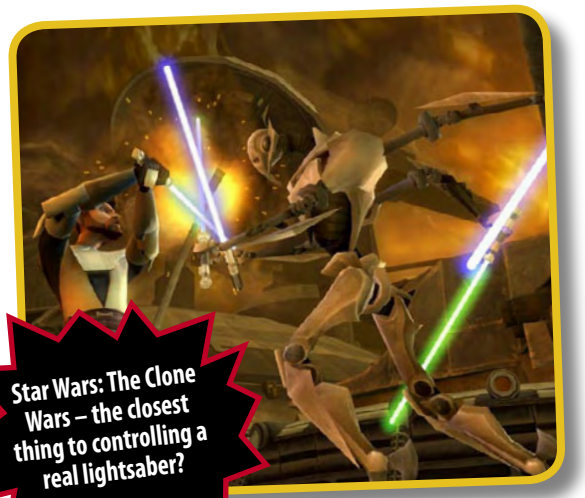
If you're up against a particularly tricky opponent – or your friend – you'll always want to get a head start. To achieve this, make sure you make the most out of the interactive entrances. By taunting on the way down to the ring, you'll get the fans on your side and gain momentum, meaning you'll have to do less to earn a finisher.

your say!

Got something to say? Write and tell us!

FUN FOR ALL AGES

Congratulations on the new mag guys, it looks amazing and it's good to finally have the Wii content in there too – I can't believe you can get so much information into a mag for free! The only thing I was wondering is that, because the mag's obviously aimed at a younger audience, will you still cover games like Grand Theft Auto: Chinatown Wars, as they're obviously for older gamers. I hope you do, as I can't wait to hear what you think about it – personally I think it'll be great!
Pete McClaron, Wokingham



Star Wars: The Clone Wars – the closest thing to controlling a real lightsaber?



Dean says: That's a very good question Pete, as you're right to think that the mag is definitely aimed at a younger audience than the rating GTA:CW will get. We will cover all Wii and handheld games, but our 'Briefly Speaking' box on every review lets you know what age range the game is targeted at and who's likely to get the most enjoyment from it.

FEEL THE FORCE

I'm looking for the best Star Wars game to play on my Wii, as I reckon that the Remote is the perfect Lightsaber substitute. Can you tell me which is going to be the best game out of Star Wars: The Force Unleashed and Star Wars: The Clone Wars. I've played The Force Unleashed and that's good, but I was wondering if you had any information on Clone Wars and how well the Wii controller works with it.
Steve Russell, Belfast



Chris says: You're right to say that The Force Unleashed is a good game – particularly on the Wii, where you get to swing the Remote to activate the Lightsaber – but we have high hopes for The Clone Wars, as we believe that this one-on-one fighter should offer far more intuitive controls, meaning that direct movements with the controller will be mimicked on-screen.



Resistance Retribution – third-person not first-person, but why?

WHY, WHY, WHY...

Why isn't Resistance Retribution on the PSP going to be a proper first-person shooter like the PlayStation 3 version? Come to think of it, why aren't there more good first-person shooters on the PSP, as they're hugely popular and I for one would love to see more of them.
Jordan McGarry, Plymouth



Darren says: Well, Resistance Retribution might not be a first-person shooter, but it is still shaping up to be a very good game indeed. You're right that there aren't many FPS's on the PSP, but that's simply down to the control set-up of the hardware.

Game bytes

FOOTBALL MANAGED?

I bought Football Manager last year for the PSP and really enjoyed playing it. What I want to know is, is it worth getting this year's version? Are there enough new features to make it worth it?
Oscar, Wigan

Well Oscar, it's usually the case that yearly updates of sports titles usually have very few major new features (apart from updated team stats), but Football Manager 2009 does also come with a totally new graphical match view, which is a major update for the series.

PRINCE CHARMING

Is Prince of Persia on the DS basically an update of the really old original title? Thanks.
Harry Bolton, Swansea

There are a lot of similarities between the original Prince of Persia game and this DS update (mostly with its visual style), but rest assured that this new game will be hugely superior in every way.

DOUBLE FANTASY

What's better – the Dragon Quest series or the Final Fantasy one?
Gary Fisher, Aberdeen

Final Fantasy, but only just.

PLAYZINE game guide

Football Director

At the end of the day, football's the winner...

MATCH REPORT

You are able to skip a match and just go straight to the report. This is great if you're in a hurry, but it's worth playing through the match (and paying attention to the flow of the ball), if only so that you can work out the players that are getting the most possession and spot any weaknesses in the team that might need attention.

Roll over screen for annotations



YOUTH TEAM

The easiest way to get new players for your team is to plunder them from the youth team. The advantage of going down this route is that the players are young, fit and obviously free, too. They're bound to be a bit rough around the edges, but you do occasionally find a gem or two that are perfect for training up and including into the full squad.

TRANSFER MARKET

The quickest way to get new talent though is to simply buy it from the transfer market. If you're a team in the bottom division then there's not an awful lot of sense trying to buy Wayne Rooney, but a bit of time spent researching the market can pay dividends. And don't be downhearted if you don't manage to sign a player you've got your heart set on, as there's bound to someone else along shortly that'll be just as good.



With our tips you too could walk off with the cup!

FOUR SKILLS

Each player has four skills (Tackling, Passing, Shooting and Heading), but remember that any weak areas can be improved by training.

WELL MANAGED

Our tips for the top



TUTORIAL | PATIENCE | CONTRACT

TUTORIAL

There's a very useful tutorial at the start of the game that leads you gently through the entire control system of the game. You might be tempted to skip through this and jump straight into the action, but it's worth taking time out to learn the controls here, as it'll make it much easier for you later in the game.

Next month



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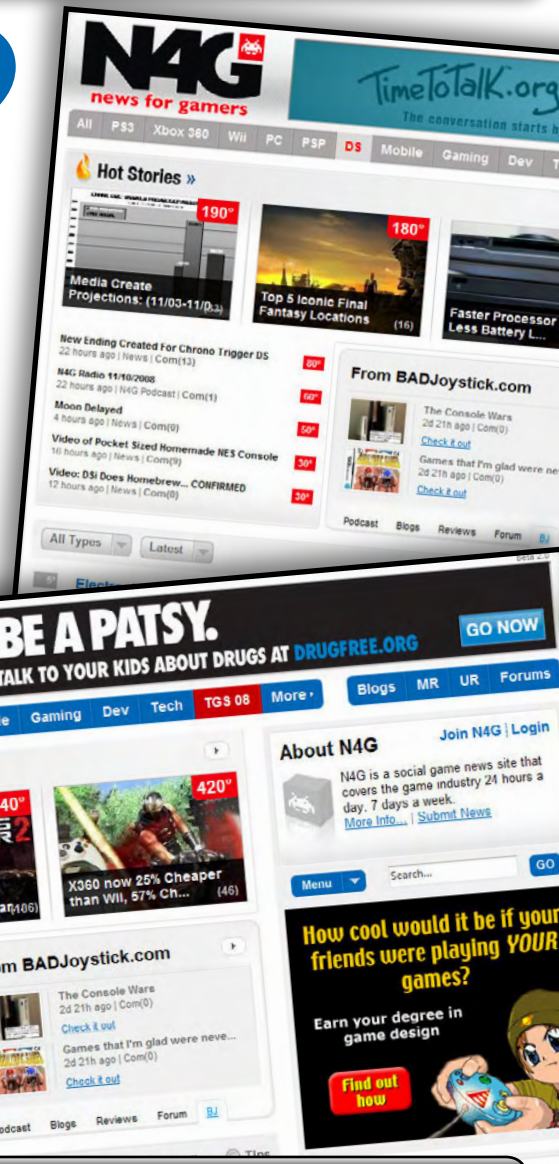
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