Fantastic games. Fearless opinion. Britain's best Xbox 360 mag

XBOX 360



FIFA 06 ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP

Exclusive Review

ISSUE 3 £3.99

HIGHBURY 9 771747 683009 03

AMPED 3

Coming Soon

★Build your own terrain park **ANYWHERE**

★**100** new tricks

★**800** pieces or gear and wear



ONLY ON XBOX 360

2K SPORTS

Indie Built Inc.

XBOX 360

XBOX LIVE

7+

www.pegi.info

© 2005 Take-Two Interactive Software and its subsidiaries. All rights reserved. 2K Sports, the 2K Sports logo, and Take-Two Interactive Software are all trademarks and/or registered trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. © 2005 Microsoft Corporation. All Rights Reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox 360, Xbox Live, and the Xbox, Xbox 360, and Xbox Live logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft.

Welcome to X360...



You've read the news and the gossip, you've scoured every preview and eyeballed trailer after trailer until the hype, the sheer excitement of the dawning of Xbox 360, became unbearable. And now, well, it's all over... the hype that is.

How was it for you? The launch I mean. Did the reality of clawing open your X360 box match expectation? Here at **X360** we've been excitedly playing every minute of every game that thankfully turned up in time for this issue. We've spent hour after hour racing the streets

> "How was the launch for you? Did the reality of clawing open your X360 box match expectation?"

of *Gotham 3*, sweated blood and tears to reach the horrific end of *Condemned* and pushed ourselves through the sleep barrier to see all *Call Of Duty 2* had to offer. Sure, there have been some disappointments – *Quake 4* didn't lived up to the promise, but for every *Quake 4* there has been a *FIFA 06*, an *Amped 3* or a *Kameo*, games that had been shoved aside by louder boasts but ultimately proved Xbox 360 is home to new and imaginative games.

This is why we're more excited than ever. The launch games represent the beginning of something altogether more exciting, and as 2006 rolls into 2007 we'll be seeing the likes of *Tomb Raider: Legend*, *Gears Of War* and *Mass Effect* pushing back the boundaries and delivering the experiences we demand.

So, until the new year when all the hype begins anew with *Halo 3*, I'll leave you to the glitz and glamour of *PGR3*'s Las Vegas strip.

Ian Dean
Editor

PS **Though delayed, games such as *Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion*, *Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter* and *Test Drive Unlimited* will prove to be some of the best of 2006.**

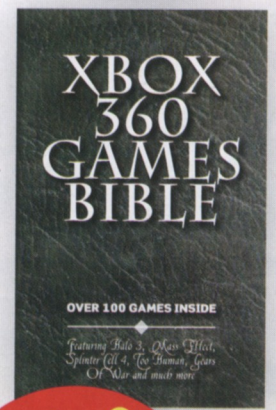
The UK's best-value Xbox 360 magazine



X360 MAGAZINE
So good we surprise ourselves



X360 DVD
Watch the best games of 2006, right here!



X360 BOOK
We gave you *Halo*. We delivered Rare. Now experience, The Xbox 360 Games Bible

XBOX GAMES TO RUN ON X360!
» Halo hi-def news on page 13

Backwards compatible...

Microsoft reveals the first Xbox games to run on X360

As we went to press, Microsoft confirmed the list of Xbox games that will run on Xbox 360 at launch. The backwards compatibility of the X360 is better than anyone could have imagined, with over 200 titles playable at launch. As promised, the games on the list constitute some of the biggest selling on the console. Joining the best-selling *GTA*, *Halo* and *KOTOR* franchises are *Pro Evolution Soccer 5*, *FIFA*, *Fable* and *Rainbow Six 3*. Also, popular titles such as *Jade Empire*, *Forza* and the *Medal Of Honor* series will be compatible along with cult classics like *Pariah*, *Thief* and *Ninja Gaiden*. Further to this, it was revealed that all Xbox games running on Xbox 360 will play in 720p.

CONTENTS

X360 REGULARS

64 COVER — Exclusive review of FIFA on X360

10 POSTAL — Your rants and raves answered

12 NETWORK — Halo and DOA combine

56 FEATURES — How Xbox 360 will take over

33 PREVIEWS — Exclusive play of The Outfit

ESSENTIAL GAMES

Afterburner	22
Alan Wake	**29**
Blue Dragon	60
Call Of Duty 2	**84**
Condemned	76
Chromehounds	**53**
Crackdown	40
Demonik	**29**
DOA 4	12
Enchant Arm	**60**
Frame City Killer	52
Full Auto	**48**
Gears Of War	20
Ghost Recon AW	**118**
Gun	82
House Of The Dead 4	**61**
Kameo	72
FIFA RTTWC	**64**
King Kong	28
Live Arcade	**116**
Mass Effect	14
MotoGP URT 06	**44**
NBA Live 06	110
NFS MW	**92**
PES 6	17
PGR3	**100**
Quake 4	106
Ridge Racer 6	**46**
Rumble Roses XX	53
Sonic The Hedgehog	**58**
Stranglehold	29
Test Drive Unlimited	**50**
The Outfit	34
TimeShift	**52**
Tiger Woods 06	99
Tomb Raider: Legend	**42**
Tony Hawk's American Wasteland	98
Too Human	**45**
Virtua Fighter 5	23
Voodoo Nights	**53**
Wrestle Kingdom	29



EXCLUSIVE REVIEW

64 FIFA 06

ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP

You won't believe how real this gets!

THE REGULARS

NETWORK

022 **SEGA REVEALS ALL** — The first screens of *Afterburner*

024 **IAIN LEE** — Insights from TV's Mr Games

028 **HORIZON** — New games and releases

FEATURES

056 **WORLD DOMINATION** — How Xbox 360 will overtake Sony's PS2 brand and conquer the world, including Japan

120 **XBOX LIVE 360** — Everything you need to know

COMMUNITY

116 **NEWS AND GOSSIP** — Live Arcade returns anew

118 **GHOST RECON AW** — The multiplayer mode played

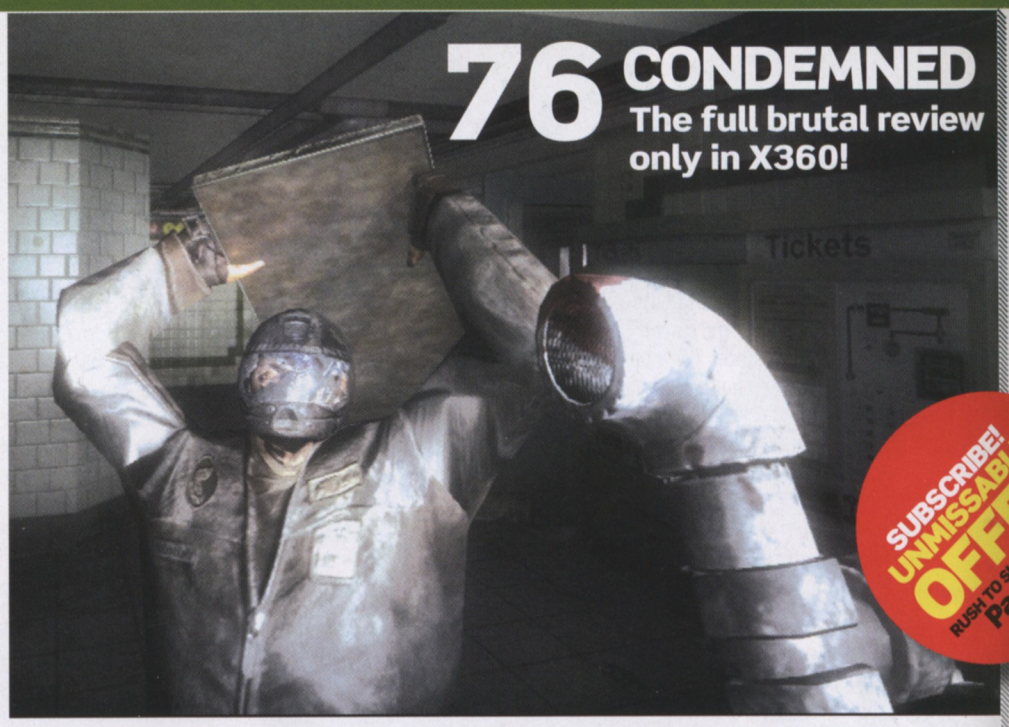
122 **DVDS & HARDWARE** — First unofficial pad tested



129 ON THE DVD
Watch *Mass Effect*, *Splinter Cell 4* and *MotoGP* in action

115 COMMUNITY
Every Live 360 question answered

127 NEXT MONTH
What exclusives are in store next issue?



76 CONDEMNED
The full brutal review only in X360!

SUBSCRIBE! UNMISSABLE OFFE
RUSH TO SIGN U
Page



PREVIEWS

034 THE OUTFIT
Chewing gun and kicking ass!

040 CRACKDOWN
Another wannabe *GTA* shows up

042 TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND
Lara jumps ship for her next-gen debut

044 MOTOGP URT 2006
The fastest game on console speeds up

045 TOO HUMAN
Thankfully, not a Robin Williams film



046 RIDGE RACER 6
Namco proves the old-school is still hip

048 FULL AUTO
Drive and gun your way to the podium

050 TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED
Is this the game to better *PGR3*?

PREVIEW ROUND-UP

052 FRAME CITY KILLER
TIMESHIFT
CHROMEHOUNDS
RUMBLE ROSES XX
VOODOO NIGHTS
New details on games coming soon









REVIEWS

64 FIFA 06 RTTWC

70 AMPED 3
2K Games delivers one of the surprise hits on launch day, all is revealed inside…

72 Kameo: Elements Of Power

76 Condemned

82 GUN
Dust down your chaps, tip your hat and prepare for a rooting-tooting adventure

84 Call Of Duty 2

92 Need For Speed Most wanted

98 TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN WASTELAND
Skating without boundaries, really? The Hawkster never played his X360 version…

99 Tiger Woods PGA 06

100 PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 3
You'll get plenty of kudos for just buying this polished piece of software

106 Quake 4

110 NBA Live 06

Meet the team



IAN DEAN
GROUP EDITOR

Ian doesn't mind us telling you he used to be a morris dancer. "Why be ashamed of your past?" he humourlessly retorts. Please email him and call him a loser so we don't have to.

IS ALWAYS/ into rubbish things

ian@x360magazine.com



JAY FILMER
DEPUTY EDITOR

Jay has been much happier this month, mainly because of the misfortune suffered by almost everyone else on the team. It's almost like he... no, let's leave it to the police.

IS ALWAYS/ being unpleasant

jay@x360magazine.com



KEITH HENNESSEY
NEWS EDITOR

A major plumbing disaster was Keith's cheery tale of woe this month. His new house is flooded and he faces financial ruin, yet he still smiles. One day he will crack. He has to.

IS ALWAYS/ laughing at his bad luck

keith@x360magazine.com



RYAN KING
COMMUNITY EDITOR

After experimenting with healthy eating, Ryan has started living off the vending machine again. The reason: the lady who works in the shop where he buys his apples hates him.

IS ALWAYS/ at the vending machine

ryan@x360magazine.com



KAREN RUTHERFORD
SENIOR SUB EDITOR

This month Karen has been unfortunate enough to have the ceiling above her leak every time it rains, forcing her to work alone – or is she just trying to get away from us?

IS ALWAYS/ moving desks

karen@x360magazine.com



ANDREW DOWNES
ART EDITOR

"Just don't make me out to be a psycho this month," Andy growls, aware this is being written yet seemingly unaware that we'd construct his description around that request.

IS ALWAYS/ plotting against us

andyd@x360magazine.com

Contributors



Iain Lee

The life of a minor celeb isn't easy; between trying to blag a table on *Hell's Kitchen* and a spot on *Dick And Dom*, our Iain has been thinking long and hard about the Xbox 360. His thoughts are on page 24, and they're good.



John Tynes

"You owe me an Xbox 360!" was the overriding sentiment from our US correspondent this month as reality dawned that there aren't enough to go around. "You owe us 500 words and Boston," was our response.



Andy Hartup

Out sister mag *XBM* has leant us Andy's talents again this month as we put him to work reviewing *Quake 4* (page 106). Andy's pic doesn't do him justice, he's bigger than this, he's bigger than all of us.

Gareth Williams

Our resident *Gotham 3* expert was snapped this month following a tank race with his pal 'nibbler'. We didn't want to ask too many questions, but we did ponder the safety of smoking around heavy fuel. When not mucking about in tanks Gareth writes for IGN.



X360

Highbury Entertainment Ltd, Paragon House
St Peters Road, Bournemouth,
Dorset. BH1 2JS

Tel: +44 (0) 1202 299900
Fax: +44 (0) 1202 299955
Website www.paragon.co.uk

CUSTOMER SERVICES
If you have a query regarding a subscription please contact the subscription hotline on 0870 444 8682 or email paragon@cisubs.co.uk. For all other queries including missing covermounts, please contact our Customer Services Department on 01202 200200 or email customerservices@highburygroup.com.

MAGAZINE TEAM
Group Editor Ian Dean
ian.dean@highburygroup.com

Deputy Editor Jay Filmer

News Editor Keith Hennessey

Community Editor Ryan King

Senior Sub Editor Karen Rutherford

Art Editor Andy Downes

Group Senior Editor Steve Bradley

Group Art Editor Paul Ridley

Consultant Editor Matt Bielby

Contributors
Aaron Asadi, Marc Chacksfield, Ella Clarke, Ian Collen, Andy Hartup, Will Johnston, Iain Lee, Rick Porter, John Tynes, Gareth Williams

ADVERTISING
Commercial Manager
Nick Roberts
01202 200242
nick.roberts@highburygroup.com

Advertising Director
David Dumville
020 7608 6508
david.dumville@highburygroup.com

Group Advertising Manager
Mandy Critchley
020 7608 6515
mandy.critchley@highburygroup.com

Classified Sales Executive
Caroline Sanyare
01202 209308
caroline.sanyare@highburygroup.com

Ad Production Co-ordinator
Lorraine Troughton
Production Controller
Caroline Bradford
Ad Copy Controller
Caroline Bradford

PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION
Production Co-ordinator Jo Spick
Production Manager Dave Osborne
Bureau Manager Chris Rees
Circulation Manager Tim Harris
Tel: +44 (0) 1202 200200
Fax: +44 (0) 1202 200217

INTERNATIONAL LICENSING
X360 is available for licensing overseas.
For details, please contact...
International Sales Manager Leylah Honeybourne
Tel: +44 (0) 1202 200205
Fax: + 44 (0) 1202 200217
leylah.honeybourne@highburygroup.com

DIRECTORS
Chairman Kelvin MacKenzie
Publishing Director Dave Taylor
Editorial Director Dan Hutchinson
Creative Director Trevor Gilham

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Subscription Rates
(13 issues) UK £34.99 UK direct debit £7.99 every three issues
Subscription Hotline: 0870 444 8682

Printed by Wyndeham Heron Ltd, The Bentall Complex, Colchester Road, Haybridge, Maldon, Essex
Tel: 01621 877777

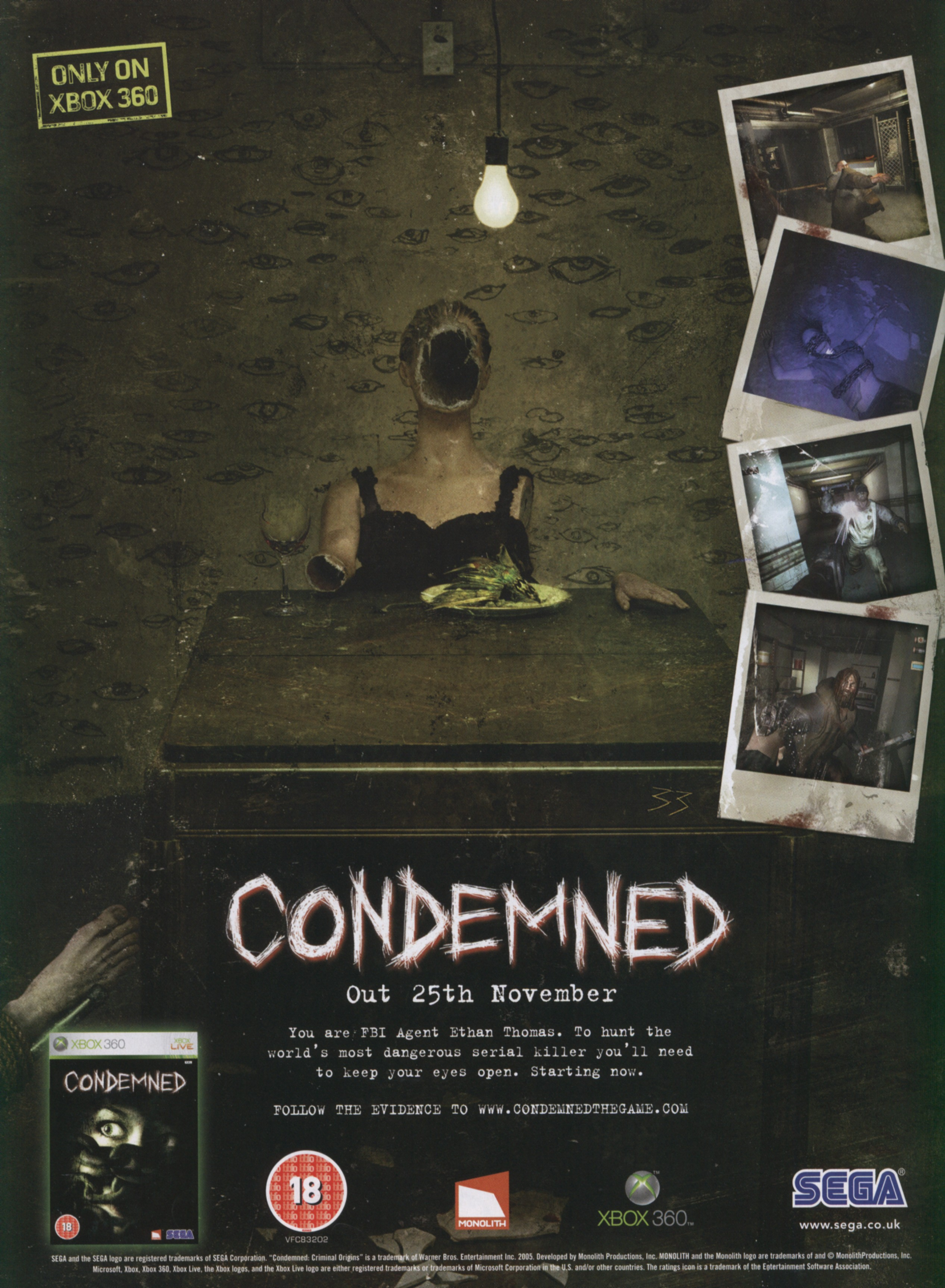
Distributed by Seymour Ltd, 1st Floor, 86 Newman Street, London W1P 3LD Tel: 0207 3968000

Xbox is a trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and other countries. X360 is an independent publication not affiliated with Microsoft Corporation. The views expressed within are not necessarily the opinions of Microsoft, its software partners or third party software publishers. All copyrights and trademarks are recognised. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher.

HIGHBURY ENTERTAINMENT

©2005 Highbury Entertainment Ltd
Highbury Entertainment Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of Highbury House Communications PLC, Registered Office: The Publishing House, 1-3 Highbury Station Road, Islington, London N1 1SE ISSN 1471-1192

Cover Art: ©2005 Electronic Arts. All Rights Resversed. Shirt models own.



SEGA and the SEGA logo are registered trademarks of SEGA Corporation. "Condemned: Criminal Origins" is a trademark of Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. 2005. Developed by Monolith Productions, Inc. MONOLITH and the Monolith logo are trademarks of and © MonolithProductions, Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox 360, Xbox Live, the Xbox logos, and the Xbox Live logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Eotertainment Software Association.



"Winner, Best RPG of E3"

– Game Critics Award, GameSpot, IGN, GameSpy, Xbox Evolved, Console Gold, Daily Game, Games Domain



"This is going to be special"

– Xbox World



"Destined to be mind-blowing"

– PC Gamer



"Hottest RPG of 2005"

– PC Zone

The RPG for the Next Generation

16+ www.pegi.info

PC DVD ROM

XBOX 360™

BETHESDA GAME STUDIOS

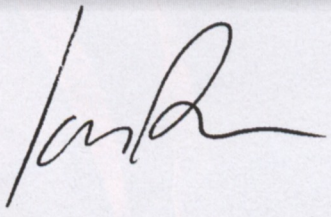
Bethesda SOFTWORKS a ZeniMax Media company

2K GAMES

The Elder Scrolls ® IV : Oblivion™ © 2005 Bethesda Softworks LLC, a ZeniMax Media company. The Elder Scrolls, Oblivion, Bethesda Game Studios, Bethesda Softworks, ZeniMax and related logos are registered trademarks or trademarks of ZeniMax Media Inc. in the U.S. and/or other countries. 2K Games and the 2K Games logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox 360, Xbox Live, and the Xbox, Xbox 360, and Xbox Live logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. All Rights Reserved.

POSTAL

So, here we are again, challenged with the task of answering your questions and saving you from nights spent shaking with worry. We're here for you – we're always here. Send us letters... let us be here for you



CONTACT US

LETTERS
We prefer letters – it makes us feel popular in the office. Send your letters, sweets and freebies to:

X360 Magazine,
Paragon House,
St Peters Road,
Bournemouth,
Dorset
BH1 2JS

EMAIL
Send your email letters to:
letters@x360magazine.com

PHONE
Call the **X360** team and chat about games and your social problems, on 01202 209301 between the hours of 4pm and 6pm

SMS TEXT
Feel free to text us with rants, proposals or praise on:
07813 297947

FAX
If you're posh or an angry lawyer looking to complain about review scores, then please fax on:
01202 299955

LAUNCH WORRIES

❑ I have heard that Microsoft is going to struggle with the demand for Xbox 360 consoles in Europe. This seems to be a well-versed statement as I've heard it with every new age of console there has been. Firstly, is it true? Secondly, don't you think it's a wee bit ridiculous? Surely Microsoft would anticipate this in planning or whatever? I can't bear to think that I won't have this beautiful new piece of hardware on 2 December.
Scott, Glasgow

At the time of writing, Microsoft is anticipating shortages; the console is in high demand so there won't be enough to go around. As for it being ridiculous... well, Microsoft is launching a console in the US, Europe and Japan all in the same two weeks, which has never been done before. The company should be applauded for giving the UK the same access as Japan and America.

GRIPPED TO YOUR PERFECT LENGTH

❑ Before I start, I just want to say how much I enjoyed the first issue. I bought your mag as well as the official one, but was much more gripped to your perfect length previews and news section. The official mag's sections were so small. You should steal the official tag! You've convinced me to subscribe by far.

But let me get to my point. Many people are complaining about the lack of current Xbox titles compatible with Xbox 360. Although it would bring tears of nostalgia to our eyes playing *Halo*, and a rush of speed racing on *Project Gotham 2*, do we really care?

When the PS2 released, a hefty percentage tried out old PS games, just to see if they worked and then stuffed them back on the shelf to gather dust. It will be a similar case with the X360. Try out *Half Life 2* or *Matrix: Path Of Neo*, then go back to playing *Perfect Dark Zero*. Do you get my point that gamers are wanting too much out of the X360? After all, the next-gen console war will be won in the new releases, not old-time classics.
Ryan Casey, Preston

You're right, it is the new releases that will inevitably sell a console, but when people can get trade-in deals on old hardware, of course backwards compatibility is going to be important, as is the need to carry over old game saves, as the following readers illustrate...

SAVE ME

❑ How am I going to get my game saves from my Xbox to my Xbox 360? Is there a way I can use my computer?
Christopher Mcgrillen, Co. Donegal, Eire

Nope, 'fraid not.

BACKWARDS COMPATIBILITY

❑ What with all the buzz and excitement surrounding the imminent release of Xbox 360, I have noticed there is one subject that seems to have been overlooked. I've bought almost every magazine released since August on the Xbox 360 and no one mentions it at all; how do gamers transfer data from their Xbox to their new Xbox 360? How do I transfer my Gamertag and Live subscription that I already have? How about all the lovely custom painted cars from *Forza Motorsport*? How about downloadable content already purchased? Surely all this data will be able to be transferred?
Paul Cairns, via email

Good news and bad news. With your Gamertag, you'll be able to call up your account details when hooking your Xbox 360 up to broadband for the first time. As for other data, there is no way to transfer it between consoles, so if you wish to play Xbox games on your Xbox 360, you'll need to start from scratch.

HALO MOTO

❑ I have got *Halo 2* and the new expansion pack but I would really like to know when, or round about when, *Halo 3* is released?
Jacqueline Morris, via email

Probably next Christmas...

FIGHTING TALK

Star letter

I'M GETTING a bit tired of all the aggro and hassle that comes with buying a next-gen console. All the companies do is just lie about everything and slag each other off, which then results in fans doing the same thing to each other in forums and sometimes in real life. I run my own indie shop and had to literally split up and throw out two youths who actually came to blows over an argument regarding which was best out of Sony and Microsoft.

While it's understandable that some people who can't afford everything may feel the need to 'support' their console of choice like they'd support a football team, people are taking it too far. But that said, when the console manufacturers are setting such a bad example, is it any wonder?
Colin, Bracknell

Well said, but can manufacturers ever stop trying to out-do each other? After all, creating publicity while stripping away confidence in rivals is a common practice in this day and age – just think back to the electoral campaigns, there was more effort spent slinging mud than proffering sincerity and good will. But this is just the way of the world we suppose.



❑ Xbox 360 is coming! It is going to seriously kick Sony's and Nintendo's asses. 'Why?', I hear PS3 and Revolution fanboys shout, well, because of X360's line-up: *Resident Evil, Prey, PGR3, Halo 3* (maybe), *Dead Or Alive 4, FF XI* and lots more. PlayStation3 is going to be dead and the Revolution is already dead with that rubbish controller. In fact, I don't know why Nintendo and Sony are even trying.

Brian, Coatbridge

THE SPOT
"Don't anger him"

"Okay readers, there have been far too many letters like this over the last few months. I don't want any more of this 'PS3/Revolution is rubbish and the X360 is great' type nonsense. I know the Xbox 360 is awesome and I don't need to read any more letters like this. I have a whole bunch of sharp pencils and a human anatomy book. Don't make me use them. You have been warned."

2K GAMES JOYTECH

Each month our Star Letter wins an awesome Joytech Neo Se Controller and a 2K game! 2K games are always a sign of quality, and what better way to play than with the very best third-party pad available for X360? In fact, Joytech's pads are so good we're giving one away to every letter we print!

AM I THE ONLY ONE?

❑ After reading some of the outrageous comments Sony appears to have made in your Top Ten feature (X360 issue 1) I felt it my duty to write in.

Sony seems to be treating its customers like idiots. To say we're going to have to work harder to be able to afford their super console is absolutely disgusting. It's also evident that they don't much care about European gamers due to the complete hash of the PSP release date and their bullyboy technique of banning grey imports.

The Xbox 360 will be released on 2 December in the UK with an impressive games line-up. Microsoft has a product at an amazing price, with the ability to tailor a package to suit people's needs.

I have owned virtually every console, and I would probably have bought both machines, but now I will not be buying a PS3. If anyone from Sony is reading this you probably won't care, but you must consider, am I the only one?

Christopher Browne, Southend

PS – If anyone from Sony is reading this, can I have a free HDTV to play my Xbox 360 on?

Was hardly worth asking really was it?

MAKING GROWN MEN CRY

❑ I'm writing to praise the plan to release *Halo 3* against the PS3. Sony will surely be hit badly by this, we've seen what *Halo* can do and the prospect of another is making grown men cry with anticipation. So releasing it against the PS3 will make the whole Xbox nation discard any intention to buy a PS3 and buy *Halo* instead, and will also cause the PS faithful to become tempted by what they see. They won't be able to resist the Xbox 360 and Sony will be sent spiralling down like a log in the toilet!

Neal Clapp, Tiverton, Devon

Hmm, cheers for that. That was really nice. We hope you feel better.

BURNING ISSUE

This month's hot topic of discussion on the **X360magazine.com** forum has been the Xbox 360 10 most-wanted games

Craig
"I had no idea *Perfect Dark, Condemned* and *Oblivion* were launch titles until now. This makes me happy."

Zola
"*Condemned* looks A-W-E-S-O-M-E! But I'll probably be getting *PDZ* and *PGR3* on launch."

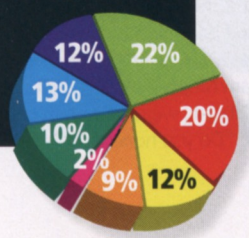
Dr Kong
"So many good games. Now, where am I gonna get the money?"

Steelers 95
"As long as I get my copy of *Oblivion* on launch day I'll be a happy camper."

MAILBAG BREAKDOWN

People's hopes, dreams and fears...

- This isn't a rant but...
- Xbox 360 rules
- When is *Halo 3* out?
- Can I transfer my game saves?
- Is Rinny single?
- PS3 is crap/gay, etc
- How do I transfer my Gamertag?
- Will MS run out of Xbox 360s?



MORE XBOX LIVE CONFUSION

❑ I have read issue 1 of your Xbox 360 magazine and I am still a bit confused about how Xbox Live will work.

1) Can I continue to use my current Xbox Gamertag? 2) Will my current subscription continue for the Gold membership, ie from my credit card account, or is the only way to pay by buying the 'top-up' cards?

Robert, via email

You can indeed keep your current Gamertag. As for payment, it will cost the same as you pay now and you can continue to use your credit card.

PLONKER LETTER

MISTAKEN IDENTITY

❑ Are you going to do what Nintendo did? As in when the Game Boy Advance came out they stopped producing games for the original Game Boy? Are you going to do the same to the Xbox when the Xbox 360 comes out in December? If this is the case, it is a shame that to play new games like *Halo 3* and *Quake 4*, I'm going to need an Xbox 360, and having little or no money means people like me are missing out. I am confused and anxious to find out what is going on with the Xbox now the Xbox 360 is nearly out. Please help me out.

Ian Pennells, via email

Doh! We'd just like to point out we're not Microsoft, therefore 'we' won't be doing anything. But, Microsoft will be continuing support for Xbox into 2007. That said, you won't see *Halo 3* or *Quake 4* as these are planned for the Xbox 360. Sorry if you feel cheated, but this is just the way things happen – if you want new games, you are eventually going to need new hardware.

TEXTS

I HOPE THE NEXT NFS GAME WILL NOT BE THE SAME AS MIDNIGHT CLUB AND IT WILL HAVE COPS. MICKY

Funny you should mention it...

WHY DONT YOU PUT YOUR GAMERTAGS ON THE STAFF PAGE? ANON

Because we want to avoid people like you

WHAT IS BETTER, THE PS3, THE XBOX 360 OR THE REVOLUTION? JAMES H

Talk to the hand James, talk to the hand

DO A LITTLE DANCE, MAKE A LITTLE LOVE, GET DOWN TONIGHT! DAVE

Okay, tell your Mum to come round about 8ish

I LIVE IN DEVON AND I NEVER MEET ANY GIRLS WHO LIKE GAMES. DOES ANYONE LIVE NEAR DEVON? DANIEL

Nope. And we feel your pain – she doesn't live near us either

YOU SHOULD DO A PEN-PAL SECTION IN YOUR MAGAZINE LIKE OLD MAGAZINES USED TO. I'M QUITE LONELY AND WOULD LIKE A PEN PAL. KENITH

Why not try one of the internet's many chatrooms?

WILL YOU BE ABLE TO BUY DIFFERENT SHELLS FOR THE XBOX 360 OR JUST THE FRONT? ANON

Just the front we're afraid. You could always paint it up yourself if you've got the required talent. Send us pictures of the finished article

NETWORK

X360 We look at news in many different ways. Here's how...

FEATURE	HOT SEAT	MULTIFORMAT	IN THE SPIN	OPINION
The latest Halo news	BioWare's Greg Zeschuk	Sony's PSP bundle	We focus in on Gears Of War	Iain Lee and John Tynes



HALO PROCLAIMED DOA

Is the Chief back in action?

Last month we brought you news that Bungie had confirmed the inclusion of a *Halo* character in Team Ninja's *Dead Or Alive 4*. However, despite us backing the lovely Cortana to make an appearance, Tecmo finally announced the secret character is in fact Spartan 458. *Halo* fans will be aware that this is an alias for Master Chief, but being *Dead Or Alive* there's a sexy twist in the tale – Spartan 458 is female. Hmm, killer bikinis and jiggly bits versus Spartan armour and an SMG… we don't fancy our chances.

"The opportunity to work with Team Ninja and combine our powers to strike yet another blow in our quest for world domination, was too alluring to pass up, "said Bungie Studio Manager Pete Parsons. "Plus, we just think the idea of putting a Spartan into a *DOA* game totally kicks ass."

FEMALE INTRIGUE

Seeing as Spartan 458 is unlike any other character currently playable in the game, she'll almost certainly come with a whole new set of moves to master and combos to perfect. Whether the armour will take any sort of battle damage is yet to be confirmed, but if it does, we may finally get to see what lurks under the famed headgear – then again, knowing the *DOA* team you'll probably be able to bust off her entire outfit to reveal a skimpy two-piece.

Team Ninja head game designer and Xbox 360 campaigner, Tomonobu Itagaki commented on how the game worlds came together – an idea that was born some years ago at E3. "Our first priority was, above all else, to remain truthful to Bungie's original design and background material. Then, ideally we were able to add a bit of Team Ninja's distinctive flavour on top. "Itagaki went on to pose the question: "Do you honestly believe there is anything out there that can't be accomplished with the technologies of Bungie and Team Ninja put together?" That's a question we'll answer next issue when we bring you a full review of *Dead Or Alive 4*, with bonus material and all. ■





SPARTAN SPARRING/ Knowing Bungie, Spartan 458's fighting technique has probably been religiously mapped out down to the weakest punch

DOA4 DELAYED?
13 JANUARY IS NOW A RUMOURED ON-SALE DATE
GET YOUR PRE-ORDERS IN EARLY, THIS WILL BE MASSIVE



MASTER OF DISASTER/ Even the ultimate super-soldier can't handle a spot of classic ninja action. It's back to boot camp for the Spartans



DODGE AND WEAVE/ It's good to see that *DOA4*'s special new character doesn't buck the game's rules – character balancing is everything in this game

HALO CRAZY



A FEMALE-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT

No, not a shopping centre

AS YOU CAN see, there's set to be at least two versions of the female Spartan fighter and an unlockable *Halo* environment to duke it out over. As with other *DOA* environments, it looks to be fully interactive, allowing you to use the platforms and scenery to your advantage, unleashing killer combos and sending opponents crashing to the cold steel below – or perhaps even out into space.



FIX UP, LOOK SHARP

Halo will be looking its best for the big day...

INTERNET CONJECTURE has been rife with the news that not only will both *Halo* and *Halo 2* be backwards compatible, but they are also set to receive a visual enhancement. The update on Bungie's official site claims to have information on how "*Halo* and *Halo 2* look on the X360, and it's all good news". This has led to speculation that both games will be running in HD format, with all-new shinier graphics on Microsoft's new console.

VIRTUA FIGHTER 5

Blaze of glory

Character details revealed

THIS MONTH saw fresh details emerge concerning one of two new *Virtua Fighter 5* characters, a game rumoured to be released on the X360 in the near future. The masked wrestler seen in the recent teaser trailer is called El Blaze; he uses the high-flying Lucha Libre fighting style and seems to be connected with Wolf. However, according to the game's developer, there will be no online fighting and it will build on the functionality of *VF4* to create a strong community. For more on *VF5* and other Sega games skip to page 22.



"THIS TECHNOLOGY IS ALLOWING THINGS NEVER DONE BEFORE... IT'S THE FUTURE OF ROLE-PLAY"

THE HOT SEAT / DR. GREGORY ZESCHUK

After announcing its new RPG title, Mass Effect, we talk to the game's producer to sort fact from science fiction

With the success of *Knights Of The Old Republic* and *Jade Empire*, Canadian RPG developer BioWare proved there was room for a more cerebral PC gaming experience on console. Without a doubt, these two RPGs changed the way many console gamers viewed the genre, and *KOTOR* in particular, changed the way the entire *Star Wars* franchise should be approached. But it's Xbox 360 where the developer really hopes to make an impact, with its first game *Mass Effect*.

"With *Mass Effect* we are creating a new IP, creating an entire living galaxy. This game will be the ultimate science fiction RPG," states Dr. Gregory Zeschuk, joint CEO of BioWare, as he maps out the company's most adventurous project on any platform.

The game will be set in the 22nd Century and offer several galaxies to explore. The human race is new to space travel; it has no allies and humanity is struggling to be an equal with the alien races accustomed to space travel. AI life has become self-aware and is struggling to find a foothold in the universe. You will lead an exploration team, befriend and war with aliens, and discover sinister plots within the human hierarchy. Ultimately, what you do and say will have 'mass effect' on the entire universe.



BIOG

NAME/ Gregory Zeschuk
COMPANY/ BioWare
JOB TITLE/ Joint CEO
CURRENTLY WORKING ON/ Mass Effect
DID YOU KNOW? Jade Empire 2 is now in development

"The question we wanted to pose with *Mass Effect* is, what is the danger of creating true AI? In *Mass Effect* the AI has a very dark agenda. The player must deal with the greys between bio and AI life forms, make the moral choices over who to trust, to befriend and who to attack," explains Zeschuk, before elaborating that as a human you will need to adapt AI forms to your chemistry and over time blur the boundaries between humanity and AI.

This game is going to be huge. It is planned as a trilogy of games, with download packs being released between each game. These will include new galaxies, races and story arcs. In fact, each galaxy will have hidden, unexplored planets to discover that will lie outside of the main quest, but what you do on them will affect the outcome of the universe.

"This technology is allowing us to do things we've never done before... This is the future of role-playing," states Zeschuk. "This game is about free-form exploration, about discovering unexplored planets and star systems. It will last the lifespan of the Xbox 360."

With such commitment to X360 from BioWare, how can Microsoft fail? ■

Coming soon... exclusive screens of *Mass Effect*



Alone In The Dark

New details on Atari's game of survival

Following on from its announcement last month, we've now seen some in-game footage and have obtained further details of Atari's new and terrifying looking *Alone In The Dark*. The game mostly takes place in an intensely gothic and dilapidated version of New York's Central Park, where lighting, noise and other effects are used to create a genuinely unsettling atmosphere. In addition to Central Park we're also told lead character Edward Carnby (yup, he's back) will be lucky enough to venture beyond the confines of New York's smelly central attraction, and perhaps even into the realms of the afterlife itself.

The afterlife is a central element to *AITD*, with death and near-death experiences playing a prominent role.

As for gameplay, *AITD* is being billed as a survival action thriller rather than a survival horror. That means less puzzles and a lot of wandering about scared or being stunned by generous helpings of cinematics and all-out killing.

The glimpse we got of the game this month suggests something very special, which, frustratingly, won't arrive until the end of 2006 at the earliest.





IF YOU LIKE THIS... TOO HUMAN
READ THE PREVIEW » Page 45

'ENGAGE'
As a human you are new to the wider world of galactic travel and will need to befriend as many alien races as possible, even the slimy ones



DOOM AND GLOOM
The graphics used in Alone In The Dark create a truly scary game atmosphere

SMALL Print

SORRY SONY

» Sony's attempts to scupper the X360 launch in Japan by releasing a new, even slimmer 'Satin Silver' PS2 look as though they could backfire because of compatibility problems. Initial reports suggest the machine has trouble playing certain PSone and PS2 games. Having a console with backwards compatibility issues is one thing, but it's something else entirely to have hiccups with titles made specifically for it. Sony will no doubt be in for some damaging feedback for this boob.



ATEN-TION

» In a concerted effort to add a high cultural component to videogames, Silicon Garage Arts has revealed that its new Xbox 360 action/adventure title, *Shadow Of Aten* will come complete with a separate multimedia library covering the history of ancient Egypt and a documentary detailing the various myths and legends that relate to the game's story. So that should keep 'mummy' happy.



A RARE KAMEO APPEARANCE

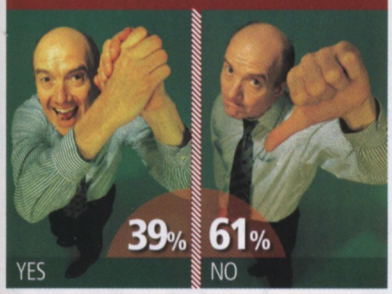
» With *Kameo* only just released for Xbox 360 (see the review on page 72) Rare has already announced that a bigger, bolder sequel is in the works. The sequel will not be the only new appearance by Kameo either, as animation studio Maxmedia is to adapt the game into a movie. The animated feature will be produced by Sunmin Park, whose credits include the Nicole Kidman horror movie *The Others*. The film is said to be a prequel to *Elements Of Power*.

burningissue@x360magazine.com

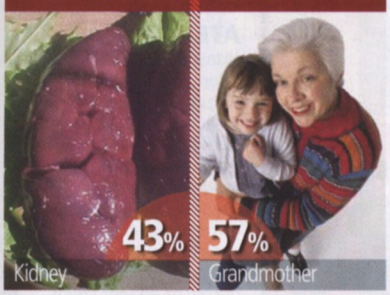
BURNING ISSUE!

With the launch of Xbox 360 so tantalisingly close, we ask will the launch go according to plan or will Microsoft be left holding the baby?

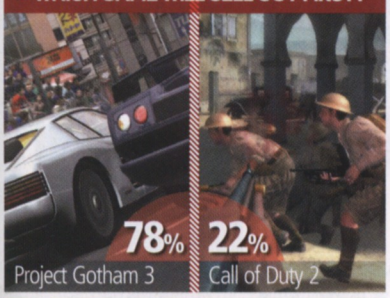
WILL THERE BE ENOUGH UNITS?



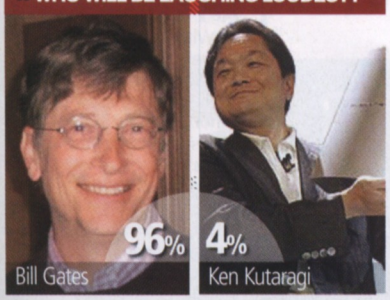
WHAT WOULD YOU SELL TO GET ONE?



WHICH GAME WILL SELL OUT FIRST?



WHO WILL BE LAUGHING LOUDEST?



LOG ON TO
www.x360magazine/forum to vote on next month's big burning issue question: Does the X360 live up to the hype?



XBOX 360 IS LOCKED AND LOADED

Microsoft makes gaming as safe as houses...

Videogame content and its certification has long been a political hot potato and has been dominating the headlines Stateside this month as the Governorator himself, Arnold Schwarzenegger, has signed a bill banning the sale of 'violent videogames' to minors. According to the state's legal summary of the bill, a 'violent' game is "a game in which the range of options available to the player includes killing, maiming, dismembering or sexually assaulting an image of a human being." As you'd expect, that will cover a huge amount of games currently occupying shelf space and plenty yet to arrive. Under the new law, retailers that sell such games to children would be subject to a $1000 fine and it will also require 'violent' games to bear an 18-certificate sticker on their covers.

While legal measures to shield young gamers from potentially harmful material can only be seen as a positive move with the arrival of next-gen consoles, such stringent measures may not be necessary, as Microsoft's new machine offers an almost limitless level of paternal control. Now parents have the option of locking out any feature they do not wish their children to be exposed to. Microsoft believes censorship begins at home, essentially putting parents in control. Basically, all parents have to do is enter their childrens' ages into the X360, which reads data from game discs and locks them out if and when appropriate. At first this may sound restrictive, but in fact it isn't, as the rules can be customised to suit each and every member of the family. For instance, if you have a ten-year-old child, they can have a separate login password and set of regulations to their 18-year-old sibling, who might in turn have different levels of access to their parents. It serves as a comprehensive system that lets you set the boundaries within your own home. We give it half an hour before younger kids bribe their older siblings into logging them in, but you can't blame them for trying, right? ■

> "IT LETS YOU SET BOUNDARIES IN YOUR OWN HOME"

GHOST BUSTERS

Ghost Recon AWF delayed until February



THIS MONTH UBISOFT announced that it is delaying the release of *Ghost Recon Advanced WarFighter* until February 2006. The publisher claims the delay is needed to "optimise the application of Xbox 360 technology". There are also delays in Japan, as Namco revealed *Frame City Killer* would not be making launch. Due to hit shelves on 12 December, the game has slipped until 'some time in the winter'. Although this is disappointing, if these games turn out better than expected then all will be forgiven very quickly.

FOR MULTIPLAYER DETAILS... P118



X360 Hot PROSPECT

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 360

Rival to FIFA 06 announced on X360

IN A RECENT interview, *Pro Evolution Soccer* producer Shingo 'Sea Bass' Takatsuka confirmed that an Xbox 360 instalment of the football series is set for release at the latter end of 2006. He went on to mention that the development team is working towards full 11 versus 11 online matches, although he is uncertain if it can be achieved this time around. Sea Bass also revealed he expects the sim to include an online version of the game's Master League. As many seasoned pros will be aware, the Master League is the mode in which you build up a team of superstars and pit them against the world's best clubs. At present, the finer details are still to be worked through – the main stumbling block seems to be the star players – will there be unlimited star talent or as the terrace chant goes 'only one Wayne Rooney'?

After scooping an exclusive review of the decent but limited *FIFA 06 Road To The World Cup* this issue, we were glad to finally have Konami's leading football developer confirm a release date for *Pro Evolution Soccer* on Xbox 360. Hopefully though, this will be a new version of the game and will finally ditch many of the niggles that *PES5* has shown up in recent times.

> "PES6 – WE'RE THINKING OF NEXT-GEN PLATFORMS SO WE'RE JUST CONSTRUCTING IDEAS NOW"
>
> SEA BASS

SMALL Print

FEELING BLU?

» In a recent speech at Harvard University, Bill Gates hinted that the Xbox 360 doesn't contain an HD-DVD or Blu-Ray drive because he believes that the digital delivery of games and movies to hard drives could become commonplace in the future. Of course, the digital distribution of games and movies is achievable, but whether it will happen on this generation of console is still up for debate.



TWO'S UP

» **X360** has received word of two titles due for release in late 2006. The first is an RPG called *The Embrace Of Time*, which is scheduled to be the first in a four chapter series. The second game is called *Data-Fly* and will feature stealth elements as well as multiple and massive environments. Information on both titles is thin on the ground, but we'll give you more details when we have them.

The small stories you have time to read between meals (or heartbeats)

5 IN 5 SECONDS

SEAN BEAN
Joins voice cast of *Oblivion*

ENDORPHIN GETS POSSESSED
Possession gets new animation software

QUAZAL AND RENDEZ-VOUS
Online multiplayer technologies support X360

XBOX 360 LOUNGE
Now open in Tokyo centre

GEARS OF WAR
Epic licences FaceFX facial animation

SMALL Print

SECOND STREET

Chavs of the world are celebrating this month with EA's announcement that *FIFA Street 2* is currently in development. Touting new modes, players and gamebreakers, the publishing giant invites us to humiliate opponents using the Trick Stick Beat system; the only thing we'd like to beat, however, is the person who commissioned this sequel... oh and maybe MC Harvey.



SCI HIGH

Having already revealed that Lara Croft will be making her comeback on the Xbox 360 this month, SCi reaffirmed its commitment to Microsoft's new console by stating that next year the foxy relic hunter would be joined by *Highlander*, *Total Overdose 2* and a new *Conflict* title.



YOU SAY GOODBYE WE SAY HALO...

Alongside recent claims that both *Halos 1* and *2* will be fully playable on launch day, there have also been unconfirmed reports that *Halo 3* is over 44 per cent complete and that the very first screens and artwork will be released next month. If this rumour holds any truth you can be 100 per cent sure we'll bring you them next issue.



JD AND COKE

Joanna Dark gets busy with the fizzy...

Fresh from her appearance on the cover of *FHM*, Joanna Dark, the world's most prominent secret agent, is proving she can hold her own with Hollywood's finest by signing up to advertise Coca-Cola.

Continuing to blur the line between fantasy and reality, this is just the first in a long line of brand integration that will make up part of Microsoft's massive Xbox 360 marketing strategy on the lead up to launch day. Alongside Miss Dark's flirtations with 'the real thing,' the big M is also joining forces with sports giant Adidas and MTV in a range of promotional events to make sure no one misses out on hearing Xbox 360's good word.

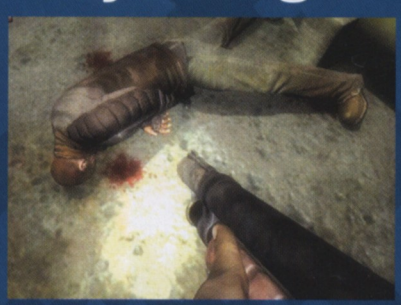
WHAT DO YOU THINK?: Is it a good idea to have videogame characters involved in advertising or do the marketing campaigns go too far? Tell us what you think at **letters@x360magazine.com** or write in to the usual address.



"Continuing to blur the line between fantasy and reality"

MOVIE TIME

Hollywood gets Condemned



ACCORDING TO the Hollywood entertainment bible *Variety*, Warner Brothers Studios plans to release a film set in the same 'universe' as the upcoming Xbox 360 fright-fest *Condemned*. Kurt Sutter, producer of popular television series *The Shield*, has apparently been signed to pen the script, which will be called *Species X*, with former Monolith CEO Jason Hall to oversee production. The movie is due to coincide with the sequel to the X360 game. Though it will feature similar themes and locales, it won't be directly based on the game's storyline. Hall has been quoted as saying: "One medium usually handicaps the other, if you hadn't thought of the movie when you did the game you'd limit creative expression losing your core audience." We'll bring you more info as soon as we have it.

MONEY TALKS



IF YOU LIKE THIS... SONIC READ THE FEATURE » Page 58

AN INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT

PS3 developers make friends with Microsoft

Though shelling out forty pounds a time for new Xbox 360 games might seem a lot, according to games publisher Bandai, gamers are getting off lightly when compared to the game makers.

In a recent Bloomberg report it was revealed that Bandai expects development costs for next-generation games to more than double in the coming months. The software company's Managing Director Shin Onozawa stated that the investment required to develop a next-gen title could grow to five million pounds from the current cost, which sits at just under three million. However, he did go on to add that, "costs will begin to fall a year or so after the consoles are released and game makers get used to the systems." This is concerning news, as higher development costs tend to lead to more expensive games. But don't go cancelling your X360 order just yet, because Microsoft's Peter Moore hit back by stating that "it's not linear, if it costs 40 per cent more to develop a game, then it's going to cost 40 per cent more to the consumer. That simply doesn't work."

On a more positive note, the word from many development houses is that the Xbox 360 is a very stable operating system. More importantly, it could be gaining development support at the expense of PlayStation3, due to its even higher development costs on Sony's console. Industry insiders have claimed that Sony's initial investment for the PS3 is not a large budget for software companies that want to develop games for the machine, leading many respected developers to defect to the Xbox 360 camp. Tomonobu Itagaki has already publicly revealed that he believes the X360 is the "best console in the world, it's better than PlayStation3," adding that the "PS3 has too complicated an architecture". His comments not only suggest that the likes of *Dead Or Alive* will be Xbox 360 exclusives, but that with a much bigger development budget, software companies could be more inclined to side with Gates and the X360 than Kutaragi and company. ■

MORE NEWS COMING SOON



SIGNED UP/ The powerful hardware and dedicated support of Microsoft to Xbox developers has seen companies like Tecmo flourish on the systems



JUMPING SHIP/ With rising production costs for PS3 titles and little funding from Sony, could we see a franchise like *Metal Gear Solid* coming to X360?

MULTIFORMAT

Behind Enemy Lines

What's happening in the rest of the games world?

In our eyes nothing can beat the X360, but we still like to have a nose at what the big M's competitors are up to. This issue, we've got news of Sony's new PSP bundle and after last month's Revolution revelations, there's been plenty of speculation about its release date...

CLASH OF THE TITANS



WITH THE impending launch of the Xbox 360, we've every reason to expect a strong Sony offensive this year and the Japanese giant hasn't let us down. Not only is Sony planning to release a new cut-price PSP bundle, but it also comes complete with a 1Gb memory stick and the latest *GTA* outing, *Liberty City Stories*. There's no denying that this will be very attractive to gamers, but considering the new 'Giga Pack' will be retailing at £214.99 and the most powerful console in the world – the Xbox 360 – is only £209.99, we know where the smart money will be going this Christmas.

NINTENDO GUN FUN



INTERNET FORUMS were buzzing this month with news that we could be seeing the Revolution as early as spring next year. However, an announcement from Nintendo soon followed, explaining that it was all a big mix up on the translation front and no firm release date had been set. In contradiction to this, a recorded message on an official Nintendo hotline in the States suggests that the Revolution will arrive in the 'later half of 2006'. To brighten up your day, here's a picture of a prototype light gun found doing the rounds on the net, and though its unlikely to be produced, with last month's unveiling of the new 'revolutionary' controller, anything is possible... Thanks again Nintendo.

IN THE SPIN

WE CUT THROUGH THE CRAP OF THE PR MACHINE



GEARS OF WAR

Humanity is in a struggle for survival against an alien race known as the Locust Horde. These creatures have surfaced from the bowels of the planet on 'Emergence Day' to slaughter every living creature. Combining tactical combat and cinematic techniques, it's hard not to get excited about Epic's Xbox 360 exclusive shoot-'em-up

"MEMORABLE CHARACTERS AND AN EPIC STORYLINE PLAY OUT LIKE AN INTENSE AND UNSETTLING BLOCKBUSTER ACTION FILM"

From what we've seen first hand of *Gears Of War*, Epic could be right on the money here. The game uses the Unreal Engine 3, so there is no loss of atmosphere between in-game action and cut-scenes. There is a sense that the desire to present a glossy film experience may leave the action a little 'on rails' but we'll decide once we've had a hands-on play.

CHANCES OF HAPPENING: ✔✔✔✔●

"FOR THE FIRST TIME, AI TEAM-MATES ARE INDISCERNIBLE FROM HUMAN PLAYERS"

Now here's a bold claim. The game is designed to be played as a team, whether that's with a human or AI character backing you up. The tactical element to the combat – you'll need to give covering fire to friendlies and make cover by exploding scenery – suggests the AI will need to be pretty smart to survive. However, we feel you will need to experience *Gears Of War* with a real human player to get the full effect of the experience. To make it more enticing, the whole single-player campaign can be played over Xbox Live. Who needs AI players when you have real people to shoot up the shop with, no matter how intelligent they are.

CHANCES OF HAPPENING: ✔✔✔●●



READY TO RUMBLE/ Though heavily based around blowing the crap out of stuff, there will be stealth involved in *Gears Of War*



"GEARS OF WAR USHERS IN THE NEXT-GENERATION WITH UNPRECEDENTED VISUALS"

Who better to get the most from the Unreal Engine 3 than Epic itself? Well, judging on how good this game looks, no one. The high-definition visuals deliver a crisp and unique look. Every bullet hole, splash of rain and flash of lightning looks real. The visual style is dark and brooding, like a third-person *Doom 3* with added lighting and water effects to boost the realism. It would be fair to say that when *Gears Of War* ships next year there won't be too many games that will compete with it technically.

CHANCES OF HAPPENING: ✔✔✔✔✔

"HYPER-REALISTIC AND INTENSE COMBAT"

The idea behind *Gears Of War* is slightly different to what you may expect from an Epic shoot-'em-up. This is a squad-based shooter with the emphasis on shooting. You will be able to use blind fire – shooting over or around cover to suppress the enemy but reducing your aim, basic squad commands will allow you to outsmart the enemy, while destructible environments will offer makeshift cover.

CHANCES OF HAPPENING: ✔✔✔●●

"GEARS OF WAR WILL EMBODY THE NEXT-GENERATION MICROSOFT XBOX LIVE EXPERIENCE"

As well as the online co-op mode mentioned earlier in which the whole game can be played with a friend, *Gears Of War* will offer the chance to watch other players battle, view stats and player achievements, as well as customise your Live Dashboard and Blades with artworks. It will also provide 'individualised matchmaking' that we presume will be for the co-op mode, but it could suggest a versus mode too, which it will need if it is to embody next-gen Xbox Live.

CHANCES OF HAPPENING: ✔✔✔✔●

"WHO NEEDS AI PLAYERS WHEN YOU HAVE REAL PEOPLE TO SHOOT WITH?"





TRENDS: Hardware

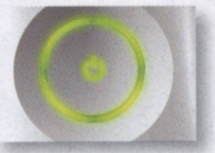
This month saw a trio of exciting announcements concerning Xbox 360 and its awesome functionality...

1. DRIVE TIME



Microsoft has confirmed that the Xbox 360 will come with a hard drive peripheral that contains videos, gamer tiles and a puzzle game called *Hexic* – created by Alexy Pajitnov, the man behind *Tetris*. The content is also designed to help show gamers what they can do with their X360 in addition to playing games.

2. FIELD OF STREAMS



The big M has also announced new software for Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005 that can stream digital music, videos, photos, standard HD television and movies from PCs to any TV via the X360. The new software – Update Rollup 2 – is free of charge via the Window Update download site.

3. PLATFORM DUO



Microsoft's first cross-platform controller has been revealed. The Xbox 360 Controller For Windows includes a driver that allows it to work with Windows XP-based PCs and the X360. The standard wired controller will work on PCs after users download the driver from Microsoft.

SMALL Print

A PAIR FOR RARE

» In an interview with MTV, Xbox Vice President Peter Moore revealed that Rare is currently working on two brand new titles for Xbox 360. Despite just finishing two Xbox 360 games after a long development process – *Kameo: Elements Of Power* and *Perfect Dark Zero*. The new games have been in development for nearly two years and will be announced in the spring. Keep watching this space for updates.



EA BAG BART

» EA has secured the rights to develop games featuring *The Simpsons* in a groundbreaking deal with media giant, Twentieth Century Fox. Although a launch date hasn't been announced as yet, the first of the multi-game deal is set to appear on next-generation consoles only and promises to offer something never seen before from sofa-loving Homer and his wayward family of misfits. One thing's for sure though, we'll bring you all the news as soon as we get it.



ELDER SCROLLS DELAYED

» It looks increasingly likely that those wanting to avoid the Christmas chaos by losing themselves in the world of *Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion* will unfortunately have to wait a little while longer than anticipated. According to a financial update from publisher Take-Two, *Oblivion* is now set for release in its second quarter, which runs from February to April 2006...



CLIMACTIC/ *Afterburner*'s retro style will find many fans in the Xbox 360 community. Sega needs to release this in 2006

SEGA WISH LIST

CALL FOR COIN-OPS

How long until we see Sega's arcade line-up on Xbox 360?

Following up on the impressive trailers screened a few months back, Sega has once again been plucking at our heartstrings by releasing fresh shots of its upcoming arcade line-up. The big blue is yet to confirm whether these games will definitely be coming to the Xbox 360, but with the specs for Microsoft's new machine looking very similar to Sega's new Lindbergh arcade hardware, many industry insiders have suggested there's every chance of us seeing these coin-op classics some time in the near future. This school of thought was given even more momentum when Yu Suzuki – head of Sega's newly formed AM Plus (Amusement Machine) development team – was quoted as saying that "although the Sega of today is split into home and arcade divisions, development is borderless." When quizzed on what next-generation consoles will be getting Sega arcade titles, Suzuki took a predictably neutral stance stating only that "for a techie like me, the PS3 is very attractive, but when you consider that both companies are delivering the quality that users want, I believe that hardware like the Xbox 360, which offers easy development, is important."

> "I believe that hardware like the Xbox 360, which offers easy development, is important" Yu Suzuki

With Sega classics like *Sonic The Hedgehog* spinning their way onto









THE FIGHT IS ON/ *Virtua Fighter* is a classic franchise that needs to be released on Xbox 360. The more we see of this stunning beat-'em-up the more we feel it's a perfect companion to Tecmo's *Dead Or Alive 4*. Come on Sega, deliver the goods and bring this brawler to Xbox 360!



HENMAN WANTS TO BE RELEASED/ The sheer detail and quality of *Virtua Tennis 3* is amazing. With any luck and some strong words from gamers worldwide, Sega should be coerced into releasing its premier sports franchise on Xbox 360 next summer

our release list we ask, why not the awesome *Afterburner Climax*? With its scorched skies and frantic search-and-destroy gameplay this looks set to feature all the elements that made the original such a huge success. Being a console somewhat bereft of beat-'em-ups, *Virtua Fighter 5* would also be a welcome addition to the Xbox 360 fold with its stunning environments and intriguing new characters. If this respected fight fest does make it onto the Xbox 360, prepare for a showdown of epic proportions as it goes up against Tecmo's *Dead Or Alive 4* – you'd better start choosing your side now. Nevertheless, if planes and pain isn't quite your thing, you could always bring the heat to the court in *Virtua Tennis 3*. Despite *Top Spin 2* being primed to claim the Xbox 360 tennis top spot during the launch period, with it's simple game mechanics and roster of the top pros, *Virtua Tennis 3* would be the perfect doubles partner for 2K's tennis sim. All that's left now is for Sega to take Yu Suzuki's lead and confirm that these arcade additions will be coming to the Microsoft's next-gen powerhouse and we'll be jumping for joy. ■

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

IF YOU'RE ANYTHING like us, after a few minutes of staring at the shots on these pages, your magazine will be sodden with drool brought on by the thought of playing these games on Xbox 360. So, before the paper is reduced to a palpable mush, cut out this coupon and send it back to us – once we get enough support we'll march on down to Sega and petition for their Xbox 360 releases.

I, ... WANT TO SEE YOUR AWESOME ARCADE TITLES ON THE XBOX 360. MAKE IT HAPPEN OR TAILS GETS NEUTERED.

XBOX 360 SET TO BE HALF THE PRICE OF PS3

Analyst reveals Microsoft's console is a bargain compared with Sony's

IN A RECENT review of production costs, it was discovered that Sony fans could pay a lot more for the PS3 than they expected. Analyst Merrill Lynch has delved into the hardware of the X360 and the PS3, broken down each console cost part by part and concluded that by the end of next year the Xbox 360 could be selling at half the PS3's price. The report reads: "The PS3 will not only be significantly more costly than Xbox 360 at launch, but will continue to operate at a cost disadvantage for several years... we think the Xbox 360 could be selling for half the price of PS3 in the latter half of 2006."

> "Xbox 360 should emerge as the winner in the next round of game console wars"

The breakdown highlights the central cell processor and Blu-Ray drive as the PS3's biggest expense and estimates that the PS3 will cost £280 to manufacture, compared with £190 for the X360. So with X360's production costs lower and the price of its components falling, Microsoft could be poised for a hefty price drop in late 2006, helping to establish a very strong customer base that could shatter the PS3. For bringing this to our attention we'll give Lynch the last word: "Microsoft has a significant advantage in terms of cost. Taking Sony's weakened financial condition and Microsoft's deep pockets into consideration, we conclude that Microsoft's Xbox 360 should emerge as the early winner in the next round of the game console wars."



COSTLY?/ Has Sony priced itself out of the console war?

AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD NEWSAGENTS OR CAN BE A COPY DIRECT ON 01202 200272



THE BRIT
Iain Lee

GETTING IN EARLY...

He's got more rock than Brighton

Okay. We're close. We are so near to getting the Xbox 360 that, believe it or not, I actually have a semi. You can feel the excitement in the air. The magazines are popping up, the ads have been around for a while and the shops have had their empty X360 boxes on display for what seems like years.

So, what am I supposed to do as the countdown continues? The tension and frustrations are mounting and I've already packed away the ugly old Xbox to make space for the new, sleek, white box of sexy delights that I will soon be caressing. But what do I do now? I'm dangerously close to losing the plot as I climb the walls of my flat waiting for what I know will be the gaming experience of my life. How do I stop myself going into Gamestation, dropping my trousers in front of the X360 display and knocking one out?

Well, in an attempt to pass the time and make sure I don't get arrested in a videogame shop, I've recently turned to my old friend, the mighty eBay, to see what X360 stuff is out there. I thought that maybe a pre-release 'box might have managed to find its way onto the market, stolen by some bitter ex-Microsoft employee who wanted to seek revenge on Bill Gates by selling his hot goods on the world's most popular car boot site. This was not to be. The first thing I found were about a dozen ads set up by some idiots claiming they could 'sell' me a link that would guarantee a free X360. Er, right. Listen fellas, you got me on that one with the DS. I ain't falling for that again. Not after I was also suckered in when the PSP came out. So I'm definitely not going there a third time.

But this wasn't the most amazing thing on offer. No, the thing that really took my breath away was an ad set up by some dick who was marketing what he called 'an uber cool hotmail address for X-Box 360 seller'. The email he thought was 'uber cool' was X-BOX360_SELLER@HOTMAIL.CO.UK. Now, you don't need me to tell you, there is nothing cool, uber or otherwise, about that email address. So I've come up with a plan to teach the poor sucker who actually shelled out good hard PayPal for that, a well-earned lesson. I urge all of you, in the empty days you have leading up to the release of the mighty X360, to please email the chump that now owns that addy with the message 'You, sir, are a massive bell end.' It's childish, I know. But imagine the look on this dude's face when he turns on his PC tomorrow to check his new, snazzy email account, and gets 5,000 messages calling him a bell end? Ooh, I've just thought, to make it even better, we must all put as our subject heading 'I want to buy 10 X360s'. He'll cream himself over that one.

The next time we speak, it will be the future. ■

Iain knows Richard Bacon

> "I CLIMB THE WALLS OF MY FLAT WAITING FOR WHAT WILL BE THE GAMING EXPERIENCE OF MY LIFE"



Illustration by David Semple


ON SALE 13.10.05
4 FREE GIFTS!
BEST SELLING UNOFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE
MORE THAN 500 XBOX GAMES INSIDE
FIRST FOR XBOX 360
XBOX
XBM
ISSUE FIFTY TWO
NEED FOR SPEED MOST WANTED
VROOM WITH A VIEW
THE WARRIORS
BROTHERS IN ARMS EARNED IN BLOOD
DELTA FORCE BLACK HAWK DOWN
COMPLETE GUIDE
EVERY LEVEL FULLY SOLVED INSIDE!
FREE WITH XBM
XBOX 360
KAMEO: ELEMENTS OF POWER
Exclusive Preview
SAMPLE
ISSUE 52
£4.99
POLICE
FIND OUT WHY WE'RE THE UK'S BEST INDEPENDENT UNOFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE.
AVAILABLE FROM ALL GOOD NEWSAGENTS.
OR CALL FOR A COPY DIRECT ON 01202 200200



THE YANK
John Tynes

FOR THE CRANK FILE

A letter from America...

Hello, old chum. I hope this letter finds you well. I've received the latest **X360** in the mail and as usual, it's brilliant. Why, I remember just last year when we were having our whiskies at the club, surrounded by the taxidermied heads of woodland creatures we'd bludgeoned together, and you said that not only would the magazine be terrific, but you were certain you could persuade the publisher to buy me an Xbox 360 on launch day. Ho ho! How we laughed to think of doddering old Pantsworth J. Smiley in the boardroom mindlessly signing cheques, not noticing the one that would pay for my gleaming new silicon god. I realise you may not recall this conversation, or indeed possess any knowledge of our mutual creature-bludgeoning, let alone the embarrassing and distasteful episode of amateur taxidermy that followed, and yet here it is, almost launch day, and I want my free Xbox 360.

Of course, since that wistful day at the club Microsoft has made two Xbox 360 options: the core system and the full package with the funny detachable hat on top. I suspect you are thinking, "Well, he's just a columnist, the core system is all he needs." I'm sure that sounds very reasonable, but you don't have all the information you need.

Here in America, the supersized land of opportunity, we have far more options. One of our fine retailers has assembled four bundles of Xbox 360s, games, and accessories: the Core, Silver, Gold, and Ultimate bundles. This rather complicates matters and makes your decision harder. I pity you.

But wait! It appears their Core, Silver, Gold, and Ultimate bundles have entirely sold out! In fact, there is only one bundle still remaining, one whose name I dared not speak: the Omega bundle.

Perhaps you've heard of it. It includes the laughably puny "full package," plus three more controllers, memory card, faceplates, play & charge kit, battery, Live subscription, and twenty games. Finally, there is the minor trifle of a 42" plasma monitor, which is just a bonus titbit I might use as a breakfast tray. All of this is available for only £2544 and fifty of those pence things you people are always rattling on about.

Since this is the only option remaining here at the dawn of launch day, we have to make the best of things. You might as well place the order now and get it over with, and I will resign myself to countless hours of hard but wireless labour. Think not of the cost! Think only of the rewards that await you in the kingdom of heaven for such a deed. My dear Ian, look to eternity, and I shall look to the beautiful plasma.

It's either that or I wait in line all night with the proles. For the love of God, Ian! Omega me! ■

John likes dice, a lot



Illustration by David Semple

> "THINK NOT OF THE COST! THINK OF THE REWARDS THAT AWAIT YOU IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN"



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

SAVE 33%

THAT'S 4 FREE ISSUES WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE!

Or pay just £7.99 for 3 issues – today!





www.X360magazine.com

Yes, I'd like to subscribe to X360 as indicated below:

- ❑ **ONE YEAR** (13 issues) for £34.99 – SAVE 30%
- ❑ **BEST DEAL!** Spread my payments with Direct Debit (only £7.99 every three issues)

YOUR DETAILS

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Postcode _____ Telephone _____

Email _____

Please tick the box if you DO NOT wish your details to be used for internal promotions by Highbury Entertainment ❑ Please tick the box if you DO NOT wish to receive information about products and services from other carefully selected companies ❑

MEDIA CODE XB20503

YOUR PAYMENT DETAILS

❑ Cheque enclosed (made payable to Highbury Entertainment Ltd)

❑ Visa ❑ Mastercard ❑ Switch ❑ Delta

Card number _____

Expiry Date _____ Issue No _____

Signed _____ Date _____

HIGHBURY ENTERTAINMENT

INSTRUCTION TO YOUR BANK OR BUILDING SOCIETY TO PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT

DIRECT Debit

Name and full postal address of bank or building society

To: The Manager Bank/Building Society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of account holder(s)

Branch sort code

Bank/building society account number

Banks and building societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account

Originator's identification number

8 5 1 4 1 2

Reference number

Instructions to your bank or building society

Please pay Highbury Entertainment Ltd Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Highbury Entertainment Limited and, if so, details will be passed on electronically to my bank/building society

Signature(s)

Date

SEND THIS CARD TO: HIGHBURY ENTERTAINMENT LTD, FREEPOST NATW1809, SOMERTON, TA11 6ZA

CALL 0870 444 8682 OR FAX 01458 271146

Offer valid in the UK only. Call 44870 444 8682 for international prices. THIS OFFER EXPIRES WITHOUT NOTICE

HORIZON

ICONS CUTE, AND USEFUL

SHOOTER · FIGHTER · PUZZLE · ADVENTURE · RACING · UK · JAPAN · USA · BEARDY · SLEEPER
CUTE · GIRLY · SCARY · BORING · MANLY · AMBITIOUS · CASH-IN · CONFUSING · DEAD CERT · ADULT



REAL REPTILES/ The detail of the graphics in *King Kong* are sure to blow you away, just don't get too scared

PETER JACKSON'S KING KONG

Lord of the swings

SMALL DETAILS
RELEASE/ 2 December 05
PUBLISHER/ Ubisoft
DEVELOPER/ Montpellier Studios
GENRE/ Action/ Adventure
LIVE/ Yes

By now, everyone knows almost all there is to know about King Kong; he's big, angry and very possessive – if you mess with his woman you can bet he'll go ape. You might have even played the game on other formats, but rest assured you won't have truly experienced the power of Kong until you've seen what he's capable of on the Xbox 360. Despite platform-sharing gameplay and story elements, what isn't shared with any other machine is the unparalleled presentation that has been achieved by Michel Ancel and his team at Montpellier Studios. Not only will you be wowed by Kong and company, but the striking interactive environments will also have you in absolute awe. For X360 the polygon count has been upped considerably, with normal mapping added to create a striking look and atmosphere.

You play as both Jack Driscoll and the great ape himself across two very different environments – the savage and the civilised. But whoever and wherever you are, success depends on a blend of intelligence and brute force, because when you're not trawling through the jungle disposing of prehistoric predators, you have to use intelligence to outwit enemies that can't be felled in the city. Of course, no amount of wit or strength can save you from the inevitable – eventually Kong will climb the Empire State Building and meet his end on the cold concrete below. However, before that happens, Jackson and the Xbox 360 will have given you one of the greatest (movie-licensed) gaming experiences you've ever had.



PREHISTORIC PERILS/ Watch out when you're in the jungle – you'll come across enemies of all shapes and sizes in there, and the small ones are often the worst



SMALL DETAILS
RELEASE/ TBC
PUBLISHER/ TBC
DEVELOPER/ Wrestle Kingdom
GENRE/ Sport
LIVE/ Yes

WRESTLE KINGDOM

The next king of the ring?

It might not replicate the glitz and glamour of the WWE's sports-entertainment, but when it comes to technical wrestling, there's no better than the Japanese scene. Forget the elaborate soap-style storylines, *Wrestle Kingdom* is about pain and with the likes of *Rumble Roses* making its way to Microsoft's new machine, this is more likely to attract hardcore fans.

Currently being developed by Yuke's, *Wrestle Kingdom*'s gameplay seems on a par with what you'd expect from the genre. However, to up the ante, Yuke's has used the Xbox 360's striking graphical capabilities to the full, making for a very realistic experience. Every grizzled grappler is high-poly, the textures are extremely sharp, facial animations are sublime and you even get to see the sweat being battered off bodies.

Chief planner, Shunsuke Kataumata confirmed that the Xbox 360's graphics are just the surface of the new development experience, so we can expect more from Wrestle Kingdom than just accomplished visuals.

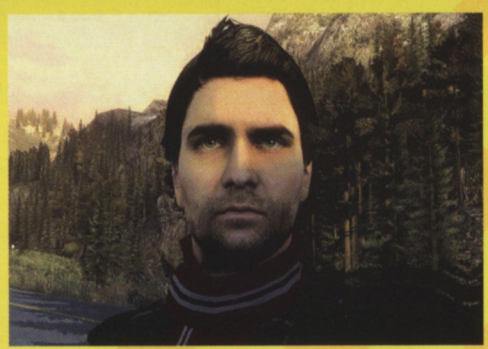
SMALL DETAILS
RELEASE/ 2006
PUBLISHER/ TBC
DEVELOPER/ Remedy
GENRE/ Adventure
LIVE/ TBC

ALAN WAKE

Wake placid?

From the team behind *Max Payne*, *Alan Wake* looks to offer something a little different. Far removed from *Payne*'s all-guns-blazing action, this takes its cue more from *Twin Peaks* than *Commando*.

Alan Wake is a best-selling horror writer who documents the terrors that lurk in his nightmares, but things start to turn nasty when these nightmares start to come true. Developer Remedy is touting a huge game world to explore, and an open-ended style of play, which should appeal to gamers wanting a change from the linear nature of so many other adventure games filling the shelves.

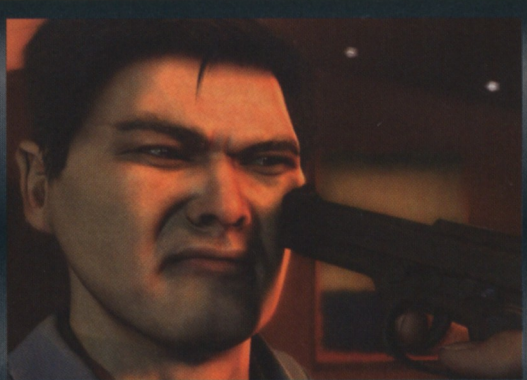


SMALL DETAILS
RELEASE/ 2007
PUBLISHER/ Midway
DEVELOPER/ Tiger Studios
GENRE/ Adventure
LIVE/ TBC

STRANGLEHOLD

No holds barred

Notable for being the first game from John Woo's Tiger Studios, this third-person adventure title is still somewhat of an unknown quantity. Set in Hong Kong and Chicago, the game sees Chow Yun-Fat reprise his *Hard Boiled* role as Inspector Tequila. Action is said to feature much of the hyper-kinetic, choreographed moves and freeze-framed sequences that Woo is so renowned for. Combine this with the fact that Midway's internal studio (responsible for the excellent *Psi Ops*) is also on board, and this has the makings of a cult classic.



SMALL DETAILS
RELEASE/ Q1 2006
PUBLISHER/ Majesco
DEVELOPER/ Terminal Reality
GENRE/ Action
LIVE/ Yes

DEMONIK

Licence to kill

Horror writer Clive Barker is developing this Xbox 360 title in tandem with the forthcoming film of the same name.

In a nice twist, players won't be taking on the role of the human hero as he searches for evil creatures to slaughter, but will become the monster as it attempts to track down and kill the main protagonist. In your quest for total dominance, the lead character, Volwrath must face a mix of both human and supernatural beings using a range of special 'demonic' powers. It might not be big just yet, but *Demonik* could well turn out to be very clever, so keep a watchful eye on this one over the coming months.



PROFILE

Bungie

With Spartan 458 revealed as the secret character set to appear in *Dead Or Alive 4*, Bungie has again stolen the show. Founded in 1991, the studio achieved success with the *Marathon Trilogy* and the first two *Myth* games. In 2001 this success soared with *Halo: Combat Evolved*, and later *Halo 2*, which helped establish Bungie as Microsoft's hottest development property.



WORKING ON
Halo 3

KEY TITLES
- Marathon
- Myth
- Halo

PLAN AHEAD, THE ESSENTIAL...

SPORT GAMES



1 FIFA 06
EA's title contender is kicking off in style

2 MADDEN 2006
Ensure to touch down with this immediately

3 NBA 2K6
Looks set to slam the competition

4 TOP SPIN 2
Serving up an ace on the Xbox 360

5 NHL 2K6
This one's twice as nice on the ice

CHANCES OF...

Santa bringing you an Xbox 360

63%

Actually seeing daylight after 2 December

1%

The X360 team getting drunk and trying to dance at the office party

100%

Being sick of turkey sandwiches

99%

ONE MINUTE ROAST

"Penny Pinchers"

If it isn't game content under scrutiny, it's the price of the consoles. Many videogame naysayers have been grousing on about the fact that gamers in the US pay a little less for the Xbox 360 than us here in Britain.

LET'S FACE IT – This is the cheapest console launch ever. £209 for the world's most powerful console? It's a bargain at twice the price.

The great and the good coming your way in the next year

RELEASELIST

THE SURE THING



DEAD RISING

It's not the most original idea for a game, but with hordes of zombies to decapitate and items from every shop in the mall to use, it's bound to be 'bloody' entertaining. We're heading straight for the golf shop…

reviewed P72

hands-on multiplayer P114

DECEMBER

2 Amped 3	2K Games
2 Call Of Duty 2	Activision
2 Condemned: Criminal Origins	Sega
2 FIFA 06 Road To The World Cup	EA
2 Gun	Activision
2 Kameo: Elements Of Power	Microsoft
2 King Kong	Ubisoft
2 Madden NFL 2006	EA
2 NBA Live 2006	EA
2 Need For Speed Most Wanted	EA
2 Perfect Dark Zero	Microsoft
2 Project Gotham Racing 3	Microsoft
2 Quake 4	Activision
2 Ridge Racer 6	Namco
2 Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2006	EA
2 Tony Hawk's AW	Activision
2 Top Spin 2	2K Games

QUARTER 1 2006

Alan Wake	TBC
Battlefield 2: Modern Combat	EA
Burnout 360	EA
Chromehounds	Sega
Dead Or Alive 4	Microsoft
Dead Rising	Capcom
Demonik	TBC
Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion	2K Games
Far East Of Eden: Ziria	Hudson
FIFA Street 2	EA
Fight Night 3	EA



Call Of Duty 2 — Sega

new screens P12

Final Fantasy XI	Microsoft
Football Manager 2006	Sega
Full Auto	Sega
Frame City Killer	EA
Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter	Ubisoft
LMA Manager 2006	Codemasters
Lost Odyssey	Microsoft
Love Football	Namco
NBA 2K6	2K Games
NHL 2K6	2K Games
Ninety-Nine Nights	Microsoft
Possession	TBC
Prey	2K Games
Rumble Roses XX	Konami
Saint's Row	THQ
Scarface: The World Is Yours	Vivendi
Sega Rally	Sega
SSX 4	EA
Stranglehold	Midway
Test Drive Unlimited	Atari
The Darkness	Majesco
The Godfather	EA
The Outfit	THQ
The Urbz 2	EA
TimeShift	Atari
Turok Next-Gen	Buena Vista
Wrestle Kingdom	TBC

2006

2 Days To Vegas	TBC
Afterburner Climax	Sega
Armored Core 4	From Software
Avalon	TBC
Banjo Kazooie	Microsoft
Blue Dragon	Microsoft
Brothers In Arms 3	Ubisoft
Captain Blood	1C Company
Colin McRae 360	Codemasters
Condor Trilogy Online	TBC
Crackdown	Microsoft

reviewed P101

Crazy Taxi Next-Gen	Sega
Dark Sector	TBC
Dirty Harry	WB
DOA Xtreme Beach Volleyball 2	Microsoft
DOA: Code Chronos	Microsoft
Driver Parallel Lines	Atari
Duke Nukem Forever	TBC
Dynasty Warriors 5 Special	TBC
Elveon	TBC
Everyparty	Microsoft
Fable 2	Microsoft
Final Fantasy XII	Microsoft
Forza Motorsport 2	Microsoft
Gears Of War	Microsoft
Grand Theft Auto 4	Rockstar
Halo 3	Microsoft
Huxley	TBC
Interview With A Made Man	TBC
Jade Empire 2	Microsoft
Justice League of America RPG	WB
King Of Fighters Maximum Impact 3	Ignition
Killing Day	Ubisoft
Marvel Universe	Microsoft
Mass Effect	Microsoft
Mobile Suit Gundam	TBC
Monster Madness	TBC
Mortal Kombat 7	Midway
MotoGP URT 2006	THQ
Pirates Of The Caribbean 2	Buena Vista

only on Xbox 360



Gears Of War

Pro Evolution Soccer 360	Konami
Resident Evil 5	Capcom
Sonic The Hedgehog	Sega
Splinter Cell 4	Ubisoft
Tenchu 360	From Software
Tomb Raider: Legend	SCi
Too Human	Microsoft
Unreal Tournament 2007	Midway

CIRCLE OF TRUST

What's getting the X360 team excited this month?

LAUNCH DAY

After the first looks, previews and play tests, we finally get to bring Microsoft's newborn home and lavish it with attention. For us, Christmas is coming early this year

FORWARD PLANNER
DECEMBER

12/05

Whether it's games, film or music, don't miss a thing this month – just use the **X360** diary

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				01 Clear a big Xbox 360-shaped space in your living room – there's only one day to go!	**02** **LAUNCH DAY:** Microsoft's great white hope finally arrives in stores – things will never be the same again	**03** **HEADLINE NEWS:** Xbox 360 sold out across Europe
04	**05** **DVD RELEASES:** *Fantastic Four, Star Wars: Clone Wars Vol 2*	**06**	**07**  **MENTAL NOTE:** Really should start some Christmas shopping… just one more lap on *PGR3*			
11  *FIFA* is amazing… still time for shopping later	**13**					
18 **FUNNY FIVE MINUTES:** Take time out to polish up on Christmas jokes… Are you a leg or a breast man?		**20** **KEEP IT CLEAN:** Time to replenish mistletoe hung hilariously over belt buckle	**21**	**22** **XBOX 360 ANNIVERSARY:** Has it really been 20 days? You should probably try and get some sleep	**23**	**24** **NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT:** Smart move, go and buy your Christmas gifts today – they'll be much cheaper
25 **HAPPY CHRISTMAS:** Open presents, shovel in lunch, have a nap and then watch TV… Isn't Christmas magic? 	**26** **KEEP YOUR MORNING OPEN:** Gives you time to shake off the hangover	**27** "It's easier for teens to make girls than boys" – Ian	**28**	**29** **WE'RE ON SALE** Ring in the new year in style by picking up the latest **X360** – we visit Crystal Dynamics to bring you an exclusive play of the new *Tomb Raider*. It's going to be 'legendary'. 	**30** 	**31**



Bringing videogames into focus



- **180 pages of essential gaming**
- Written by gamers for gamers
- **32 pages dedicated to retro games every month**

Issue 38, on sale now

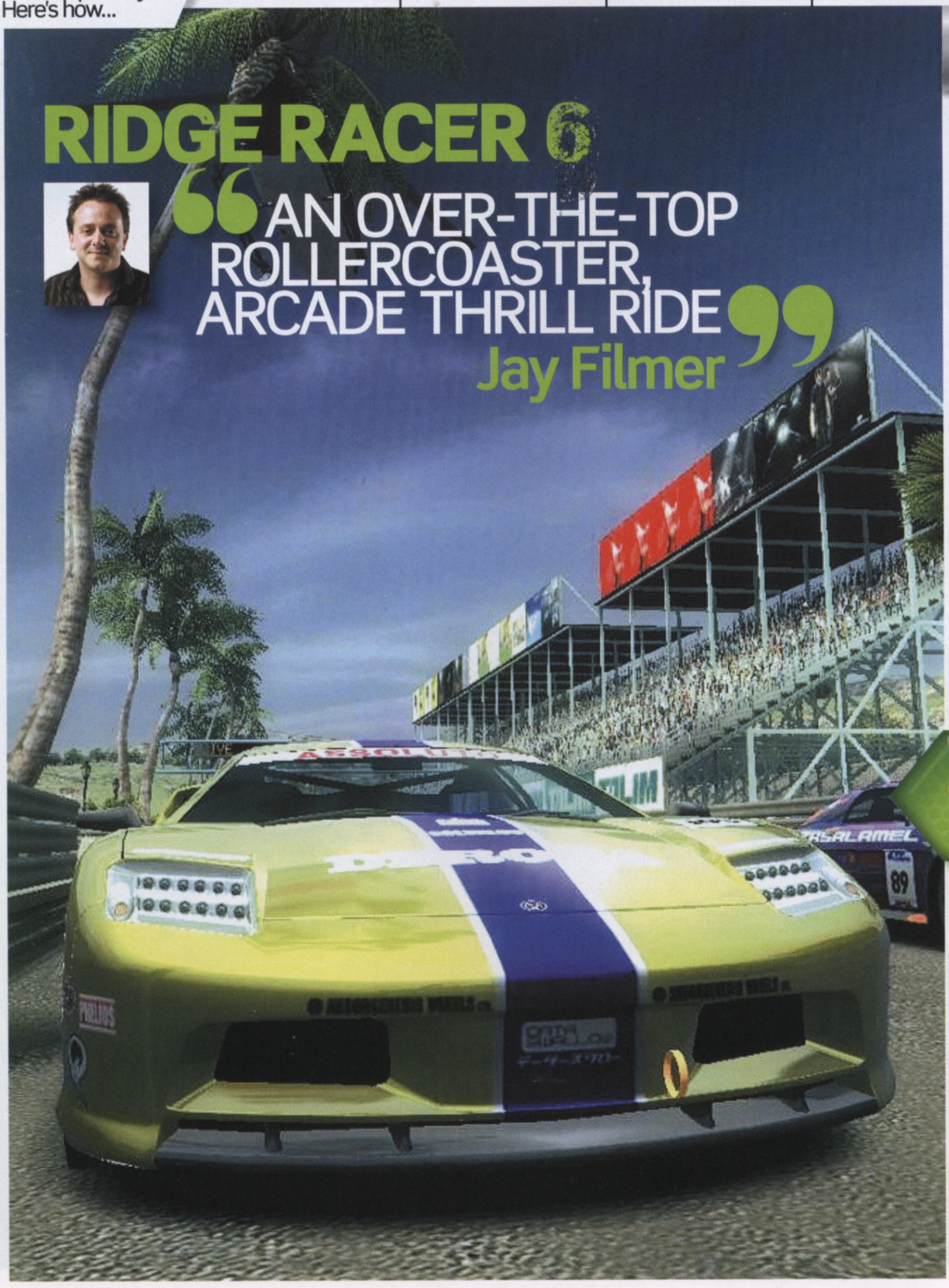
The multi award-winning multiformat magazine – available from WHSmith and other good newsagents or call for a copy direct on 01202 200200.

+++ Relic studio visit +++ Hands-on with Ridge Racer 6 +++ The latest on Too Human +++ Test Drive played

PREVIEWS

X360
We cover games in five unique ways. Here's how...

SCREENSHOT	INTERVIEWED	FIRST TEST	FULL ACCESS	ROUND-UP
Let the game do the talking...	The developers openly talk to us	Hands-on with the latest games	Exclusive screens and studio visits	Smaller games examined



RIDGE RACER 6

"AN OVER-THE-TOP ROLLERCOASTER, ARCADE THRILL RIDE"
Jay Filmer

X360 PREVIEW GAMES CONTENTS

34 **THE OUTFIT**
Think *Mercenaries* meets *Ghost Recon* and you could be close to imagining how Relic's impressive shooter plays

40 **CRACKDOWN**
GTA's creator looks to Xbox 360 to develop free-form gameplay

42 **TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND**
Lara is coming to Xbox 360 and we've snagged a tasty new pic from the forthcoming game. This looks stunning

44 **MOTOGP URT 2006**
The 'fastest game on console' is close to an X360 release – here are some new details

45 **TOO HUMAN**
Nearly 10 years in development, the *Eternal Darkness* developer's new adventure is finally nearing completion

46 **RIDGE RACER 6**
Namco's classic series makes its Xbox debut in style. Expect powerslides and dinosaurs amongst the racing action

48 **FULL AUTO**
Hands-on with Sega's frantic racer come shooter – it's *Burnout* with guns and a whole can of next-generation sex appeal

50 **TEST DRIVE**
This game is really beginning to look the part and now you can see for yourself...

52 **ROUND-UP**
Frame City Killer, Rumble Roses XX, Voodoo Nights, TimeShift and *Chromehounds*

Release date/ March 06

THE OUTFIT

There's nothing mindless about this violence

NEED TO KNOW

Publisher/ THQ
Developer/ Relic
Genre/ Shoot-'em-up
Players/ 1-8
Xbox Live/ Yes

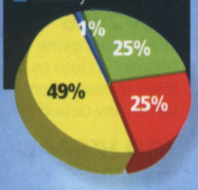
Briefly

In the midst of World War II, J.D. Tyler, Deuce Williams and Tommy Mac tackle Nazi Germany

IN THE PIE

The Outfit is exploding with

- Destruction on demand
- Destruction not on demand
- Blowing up buildings
- Subtlety



Radical gaming concepts tend to get extinguished faster than executive chairmen can put out their cigar on the junior tea boy's hand, so here's one to really set jaws dropping in the boardroom. *The Outfit* is a war game that isn't a war game. While it might have all the ingredients of war – World War II, explosions, shouting, destruction – something in the game is definitely amiss. And that's its colour. The battlefield is covered in bright, pastel green grass rather than the burnt ashes of fallen soldiers. The sky is a clear, dazzling blue and isn't choked with smog or dust. It looks like the scenery has been cut and pasted from *The Sound Of Music* instead of a dark scene lurking in the heart of wartime Nazi Germany. For a game based on a six-year period where millions lost their lives, it's just so… bright.

So what's going on? In a word: change. In nineteen words: *The Outfit* is fighting its own battle to move away from the well-worn clichés of the war genre. So far, *The Outfit* is winning. The clichéd ash-grey colour palette of Every War Game… Ever! is out and a fresh, vivid look is in. It immediately makes a difference to the game's appeal and gives *The Outfit* its own unique identity. It doesn't undermine the gameplay at hand and the war doesn't feel any less intense for the brighter colours, it just gives this particular war a flavour that the other games have missed.

It's not just the visuals that have undergone the next-gen surgeon's knife and had all ties to the past hacked away either. The gameplay is where you notice just how deep the differences run. The unique selling point that THQ will be shouting about on the back of the box



Excited?

Destruction/ You can destroy absolutely anything you see

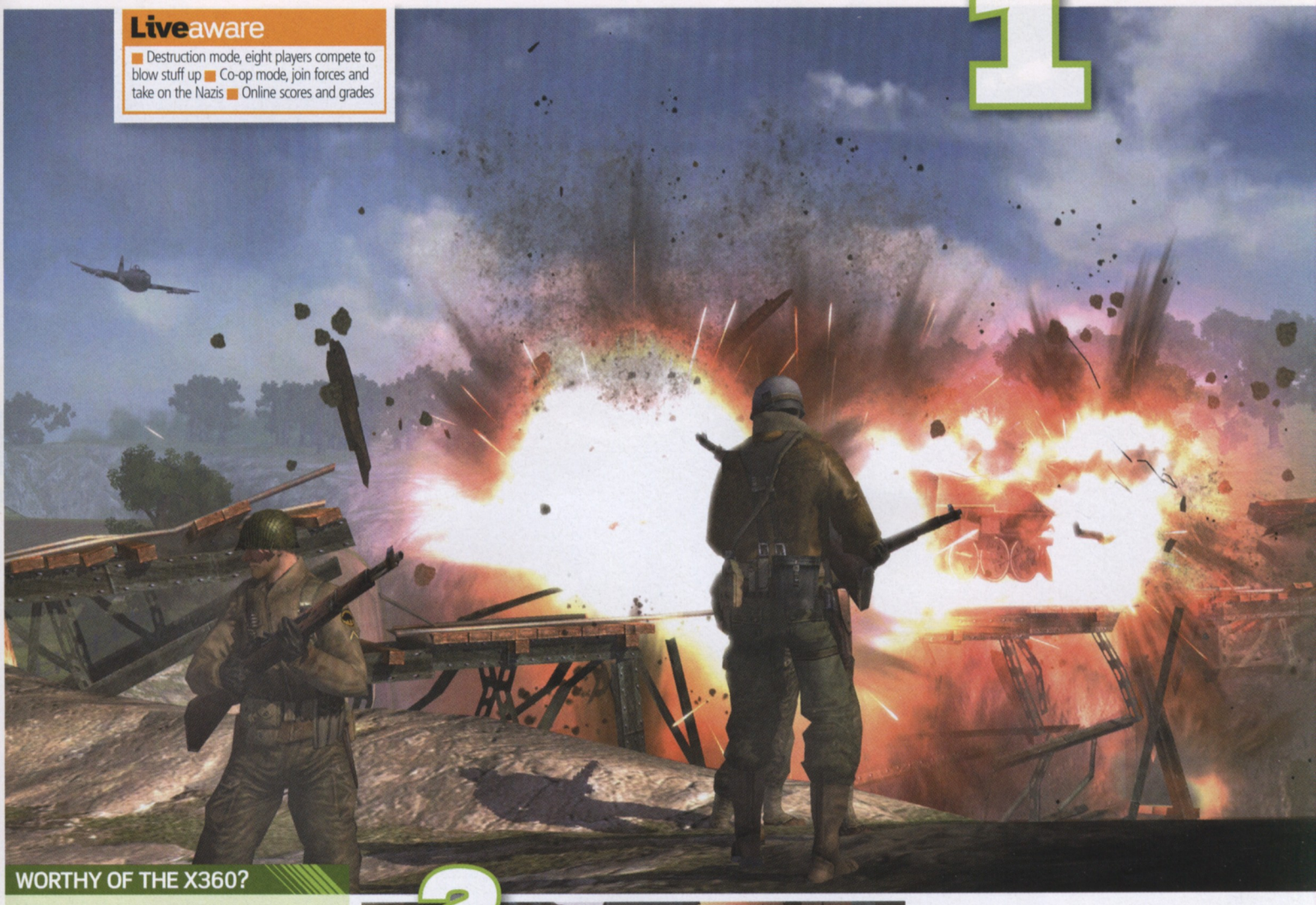
What gen/ It's debatable whether it really looks all that next-gen

Exclusive
FIRST PLAY
Honest impressions of war

"Fighting its own battle to move away from the well-worn clichés of the war genre"

Liveaware

■ Destruction mode, eight players compete to blow stuff up ■ Co-op mode, join forces and take on the Nazis ■ Online scores and grades



WORTHY OF THE X360?

The Outfit's hat trick of joy and individuality

Freedom Of Total Destruction is the snappy name awarded to the ability to blow up… well, anything. Blowing up bridges is one regular objective of the game.

Shoot-outs commonly occur around ambush areas where there's plenty of cover for both sides to get drawn into a long, messy firefight. The difference in *The Outfit* to games of a similar ilk, is that the cover will gradually erode and crumble over time as bullets and shells hit it. There is nowhere safe to hide long in this game.

You can drive the tank through pretty much any obstacle, by either pile-driving through it or blowing it up with your turret. This is just like real life, and like the big scary place that sustains your bouts of gaming with cash and food, too much damage will cause your tanks to explode. Time to jump for it and call in a new one.





» is something called Destruction On Demand. We're not sure if it's capitalised or not, but it deserves to be. Destruction On Demand lets you summon any weaponry, anywhere, at any time. The way it works is like this: throughout *The Outfit*, Field Units are awarded for anything from killing enemy soldiers to blowing up buildings. Field Units serve as the currency here, so if you have enough, you can call up a mini-menu where you can pick and choose what gets dropped off – let's say, a crocodile, which is essentially a tank with a flamethrower strapped on its bulky, metal back. You spend your Field Units, a flare goes off next to you and a plane flies overhead, dropping the Crocodile onto wherever the flare is. Easy. If you're really stuck on how to move past a well-placed gun turret or tank, you can use Destruction On Demand. Call reinforcements to back you up, call a tank and steamroller your way through, call a few gun

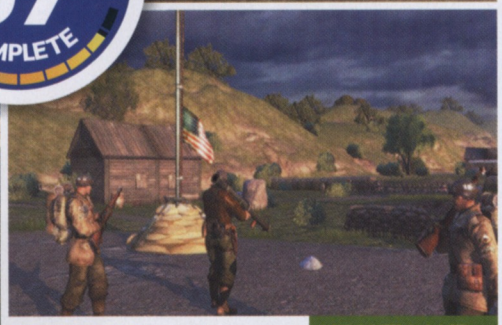
> "Summon any weaponry, anywhere, at any time"



HIP HISPY/ This is Tommy Mac with a flamethrower on his back. And you don't want that. Return of the Mac. Oh dear

VERSION TESTED **87%** COMPLETE





UP THE POLE/ The aim of each mission is to raid and secure locations by defeating the enemy and raising the 'Stripes.

turrets of your own to fight fire with fire or call in an airstrike to kick off your assault. You can even do all four, if you can afford it. The fact that Destruction On Demand is so easy to use is a boon to *The Outfit*. The fact that Destruction On Demand hands you a huge menu of demolition to sample – AA guns, artillery strikes, Scorpion tanks – makes using this feature a joy.

Pushing the boundaries

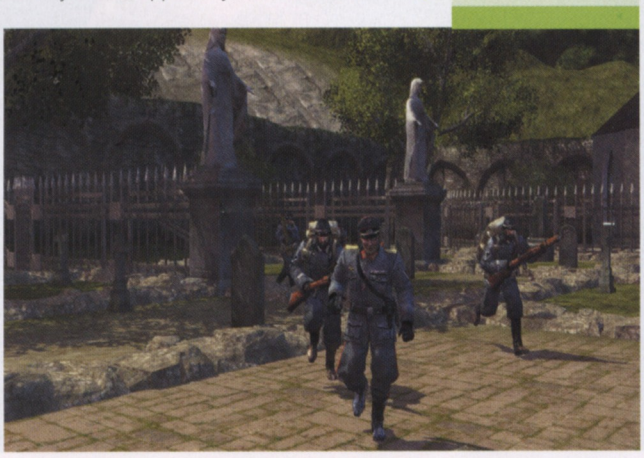
This would be enough to separate *The Outfit* from the *Medal Of Duty: Modern Combat* games out there, but it keeps pushing ahead. Its third-person viewpoint gives the gameplay a different slant, as there's an emphasis on taking cover and giving D-pad orders to your four-strong squad (Attack, Suppress, Defend, etc). You can leap over fences, duck behind sandbag walls and jump up steep inclines. You're free from the FPS shackles of other war games, allowing you to move around freely. In many ways, these differences mean that rather than snuggling up to the *Medal Of Honor* or *Call Of Duty* games, this treads on the toes of shooters such as *Mercenaries* – a name that crops up again and again as Relic Entertainment enthuses about its baby. Like *Mercenaries*, this is still a war game, but it's one man versus an army of many. Well, one man with Destruction On Demand versus an army of many.

As for that one man you're controlling, you get to choose between three soldiers with names that are supposed to be dripping with testosterone and Americana but sound like they've been lifted straight from an adult movie. Introducing: J.D. Tyler. He's the token black guy of the squad complete with ghetto "riding in style" catchphrases. He's armed with a sniper rifle to pick enemies off from a distance and a shotgun when they get within breathing distance. J.D. Tyler is also the best at running, having more stamina to leg it over long distances than the other two. He's the stealthy choice, apparently, but stealth is a »

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Ease up

The health system works the same way as in *Call Of Duty 2*. If you're taking fire, rest up and your health will slowly restore. However, this doesn't make the game as easy as it sounds, thanks to instant death when you come in contact with explosions. It appears that some fine-tuning awaits.



"PEOPLE WHO WANT TO PLAY BIG ACTION, EXPLOSIVE, IN-YOUR-FACE GAMES WILL BE PLAYING THE OUTFIT!"

TALKING TO ADRIAN CROOKS



Relic's Producer Adrian Crooks gives **X360** the lowdown on *The Outfit* and talks about its development on the Xbox 360

X360: HAVE THERE BEEN ANY WAR MOVIE INFLUENCES?
CROOKS: Not really. If I had to pick one, I'd say… [long pause] *Saving Private Ryan*. You know, we're more influenced by action movies. Movies like *Predator*, *Aliens*, *Terminator* or *Heat*. A lot of the time, we looked to Jerry Bruckheimer [producer of *The Rock* and *Bad Boys II*] and we thought: "What would Jerry do?" We were going for something different with *The Outfit*. I remember we had a board meeting and I held up five pictures from *Medal Of Honor*, *Call Of Duty*, *Battlefield 2* and some other war games. I asked everyone in the room to tell me what each game was. They couldn't do it. So we went for the bright colours to get away from what you normally expect.

X360: THERE'S NO WAY OF ACTUALLY 'LOSING'. WAS IT HARD KEEPING THE GAME CHALLENGING?
CROOKS: Sure, sure. It was tough. The game we looked to was *Burnout: Revenge*. In *Burnout* you die, but when you come back, you can still retain your lead. It doesn't punish you unduly. That's what we were looking for.

X360: WHAT DOWNLOADS CAN WE EXPECT?
CROOKS: There will be a year's worth of content coming from an eight-person download team. They will just produce downloadable content so we'll have a designer, an artist, a programmer, all working on multiplayer maps, vehicles and other stuff we can't talk about right now.

X360: HOW HAS WORKING ON XBOX 360 BEEN COMPARED TO THE XBOX?
CROOKS: It's challenging as the hardware has been evolving as the game is, but it's fantastic.

X360: WHO WILL THE OUTFIT APPEAL TO DO YOU THINK?
CROOKS: People who want to play big action, explosive, in-your-face games will be playing it!

WHAT'S THE STORY?

Give me a reason...

To kick your ass

Relic Entertainment has been keeping extremely quiet on the story so far, which starts off with an obligatory training level, an 'unexpected' surprise during said training level, and then it slowly branches off into the game proper. We've been threatened with pointy objects not to talk, so it's hard to judge exactly what to say. But you should know that there's a very interesting twist towards the end and the story doesn't plump for the glib emotion seen in other games. The narrative is simple, to the point and much more effective because of it. Hopefully what we've seen so far is representative of the game when it eventually hits the shelves.





Stories in war games go for emotional heartstrings and tend to miss. *The Outfit* won't make that mistake.

» dirty word in *The Outfit* and doesn't feature too often. Next up: Deuce Williams. Deuce wears a silly GI Joe style helmet and black reflective shades. He probably chews on cigars in his spare time. You know the type. Deuce has a rocket launcher that's perfect for taking out vehicles such as tanks and a pistol to deal with infantry. He's also the most fun to use, for reasons we'll explain later. Finally: Tommy Mac. He has a haircut like Guile and a jaw that can crack boulders. Tommy is armed with a sub-machine gun and sticky grenades, a halfway compromise between J.D. Tyler's anti-personnel tactics and Deuce's anti-vehicle brawn. Whoever you choose, you have the benefit of health regenerating during breaks in the action, cutting out the need for tedious med-pack hunts.



Remember when we said Deuce Williams is the most fun? Here's why. He's armed with a bazooka. Almost everything around you can be blown up. Combine the two and the result is overblown fun. "Everything?" you ask, remembering the failed promise of *Red Faction*. "Everything," we reply, also remembering the failed promise of *Red Faction*. You can pick any building, hideout or structure you see and pick it apart brick by brick with explosives until it collapses like a drunkenly assembled house of cards. Given the potential to cause carnage and level buildings, it should come as no surprise that most of your objectives shun subtlety and stealth in favour of all-out action. "A lot of it revolves around blowing stuff up because it's pretty fun," says lead designer Jeff Brown. You can't fault the man's logic.



TALK TALK

I hear voices

No big names have been roped in for the voice acting and if it's not too late in the day, we suggest they get someone with some sort of experience on board. The problem isn't the quality, but the quantity. Hearing "riding in style" for the tenth time in a minute means you quickly get bored...



ON DEMAND/ In *The Outfit* you can call on reinforcements at any point to help you wage war against the well-dressed Nazis



More lives than a cat

Here's a cute addition that is sure to make you smile. There are no lives. At all. No arbitrary number in the corner slowly ticking down with each death to unnerve you that you'll be slapped with a Game Over screen just as you near your goal. No "mission failed" messages crop up either. No way of losing. No dead-ends. You simply pick yourself up, dust yourself down and try again every time your soldier hits the deck, with the only consequence being you have to start at a captured spawn point rather than the spot where you first fell. "You just keep hammering away at the missions!" bellows lead designer Jeff Brown from all of two feet away. Slightly deafened and incredibly frightened, we nod furiously in agreement.

Naturally, given all this potential for strategy and destruction, we ask Jeff Brown about multiplayer. He lets out a really loud "Erm..." so the entire room can hear, while he looks for help. Producer Adrian Crooks answers his SOS call and says they aren't allowed to talk about multiplayer yet. Still, in dribs and drabs, a few tasty morsels of information are let slip. The best news first – there will be a co-op split screen and co-op Xbox Live modes. There's no word on how two players will battle through the Campaign mode side by side, but it's definitely in there. Xbox Live will hold up to eight players and while the modes available are also being kept under wraps, there will be a destruction mode, where players race to destroy the environment as quickly as possible.

> "There are no lives. Simply dust yourself down and try again"

There's still work to be done. While the basic game is now locked into place and looking very solid, the frame rate needs to be kicked up a few notches and the pacing needs its belt tightened in a few areas where the action has started to sag. Otherwise though, *The Outfit* has got the guns, the bright colours and the distinctive gameplay to create a potent mix that could well take your Xbox 360 by surprise when it is eventually released after the first wave of launch titles. *The Outfit* isn't a war game. If everything falls into place likes it's shaping up to, *The Outfit* will be a damn good war game.

Ryan King



ALL ABOARD/ Clamber into a tank and your team-mates follow suit, including the one whose AI gets confused as he runs around lost

FACT: There are spawn points on each level in *The Outfit*. Capture one by standing by it until your flag is raised and you can spawn there every time you snuff it.

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

The Outfit looks like it will scrub up pretty nicely, providing that Relic works hard at brushing away those last-generation cobwebs.

Thriller?

Excited?

Buddy up/ Superpower-fuelled co-op action adds an exciting new dimension

Same game/ Already plenty of supposed '*GTA*-beaters' around



Release date/ September 06





JUMP STREET/ Much of *Crackdown*'s action takes place on top of buildings and structures that rise high above street level

Liveaware

■ Co-op play over Xbox Live ■ Supports Spectator mode ■ Possible future downloads featuring extra cars and weapons

NEED TO KNOW

Publisher/ Microsoft
Developer/ Real Time Worlds
Genre/ Action
Players/ 1-2
Xbox Live/ Yes

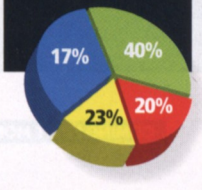
Briefly

Take on the role of a super-human cop trawling a massive city in search of heads to bust and kingpins to kill

IN THE PIE

What you will meet on the streets...

- Massive city
- Killing kingpins
- Super powers
- Personal pimping



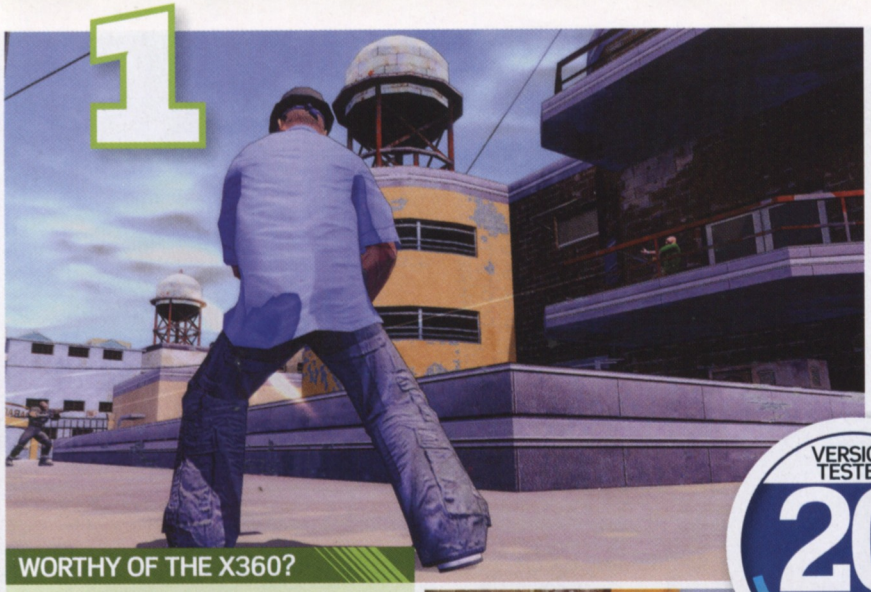
CRACKDOWN

Grand Theft Auto creator prepares to Crackdown on Rockstar's monopoly

Little did David Jones know when he set about creating a new videogame all those years ago, that he was producing a monster; a game that would end up defining a genre and spawning a series that has been almost untouchable ever since. Gamers who have explored every city, completed every mission and drank every cup of hot coffee will tell you that the *GTA* series will take some beating, and so perhaps the only game with even a slight chance of doing so would be one born of Jones' brain. *Crackdown* is that game and it's hoping to better *GTA*'s mix of guns and gasoline by re-imaging the crime adventure.

In the game's story mode you play the role of a supercop. You are given incredible powers by a mysterious organisation known as the Agency and are tasked with ridding the city of 21 crime lords. The boys in blue are powerless to stop the kingpins' gangs and you're the only grizzled badass with the skills to make the streets safe again. It's a good job then that you'll be able to take the scum down in just about any way you see fit, regardless of legality. The game takes place in one massive world where you travel around, picking up missions that will eventually lead you to one of the city's lordly kingpins. You won't have to challenge these bosses in any particular order, just as long as they all eventually get the long kiss goodnight. An interesting aspect of the game design is that each boss controls different

> "You play the grizzled badass who takes the scum down"



WORTHY OF THE X360?

Crackdown targets a new shooting system

The majority of your actions can be performed using the two analogue sticks and the shoulder buttons. To shoot, 1 target an enemy with the reticule and you'll get a soft lock. You can change it by hitting the left trigger to connect with a hard lock.

Once you have a hard lock you'll see small boxes appear on the head, torso and limbs of the enemy, 2 so you can pick the point on the body you want to bust a cap.

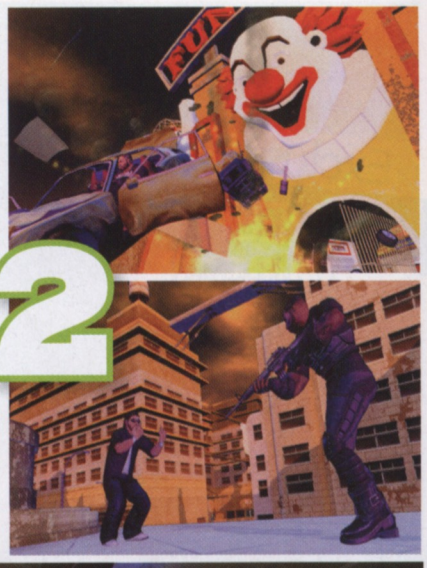
This system isn't limited to humans as you can also pinpoint parts on vehicles. You can either blow out the tyres or, if you're a real sharp shooter, hit the petrol tank 3 and watch it burst into a ball of flames.

VERSION TESTED 20% COMPLETE

A SHADE BETTER

Graphic gaming

Real Time Worlds has stated that it wants to give *Crackdown* the look of a graphic novel and it has to be said the visual style is very unique. It certainly differs from other games made in the *GTA* mould: it's very bright, highly stylised and extremely colourful.





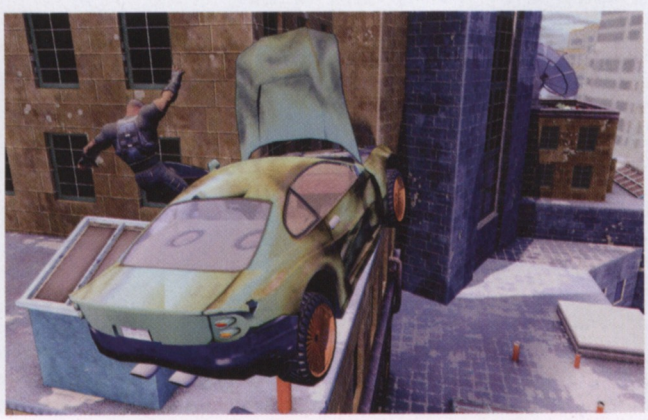
parts of the city's criminal operation. So, each time you seek out and kill one of them, the part of the economy they controlled changes. For instance, if the boss you take out deals in car supplies, then more perps will be taking to the streets on foot – each boss has to react to the death of another and try to take on their part of the business, but their success is dependent on how quickly you get to them.

On the plus side, your cop persona possesses a range of powers gained through experimental drugs – strength, driving, speed, shooting and athletics, which can be upgraded depending on how you play. Each skill will increase according to the method you use to kill, so if you use your fists to beat someone up, then your strength will rise. Build up enough strength and you'll be able to pick up cars and even people to use as projectiles. These special powers also extend to your ride as vehicles receive Agency upgrades such as armour plating – your rating is also transferred to any car you jack – get in and the vehicle will beef up, get out and it reverts to its previous form.

Athletics will increase your grappling and jumping skills and it's a good job, as the developer claims that 50 per cent of the action will take place above street level. From what we've seen of the game so far, *Crackdown* features plenty of platform-style movement so you can lunge and shimmy along ledges and use the game's strange moon-based physics to leap across rooftops. While in the air it's possible to wield weapons, or reach your buddy who's waiting a block away.

Early signs show that *Crackdown* is certainly looking to give the *GTA* fans the gameplay they're looking for, while also adding some new concepts. The question is though, will it manage to dethrone King CJ? Watch this space. **Keith Hennessey**

HIGH AND DRY/
After a heavy session on the experimental drugs, he wanted to feel a new kind of 'high' – just say no, kids



FACT: As well as *Crackdown*, David Jones and his team at Real Time Worlds are working on a new online Xbox 360 *GTA* clone called *All Points Bulletin*.

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

Instead of trying to be ultra-realistic, *Crackdown* has gone for a rather more novel approach – but is that what the *GTA* faithful really want?

Thriller?

Release date/ March 06

Exclusive SCREEN

Lara leaps to Xbox 360





Excited?

Old-school/ Puzzle solving and combat are again the primary focus

Angel eyes/ We can't forget the mechanics of *Angel Of Darkness*

> "Lara will be scaling giant cliff tops, swinging from ropes and diving into magnificent pools"

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

Our girl's growing up

Like most women of her ilk, Lara Croft is a shameless tease, first giving gamers a taste of the goods when she arrived on the scene in *Tomb Raider* and then after she'd got what she wanted (plenty of attention and a skip load of cash) she started to turn nasty, hurting her wide-eyed devotees with games like *Angel Of Darkness*.

After the last game we swore never to let her into our hearts again, but wouldn't you just know it, now that she's turned up on the development doorstep with some exciting moves and a seductive new look, all is forgiven. And we're willing to give her another go. But we're not going into this relationship blind, as from the recent footage we've seen, Lara is looking more like her old self, displaying the gun skills and acrobatic routines she's so famous for. Crystal Dynamics, the US studio responsible for the *Soul Reaver* series, seems intent on correcting mistakes made in recent games and getting *Legend* just right.

This new instalment looks to have some of the heaviest action we've seen in the franchise so far. Heavy machine-gun emplacements and big explosions are set to feature, but don't go thinking it's gone all Michael Bay on you, as the gunpowder and pyrotechnics have been used sparingly. In fact, Lara's physical attributes are the biggest feature being touted, as she will once again be scaling giant cliff tops, swinging from ropes and diving into magnificent pools of water in locations such as West Africa, Russia and the Himalayas. There will also be plenty of physical puzzles to solve requiring some good old-fashioned shimmying and swinging. To help get the job done, the all-action girl will have a selection of new gadgets – the most prominent being a magnetic grappling hook, which with the help of the Havoc physics engine, is used to transverse rivers and countless dangerous chasms.

While only a hands-on playtest will reveal whether Crystal Dynamics has got it right, there seems to be plenty to keep fans of the sultry relic hunter happy this time around.

Keith Hennessey

FACT: To achieve a sense of consistency, only one person has been tasked with animating Lara from the very beginning of the project until the bitter end.

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

This looks much more like the Lara we know (and love) – the power of the X360 really shows off her makeover. Let's hope she has the intelligence to go with it.

Thriller?

NEED TO KNOW

Publisher/ Eidos
Developer/ Crystal Dynamics
Genre/ Adventure
Players/ 1
Xbox Live/ TBC

Briefly

A repentant Lara Croft returns in the seventh instalment of the *Tomb Raider* series with new developer Crystal Dynamics

IN THE PIE

Treasures of the tomb...

- Cave exploration
- Physical puzzles
- Limber moves
- Dual pistols

Excited?

- **Hot leathers/** Increased physics power will make this essential
- **Scraped knee/** We get to be Rossi, but then, so does everyone else

Exclusive SCREENS
The fastest game on console



VERSION TESTED 20% COMPLETE

ON THE X360 DISC

- Teaser trailer
- Gameplay trailer
- Screenshot gallery
- Audio commentary

Release date/ March 06

MOTOGP URT 2006

Dude, you said 'helmet'





CHIT-CHAT/ Every character you meet in the game will have something to say for themselves, so it's always worth being social

NEED TO KNOW

Publisher/ THQ
Developer/ Climax
Genre/ Racing
Players/ 1-16
Xbox Live/ Yes

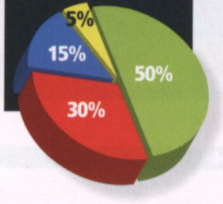
Briefly

Race around real-life tracks as your favourite real-life racer (Rossi – it's got to be Rossi) from a bang up-to-date roster of MotoGP riders

IN THE PIE

Under the helmet...

- Awesome bikes
- Spectacular crashes
- People riding backwards
- Rossi winning all the time



Back when Xbox Live was first launched, it included a demo of THQ's very first *MotoGP*, an offering that squarely sold the service to us and opened our eyes to a whole new world of possibilities in gaming. For an entire two-weeks solid, this writer raced against what was a decidedly curious mixture of American teens and gruff Northerners on the Mugello track, over and over again until the early hours of the morning. For many gamers, *MotoGP* was Xbox Live.

Now THQ is releasing its popular series on Xbox 360, featuring much better looking bikes, more realistic courses and a much more authentic and believable physics engine – all made possible by the increased processing power of the Xbox 360's three-core, SMT-able beast of a CPU.

Of course, Xbox Live will be at the very heart of *MotoGP 2006*, so those days of being called 'gay', racing against, shouting at, and irritating the hell out of hardcore bikers by driving backwards, will no doubt all come around again. We expect many of the modes offered in the forthcoming *PGR3* to be available as well, including custom tournaments and a race editor, plus future download packs.

This will without a doubt be the best version of what we believe to be the greatest motorbike racing game in existence. However, there's been little information released so far – and only these screenshots to look at – so we're not too sure how it will exploit the all-new Xbox Live at the moment. With an early release date next year though, we shouldn't have too long to wait. **Jay Filmer**

FACT: Apparently Valentino Rossi plays *MotoGP* to 'prepare' for real racing. If it's good enough for the champ, it's good enough for us.

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

It's early days on X360, but going by Climax's record, it should be amazing.

Thriller?



Exclusive SCREENS
You can't rush greatness...

Excited?
- **It's almost here/** *Too Human* is finally arriving next year, we can't wait
- **Hack 'n slash/** This game could be all about experience over gameplay

VERSION TESTED 12% COMPLETE





LATE COMER/ Silicon Knights has joined the illustrious Molyneux club for late games – this baby's taken 10 years

Release date/ November 06

TOO HUMAN

Another 'the next Halo' in the making...

The developer Silicon Knights and its talisman director Denis Dyack are one of the few teams in the games industry that can silence a crowd. This happened last month at X05 when the studio's long-delayed *Too Human* made an entrance.

This third-person action game is older than dirt. It has been in development since 1997 on PlayStation. In that time, Silicon Knights has worked with Miyamoto on *Eternal Darkness* and Kojima on *MGS: Twin Snakes*. Planned as a trilogy, *Too Human* is finally here and it's looking very special too.

The game puts players in control of a human called Baldur, who is, for some reason, tasked with defending mankind from an onslaught of robots hellbent on human eradication. Baldur is a man-made cybernetic god of sorts created from biotechnologies, and so the aim of the game is to continuously develop Baldur's attributes, as if he's 'too human' then he'll never save mankind.

In terms of gameplay, we're talking action all the way – a kind of cybernetic *Devil May Cry*. However, *Too Human* will come pretty close to a cinematic experience courtesy of a new camera technique that is able to adapt to the player's actions. An orchestral soundtrack, motion-captured Hong Kong stuntmen and intuitive controls will all add further to the scale of the experience.

In many ways, *Too Human* is planned as a culmination of Silicon Knights' recent partnerships. If tricks learnt from Miyamoto and Kojima can be implemented, then this will be one of *the* games of 2006. **Jay Filmer**

FACT: Originally planned as a single-game PlayStation release in 2000, *Too Human* is now a 2006 trilogy.

NEED TO KNOW

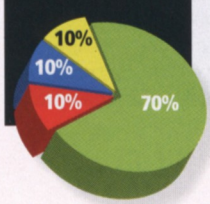
Publisher/ Microsoft
Developer/ Silicon Knights
Genre/ Adventure
Players/ 1-2
Xbox Live/ Yes

Briefly

Build a better god and save mankind in one of the most lavish action games in development

IN THE PIE

What makes this game 'too human'



- Sweet graphics
- Fluid controls
- Hero development
- Delays

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

It's one of X360's best-looking games. We hope there are no more delays...

Thriller?

Exclusive SCREENS
Retro racing makes a return



Excited?
- **Retro revival/** Fans of the series will be in old-school heaven with this one
- **Bizarre is best/** Unfortunately for Namco, *PGR3* is just too damned good

Release date/ January 06





MODEL PERFECT/ No *Ridge Racer* game has ever had cars this nice – only the mighty *PGR3* can match it for detail

NEED TO KNOW

Publisher/ EA
Developer/ Namco
Genre/ Racing
Players/ 1-8
Xbox Live/ Yes

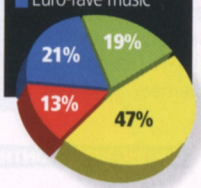
Briefly

PGR3 without the realism but with added colour. Play this and you'll be wildly drifting and spinning with the best of 'em

IN THE PIE

What *Ridge Racer 6* will impress with...

- Bright cars
- Drifting
- *RR1* courses
- Euro-rave music



Liveaware

A classic Versus mode ■ Worldwide unified Time Attack mode ■ Download/upload Ghost cars to perfect your racing line

RIDGE RACER 6

No console should launch without it

Okay, so chances are you've already excitedly flicked straight to the review of *Project Gotham Racing 3* and chances are this is where your money will be going on launch day. However, Bizarre's finest isn't the only top-quality racing game that the Xbox 360 has to offer. For those of you who like your racing a bit more 'on edge', it may be worth considering *Ridge Racer 6*. You see, where *PGR3* offers the most realistic cars and courses you've ever seen in a videogame, as well as faithful handling physics, *Ridge Racer 6* is an over-the-top, colourful arcade rollercoaster thrill ride, featuring the sort of crazy drifting and impossible boosting that only a videogame can deliver.

As fans will no doubt be aware, *Ridge Racer* games share a unique charm that you don't get from racing games concerned with accurately replicating real life. For instance, the wildly over-dynamic drifting that's seen in every previous *Ridge Racer* game makes a welcome return, allowing you to display skill and dexterity in a completely different way to how you would when playing something that bit more realistic. The drifting is so over the top, and if you feel like showing off you can even throw your vehicle through a complete 360-degree spin while racing, with negligible loss in speed.

In addition, *Ridge Racer 6* also includes the *Burnout 3*-esque nitro boosts that you'll be familiar with if you've played any of the *Ridge Racer* games on PSP. These are undoubtedly a worthy addition and further enhance the detachment that *Ridge Racer* games have from the constraints of the real world. They force you to play tactically, too. You are required to

> "Throw your vehicle through a complete 360-degree spin"







WORLD WARRIOR

Pack your bags

Ridge Racer is known for its quick and shallow pick-up-and-play gameplay, but *Ridge Racer 6* is breaking the mould, adding more depth to the single-player experience. This time round, Namco has introduced the World Xplorer mode, where you get to travel the globe over a whopping 230 races.

VERSION TESTED 98% COMPLETE

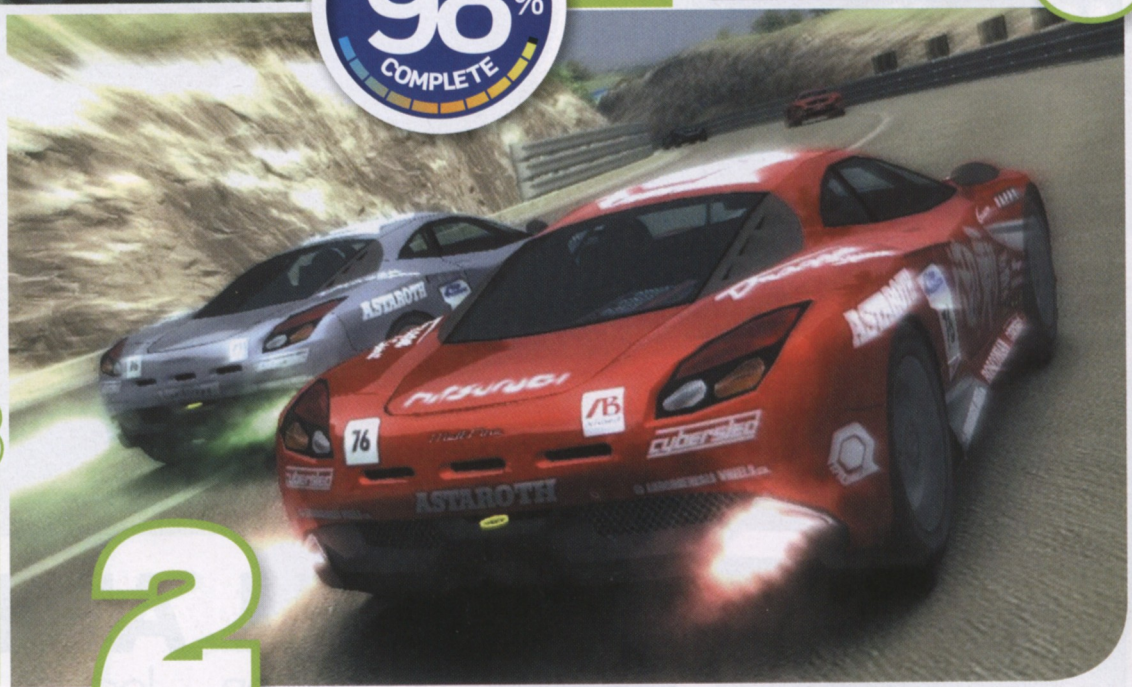
WORTHY OF THE X360?

What makes Ridge Racer out of this world...

The main feature of *Ridge Racer* has always been its wild, insane drifts. These days, they're so far removed from real-world physical laws that you can actually spin through a full 360 degrees at over 100 miles-per-hour and still continue in exactly the same direction.

Recently stolen from EA's *Burnout 3*, the boost complements *Ridge Racer*'s style to perfection and will hopefully be a permanent feature in all future games.

Ridge Racer has a style all of its very own, which this image – with its fireworks, big wheel and brightly coloured car – suitably depicts. Expect a cheesy Euro soundtrack to back everything up.

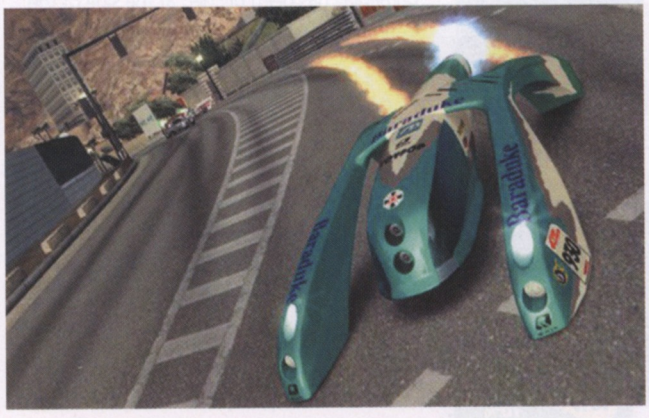


think about which part of the track will be best to use the nitros for maximum gain, and it's important that you cautiously conserve boost power, just in case you end up in a duel to the finish line.

Ridge Racer 6 is by far the most comprehensive game of the series so far, with a whopping 130 vehicles packed into the game, as well as 30 courses. These courses include a modern metropolis, a surfside resort, an industrial bayside, a city night scene and a canyon. Going by *Ridge Racer*'s past standards, the amount of cars and courses is incredibly generous. As usual, brand new tracks are complemented by rejuvenated versions of classic tracks that the fans love to see time and time again.

As you might expect, *Ridge Racer* will also be playable online over Xbox Live. In addition to head-to-head racing, players can upload their time attack scores for inclusion in the worldwide ranking and download other players' ghost data, as well as contributing their own. Namco is also promising downloadable content over the Xbox Live Marketplace, although is yet to confirm exactly what this will be. However, we're expecting more cars and more courses.

While we're looking forward to *Gotham 3* ever so slightly more – simply because the scope and vision for the game is just much further beyond that of *Ridge*'s – there's still plenty of room in our hearts for *Ridge Racer 6*. Plus, this game will definitely be different enough to *Gotham 3* – not to mention far more outrageous – to ensure we'll be taking it for a few laps come its release. So, if you're interested in exciting, colourful and wildly unrealistic racing action, that in no way takes itself too seriously, then *Ridge Racer 6* could be the racer to wait for. **Jay Filmer**



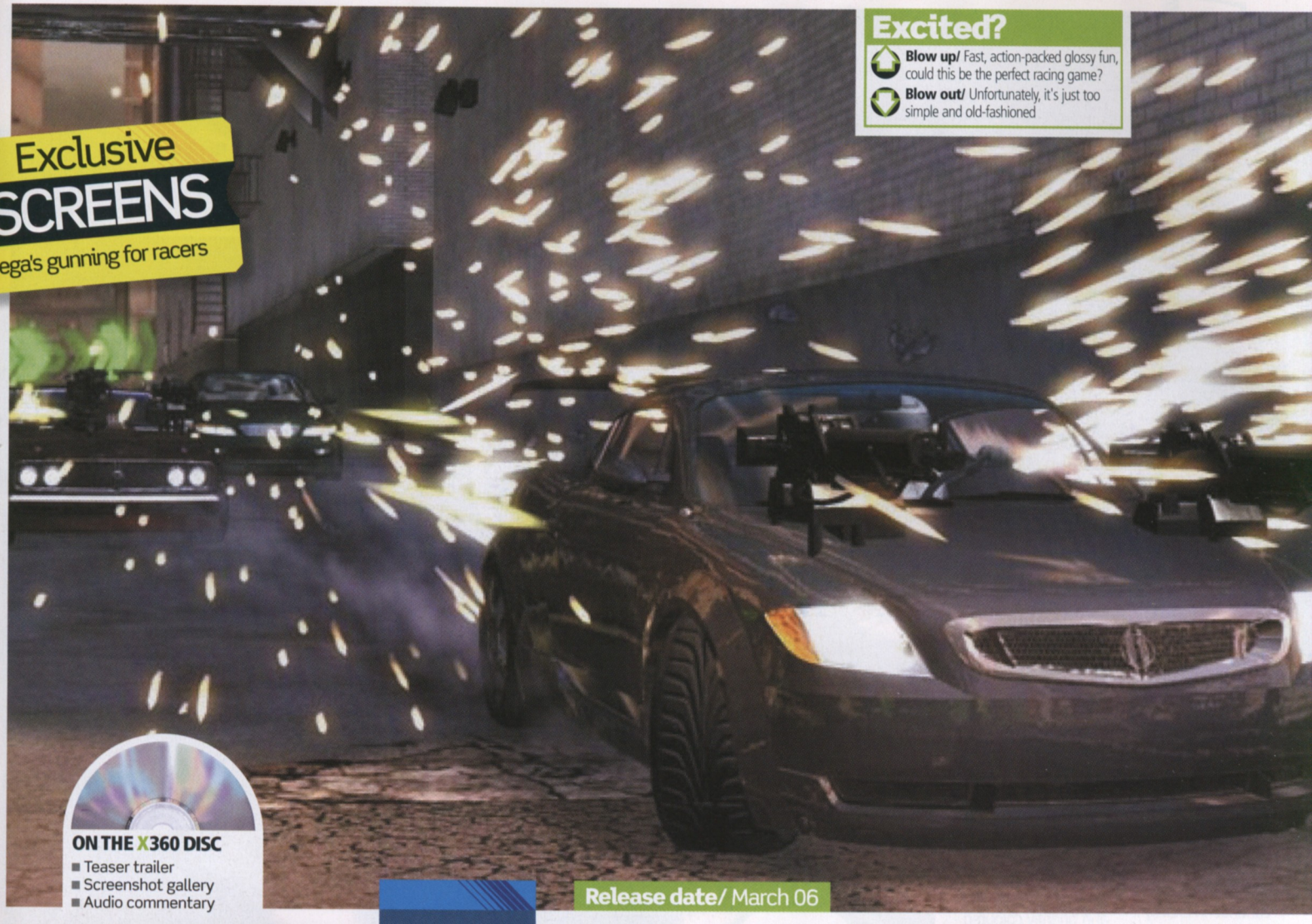
CATCH MY DRIFT/ The wild trademark drifting will definitely make a welcome return in Namco's *Ridge Racer 6*

FACT: In the past you could play mini-games like *Galaga* as the game loaded. Namco is promising a brand new game from its back catalogue for *Ridge Racer 6*.

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

We're big *Ridge Racer* fans here on X360 and this looks to be every bit the true successor to the series. It's just unfortunate it's going up against *Gotham 3*.

Thriller?



Exclusive SCREENS
Sega's gunning for racers

Excited?
Blow up/ Fast, action-packed glossy fun, could this be the perfect racing game?
Blow out/ Unfortunately, it's just too simple and old-fashioned

ON THE X360 DISC
- Teaser trailer
- Screenshot gallery
- Audio commentary

Release date/ March 06

FULL AUTO

Gentlemen... lock 'n' load

There's not a great deal of subtly to this game. You like to race fast cars? Tick. You like to blow stuff up? Tick. And you like to wrap the whole crazy caboodle in glossy, shiny, next-generation looking graphics? Again, tick.

With *Full Auto*, Sega has decided to chase the lowest common denominator. Subtle gameplay has been ditched at the side of the road in favour of all-out road rage. If you can't win a race fairly, it's no problem, simply do it with a rocket launcher.

Of course, there is actually more to *Full Auto* than simply pimping a Cadillac with machine guns and oil slicks and exploding your way to the finish line. This is a Sega game after all, so some fine-tuning to the formula has taken place. Before you race, all manner of options are open to you: weapons on or off, guns only, rockets only, full race rules, real damage, no damage – you really can customise almost any aspect of a race or tournament. A very handy set of options for the Xbox Live adoring members of our parish.

Once away from the starting grid you'll notice another little balance to the gameplay. All weapons are locked out for 30 seconds. This gives you the chance to juggle for position and demands you get in the right mentality, as despite having a reputation for gunplay, *Full Auto* is actually a very nippy racer. The handling is spot on and the tracks, though hardly demanding in the early stages, do make for some very close races. More so, the circuits are littered with obstacles and scenery to vandalise. The point being that you'll need to successfully combine driving and shooting skills to win out in this game.

> "Use the scenery to cause as much chaos as possible"

NEED TO KNOW

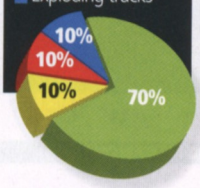
Publisher/ Sega
Developer/ Pseudo Interactive
Genre/ Racing
Players/ 1-8
Xbox Live/ Yes

Briefly

If you can't out-race them, don't worry you can out-gun them instead, in this back-to-basics racer

IN THE PIE

What *Full Auto* will impress with...
- Exploding cars
- Exploding shops
- Exploding garages
- Exploding trucks







IN A SPIN/ Courtesy of 'the most powerful console in the world' and some nifty maths calculations, you will never see the same crash twice

Liveaware

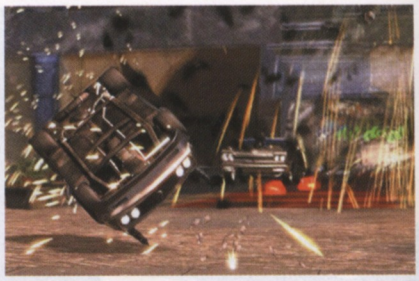
Custom tournaments ■ Race online or enter destruction contests ■ Likely to be download packs in the future



TIME TO DIE

Ticking the bomb

A feature that sits well with the arcade nature of the guns and rockets is a time warp-a-like Unwreck mode. If you're on the wrong end of a missile, you can rewind time to a safer point and get your own back – if you can remember who is coming behind you, you can counter their attack and turn the tables.





VERSION TESTED 81% COMPLETE

WORTHY OF THE X360?

A devastating approach to racing...

It's all about blowing the crap out of everything. If you can't find a short cut in *Full Auto* then just make your own, blasting your way to the finish line.

There are some rather odd routes to pick in the game, including alleys and the more impressive shopping mall floor. But our favourite to date must be the casino floor – it's a rollover!

As well as short cuts, you can also target objects like petrol tanker lorries, garages and signs to set traps for rival racers both in front and behind. Explode one of these and the debris will cause chaos for everyone in your wake – slowing them down so you can get away.



You'll notice quite early on that just sitting behind an opponent and blasting bullets into his rear won't do too much damage. In fact, he'll probably beat you to the finish line. However, aim a rocket manually – using the right stick – at a distant petrol station or sign and release to see said garage explode in a blossom of fire and oil; fire and oil that is now a hazard to the pimps in the lead. Learning to use the roadside scenery to cause as much chaos as possible is a sure-fire way to upset the AI and force them into mistakes.

Likewise, online the destruction is permanent. So a sign that has been casually blown into the road will be there on lap two. A car that has been smacked one too many times with a rocket will still be scattered across the road on lap three. And by lap four, the track will be a wasteland peppered with debris from cars, buildings and burning oil.

Back to the single-player and we've discovered another aspect of the tracks – the short cut. Classic. Sure, we've all found the hidden alleys and off-road lanes in *Burnout Revenge* and *Need For Speed*, but in *Full Auto* you can go one step further. Why go around a shopping mall when you can blow open the front windows and drive through? Enjoy a spot of gambling, sir? Then why not crash through the front doors of the local casino and win a buck or two on the way to the finish line? Honestly, bumper-to-bumper gunfights through the clutter of a shopping centre are truly exhilarating.

Once again we have to reiterate that there is nothing truly new or fresh about *Full Auto*, but from our playtest, we can affirm that it is damn good fun. And really, that's all Sega seems to want from its second Xbox 360 release – to offer cars, guns and slick next-gen looks, and it is certainly delivering that. **Ian Dean**

CRASH AND BURN/
It's just as easy to get out as it is to get in. Stunts like this will increase your boost meter in a take on *PGR3*'s Kudos.



FACT: ***Full Auto*** **uses the power of the X360 to calculate all of the hits and explosions in real-time. You are guaranteed to never see the same crash twice.**

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

Good, but not essential. However, the wealth of custom mode options suggests this will find a home on Xbox Live with ease.

Thriller?

Release date/ June 06

Exclusive SCREEN

Better than the real thing?

TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED

Gunning for Gotham's crown

NEED TO KNOW

Publisher/ Atari
Developer/ Eden Games
Genre/ Driving
Players/ 1-12
Xbox Live/ Yes

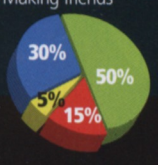
Briefly

Drive around Hawaii challenging other players to races. Join clubs, buy houses, visit the shops and trade items too

IN THE PIE

Test Drive Unlimited features...

- Cars
- Trees
- Buying things
- Making friends



Originally intended to be a 'launch window' game, Eden Games has decided to put its ambitious driving experience – *Test Drive Unlimited* – on hold for a while. The fear was that the game simply wouldn't get a fair chance against the hype and reputation of Bizarre Creations' system seller *Project Gotham Racing 3*. Now looking at a mid-2006 launch, Eden Games is confident that they have the time and the talent to create a game that will blow *Project Gotham* right out of the water.

Tough words indeed, but Eden Games doesn't just talk a good fight, the company is now showing off versions of the game that are starting to back up its bold claims too.

We flew to France this month to test the game, and within minutes were hooked on the title – stunned and impressed with how far the game has come since we played it way back before we'd released our first issue.

The game has always looked nice, with meticulously rendered cars featuring interiors that already eclipse those found in *Project Gotham Racing 3* and scenery that simply looks beautiful. Previously, our doubts were with the way the game played. It just didn't feel right. Thankfully, this is where Eden Games has made the most improvements, it now feels more than adequate and with any luck will be perfect come release day. We can't wait for this – it really does have the potential to make *Gotham* obsolete.

Jay Filmer

FACT: Over 1000 miles of actual Hawaii roads exist in the game. To drive around the island's perimeter takes about five hours – and that's on a good run.

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

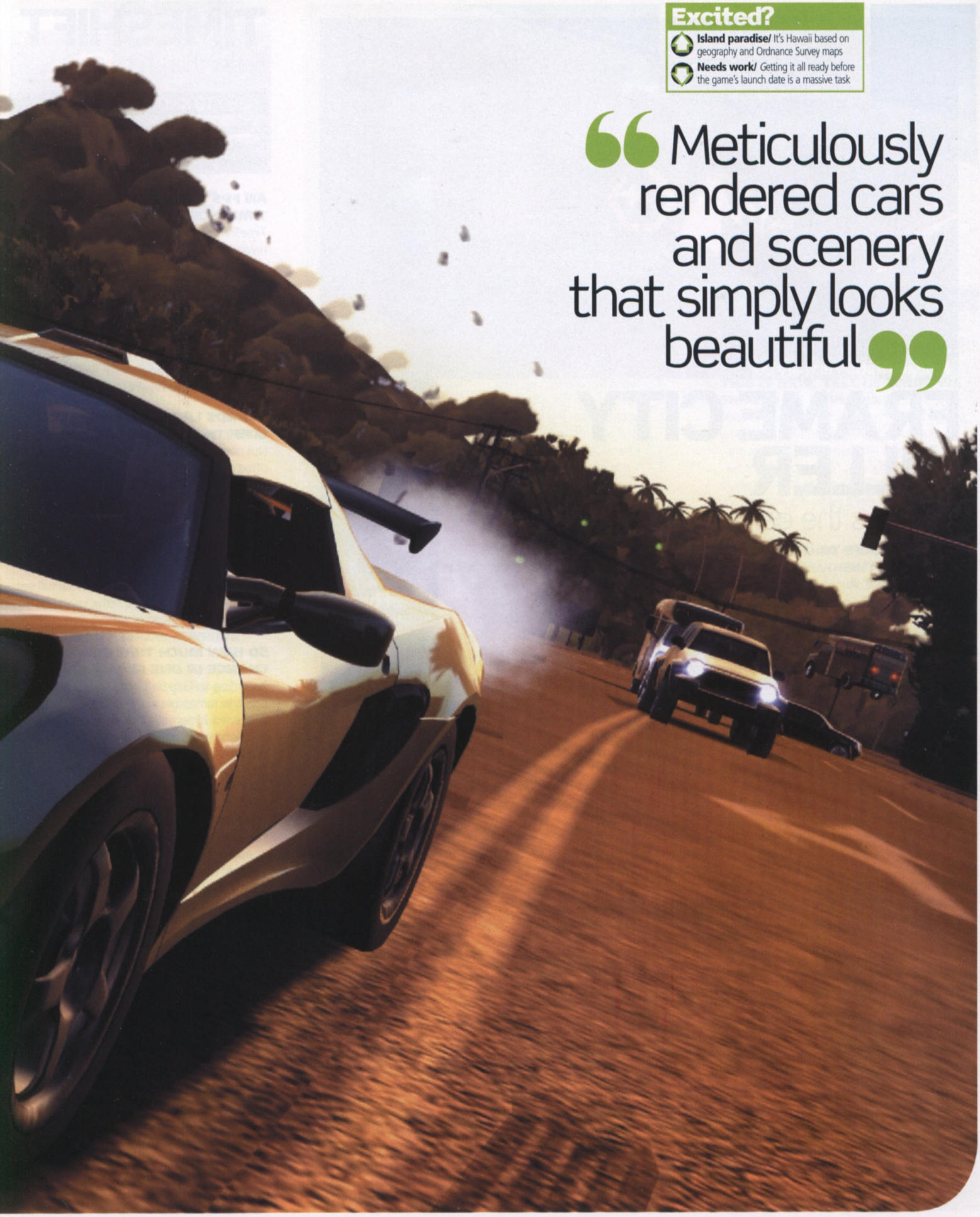
A massively ambitious game – that combined with racing will offer a uniquely social experience rarely seen outside of an MMORPG. We really can't wait for this.

Thriller?

Excited?

Island paradise/ It's Hawaii based on geography and Ordnance Survey maps

Needs work/ Getting it all ready before the game's launch date is a massive task



"Meticulously rendered cars and scenery that simply looks beautiful"



Release date/ February 06

FRAME CITY KILLER

EA plays the game

OKAY WE HAVE TO ASK, ISN'T THIS REALLY JUST A FLASHY GTA?
We can see why you might think that, but it's not as simple as that. In the game you play as Crow, an assassin on the trail of several crime lords. These kingpins have to be capped without you ever being detected, and so you'll have to trail your mark around the huge city environment, observing their movements and calculating the best time to strike.

SOUNDS EASY ENOUGH, BUT WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?
It might sound simple but when you consider the streets and buildings are teeming with innocent people unaware of the hell you're about to unleash, the game does get a lot more complicated. Plus, the time of day is also something you have to consider, as it will affect your actions too. Depending on whether it's day or night, rain or shine, the streets will clear and fill. You will therefore be forced to constantly alter your tactics.

CAN THOSE EIGHTIES STYLE GLASSES REALLY HELP YOUR GAME?
Yep, they sure can. Though they might look like something you'd get as a freebie with a McDonald's Happy Meal, the shades really are an essential part of your kit. Using them allows you to scan the crowd for both information and clues – the unique windowing technology enables you to zoom in and highlight individual members of the crowd as well as search hidden security systems.

WHAT ABOUT CARS AND CHICKS? HOW MUCH ARE THEY FEATURED IN THE GAME?
You'll be pleased to know that *Frame City Killer* features both cars and girls in equal measure. You can jump into the seat of any of the flashy futuristic cars and cruise the city or interact with the lady lovelies – but be careful, some of them aren't to be trusted. If you do find yourself in trouble, you can always bust some awesome shapes using Crow's range of martial arts moves.



HOW'S IT LOOKING?

Though Namco isn't famed for its adventure games, with its unique visual style and open-ended mission structure, this looks to be developing nicely.

NEED TO KNOW

Publisher/ EA
Developer/ Namco
Genre/ Action/ Adventure
Players/ TBC
Xbox Live/ Yes

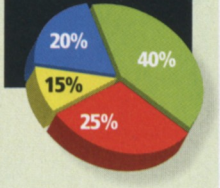
Briefly

Set in the year 2024, *Frame City* is under threat from ruthless criminals, and only you can save the day

IN THE PIE

Frame City Killer features...

- Eighties action
- Scanner shades
- Surveillance
- Killer car chases



TIMESHIFT

Better than Time Cop

NEED TO KNOW

Release Date/ March 06 **Publisher/** Atari
Developer/ Saber **Genre/** Shoot-'em-up
Players/ TBC **Xbox Live/** Yes

AN FPS WHERE YOU CONTROL TIME, HOW DOES THIS WORK?
TimeShift allows you to slow down, stop and rewind the time of the world around you. The only thing you can't change is yourself. For instance, in the thick of combat you can slow down your enemies and their fire, you can even rewind time to a point before your foes had even spotted you. You can also halt time completely for the purpose of, say, nabbing a villain's gun from his hand and then shooting him to death with his own weapon.

SOUNDS LIKE THE PLAYER CAN'T LOSE THEN?
Not necessarily. Your powers do diminish and often need to be allowed to recharge, which can be awkward in the heat of battle. Also, if you do get hit by a bullet (highly possible considering the amount of enemy soldiers out for your blood) you can't rewind time and heal yourself. You're only affecting the time of the world around you – once you've been hit, that's it. Of course, rewinding time will see the bullet leave your body, but you will still be wounded and in need of aid.

SO HOW MUCH TIME CAN YOU CHANGE IN ONE GO?
According to *TimeShift*'s developer, the game needs to remember everything that has happened 13 seconds into the past, so that's how long your TimeShifting will last in one go. Impressively, the game doesn't just remember your movements and those of your enemies, but every single animated scenery element.

ANY OTHER TRICKS OF NOTE?
Yes, when stopping time completely you'll be stopping the animation of things like water and fire. This allows you to wander unharmed through flaming gas pipes and you can even walk on water without sinking – handy if it happens to be electrified.

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

Graphically it's pretty much a slightly spiced up Xbox game, but in terms of gameplay it's like nothing else we've ever played.





CHROME-HOUNDS

The joy of mechs

NEED TO KNOW

Release Date/ March 06
Publisher/ Sega **Developer/** From Software
Genre/ Shoot-'em-up **Players/** 1-4
Xbox Live/ Yes

THIS LOOKS BRUTAL, WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?
The game is set in a post-apocalyptic future where powerful nations have armed themselves and are braced for an impending war. The game's story plays out over both the single- and multiplayer modes; while the single-player game sees you fighting as part of a squad from one of the game's three nations, the multiplayer is about how much carnage you can cause when the war breaks out.

WHAT ABOUT THOSE MASSIVE MACHINES IN IT?
There's a variety of different Hounds on offer, such as sniper, defender and gunner each with their own unique stats relating to mobility, core armour and energy use. The machines move at different speeds according to the amount of firepower assigned, so it's a choice of small and quick or heavy and powerful.

DO THEY PACK A PUNCH?
They sure do. Pretty much everything in the game is destructible, so not only can you do some serious damage to your opponents, but also to the environment as well. If you hit a building in the right spot it doesn't just blow up, it actually crumbles in on itself, buckling and folding until the whole thing is just a pile of brick and dust.

THIS LOOKS MADE FOR MULTIPLAYER, IS IT?
Definitely, you can take on up to four friends in any of the games' battlefields, which can be up to two-square miles long, and though the Live component is yet to be announced, it should be a meaty experience. You can even customise your own metal killing machine – think *Robot Wars* multiplied by a million.

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

Chromehounds sports some sharp visuals and has plenty of multiplayer potential. If the single-player experience is nailed, it should satisfy fans.

RUMBLE ROSES XX

A rose by any other name...

NEED TO KNOW

Release Date/ February 06 **Publisher/** Konami
Developer/ Yuke's **Genre/** Sports **Players/** 1-4
Xbox Live/ Yes

ISN'T THIS JUST MORE OF WHAT WE'VE SEEN BEFORE FROM THE DEVELOPER?
Well, yes and no. Don't worry, it's not just going to abandon the basic premise of the original game – the scantily clad women, the over-the-top fighting and the rocking tunes will all be making a comeback. However, there will be some new features in the game too.

IS THERE STILL TWO SIDES TO EACH CHARACTER?
Why yes, the persona system makes a welcome return to the game, which changes the appearance and fighting style of your wrestler based on whether they are good or bad. Your superstar will also create a dynamic with the fans – the more popular you are with the crowd, the more of an advantage you'll have in the square-circle.

WHAT KIND OF FEATURES WILL THERE BE EXACTLY?
There are plenty of new characters and modes that weren't present in the original game, such as Tag Team matches, Battle Royals and Elimination bouts. During these team-based modes it's possible for players to perform special combo moves, accidental attacks on each other and you can even split from your partner as well. There will also be online play for fans of the busty babes... hmm, that's likely to be pretty popular, we imagine.

SO IT'S MORE THAN JUST HOOTERS AND HUSSIES THEN?
It certainly is. *Rumble Roses XX* is being developed by Yuke's – the development house responsible for the *Smackdown!* series – so it knows exactly how to create a more than decent wrestling title. The girls are merely there for those players who are too uptight to watch the men wrestle. This way you get the best of both worlds – a good wrestling game and a ring full of jiggly digital silicon. You can't go wrong with that now, can you?

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

With better looking characters, more gameplay modes and online play, this will give fans what they want and could be a surprise hit when it enters the Xbox 360 ring of light.





VOODOO NIGHTS

Do you do voodoo?

NEED TO KNOW

Release Date/ September 06 **Publisher/** TBC
Developer/ Mindware Studios **Genre/** Adventure
Players/ 1-2 **Xbox Live/** Yes

THIS IS NEW, TELL US WHAT WE SHOULD BE EXPECTING
Voodoo Nights is a third-person action game where you take on the role of two 'loose-cannon' cops simultaneously. These likely lads are chasing down a voodoo gang and gradually learn to use the black arts. The voodoo magic enables them to levitate and possess foes.

LOOSE CANNON COPS SOUNDS VERY HOLLYWOOD
The game is being touted as a shooter that draws inspiration from both Hong Kong and Hollywood cinema, but it's essentially a buddy game. Therefore, success is based on working as a team, so for instance, one levitates an enemy out from cover while the other guns him down. If Mindware get the physics right, this element could be a very entertaining part of the game.

SOUNDS A BIT LIKE MIAMI VICE, DON'T YOU THINK?
The co-operative bit does sound quite similar, yeah, and from what we've seen it may well play like it too, but we certainly hope not – apart from Ryan who does in fact love the *Vice*. We'd prefer to think that it will play more like a team-based *Psi-Ops*.

WHAT ABOUT THESE VOODOO POWERS THEN, WHAT CAN THEY DO EXACTLY?
The developer claims there's a host of new powers to make use of, such as 'dead time', which 'allows players to slow down the passage of time' when things start to get a bit hairy. Call us cynical but 'dead time' sounds a lot like bullet-time, which is so old it's almost retro. There's also a handy picture-in-picture view, which will help you keep tabs on what the other character is seeing and the powers they're using.

HOW'S IT LOOKING?

Still in the early stages of development, but it has some nice ideas. Let's hope it will have enough black magic moments to keep us entertained.

GAMES ON THE VERGE OF THE BIG TIME. COULD THEY CHANGE YOUR LIFE FOREVER?

X360 PREDICTS

TOP TEN PRE-ORDERED LAUNCH GAMES

01 Perfect Dark Zero
02 Project Gotham Racing 3
03 Kameo: Elements Of Power
04 Call Of Duty 2
05 Quake 4
06 Condemned
07 Need For Speed Most Wanted
08 FIFA 06 Road To The World Cup
09 Tiger Woods PGA 06
10 Ridge Racer 6

UNSIGNED

It's out there, but is yet to be confirmed for Xbox 360...

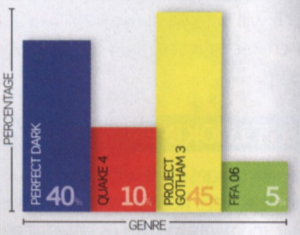
SOUL CALIBUR III

LOWDOWN: *Soul Calibur III* has only just hit PS2 but some people refuse to believe that it will remain a single-format game. With Namco shunning other formats and the arcade, how is it going to line its pockets from a PS2-only release? If Namco really cared about *SC III* it would release it on X360, right?



FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

You've bought the console, the game, Xbox Live Gold membership. Now you want to go where the people go online and shout: "You are the noob!" We reckon these are your Live gaming hotspots...





BATTLEFIELD 2: MODERN COMBAT

MOST WANTED

With *Battlefield 2* currently making men out of Xbox owners, EA is turning its eyes on the Xbox 360 version. No actual improvements have been confirmed yet, but given that the release date is pencilled in some five months after the Xbox version hits UK shelves, it's reasonable to expect developer Digital Illusions isn't going to spend that time twiddling its thumbs and spinning around on office chairs. The rumblings on the grapevine suggest Digital Illusions is shooting for a mammoth 64 players. If so, it will propel *Battlefield 2: Modern Combat* amongst Xbox 360's Live elite. Then again, perhaps grapevines aren't the best place to check for videogame news.

EXPECTED RELEASE: MARCH 06

UNDER THE RADAR

Five sleeper hits



1 NEOGEO BATTLE COLISEUM

SNK shows Microsoft some loving with this classic character packed 2D fighter.



2 TENCHU 360

Still online, the game now comes with an army of ninjas replacing the army of one and the ability to detect smells (!).



3 BATTLE ANGEL

The game of the 3D film by James Cameron, based on the Japanese manga-style graphic novel.



4 HUXLEY

A brand new MMORPG from those lovable scamps at Webzen – this looks like dark sci-fi, unsurprisingly – Aldous Huxley, see?



5 SIMPSONS NEXT-GEN

Just announced by EA with no info. Will it be *Road Rage*-style joy or *Simpsons Skateboard*-style mess?


2020. CORPORATIONS CONTROL EVERYTHING.
WITH ONE EXCEPTION.
PERFECT DARK ZERO
RARE
Microsoft game studios
XBOX LIVE
perfectdarkzero.com
XBOX 360

EASTERN PROMISE

DESPITE THE XBOX'S FAILURE IN THE EAST, MICROSOFT IS BOUNCING BACK. **RYAN KING** EXAMINES WHY THE XBOX 360 IS SET TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD

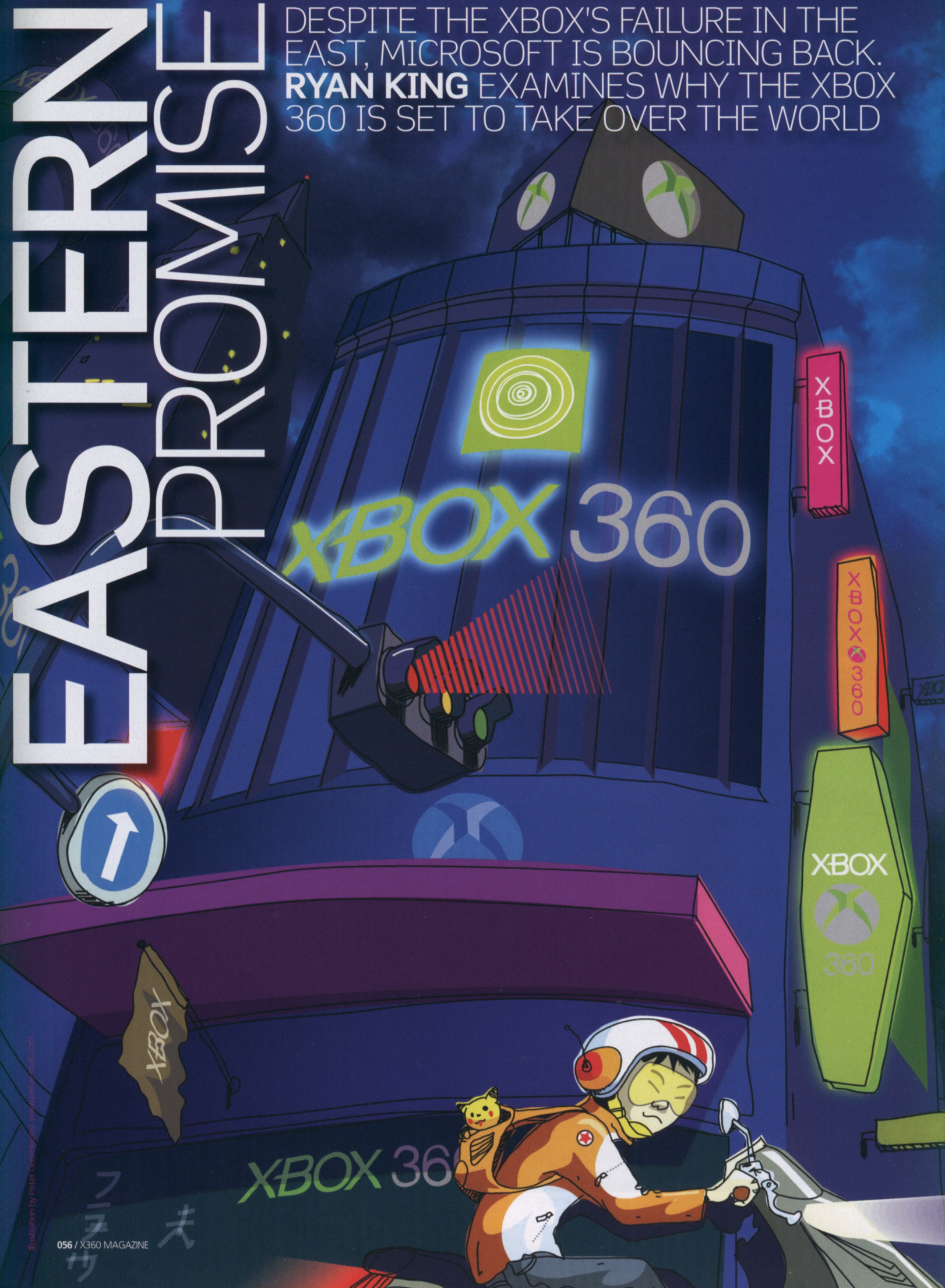


Illustration by Peter Crossman | www.petercrossman.com


フチ
360
XBOX
フチ 夫
360
XBOX 360
XBOX 360
XBOX 360
XBOX 360
フチ夫 360
XBOX 360
XBOX 360
XBOX 360
XBOX 360
XBOX 360
XBOX 360
XBOX 360
フチ夫
日本

EASTERN PROMISE



Exclusive SCREENS
Special report from Japan

LONG LOST FRIEND/ Sonic is still a much-loved mascot and Sega hopes to make its next-gen counterpart just as popular

Poor Xbox. It tried so hard. All it wanted was to be loved by the Far East. Instead, it was openly rejected, left to collect dust as gaming shelves in Akihabara creaked under its black-and-green muscle while Japanese children played and danced around their PlayStation2. It was a lesson that square pegs can't be hammered into round holes, particularly if that square peg weighs the same as a fat baby. Poor Xbox.

Xbox's bid to break into the Japanese market was arguably doomed from the start. It was against the odds that Microsoft managed to crack the American and European market in the first place, as the cards seemed to fall in Microsoft's favour – GameCube never really got out of the starting blocks, *Halo* was an unexpected success and Sony was complacent with its online strategy, allowing Xbox Live to build up steam. There were more factors to it than that, but whenever there was a slip-up by the opposition or a good bit of fortune to be had, Microsoft was always the first to respond.

Across the pond in Japan – the world's second-largest gaming market – none of these factors held any sway. GameCube managed to tread water rather than drown, first-person shooters have never really made any impact in Japan (ruling out *Halo*'s pulling power) and Xbox Live lay dormant waiting for an MMORPG to take advantage of it. What started as an uphill battle quickly lurched towards a desperate situation that no amount of Kasumi-branded 'comfort' pillows could disguise. Xbox began life in Japan with Bill Gates mixing in the streets with hip Shibuya youngsters to spread the word, and ended with soft porn actress Eri Kitajima on Japanese TV half-heartedly trying to convince gamers why Xbox Live is great. It was a sad, strange and pitiful sight watching Japan repeatedly slam the door in Microsoft's face. With Round 2 about to begin and the Xbox 360 under its arm, Microsoft has learnt from its bloody nose and altered its tactics.

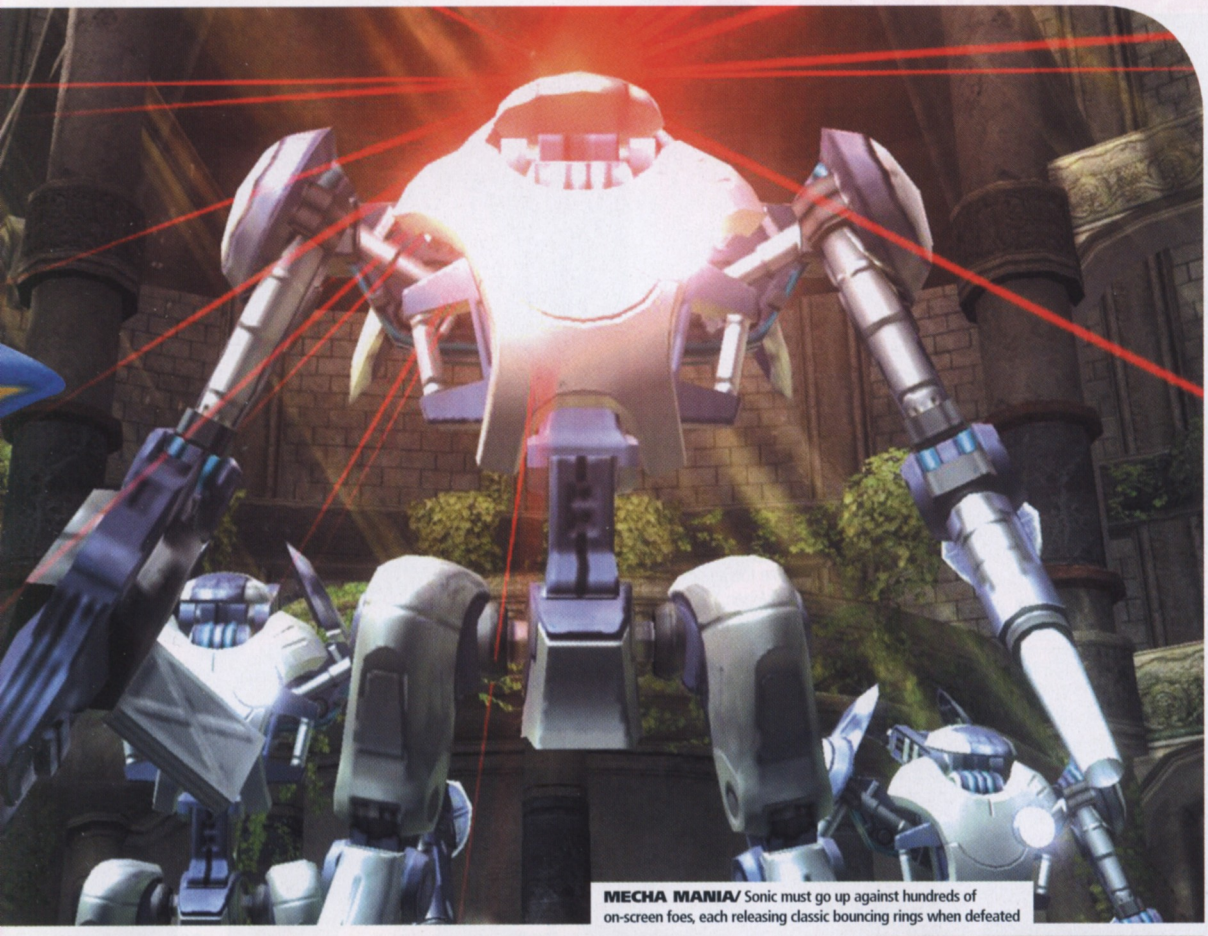
THE REASONS

Before judging Xbox 360's potential for success in Japan, it's important to see where Xbox went wrong. For every videogame observer out there with an internet browser, a keyboard and a neglected spellchecker, there was a different reason as to why Xbox flopped in Japan. The most popular theory was that Xbox failed because of

HARD SELL

While *Dead Or Alive 3* managed to sell a respectable amount of copies in Japan despite the low Xbox userbase, it still underperformed. This can be credited to two reasons: first, *Dead Or Alive 3* really lacked a central character to sell the game. Kasumi was two games old and new girl Christie didn't really fit the role. Secondly, Xbox didn't support an arcade stick at the time of release and this killed off its status as a tournament game in Japan and meant several arcade veterans steered clear. Fortunately, Hori is releasing a wireless *Dead Or Alive 4* stick for Xbox 360. Hori has also cleverly stuck with a six-button layout, ensuring it will be ideal for Xbox 360 fighting games.





MECHA MANIA/ Sonic must go up against hundreds of on-screen foes, each releasing classic bouncing rings when defeated





its size, claiming that the Japanese only fell in love with diminutive technology.

Another theory doing the rounds was that the Japanese nation has an in-built aversion to foreign companies, while home-grown companies such as Sony and Nintendo could do no wrong. Microsoft, the evil, capitalist giant of the West trying to break into a gaming market traditionally held together by Japanese companies, was a prime candidate for jingoistic attitudes. However, this theory ignores the fact that certain Western games did manage to sell – *Grand Theft Auto III* and *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City* both managed to shift plenty of units and while Nintendo's GameCube managed to outsell Xbox, it wasn't exactly in rude health. Ultimately, it boiled down to that weathered cliché – it's all about the games, and Xbox just didn't have enough of them to convince Japanese gamers to flash their yen. As Robbie Bach, chief Xbox officer would admit: "Ultimately if we had great games, people would have put a big, black Xbox in the living room."

Apart from Team Ninja's *Dead Or Alive* and *Ninja Gaiden* franchises, the only other exclusive games that really caught the Japanese imagination were Sega's *Panzer Dragoon Orta* and, oddly enough, Capcom's *Dino Crisis 3*. No *Final Fantasy*, no *Resident Evil*, no Xbox sales. The main concern underpinning the true lack of sellers was the dearth of RPGs. While that issue was eventually addressed in the West with *Sudeki*, *Fable*, *Knights Of The Old Republic* and *Jade Empire*, these came from Western developers and as a result, none were 'traditional' RPGs per se, aimed at the Japanese market.

THE GAMES

With Microsoft trying to address the lack of 'Japanese' games for Xbox 360, the first company back on board was Tecmo. This was a huge boost to Microsoft as Tecmo was undoubtedly Xbox's biggest Japanese last-gen supporter, abandoning PlayStation2 for Microsoft's console and waving the blue-and-green flag through thick and thin. As the decision behind changing loyalties from Sony to Microsoft was due to Xbox offering the better hardware, it's no surprise to see this is behind Tecmo's renewed loyalties to Xbox 360. "When you consider the essence of videogames, you can't take away its graphics, sound and interactivity," explains eccentric Tecmo producer Tomonobu Itagaki. "The Xbox 360 is the best solution at the current time." Indeed, Itagaki believes in the Xbox 360, unlike the »

RISING STAR

While the mascot who once stood toe-to-toe with Mario has faded from view over the years, Yuji Naka is back to put things right. With the original *Sonic The Hedgehog* creator back at the helm, Xbox 360 will see Naka attempt to make Japan fall in love with the blue critter all over again. Despite some lacklustre games in recent times, Sonic is still a much-loved mascot and the way Naka is intending to put the blue blur back where he belongs – on top of the pile – is by combining next-gen physics and motion effects with the classic *Sonic* gameplay we all remember from the MegaDrive days. By returning to *Sonic*'s roots. By refusing to abandon what made *Sonic* so popular to begin with.

With no surplus characters to dilute the spotlight on the blue hedgehog and no gimmicks to muddy the clear gameplay waters, it's the classic *Sonic* formula through and through. It might look worryingly like *Sonic Heroes*, but that's no real concern as Yuji Naka knows what he likes and likes what he knows, therefore it's doubtful he's going to let his baby suffer the same fate that *Heroes* did. Already, this has a sense of speed that *Sonic Heroes* never managed to deliver. Xbox 360 will see the return of classic *Sonic*, with the familiarity of Green Hill Zone adapted to a fast, 3D environment to suit modern twitch gaming. From the new screens that we wrenched from the hands of Sega, *Sonic* has never looked better. The scale, definition and sense of speed in this game may not be bettered in 2006 – the anniversary year of *Sonic*'s inception, if you didn't already know.



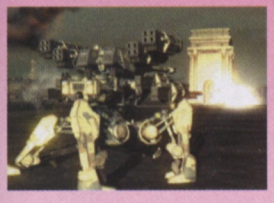
THE GAMES

BLUE DRAGON
Mistwalker

This is the first game from Hironobu Sakaguchi – the 'father of *Final Fantasy*' – since he left Square Enix

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

So there's no such thing as guaranteed success in videogames hey? Pah. This will sell more than the Bible.



CHROMEHOUNDS
From Software

Sega's contribution to Xbox 360's line-up is a mech game, or mecha if you want to be slightly arsy and pedantic about

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

Some may have their eye on *Mobile Suit Gundam*, but *Chromehounds* will pack a hefty punch.

DEAD OR ALIVE 4
Team Ninja

Combining doe-eyed anime girls with shameless cleavage, *Dead Or Alive 4* has practically been tailor-made for the Japanese market.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

In the lovely Kokoro, *Dead Or Alive 4* has the poster-girl its predecessor lacked to ensure that sales will explode in Japan.



DEAD OR ALIVE XTREME BEACH VOLLEYBALL 2
Team Ninja

Fact: Xbox sales figures doubled for the week of *Dead Or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball*'s release.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

Japanese gamers ignoring the chance to see next-gen Kokoro, Kasumi, Ayane et al in a bikini? Highly unlikely…

ENCHANT ARM
From Software

Enchant Arm, or [eM] -eNCHANT arM- to use its txt-friendly full title, is an RPG. That alone ensures this will fly off the shelves.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

Mistwalker's output will hurt its sales potential but this still gives Xbox 360 a much-needed RPG.

EVERY PARTY
Game Republic

Every Party features stylised anime graphics, eccentric design and a cute, twee family appeal at its core.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

It could be a smash, or it could bomb as gamers turn to other titles instead. It's hard to tell which way *Every Party* will swing.

FINAL FANTASY XI
Square Enix

One of Microsoft's big coups was *Final Fantasy XI* – anything with the *Final Fantasy* name will sell.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

Final Fantasy is a guaranteed seller. However, XI's age and previous PlayStation2 release count against it.



KAMEO: ELEMENTS OF POWER
Rare

This has been on the cards longer than Jesus has been with us, but finally *Kameo* has arrived.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

There hasn't yet been any real Japanese reaction to *Kameo*, a worrying sign in itself. We'll have to wait and see.

LOST ODYSSEY
Mistwalker

The second Mistwalker RPG, *Lost Odyssey* is the brooding entrant from Sakaguchi's studio. It's moody and realistic, with earthly settings.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

It will be overshadowed by *Blue Dragon* but will still shift numbers most companies can only dream of.

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM (WORKING TITLE)
Dimps Corporation

Even with rivals *Armored Core 4* and *Chromehounds* lurking around, it's hard to see them usurping this title.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

Mobile Suit Gundam games are popular in Japan so this one shouldn't be any different.

NINETY-NINE NIGHTS
Q Entertainment

When *Dynasty Warriors 2* arrived on PS2 back in 2000, this was the game it dreamt of being.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

It's not a killer app by any means, more of a plug-in title for Japanese Xbox 360 owners until the real *Dynasty Warriors* appears.

NINJA GAIDEN 2
Team Ninja

Ninja Gaiden had no trouble in the US and Europe, but came too late in Xbox's life to succeed in Japan.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

Sales will be overshadowed by its stablemate *DOA 4* but this is one game Microsoft will be thankful for.

RESIDENT EVIL 5
Capcom

Little is known about this game, but the teaser video has been enough to whip up a frenzy in Japan.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

Microsoft's first chance to taste *Resident Evil* will almost certainly result in gargantuan sales.

RIDGE RACER 6
Namco

An ever-present part of any launch line-up, *Ridge Racer 6* is playing it safe with only a boost feature to set it apart from previous versions.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

It will sell strong numbers. Nothing too spectacular, nothing too disappointing, as steady as ever.

RUMBLE ROSES XX
Yuke's

If we were to judge Japanese gamers by videogames, it's a safe bet to say that ample cleavage, wrestling and talking dogs were three of the mainstays.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

It might not hold the same weight as Konami's *Metal Gear Solid* series, but *Rumble Roses* still commands a growing fanbase.

WRESTLE KINGDOM
Yuke's

Wrestling games have a history of selling well in Japan and Yuke's has a history of making very good wrestling games.

CHANCE OF JAPANESE SUCCESS:

Has sleeper-hit potential. While it's not a killer app by any means, wrestling fans will definitely be very tempted by this game.



COVER GIRL/ *Dead Or Alive*'s Kokoro is certainly doing her bit to promote the Xbox 360 in Japan, and the press are loving it. If she doesn't entice Japanese gamers, we're not sure what will

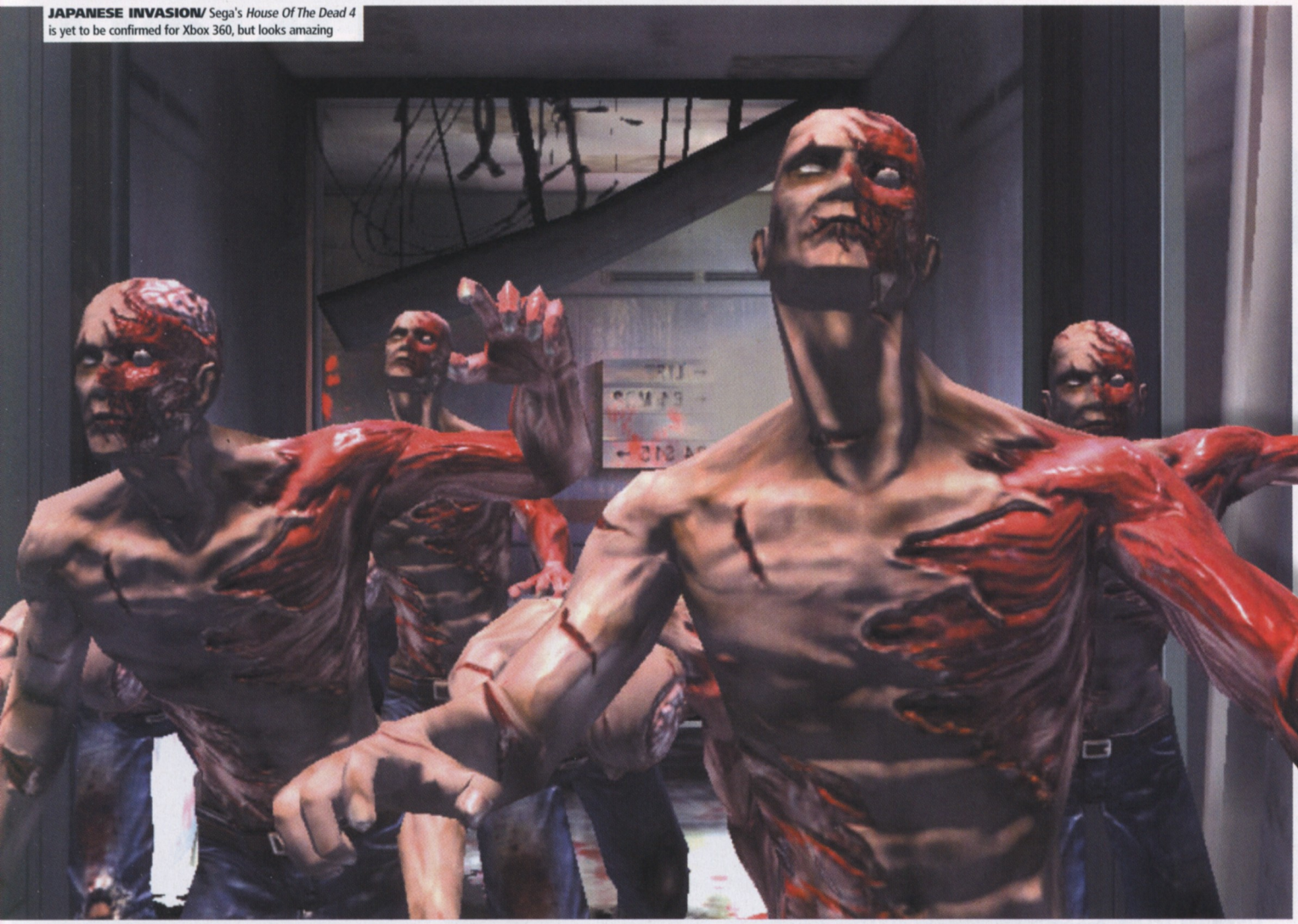
PS3, which according to Itagaki has "too complicated" an architecture.

Dead Or Alive 4 is currently the jewel in Xbox 360's Japanese launch line-up, something that's only been enhanced by the presence of new character Kokoro. While she might appear to serve as nothing more than eye-candy, the Japanese press has already gone bonkers over her and she's fronted several Famitsu covers and *Dead Or Alive 4* promotional posters in Japan already.

While *Dead Or Alive 4* is important, Microsoft has finally addressed the issue of Japanese RPGs thanks to one man – Hironobu Sakaguchi. The man credited with creating the *Final Fantasy* phenomenon might not be bringing Square Enix's series to Xbox 360 but instead, has formed his own development studio, Mistwalker. Both *Blue Dragon* and *Lost Odyssey* will bolt from the Mistwalker studios next year and these two games alone have already ensured an interest level in Xbox 360 that Xbox couldn't muster during its lifetime on Japanese shelves. Beyond that, Microsoft has also managed to secure *Final Fantasy XI*. Despite its age, this will be an enormous draw and seeing the *Final Fantasy* name on Xbox 360 will only give Japanese gamers more reason to invest, not to mention *Enchant Arm* and *Kameo: Elements Of Power*. The question of whether or not there will be Japanese RPGs on Xbox 360 has clearly been answered.

Yuke's will also be onboard to contribute wrestling games – adding another dimension to Xbox 360's line-up. Already, *Wrestle Kingdom* is in the pipeline. "Self-shadowing effects contribute a lot to making a pro wrestling game," *Wrestle Kingdom*'s chief planner Shunsuke Katsumata said, explaining his decision to choose Xbox 360 over other consoles. "When it comes to pro wrestling games, trying to render the wrestlers' muscles is really the key point. But up until now, we couldn't even use a virtual self-shadowing effect due to hardware limitations."

Microsoft's launch window line-up for Xbox 360 has enough juice to ensure it will outperform Xbox at the very least – Sega has *Sonic The Hedgehog*, Capcom has *Resident Evil 5*, Konami has *Rumble Roses XX* and Namco has *Ridge Racer 6*. Beyond that, the second wave of games will have *Ninja Gaiden 2*, *Dead Or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball 2*, *Armored Core 4*, *Tenchu 360* and *King Of Fighters: Maximum Impact 2*. And then there's the newly announced *Mass Effect* from RPG geniuses BioWare, which could very well prove to be a sleeper hit in the East.



JAPANESE INVASION/ Sega's *House Of The Dead 4* is yet to be confirmed for Xbox 360, but looks amazing

> "Microsoft's launch window line-up has enough juice to ensure it will outperform Xbox at the very least"

THE BUNDLE

Xbox was originally released in Japan with a ¥34,800 price tag draped around its muscular black-and-green neck. When sales slumped to a record low of 1,175 units just three months after the console hit the shelves, Microsoft hit the panic button and slashed the price to ¥24,800. As a result, sales quickly scrambled back up to a healthier 7,400 figure and kept the console's slim chances of surviving the Japanese market alive for a few months longer. Smug analysts stopped stroking their chins for long enough to point out that ¥24,800 should have been the original price tag all along.

Onto Xbox 360 and the initial concern is that either Microsoft hasn't learnt its lesson or is just plain stubborn. While US and European gamers get to choose what Xbox 360 bundle to shell out for, the only choice available for Japanese gamers is the expensive premium pack containing the Xbox 360 console, a 20Gb hard drive, wireless controller, wireless remote control and several accessories. A special limited-edition launch package is also planned, with the not-so-special inclusion of a headset. So why are Japanese gamers restricted to the premium bundle only? "We have a very strong broadband infrastructure in Japan compared to other countries," explains Japanese Xbox chief, Yoshihiro Maruyama. "There are various online contents on offer and these require a hard disk."

The premium bundle costs ¥37,900, so while it's still expensive, there's no denying this is still something of a bargain for Japanese gamers – it works out to be some £100 cheaper than what we're paying for a similar bundle.

The most dramatic boost in Xbox hardware sales came from the *Halo/PGR2* Xbox bundle on 20 November in 2003, which saw sales jump from 315 to 7,536 the next week. While the limited edition Kasumi-Chan Blue Xbox with 'hugging pillow' and limited edition *Panzer Dragoon* White Xbox couldn't save the console, they managed to salvage some pride. Microsoft will no doubt be looking towards similar schemes for X360. The special limited-edition package with the headset is a step towards that.

THE SIZE

While the disastrous performance of Xbox in Japan hasn't been wholly attributed to the console's design, its clear the huge dimensions didn't help. With fanboys hilariously dubbing it X-brick and proclaiming that Japanese gamers wouldn't take to it because of its size, Microsoft made Xbox 360's design one of its priorities, to help ease its way into Japanese homes.

Microsoft brought two consultants on board for the design of Xbox 360: San Francisco's Astro Studios that formed the concept and Osaka's Hers Experimental Design Laboratory that made the design. Hers is a firm known for its knowledge of Japanese tastes and the final design looks more in line with a Sony or Apple product than something associated with Microsoft.

Finally, there aren't going to be any opening day mistakes. Xbox was lambasted for its original burger-shaped man-pad, before Microsoft quickly ushered the S-pad in as its replacement. This time, the perfect pad is being released from the start.

THE VERDICT

The reaction of Japanese gamers so far has been one of mild curiosity. They've not yet been sold on Xbox 360, but haven't dismissed it either. Xbox 360's success depends on sustaining third-party support in the long run. So, with the strong line-up of games on the way, some clever marketing, as well as special-edition bundles, Microsoft might just find the round peg it's been looking for all along... ■

BRAND NEW LAUNCH



DVD NEXT

"EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO WATCH"

NEXT GENERATION DVD MAGAZINE

ON SALE 3 NOVEMBER

REVIEWS

X360
Every month, the only reviews you can trust...

VERDICT	GIMMICK	LIVE TIME	CUSTOM GAMING	PLAY THE GAME
We rate games out of ten	The game's main unique feature	The multiplayer mode is tested	Custom mode options explored	The experience of playing



CLASSIC AWARD
Any game scoring a nine is awarded the Silver Classic

LEGEND AWARD
A game scoring the perfect ten gets the Gold Legend

X360 REVIEW GAMES CONTENTS

64 **FIFA 06**
Bucktoothed Brazilian Ronaldinho debuts on X360

70 **AMPED 3**
Living out those Swiss mountain dreams

72 **KAMEO: ELEMENTS OF POWER**
Kameo finally surfaces for air, but is it any good?

76 **CONDEMNED**
"Run around bashing the [censored] out of people"

82 **GUN**
"Wiki Wild Wild... what?" as Will Smith would say, if he played games

84 **CALL OF DUTY 2**
The war machine has never looked so good.

92 **NEED FOR SPEED MOST WANTED**
Is it the most wanted launch game? Really?

98 **TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN WASTELAND**
Tony Hawk rests on his laurels and gets spanking

99 **TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 06**
Tiger's got himself all glossed up for X360

100 **PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 3**
Some would call it 'car pornography'

106 **QUAKE 4**
Activision's fragfest tools up and st-st-st-stutters into the deathmatch arena

110 **NBA LIVE 06**
Fussy rules and sweaty men get us going

QUAKE 4

"THE MOST FEROCIOUS COMBAT EXPERIENCE ON CONSOLE"
Andy Hartup

THE SCORES EXPLAINED

1 So bad it's patronising to be around
2 Even Davilex wouldn't publish this crap
3 Its stench makes our eyes water
4 You hide it when your friends come round
5 You let 'special' friends see this one
6 Getting better, in an ironic way
7 A decent but lacklustre genre game
8 A quality game but lacks originality
9 A great game that must be played
10 The big kahoona, the Perfect Ten. Buy it.

Release date/ 02 December 05

ON THE X360 DISC
- Hands-on preview
- Audio commentary



X360 Exclusive

REVIEWED

EA shows us its ball skills

Details **Publisher/** Electronic Arts **Developer/** In-house **Genre/** Sports **Players/** 1-4 **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720p

FIFA 06

ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP

About as beautiful as the game can get

It's over, it's done, it's in the bag – England have qualified for the World Cup, so why would we want to tread that road again? Fans have had to endure the tedium of the group stages with its strange and exotic formation changes, its string of dire performances and, of course, its endless tactical tinkering. There have been calls for the manager out and a new captain in and although the team seemed to have done everything wrong, we still ended up a group winner. How does it happen, why does it happen? Nobody knows, and that's precisely the reason we'd do it all over again. Because if nothing else, the beautiful game is always unpredictable – the glamour, the glory and goals – once you're on the road, there's certainly no turning back.

Perhaps then, this is the reason why, when it comes to the football fan's game of choice, *FIFA* is often left twiddling its thumbsticks on the bench. It has become predictable – each year a new addition of what is essentially the same game simply glazed with a new layer of shine and a selection of new play modes. But as any game-loving football fan will tell you, this year things



Xtunes

Recommended listening when playing *FIFA 06*

■ Baddiel and Skinner – Three Lions ■ John Cafferty – Hearts On Fire ■ Idlewild – The World In Your Arms

INSTANT OPINION

With a stunning new game engine and realistic presentation, EA has delivered a football title that has little to fear from *Pro Evo*

"Nothing can quite prepare you for what awaits you on the pitch – FIFA is serious"

have changed. EA has battled hard to address the criticisms levied at its series and has delivered one of the most engaging editions to date. The new development team has trimmed away the fat and made the *FIFA* franchise a contender once again, primed and ready to dominate the next-generation of consoles. And let **X360** be the first to tell you it has every chance of doing so, as *FIFA 06: Road To The World Cup* has the potential to play all opposition clean off the park.

Behind the spin of real-time sweat, ponytail physics and individually rendered blades of grass, there's an extremely solid engine at work and nothing can quite prepare you for what awaits you on the pitch. You know it's going to look good, but within the first few minutes of play we were pointing and gasping at the screen, positively gurgling with pleasure as we realised that this was real, that behind the hype, *FIFA* was serious.

Exclusive to X360

To clear up any confusion, both the Xbox and the PlayStation2 have *FIFA 06*, but this is no port – *Road To The World Cup* is a game made exclusively for the Xbox 360. It's not a fully fleshed out, feature-packed *FIFA* addition, but rather a humble taster of just what this machine can do and its focus is on the qualifying stages for next year's World Cup. So while it's international teams only and the modes on offer aren't as extensive as those on current-gen machines, when you discover the attention to detail, it quickly becomes of little concern.

The first thing to strike you is the visuals. EA has long been famed for its über-polished graphics, »

HIT OR HYPE? "A strong starting point to build a whole new generation of the series from" Ian Dean, Issue 2. Spot on from Deano



TESTY/ The cut-scenes are great, players will realistically swear and shove each other





Control

- R1 - First-touch moves and teasing stepovers
- X - Double tap for a cutback or low cross
- R2 - Hold and press X for a chipped pass



YOU CALL THE SHOTS

FIFA finds a new way to micro-manage

Now you no longer have to wait for the ball to go out of play before making a tactical change or substitution. A new interface is activated by the D-pad and can be used to access quick subs, kick takers, formation and tactics options. Also, while your game is loading, you enter a kind of *FIFA Street*-style mini-game. Don't panic – there's no pushchairs or Burberry in sight.

> "The crowd's noise roars and reflects the action taking place on the pitch"

but this is something else. By using slightly exaggerated player models, it's easy to tell individuals from a distance – the Beckham in-swingers, the leggy Henry strides and even the Ronaldo step-overs. When you go in for a closer look, things are more impressive, as even though player models aren't photo-realistic, almost every player is instantly recognisable with the teams' top boys receiving special attention. Blocky angles and flat faces have been eliminated, while skin tone and texture are enhanced. However, it has to be said that certain players look a tad too shiny; well, shiny doesn't quite cover it – most of them look like they've had their faces buffed with 15 layers of Turtle Wax. Shine aside, during the action players move and act like their real life counterparts, warding off tackles and taking tumbles. The falling animations are outstanding and totally random courtesy of a new physics engine that drives the calculations behind each stumble and collision. Better still, each player reacts differently: some with their hands in the air unable to believe the referee's decision and some mouthing expletives as they dust themselves off.

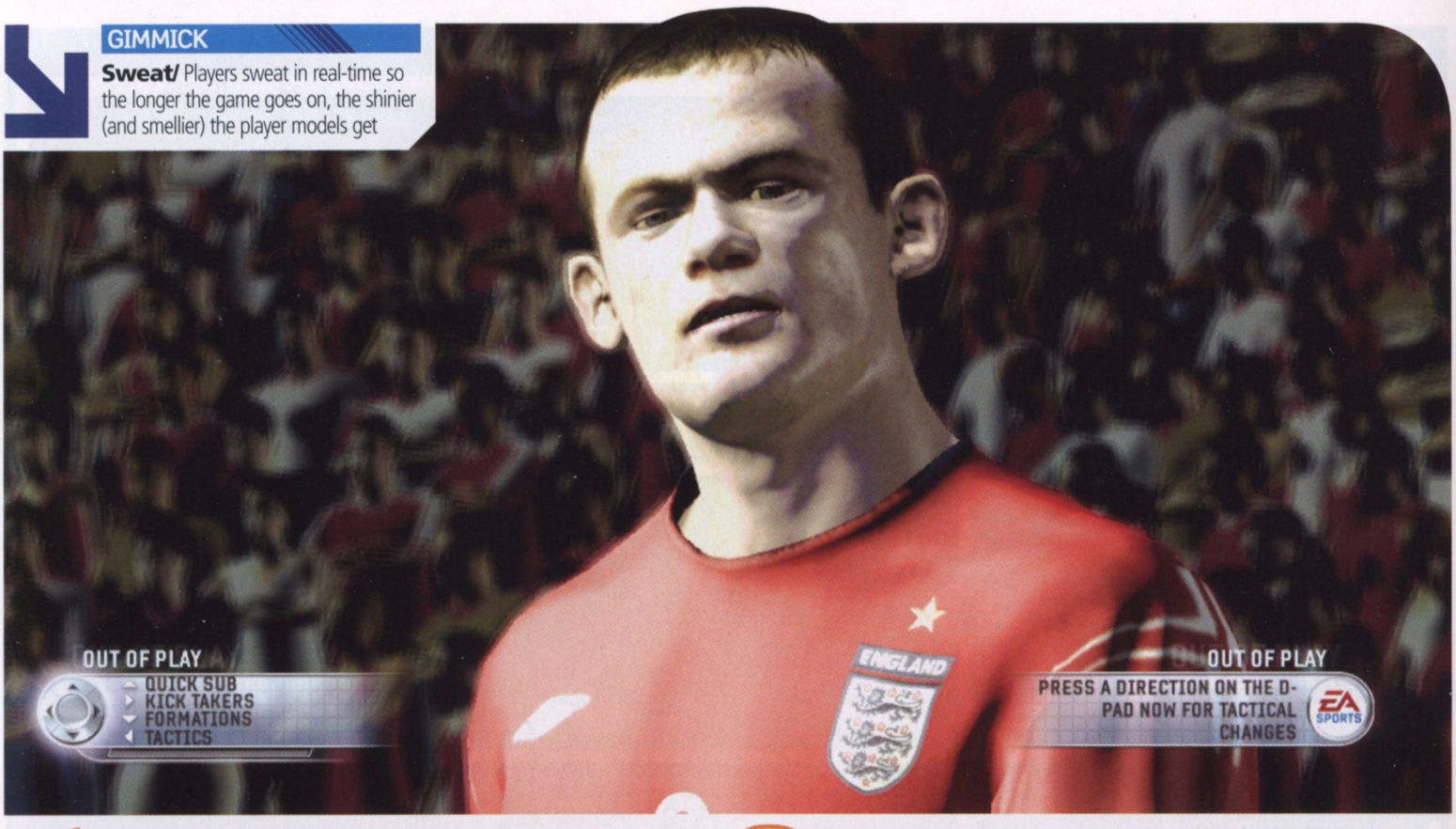
Attention to detail

Hair and clothing no longer mask the player. They have physical properties of their own, shirts bob and flow independently of the player and intricate shadows mirror every movement. It's these minute details, combined with smile-raising elements that aren't even directly linked to play, that help make up such a realistic world. For instance, when the ball trickles over to your fans for a throw-in, they will raise from their seats and show their support, whereas if your opponent is lobbing in the pigskin, your fans will remain seated. In fact, the crowd deserve special mention as they are a big part of the experience: despite looking a little generic when up close, their noise roars over the action and reflects what is taking place on the pitch – cheering and chanting when things are on the up but muted when the game fails to cut the mustard. When you get close enough to notice, the stadiums and crowd look as impressive as they do in real life and the dynamic real-time lighting affects almost everything in sight. Even the weather conditions are worth a mention, as huge selections of the pitch are often eclipsed by shadows that the sun casts, and when the sun drops from the sky, the rain also affects play. A light drizzle means a quicker playing surface, but if it's a downpour, then your passes and shots will need to be hit with a little extra pace and power.

When the crowd isn't fully on song, there's always the Sky Sports commentary team of Martin Tyler and Andy Gray to listen to, who despite becoming somewhat repetitive after extended periods of play, are always accurate and up to speed with the action. Whenever anything delays play, the duo will often enter into banter about previous meetings between the two teams playing. When we were playing as England we heard tales of the team's '66-cup victory, as well as their woeful history when it comes to penalty shoot-outs. However, there's always the »

GIMMICK

Sweat/ Players sweat in real-time so the longer the game goes on, the shinier (and smellier) the player models get



1 SPOT THE BALL

"Some of us play with the grace and flair of Henry while others graduate from the Vinnie Jones school of soccer, so this will inevitably lead to a penalty or two – especially if you go up against Deano. Keep your cool, look the other way and then leather it into the bottom corner…"

2 FOUL PLAY

"When tensions are running high, a few tackles are to be expected but there was no excuse for a sending off in the first minute. Deano barely gave his opponent time to kick the ball off the centre spot before lunging in with a career-ending challenge."





DIRTY PLAYERS?
LIVE TIME





3 FREE AND EASY

"To keep the opposition guessing, Keith decided to call in an extra man when taking a free kick. A quick one swung over the wall and then a glancing header was all it took to see the net bulge. Oh, okay it went over but it was a close one alright."

4 NEXT OF SKIN

"After a few games keeping his defensive line tighter than a duck's butt, Keith thought it was time to bring out the skills. One quick tap of the right shoulder button and the ball was running under Totti's legs, enabling him to turn and make a run down the wing."

Facts ■ Online head-to-head ■ Custom matches ■ Create match ■ Spectator mode

Play The Game Looking for perfection on the pitch? X360 has all the right moves...

FORMATIONS







UNLIKE PREVIOUS versions of *FIFA*, the formation you select has a major affect on your team's overall performance on the pitch.

IF YOU select a standard 4-3-3 against a team with competent wide players, they will exploit the space on the wing, leaving you stranded.

HOWEVER, OPT to go wide and you risk losing possession in the centre of the park. So, time spent experimenting with formations will really pay off.

GOALS







GOALS CAN be very hard to come by in *RTTWC*, an element made even more frustrating by your team-mates' reluctance to push forward.

IF YOU find you're scoring less than Peter Crouch, we suggest selecting the 'box overload' option, which will throw your attackers forward.

IF YOUR opponent fails to accomodate your new style of play you'll soon be filling the onion bag quicker than a french housewife on market day.

PLAYER STATUS







ALWAYS CHECK your players' status at various stages during a match – levels are indicated at the bottom of the screen whenever a player is on the ball.

IF YOU'VE been chasing the game your players will tire very quickly making them slow in possession and sloppy when challenging for the ball.

FATIGUE WILL lead to a spate of bookings and dressing downs from the ref. One too many cautions and one of your boys will be off for an early bath.



KICK-OFF/ Each game begins with a close-up of the players' boots and pulls away, showboating the visuals

option of turning the commentary off and customising a playlist using *FIFA* Trax, which has quite a mixed bag of tunes.

Granted the game looks good and sounds the business – we expected no less. But it's the revised gameplay that will have you double-checking that the disc is bearing the famous *FIFA* brand. After just a few passing moves it's clear that though this game may indeed be a *FIFA* title, it's not hampered by many of the troubles and annoyances that plagued previous instalments. Players are incredibly manoeuvrable and the control system is instantly accessible to *FIFA* veterans – the same button configuration is in place, as well as all the fancy flicks and tricks. There's been no drastic overhaul but it just feels much more solid, with exceptional physics that clearly mark the step up to the next-generation.

Simply the best

It certainly won't take ninety minutes to realise that in its efforts to strike a balance between casual kickabout and subtle simulation, *RTTWC* is taking its cues from the *Pro Evolution Soccer* series. Despite moving more to a simulation style of play for some time now, there is a marked similarity here. It shouldn't be construed that EA is merely trying to replicate Konami's classic formula, but it's simply taking the elements that work best and integrating them into a new brand of console football. Passing moves are much more accomplished and link-up play is tighter, but the most noticeable change is that goals are certainly harder to come by. No more route one, or shooting sweet spots – if you want a goal you have to earn it and some serious effort has to go into your build-up play. This does prove frustrating after your fifth nil-nil draw when all the tried-and-tested tricks aren't working and the goalkeeper seems more agile than a frenzied flea, but if your tactics aren't working then changes have to be made. Having migrated straight from playing the Xbox version, where a chipped through ball seemed to be the answer to any troubling situation, that simply wasn't the case with *RTTWC*; players close you down and press the ball and if you haven't thought about your next move by the time you receive the ball, then there's a good chance you'll lose it.

As always, the key to success is to size up your opposition and continually adjust your strategy to deal with them. Having said that, this is no mean feat, as the AI is 'on the ball'. If they have their noses in front, your opponents will resort to some

SVEN-TH HEAVEN

Football's not a matter of life or death... as any fan will know, it's much more important than that

Road To The World Cup features nine of the world's best managers, and from time to time you get to see them moving up and down the touchline. Coaches will react to the flow of the game; showing emotion by yelling, cheering or simply shaking their heads in disbelief.

These manager montages are just a small element of the exciting camera cuts and replays that you get throughout the game. Every time there is something of note to look at in the game, you are treated to a selection of stylish replays. While this is commonplace in other sports titles, it looks all the sweeter here. The camera focuses on aspects such as the players' feet, showing off their detailed branded boots or footage that is glossed with impressive effects that make you want to sit and watch rather than quit out and get back to the game.



ONE FOR THE PAPERS/ The keeper AI is different for each goalie in the game – Paul Robinson has a habit of parrying every shot, while Barthez does his usual chaotic walkabout act as you try and defend corners



THE KICKER/ Free kicks have been simplified, just line it up and time the shot





> "Players are incredibly manoeuvrable, passing moves are accomplished, and link-up play is tight"

rather underhanded tactics, playing for time by holding the ball in the corners or making needless substitutions. In fact, the computer-controlled opponents only added to our goal drought.

One-on-one

Never ones to doubt our prowess on the pitch, we left not only the qualification group but also our England team behind, and engaged in a two-player showdown. There is a discernible difference in how both the game and teams perform when playing a human opponent; the goals that had eluded us for so long began to fill the net until bursting point. Okay, that may be a bit of an exaggeration but we certainly made the onion bag ripple on several occasions. *RTTWC* is best played with a friend, as choosing your time-honoured teams, setting up formations and trading moves always ends in friendly ribbing.

Nevertheless, some underlining gripes have permeated the next-generation of *FIFA* football. The ball animation is unmistakably *FIFA* as it often seems stuck to the players feet as they make their up-field runs and from time to time passing is a concern. Our personal peeve is the overelaborate animations that make players slow to respond, never thinking that the button pressed two seconds before might be a little inappropriate now. Also, the on-the-fly tactical changes are often a little pointless, as by the time you have fumbled around with the pad, your opponent has been able to steal an attacking opportunity.

Given the panoply of graphical and gameplay improvements that have been made to this version of *FIFA*, these are minor gripes. Although it borrows from *Pro Evo* and is not as feature-crammed as you might expect, *RTTWC* is a solid and enjoyable experience that truly takes the visuals, spirit and technical aspects of the beautiful game to the next level. It's a mere appetizer of what to expect from the Xbox 360 in the months and years to come. But what you really want to know is, when compared to the best of what Konami and company have to offer, can *Road To The World Cup* kick it? Yes, yes it can.

Keith Hennessey

HIGHLIGHT: We can all be graphics whores at times, and when you see the detail on player models like Zidane and Davids, you'll join the brothel too.

TIMELINE You need more friends...



1 HOUR
Kick-off and you're loving it

3 DAYS
Single-player is excused

3 WEEKS
Thankfully, versus matches are top

FIFA 06 RTTWC

A very impressive debut that certainly deserves a spot in gaming's premier league. As a new beginning for the EA *FIFA* franchise, we couldn't have asked for much more.

THE SCORE

- ⊕ Stunning presentation
- ⊕ Intelligent opposition
- ⊕ Outstanding detail
- ⊖ It's still very *FIFA*
- ⊖ Lacking game modes
- ⊖ Elaborate animation

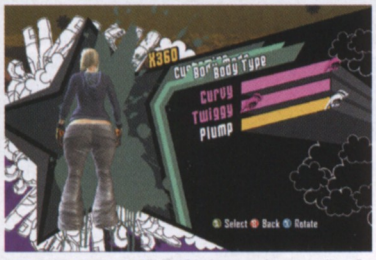
8 OUT OF TEN

Release date/ Out Now



Only on X360
REVIEWED
Proving snow's no joke...

Details **Publisher/** 2K Sports **Developer/** Visual Concepts **Genre/** Snowboarding **Players/** 1-2 **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720p



BOOTY-LICIOUS/ "I like big butts and I cannot lie..."



Xtunes

Recommended listening when playing *Amped 3*

- Bruce Springsteen – Santa Claus Is Coming To Town
- Boyz II Men – Silent Night
- Shaggy – Christmas In The Yard

AMPED 3

Not to be left out in the cold

Amid full-scale hype for games such as *Project Gotham Racing 3* and *Kameo*, it's easy to forget about a title like *Amped*. Thanks to previous screenshots that have failed to do the game justice, a lack of any obvious next-gen appeal and the fact that snowboarding games are largely hit or miss, *Amped 3* has been mostly ignored compared to other launch games. When a new console is launched, our expectations and reasons for spending money change massively. No longer are we judging a game based on how fun it is or how unique an experience it can provide – we want games that look better. Above all, we want games to reinforce our decision to spend nigh on £300 on a console and tend to shy away from things that cause friends to question why we've bothered.

This is what games like *Gun*, *Quake 4* and *Amped 3* are up against – they just aren't seen to be 'next-gen' enough. But where *Gun* really is a higher res version of a game you can happily play on Xbox and *Quake 4* is inferior to the PC version thanks to rush-job programming and the resulting stuttering frame-rate, *Amped 3* is a genuinely fun and original little title in its own right – and it looks very pretty.

Honestly, when *Amped 3* is running it can at times look lovely – especially in high definition. Screenshots show lots of white and a few trees, but actually snowboarding at speed and taking to the air reveals a huge, vast world where the draw distance goes on forever, allowing you to see far-off features in all directions – all of which are accessible to you should you make the effort to get there. Few previous-gen games give you this feeling of expanse and the higher up you go, the more this intensifies. You'll understand what we mean when you take the hand glider for a spin on one of the larger mountains.

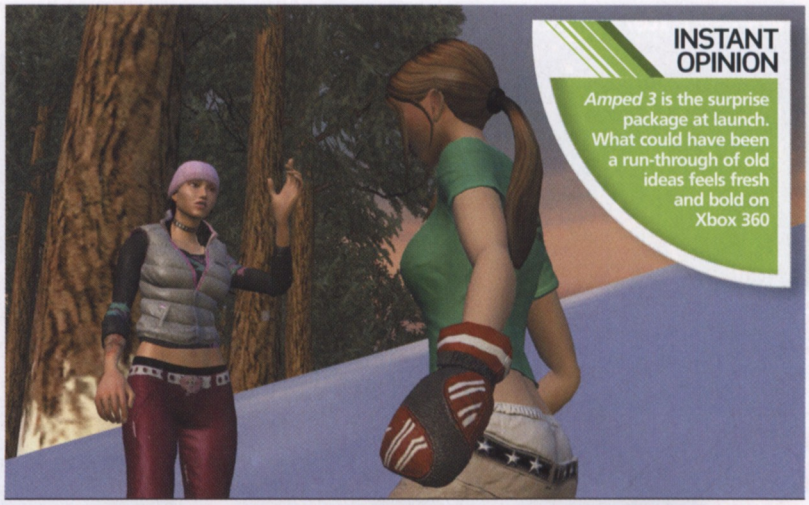
Everything else within the game looks just as nice (look out for the snow textures at night), and even though *Amped 3* doesn't represent the same graphical benchmark set by *PGR3*, it doesn't matter – it's fun to play.

As for the game itself, *Amped 3* is as open and free as the mountains themselves. Once you've created your character you're let loose on the slopes where you're presented with a multitude of events and challenges in which you participate at your own pace. In addition you also have the option to drop into the mountain without

GIMMICK



HANG TIME/ In addition to your snowboard, many other crazy items await, such as this hand glider



INSTANT OPINION

Amped 3 is the surprise package at launch. What could have been a run-through of old ideas feels fresh and bold on Xbox 360

INSTANT REPLAY

Watch out for the competition

While it's always fun to replay certain events to try and beat your high score, *Amped 3* will allow you to go even further still. Using Xbox Live, the game uploads players' scores into one central database, which then allows players to instantly see the highest score in the world for any particular event. This means that, for those who are good enough, this will definitely add to *Amped 3*'s replay value immeasurably, as players will become obsessed with one particular event and will therefore spend their time struggling to out-ride similarly fanatical players from countries on the other side of the world.



BIG AIR/ If you take the time to find the big jumps *Amped 3* rewards with some stunning views

purpose, to just ride about until you decide to do something more productive. This sort of free-roaming environment, full of missions to explore, reminds us of *Grand Theft Auto*, except without the murder and that whole hooker-sex-thing.

In addition to snowboarding, you will eventually unlock new methods of transport, which range from reasonably useful to utterly mental. Early on you get given a snowmobile that allows you to climb steep surfaces you can't logically snowboard your way up, useful for getting around without quitting into the map view. You can also unlock sledge variations (such as a single-seater couch and circular tray that resembles what pikey children use as sledge substitutes when it snows) and even a hand glider. It's unlikely you'll want to use these too often, but each does play its own part in some of the challenges you face.

Most of the time you will be on a snowboard though, and thankfully this is easy to get into. It follows the usual method seen in extreme games – you can grind, perform manuals (or Butter moves as they're known here) to link tricks and you've also an Awesomeness meter to fill. We prefer the *SSX* trick charging method, but for fans of the more freeform style, this may appeal. Importantly, the tricks and levels are much more mental than in previous *Amped* games – it's not up to *SSX*'s Uber Trickery and rollercoaster-like experience, but it's a step in the right direction.

Oddly, our main problem with *Amped 3* lies with the feature that gives it the most appeal – its freedom. It lacks a certain degree of structure as a result of this and it can seem a bit overwhelming to start a new mountain when you're not sure you've finished the previous one properly. The game also suffers because of the reliance on its massively diverse selection of challenges, which often feel more like silly sub tasks rather than part of the actual game. Many tasks are short-lived or tedious, with few being meaty enough to bring you back for further attempts on your best score.

> "Snowboarding at speed and taking to the air reveals a vast world where the draw distance goes on forever"

Still, faults aside *Amped 3* is a fun, easy-to-get-into game that is crammed full of things to do, see and find. If you've been even remotely entertained by snowboarding games, this definitely deserves a chance. **Jay Filmer**

HIGHLIGHT: Figuring out how to do the Style Tricks that achieve the most points is the moment when the game's scoring potential really opens up.

AMPED 3

While 2K Sports' underdog title is a fun and diverse game with plenty to do and unlock, *Amped 3* isn't quite as tight as *SSX*, which is still unbeaten as king of the slopes

THE SCORE

- ⊕ Easy to get in to
- ⊕ Reasonably varied
- ⊕ Gets quite addictive
- ⊖ Feels a bit random
- ⊖ Some weak challenges
- ⊖ Not next-gen enough

7 OUT OF TEN

HIT OR HYPE? "A bold move... and we're not sure if it's a good one" Keith Hennessey, Issue 2. *Amped 3* bettered our expectations

Release date/ 02 December 05

ON THE X360 DISC
- Hands-on preview
- X05 presentation
- Audio commentary
- Teaser trailer
- Screenshot gallery

Only on X360

REVIEWED

Rare delivers the goods...



Details **Publisher/** Microsoft **Developer/** Rare **Genre/** Adventure **Players/** 1-2 **Xbox Live/** No **HD/** 720p





HOT, HOT HEAT/ One of your later beast forms enables Kameo to hurl burning rock at her enemies

Xtunes

Recommended listening when playing *Kameo*

■ Air - Sexy Boy ■ Earth, Wind and Fire - Boogie Wonderland ■ Waterboys - Whole Of The Moon

KAMEO: ELEMENTS OF POWER

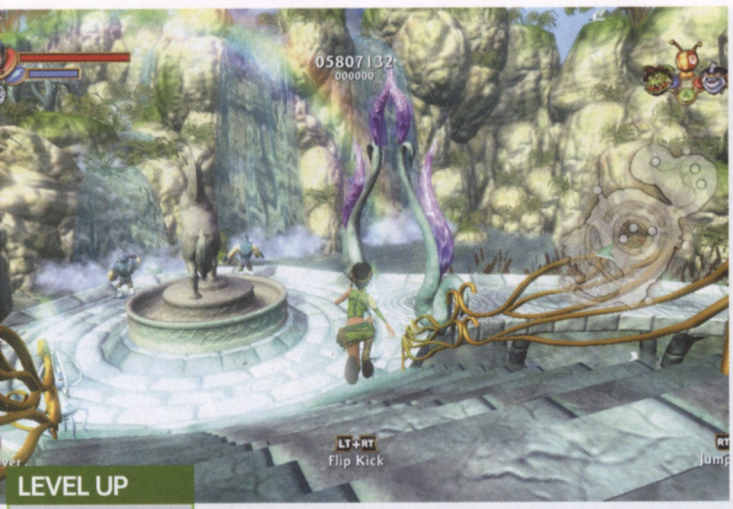
Now this really is the beautiful game

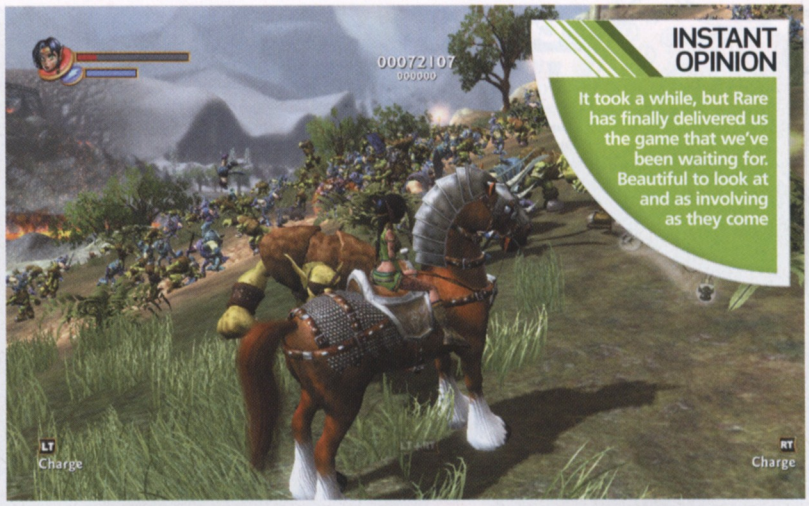
It's tough to imagine what videogames would actually be like if the elements didn't exist. True, it could be argued that the real world would be in a spot of bother if fire, water and the like simply 'disappeared', but for now we'll attempt to portray the less severe consequences that such an event would have on the many virtual worlds that rely on them. Without a slippin' slidin' ice level, most platform titles would seem incomplete, and the extra dimension of play that the many water-themed stages out there offer, has often secured a place in our hearts. A bad place, maybe – but it's still a place. Yeah, it's safe to say it would be a disaster for the majority of the game world and something that would not provide the variation that today's videogame buyer constantly demands. That said, it is subject matter that's been fairly milked now, arguably to the point where the use of these ideas promotes thoughts of lack of innovation.

With this in mind, *Kameo: Elements Of Power* comes complete with everything required to be the pinnacle of clichés. As the name suggests, the whole experience offered is based around elements. Every creature and landscape you come across will either be entirely constructed of grass or snow, and it is your mastery of these elements that will ultimately determine your success. If we were to say that *Kameo* was anything less than simple, we'd find ourselves thinking that we were devastatingly wrong.

Amazing abilities

As this title has been in development for what seems like forever, areas such as character roles and plot are probably common knowledge, but it's best to cover the basics for those who have just joined us. To start, the little winged fairy-type that you've probably caught glimpses of over the last couple of years is called Kameo. Her family has been captured by her jealous sister who has sided with the Troll King, who in turn has returned to cause all manner of nasty things to happen – it's all gone a





INSTANT OPINION

It took a while, but Rare has finally delivered us the game that we've been waiting for. Beautiful to look at and as involving as they come

LEVEL UP

The best form of elf help

If you are short of things to do, hidden throughout the *Kameo* world are four Crystal Eyes for you to track down. By enabling these, you'll boost certain attributes such as combat or defence. This world is all about give and take, so you're likely to lose something in exchange, but this means you at least get the chance to customise *Kameo* to suit the way you play. They are hidden though, so remember to keep an eye out.

GIMMICK

Dragon rage/ The opening level shouts next-gen as hundreds of detailed dragons descend on Kameo



ALL THE RAGE/ When you reach the top of the castle on level one, look up for a stunning view…

> "The battle scenes display exactly what the next generation of machines is offering – lushness"

bit wrong basically. Fortunately, acting as an aid throughout her rescue attempt, Kameo can collect and summon/turn into a host of elemental creatures, each of which is blessed with his/her/its own conveniently useful abilities. That's about it; we told you it was simple, right?

Of course, this is an X360 launch title, so as simple as things may seem at first, it's actually far more involved than you might think, and the fact that we've been throwing the word 'simple' around over the last few paragraphs only serves to make you realise how well Rare has done its job. For starters, the mission layout is varied and as enjoyable as you could ever wish. To gain many of your elemental abilities (which you manage to lose à la *Metroid* after the intro mission) you'll have to hunt down the frankly awesome Dark Trolls that have stolen them. These black wispy creatures are scattered throughout the land and every so often you'll be prompted to give chase and destroy one. They may not be particularly tough to beat (once you've sussed their weak spot that is), but actually reaching the lair of these monsters is a hell of a challenge as each is not only well hidden, but is guarded by all manner of traps and nasties. Also luring you from your immediate goal, there's a constant war going on in the Badlands area of the map – where the elves and trolls are engaged in an ongoing battle for control – so as a further distraction from your main tasks, you'll be summoned to head out to the battlefield and use your special abilities to turn things in favour of the elves. These extra missions serve as a welcome breath of fresh air once you've spent a while questing through the main temple-beating action and manage to lengthen what would otherwise be an extremely short game without letting things drag.

A sight for sore eyes

In other news, *Kameo* looks gorgeous – really. Sure, the X360 is bound to deliver visuals of a higher quality than we are perhaps used to, but the fantasy environments actually lend themselves to looking good. A squint in the direction of any of the screenshots scattered around these pages should convince you, but, to be honest, not even they do it justice. Nope, it has to be said, lakes shimmer in the sunlight in a warm, cuddly way and the underwater world is a thing of wonder, but one of the greatest visual achievements has to be the battle scenes. Whether it's a castle being stormed or a field full of trolls being trampled beneath your hooves, they display exactly what the next generation of machines is offering – lushness with fire… And dragons. Lots of dragons.

A huge focus of the game is on the creatures you are able to 'become'. There are ten in total and it's safe to say that each is better than the last – no matter what order you see them in. Although it's easy to assume that combat with the creatures is little more than a glorified round of scissors, paper, stone or a simple *Pokémon* match, the fact that each is armed with multiple »



Control

When on horseback you can use the new right shoulder button to make the beast charge. In this mode Kameo can trample her foes wth ease







THE NEXT-GEN/ A scene of carnage like this is why you've paid out £300 pounds on new hardware

> Grant your creature new, more powerful abilities that you can use to create more havoc

abilities means that there are far more options available other than just using a fire creature to take out some ice trolls. Adding to this, is the fact that by hunting down Elemental Fruit you can grant your creature new, more powerful abilities that you can use in conjunction with other creatures to cause yet more havoc. Take Deep Blue, your awesome-looking basic water type, for example. A quick upgrade and he's able to spray oil rather than not-so-damaging-against-anything-other-than-fire-creatures water at enemies. A swift switch to Ash the dragon and you can light the flammable foe and then turn him into a walking bomb. Genius.

Unfortunately, the game isn't without its faults. There are times when you feel that all the effort has been focused on certain areas of play, and some characters are used far more than others, making the game feel a little unbalanced. Flex, for example, the rubbery water thing that you obtain halfway through the game, is only really ever used to climb out of the hole in which you find him and 40 Below runs out of uses very quickly once you leave the snow areas.

Also, some moves and creature combos are used far too often. Once you've completed the game, you will have used a roll-dash-switch-climb technique so many times that you'll have developed a fairly severe allergy. No, for all its greatness, *Kameo* does suffer a little from laziness at times and it shows around the middle of the game. If you were only to play the first and last levels, you'd be gasping in awe at what has been achieved, but when difficulty is enhanced just by the game throwing a bit of randomness at you – things begin to trudge a little.

Enjoy the ride

For all these niggles, *Kameo* is Rare at its best. Not *Grabbed By Ghoulies* Rare, but *Conker/Banjo* Rare. A large, enticing environment that doesn't at first seem restricting, but after a few hours down the road, you're finding that you have to do things the way you're told to do them – there is no other way. The clever thing is, for the most part, you don't really mind. When the ride is this enjoyable, we're more than happy to clutch on to Rare's hand and be led along and, if you're persistent, this hand will lead you to the end credits in a respectable amount of time. However, what happens

A BIT ON THE SIDE

A friend in need is a friend indeed, after all...

In each of the villages you come across while on your travels, you'll stumble upon townsfolk who are in need of your help. Some will need pesky mosquitoes taken care of, while others will wish to be reunited with their lost siblings. However, whatever the problem is, there's always a decent reward in it for you if you manage to help them out. This reward will usually take the form of an Elemental Fruit or a few Runes (what pass for cash in the world of *Kameo*), but you'll need to help out a lot of people should you wish to see all there is on offer.



ICE COOL/ Those spikes on this beast's back can be used to pin your enemies, then drag them off and use the critters as clubs or projectiles



GIDDY UP/ This horse soon becomes a dependable way to race around *Kameo*'s kingdom





from then on is questionable. In an effort to provide lasting appeal, Rare has also included a number of extras for you to dabble with once the main story mode is over and all remaining side-missions are successfully mopped up. These take the form of generic time attacks and previous mission score-beating, but when there are new character skins, videos and a mass of concept artwork to be unlocked for a good performance as there are here, then there may just be the incentive needed for keen players to keep at it.

If you have a friend however – and most of us have at least one nowadays – then the limitations after completion won't seem quite so severe. *Kameo* also features a reasonable Co-op Mode that allows you to take on already completed areas of the game as a team. There's no competition here though, it's all about teamwork and building up a large enough score to unlock a few more goodies. It actually works quite well to a point, admittedly, some of the enemies aren't built with this co-op feature in mind and so their defences let them down and most are too easily felled. Still, it is a nice little extra.

Ultimately, what we have here is a fine performance from Rare. Whether it was worth the wait is debatable, but as far as launch titles go, this is certainly a gem. Therefore we advise you to give it a chance, how ever badly beaten your respect for the developer has been over recent years.

Rick Porter



LEVEL DOWN/ After the opening level Kameo loses her elemental powers. Every extra the game gives you is a blessing, like this horse you acquire early in the game – the map is so big you'll need it to get around

DARK TROLLS: The first time you run into a Dark Troll is unforgettable. The use of colour, animation and lighting is truly cinematic and all the better for it.

TIMELINE *Kameo*'s creature comforts



30 MINS
You manage to find the plant

2 HOURS
Your frozen pal is back on side

1 DAY
Fish form is in the bag

KAMEO

If you really want to see what your Xbox 360 is capable of then this is definitely a good way to go. With its amazing visuals and jaw-dropping sequences, *Kameo* truly impresses.

THE SCORE

- ⊕ Stunning looks
- ⊕ Awesome style
- ⊕ Great setting
- ⊖ A little generic
- ⊖ Limited freedom
- ⊖ Balance issues

8 OUT OF TEN

CONDEMNED

Playing inside the mind of a killer

Gaining notoriety for all the right reasons (this is a horror game after all) when it was first shown at this year's E3 show in Los Angeles, Sega's first Xbox 360 release caused uproar amongst the national press. The game's depiction of violence and criminality pushed the limits of acceptance, no one had seen a man's face get battered with such brutal realism in a videogame before. Not since *GTA* had the national press found itself so fearful. Here was a game that looked real, fed gamers gruesome images of first-person thuggery and to all intents and purposes put players – children (who's thinking of the children?) – in the position of a serial killer. "How far can this sickness go? How real do games need to get before we outlaw this filth... ban it, ban it all!"

Well, those were the cries coming from the ill-informed mainstream press about a game they didn't understand, on a console they hadn't taken the time to read up on. Sure, *Condemned* is a violent, graphic and unsettling game that uses the Xbox 360 to create believable situations. But it's no different from a movie like, say, *Silence Of The Lambs*, and that sucker won Oscars.

> "These villains think. They judge you and the situation and then react"

The game, which initially at least, feels like no other adventure you will have played is a third-person horror FPS with elements of *Silent Hill*, bits of *Doom 3* and portions of *Myst*. From the outset, this game intends to shock you. Beginning at a crime scene that should be safe and secure, weird things begin to happen. Noises unsettle the cops at the scene, a man is seen scurrying around the rooftops and the crime itself is a bizarre mixture of something from *The House Of Wax* and *Se7en*. Two bodies are positioned having dinner, one a manikin and the other a tortured corpse. In the game's bump-mapped, high-def, eerie torchlight this looks horribly real. Combined with the shouts and gunshots from other rooms in the office block, the game sets out on a genuinely unstable path.

Within this first unhinged opening you will become acclimatised to your weapons and gadgets. Obviously, the first thing you need to do is batter the men in boiler suits trying to make a break from the crime scene. The triggers control attack and defence, whilst the new shoulder buttons toggle the use of a weapon – a gun with no ammo can be used as a club – and blast an enemy with the stun gun. All too soon you'll realise that those Michael Myers wannabes making a break for it aren't your usual videogame fodder. These criminals will weigh you up in much the same way as you'll gauge them, if they see you have a gun they are likely to make a run for cover. More so, and something quite disconcerting in a videogame, you will see them actively look for better melee weapons to hit you with. It's not uncommon to corner a foe and watch him judge your weapon strength, glance at his own paltry looking stick, throw it down, rip a cabinet door off its frame and then lunge at you. These villains think. They judge you and the situation and then react. This one element of the game will have you on edge like no other before it, for the first hour or so anyway. You can never enter a room knowing what the enemy will do and so nothing is a given.

Of course, eventually the slugging will begin and the AI steps up a gear further still. They will block and parry melee attacks and when disarmed these freaks will lunge at you for a Berzerker Attack, in which they will grapple you and chew on your face – juggling the analogue sticks will break you free of their grasp. One unusual trait that you don't often see in a game is the AI character dummying a blow; they will often raise a bar to slug you, then pull back at the last minute before following up with a quicker but weaker hit. You will usually find yourself trying to block what looks like an attack, leaving you vulnerable to the follow-up strike. »

Release date/ Out Now

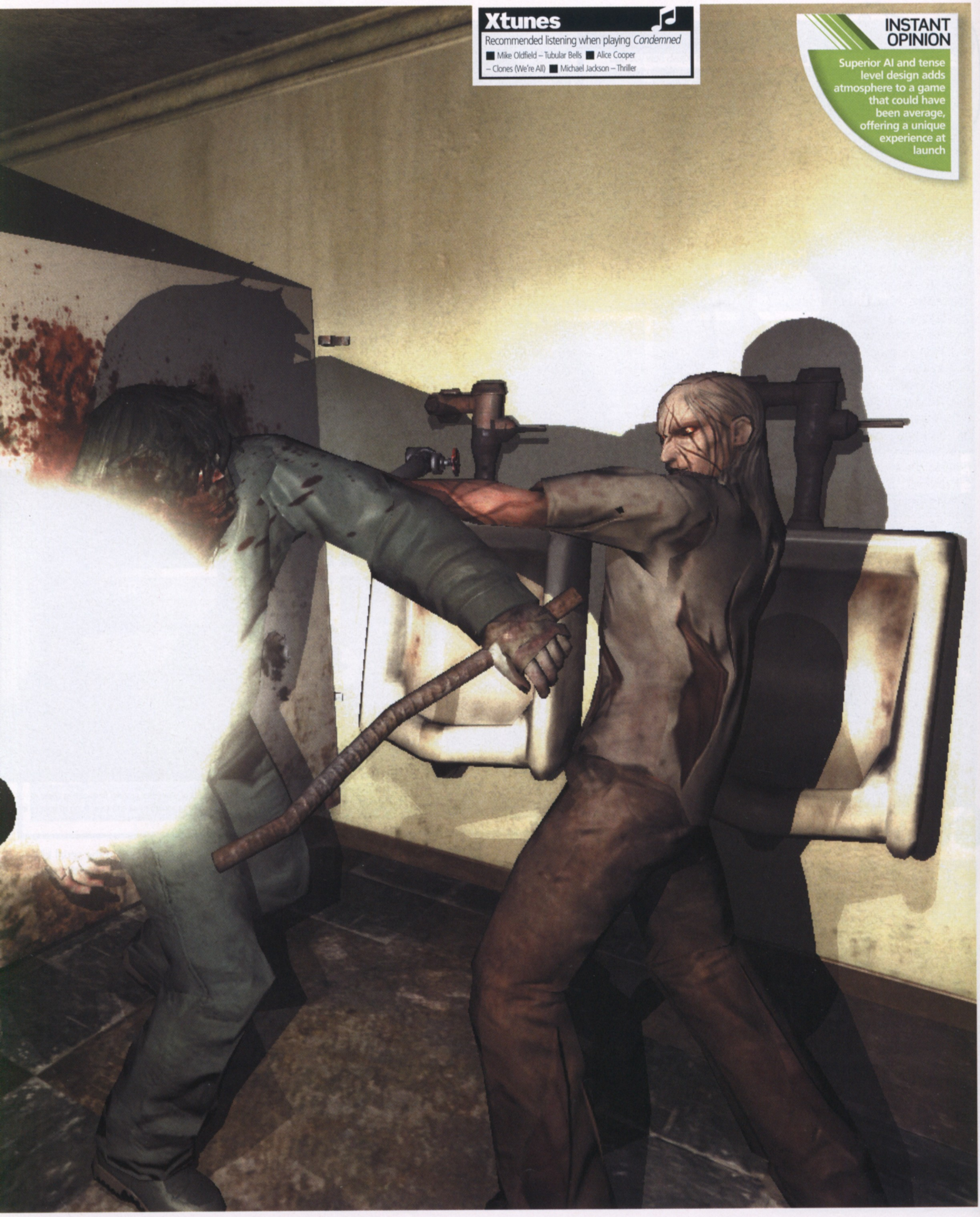


Only on X360

REVIEWED

Sega finds its dark place

Details **Publisher/** Sega **Developer/** Monolith **Genre/** Adventure **Players/** 1 **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720p



Xtunes

Recommended listening when playing *Condemned*

■ Mike Oldfield – Tubular Bells ■ Alice Cooper – Clones (We're All) ■ Michael Jackson – Thriller

INSTANT OPINION

Superior AI and tense level design adds atmosphere to a game that could have been average, offering a unique experience at launch



Control

■ The right shoulder button adjusts how you hold a weapon. When a rifle runs out of ammo you can switch it around and use it as a club instead



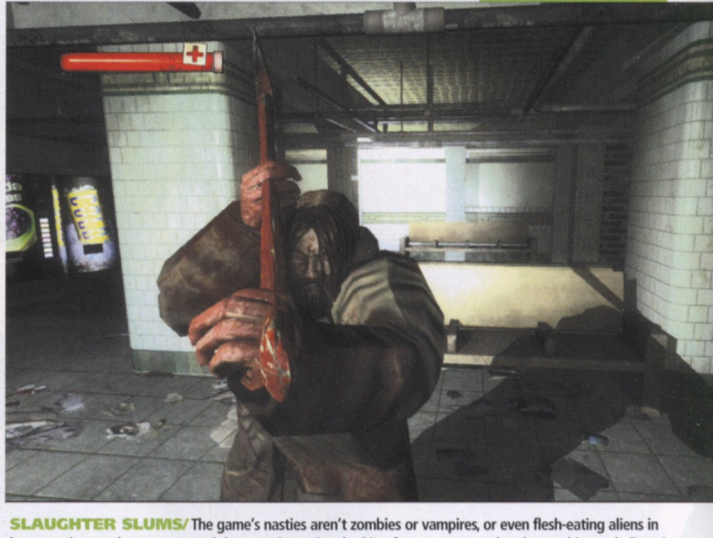
FINISH HIM/ When an enemy is stunned he is vulnerable. It is at this moment that the game's violent streak steps up a gear and offers you the chance to 'finish him' from a menu of four hits – we'd recommend sir chooses the punch, it's a classic dish

WHAT A PLANK

Be mindful of splinters

Much of the tense atmosphere comes from the game's degradable weapons. No matter what you pick up, it has a lifespan. A piece of wood will splinter and break and a gun will run out of ammo. So you are constantly searching for a new weapon and feel vulnerable when your hands are empty. It's a unique motion to *Condemned*, but every time you pick up new a gun, your first instinct is to check the chamber for bullets.





SLAUGHTER SLUMS/ The game's nasties aren't zombies or vampires, or even flesh-eating aliens in human suits; no, these are normal down-and-outs just looking for a square meal and something to believe in

> "After a few seconds of pounding, the screen will be awash with blood"

After spending some time in the game's grasp you will begin to develop particular combinations of attacks for each enemy type, proving this is just a game after all. The smaller enemies can be taken down with a strike from a hammer or piping, the larger sledgehammer wielding butchers will need to be subdued with a stun gun, and whilst dazed, steal their hammer and give it back to them smack in the face.

Condemned presents its first-person melee violence in high-def graphic-o-vision. Every blow is bloodier than the last and every strike from a nail-embedded piece of 4x4 feels realistically solid. Your enemies will react to hits with visceral appeal, doubling up at blows to the body and losing teeth with every smack to the mouth. After a few seconds of pounding, the screen will be awash with blood. Seriously, it's everywhere. Your crowbar is caked in the stuff, the walls and floor are dripping with it, and the poor goon on the receiving end of your justice is a mess of cuts, seeping wounds and missing teeth. With an enemy out for the count you can move in for the final blow by using the D-pad; will you deliver a punch to the face or snap the neck of the bloody, gurgling corpse to be?

The real deal

This brutal combat system is made all the more realistic due to the nature of playing in first-person. When you smash an enemy's face into a locker you're right there, your hands are performing the act. By placing you in the game world from this perspective and developing the story around your actions as situations unfold, this creates a very real experience. In fact, the last game to attempt this was Namco's *Breakdown*, which unlike *Condemned* had a uniquely Anime world to explore, losing the sense of immersion that Monolith has created here.

More important than the directness of the combat, is probably the structuring of the story. Again, everything plays out in first-person and the plot evolves via your actions – we won't divulge the story or its twists, only to say this game puts you in the mind of a serial killer. Each level has a set of clues to the serial killer's true identity. You, as the hero Agent Ethan Thomas, need to gather them using a set of FBI tools. For example, a UV light will show body fluids, and then using the sampler you can gather DNA. The selection of tools is automatic, but using them is manual – so zooming and snapping with the digital camera takes a degree of skill.

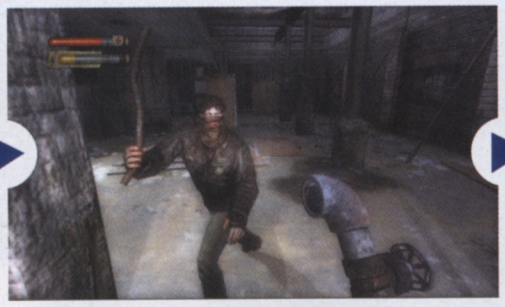


HEAD SHOT/ If you get whacked good and proper, then the screen will go bloody and blurred

Play The Game Enter the underbelly of modern life, minus the fried chicken

IN THE BEGINNING





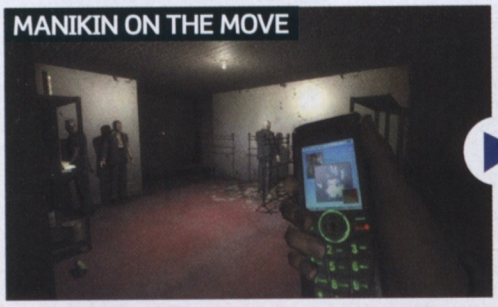


START YOUR investigation as usual by snapping the crime scene, getting used to the evidence-gathering process as you go. Then things begin to get weird.

AS YOU begin to uncover evidence, the serial killer's obsessed henchmen try to halt your progress. With anything that comes to hand, you get busy.

THE FIGHT leaves the confines of the office crime scene and moves outside; now events get serious. More weirdos crawl from the curbs and the killer makes his escape.

MANIKIN ON THE MOVE







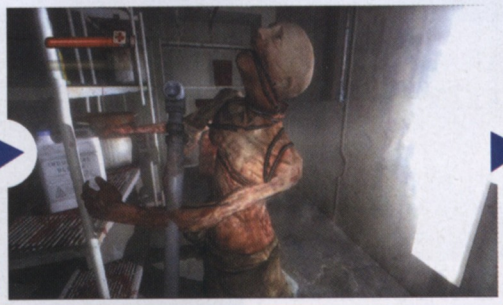
THIS LEVEL is home to one of the first truly freaky moments in the game. As you scan for evidence, one of these dummies isn't all he seems to be...

THE MANIKIN obsessed loon lunges at you and begins to give chase, again to prevent you from tracking down the serial killer. But all is not as it seems.

AS YOU smack away at the manikin people, their faces will crack and crumble, bits will fly off in a very disturbing manner. At times this game is truly weird.

THE BUTCHER







ONE OF the first boss characters you meet is the school-dinner lady gone mad. She has taken a liking to flesh and defends herself by sliding victims at you on hooks...

ONLY THEY aren't as innocent as first impressions suggest, they're alive and coming for you. If your timing is spot on you can hit them on the rails, killing them quickly.

FINALLY YOU will meet the madam herself. This broad takes a real battering to subdue, but with well-timed blocks and parries, she should be toast in no time.

More than just using this clue-gathering exercise to progress the story, Monolith has spotted an opportunity to mess with your head. A number of levels require you to follow the trail of clues using either the UV light or infrared camera. Following the trail of blood in a screen imbued with the green glow from the video camera is a genuinely freaky exercise. As we followed the grim, bloody drag marks winding through the corridors of an abandoned department store, surrounded by manikins, muffled screams and shuffling in the shadows, we were totally immersed and ready to jump at the first sign of danger. Which we did, and so will you.

In fact, shocks are what *Condemned* is all about; sharp, violent shocks. Whether it's those from real assailants, such as entering a room of statuesque manikins and discovering one of them suddenly lunges at you, or those from your character's mind, you will physically jump. This illustrates the playfulness of this game. As the plot evolves you will, as your character does, begin to question what is and isn't real. Like a fist-heavy Frank Black (from Chris Carter's *Millennium*) *Condemned*'s hero has the handy knack of putting himself in the shoes of the killer. By being in or around a scene where violence has occurred, Agent Thomas can visualise what went down. This leads to scenes of torture and extreme violence, in some cases Thomas sees images of himself killing colleagues in amongst the mutilations.

Strange but true

Not content to throw gruesome CSI scenes our way as you hunt the serial killers, *Condemned* mixes in random flashes of weirdness to make you jump. Until the closing credits you're not quite sure whether these are in Thomas' mind or actually happening. Bodies will float above your head, an empty swimming pool will fill with blood-covered freaks dropping from imaginary skylights who will begin hunting you, and most oddly of all, the cubicle doors of an empty school toilet will tear themselves from their hinges and begin flying around the room. It's all a bit 'spooky'.

So, *Condemned* gets kudos for creative AI enemies and brutal fight scenes. But keen readers would have noticed we only said this game is 'initially' different to play. This is because all too soon a routine sets in. A routine of entering a room, killing enemies, finding the right weapon to unlock the next »



DAMAGED/ Every weapon has a lifespan and this is highlighted when you wrap in around a goon's head

Liveaware

- Gamer Points awarded for high scores and finding achievements
- Watch friends play
- Match completion scores with friends

GIMMICK

CLEVER VILLAINS/ These guys weigh up a situation and react by running, swapping weapons or taking you on



BIKER BOY/ Every enemy suffers visible damage, hit this guy enough and his visor will shatter

THE HORROR, THE HORROR!

Monolith aim to surprise, but with such heavy scripting, is Condemned really that shocking?

Scripting is good, we don't mind pre-scripted events. It makes *A Simple Life* watchable and lends games like *Condemned* much-needed atmosphere. Every level features shocking events, from small moments as bodies are flung down escalators with the message 'Leave Now' stapled to their chests, to weirder freak shows, such as the enemies in the fiery farm level that lumber at you like deformed overweight wrestlers. However, there are limits to scripting. *Condemned* is so heavily dependent on it (the game is aiming to shock after all) that you will find there is usually only one route through a level, only certain platforms can be jumped from and essentially this game pushes you towards the surprise. Though nothing will prepare you for the weird ending that awaits strong stomached players.







PACK MENTALITY

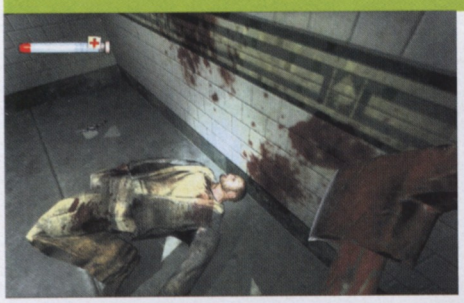
No one likes a clever clogs, they're just plain annoying. So you'll be glad to know Condemned is full of them...

Enemy AI really is a strong point of *Condemned*. The killers you will face in this game hunt in packs, they will take out lights in an area to better their advantage and retreat to find a more effective weapon if you're giving them a pasting. And this couldn't be more frustrating.

Unusually however, they will attack each other too. Don't forget, these are cold-blooded killers after all. To beat them at their own game you can group a couple together and hit one into the other, so that they will turn their shovels on each other. Leaving you to scurry to cover and watch the floorshow from a safe distance. This is a particularly good tactic to use when low on health, as once the enemy are bashing chunks out of each other, there's always a chance even more adversaries will join in the brew-ha-ha. Now who's the clever clogs then?



OVERKILL/ It's not all shovels and iron bars in *Condemned*, there are guns in here too. However, unlike other games you will only have the bullets in the chamber to use, there are no ammo packs in this adventure







STALKER/ Uniquely, the enemy in *Condemned* will attempt to outsmart you at every opportunity

> "This is a game that needs to be experienced just to test yourself against the inventive AI"

door – keys aren't used here, instead axes smash some doors while spades and crowbars are used to levy locks – and collecting story clues. If you discover an axe there will be a door that needs breaking down nearby. That old chestnut 'the last enemy has the key' also rears its head. In one of the later levels you will need an axe to break a stair rail to free a piano, only there is no axe available. However, a bunch of killers flood in through the windows, and the last one you kill holds the axe you need.

Points mean prizes

So, whilst keys have been done away with, the formula still remains the same – find the level exit and kill everyone on the way to this goal. It's an overly simple premise that kind of jars with the development Monolith has put into the AI and combat physics. Also, it's a formula that can become repetitive towards the game's final scenes as you step-and-repeat the same attack and defend patterns against the overly similar enemies you've been battering for the last five hours – oh, didn't we mention that? That's how long it takes to complete *Condemned*. It's a short adventure, saved somewhat by the collectables (or achievements as they're known in the game) found hidden in the levels. Finding six dead birds, three pieces of unusual metal or discovering hidden Xbox 360 consoles rewards you with unlockable content and Gamer Points to boost your Xbox Live score. There are two endings to experience, dependent on a moral choice to be made at the game's conclusion, and in all honesty repetition would set in all too quickly if the game were any longer.

This isn't to say that *Condemned* is a particularly dull game – in fact the AI, physics and storytelling are all excellently executed. Actually, without such attention to detail, *Condemned* would have been a distinctly average game. As it is, this is a game that needs to be experienced just to test yourself against the inventive AI. It's fun, atmospheric and in some ways different without ever really being overly original. Perhaps Monolith is saving its truly original ideas for the sequel?

Ian Dean

HIGHLIGHT: Pounding a guy in the face with a cabinet door, the full thrust of the hit sent him careering straight into a nearby bookshelf.

TIMELINE *Condemned* – what a bloody day



15 mins
Tutorial time

2 hours
Back to school

5 hours
Game over

CONDEMNED

This brutally atmospheric horror adventure will make you jump at every blood-splattered plot twist. If you're after something uniquely next-gen, this is the game to buy... if you dare

THE SCORE

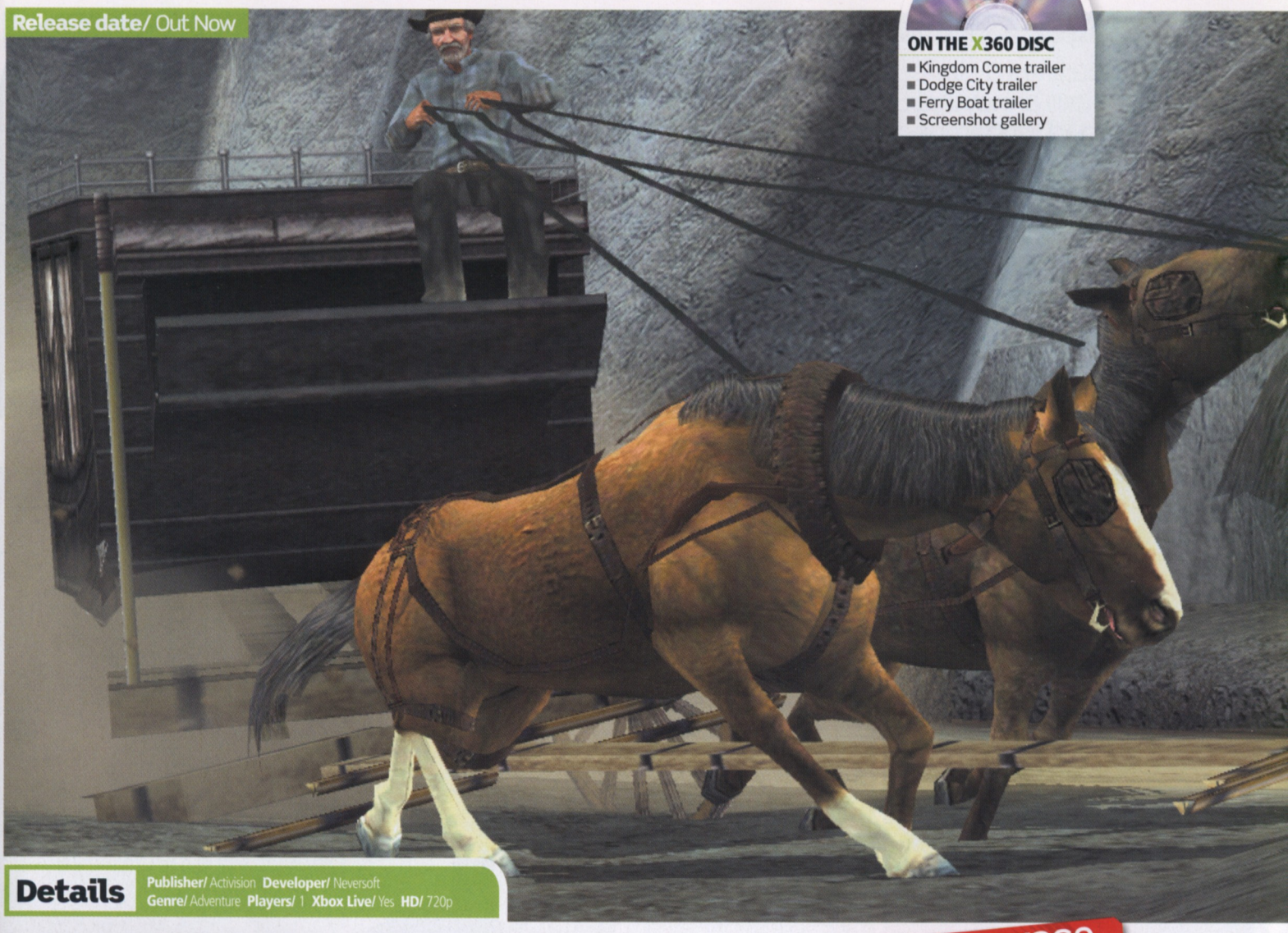
- ⊕ Inventive AI
- ⊕ Slick combat system
- ⊕ Genuinely creepy
- ⊖ Short-lived adventure
- ⊖ Simplistic gameplay
- ⊖ Overly scripted

8 OUT OF TEN

HIT OR HYPE? "A genuinely different gaming experience," Ian Dean, Issue 2. Almost, further play has revealed less depth and more death

Release date/ Out Now

ON THE X360 DISC
- Kingdom Come trailer
- Dodge City trailer
- Ferry Boat trailer
- Screenshot gallery



Details
Publisher/ Activision **Developer/** Neversoft
Genre/ Adventure **Players/** 1 **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720p



SOAKING/ This game brings *GTA*-a-like sex and violence to The Old West – and it's all the better for it



GUN

All rhinestones and no grit

Only in X360
REVIEWED
Neversoft must Cowboy Up

Cue man playing harmonica… Time was when the Wild West used to be a place of good and bad people, right and wrong; a place of absolutes and heroes and villains. Well, this is nothing like how old Hollywood decided the West was won. It has little but location in common with John Wayne or *The Lone Ranger*. Neversoft isn't interested in black-and-white hats or heroes who drink milk, and if protagonist Colton White drank down a bottle of blood while chomping on a cigar rolled with the ashes of his enemies, he wouldn't be acting out of the game's overall character. This is dusty violence as spectacle rather than commentary and it's the direct result of how Hollywood, and subsequently television, now views The Old West; harsh, violent, bloody and muddied with gore and viscera. People swear. There are prostitutes. No one dies clean.

When you've just spent a good few minutes scalping Indians (yes, Indians not Native Americans – we're using the game's vernacular) for no reason, and they've been screaming in shrill tongues as you saw the top of their heads off, you have to ask yourself questions concerning the nature of modern interactive entertainment and what it can give you that films can't. It's one thing sitting in for an evening with a bottle of gin, tissues, and the DVD boxset of *Deadwood*, it's another to actively act like a complete bastard to individuals whose people were decimated by genocide because you have been given freedom to do so. This is a game from the school of thought where violence is truth and blowing a man's eye socket out of his skull with your six guns equals honesty. Where *Grand Theft Auto* has satire to justify its amorality, *Gun* simply has the attitude that, hey, that's how it was.

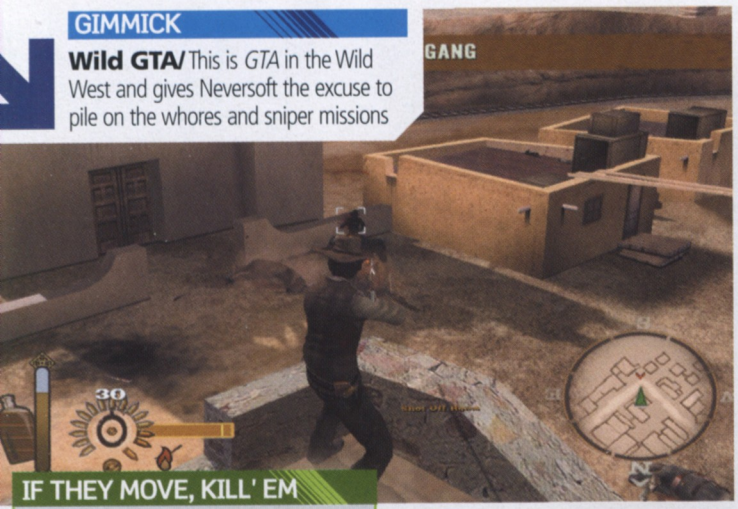
We could spoon out platitudes that attempt to justify, explain or excuse easily the most violent title we've played, but we're going to use the reasoning of French New Wave filmmaker Jean-Luc Godard. When asked why there was so much blood in *Pierrot Le Fou*, he said "That's not blood, that's the colour red". Trouble is, that once you've taken the violence out of the discussion there's not much left.

Gun follows on the path set by *GTA*, and that means it has an open structure that flanks a central story. After Kris Kristofferson (your adoptive father) has shown you how to shoot a revolver and

Xtunes
Recommended listening when playing *Gun*
- Faith No More - Midnight Cowboy
- Bon Jovi - Blaze Of Glory
- Marty Robbins - El Paso

GIMMICK

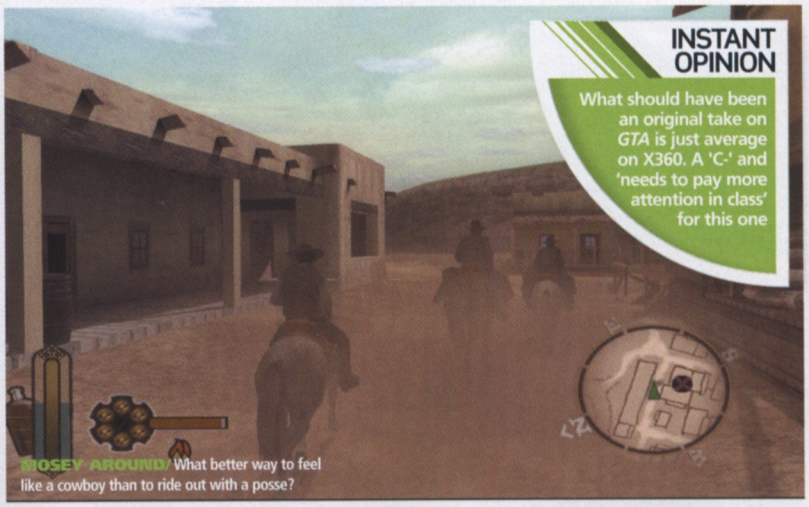
Wild GTA/ This is *GTA* in the Wild West and gives Neversoft the excuse to pile on the whores and sniper missions



IF THEY MOVE, KILL' EM

Makes the OK Corral look like a wedding...

Quick-draw: Not quite as good as *Red Dead Revolver*'s Dead Eye mode, but it has its merits. With a revolver drawn and Quick-time engaged, the left stick is tapped in a direction suggested by an arrow to quickly draw a bead to a target. Then you plug them until they switch to their death animation as crimson sloshes to the dirt. This happens in slow motion to make it dramatic as well as heavily aided. While it takes away any sense of being a skilled gunslinger as opposed to a radar-guided defence system, it does mean that you are able to wipe out handfuls of enemies in one go.



MOSEY AROUND/ What better way to feel like a cowboy than to ride out with a posse?

INSTANT OPINION

What should have been an original take on *GTA* is just average on X360. A 'C-' and 'needs to pay more attention in class' for this one



rifle and has died in a heroic manner – thus giving you reason to avenge him – you ride horses instead of cars and are given the option to go wherever you like should you want to. Naturally, the West isn't as detailed a place as a modern city, and so everything has been compressed so you don't spend hours traipsing across empty deserts or negotiating crags. This gives the game a contrived and often totally unnatural feel that's occasionally beautiful, and also means that actual exploration doesn't feel as adventurous as it should. While you can visit towns for a game of poker or take jobs herding cattle or hunting buffalo, mining gold or collect bounties, there's more entertainment in actually pursuing the story. If you want to improve your statistics before you take on a gang whose destruction is central to the plot, then look for a wanted poster and accept the gig. Unfortunately dishing out justice is the same as killing one of the game's many resilient boss characters and their easy-to-snuff henchmen.

It's a violent game and when it's not being violent, it's not that enticing. There are, however, plenty of reasons to pull a trigger because the game's title isn't a fashion accessory. Sure, there are delicately animated horses to enjoy and missions that involve moving barrels of TNT rather than killing, but it is the gun fighting that defines the main reason to play. Shooting comes in many forms, from using shotguns to rifles and Gattling guns, but its main guise is that of the Quick-draw, which breaks down to using a pistol to watch a man die in slow motion while your Quick-draw meter runs down. This is death as spectacle and while it's never less than perversely pretty to watch, it feels more like *Robocop* than Clint Eastwood to play. It's also the main reason why gunfights don't quickly corrode into chaotic slaughter. It feels automatic.

> "The Old West, harsh, violent, bloodied and muddied with gore and viscera. No one dies clean"

So it's all about violent acts and enjoyment thereof, but it doesn't provide constant butchery and actual gunplay isn't as strong as a game called *Gun* would suggest. This isn't *GTA* with cowboys, but it has merits that maintain integrity, as long as you're impressed with the death animations that make people die like mo-capped stuntmen rather than rag dolls. **Will Johnston**

HIGHLIGHT: Popping a horse from a faraway distance and watching it crumple under the shocked rider never fails to impress.

GUN

Neversoft provides bar fights and plenty of shooting to create a violent and brutal game. Unfortunately though, the game doesn't quite reach its potential – it's just not as exciting as it should be

THE SCORE

- ⊕ Brutally violent
- ⊕ Great style
- ⊕ Unique setting
- ⊖ Last-gen visuals
- ⊖ Limited freedom
- ⊖ Dull missions

6 OUT OF TEN

Release date/ Out Now

Xtunes

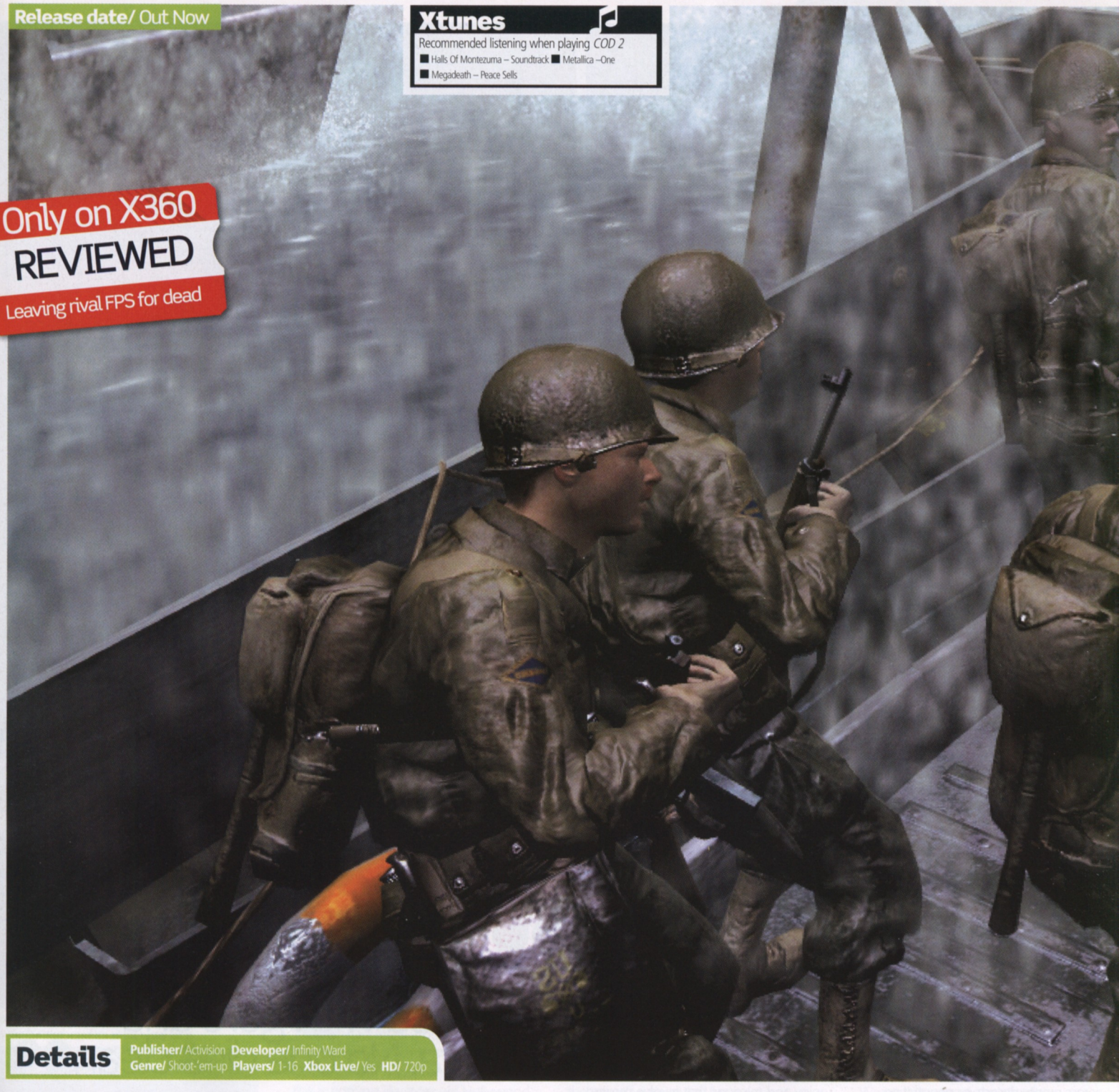
Recommended listening when playing *COD 2*

- Halls Of Montezuma – Soundtrack
- Metallica –One
- Megadeath – Peace Sells

Only on X360

REVIEWED

Leaving rival FPS for dead



Details

Publisher/ Activision **Developer/** Infinity Ward
Genre/ Shoot-'em-up **Players/** 1-16 **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720p

CALL OF DUTY 2

War has never looked so shockingly good

"War is delightful to those who have not experienced it," said beardy Dutch humanist Erasmus back in the 1500s. Erasmus didn't like war back then because war was ugly, featuring misshapen heroes wielding sharpened sticks and peasant children throwing rocks. War today is now a spectacle, a form of entertainment. If Erasmus were alive today and managed to play *Call Of Duty 2*, he'd probably start clawing at the screen in disbelief. The graphical trickery would be dismissed as witchcraft and the X360 would be thrown into a lake to see if it floats or sinks. Erasmus would be experiencing war and he would be delighted.

So, why would he be so delighted? Well, the simple answer is the graphics; an obvious starting point for this review and easily *COD 2*'s trump card. Gaming snobs have been endlessly chewing over the gameplay versus graphics debate for longer than anyone cares to remember, but *COD 2* has given that tedious argument a loud crack on the backside. If there's one thing Infinity Ward has learned from *Call Of Duty*, it's how to create spectacle. You'll notice straight



INSTANT OPINION

While the reliance on linearity and pre-scripting will irk, there's no denying *COD 2* really brings WWII kicking and screaming into life

> "Bombers soar overhead and mud is kicked into the air by hand grenades"

away how scarily realistic *COD 2* looks. Having never been to war, by realistic, we mean that when you go to sleep at night dreaming of man-versus-man conflict and those horrendous stories your grandad told you in-between mouthfuls of digestive, this is what war looks like – chaotic, dramatic and heroic. The bombers soaring overhead, the mud kicked into the air by hand grenades, the errant sniper rounds pinging off the wall behind you – every war cliché is present, correct and looks worryingly real. These cheap tricks to create atmosphere seen in the predecessor have returned, but they've now been bolstered with a Hollywood-size budget to make accountants sweat. War has always been about teamwork, and the *COD* series has the technological muscle to recreate the feeling of camaraderie. Now the fear of slowdown has been banished to the distant realms of last-gen, you always have fellow troops fighting by your side, no matter what else is happening on screen. When one team-mate slumps to the ground, another runs in from the back to take his place. When you charge off ahead, your men will follow you. The result is a perpetual firefight, with an endless cycle of old soldiers dying and new soldiers running into the fray. Pardon the cliché, but it's total carnage. Gameplay versus graphics? Sometimes gameplay needs the graphics to realise its potential.

Cynics be damned. When war looks this good, it's hard to resist the pull and not get drawn in. True, the emotional draw might not be there, so you're not going to burst into tears when Private Peas takes a sniper round to the skull, but you are going to be angry that your decoy taking »

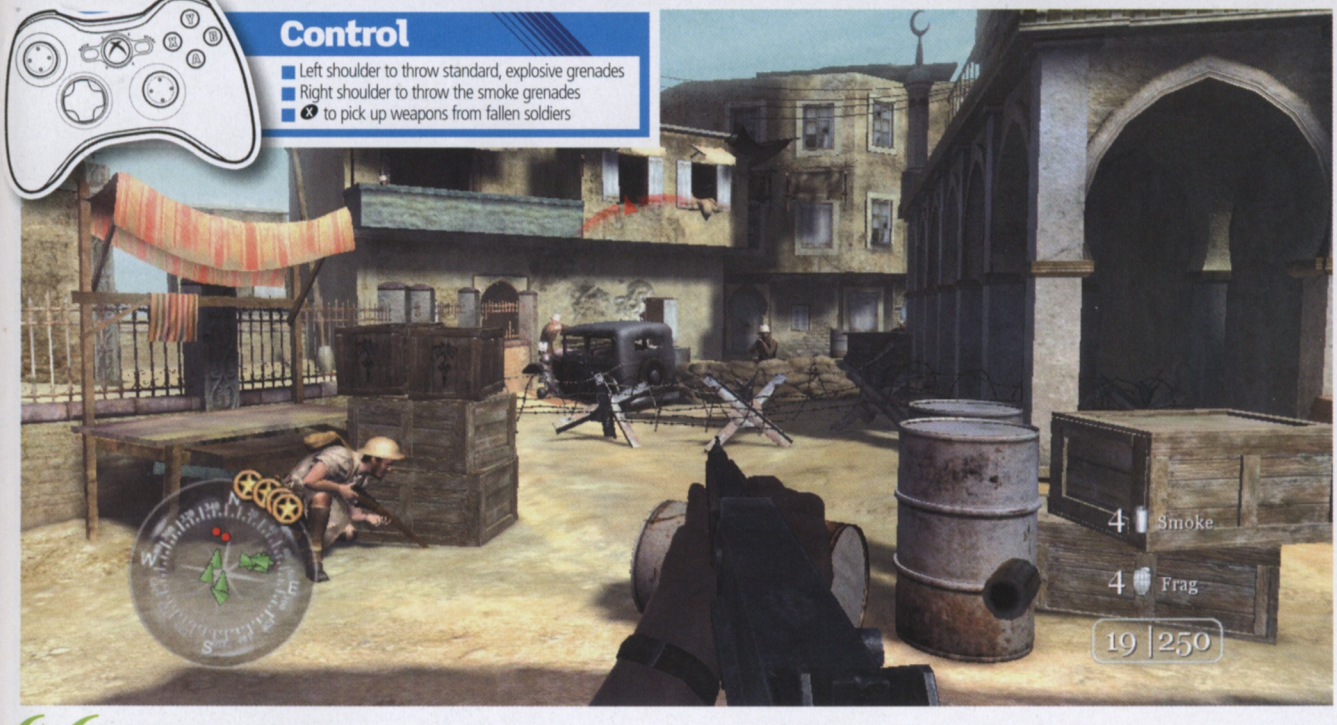






Control

- Left shoulder to throw standard, explosive grenades
- Right shoulder to throw the smoke grenades
- X to pick up weapons from fallen soldiers



TANKED UP

Any chance of a lift?

Walking is boring enough, having to run everywhere is dull. *Call Of Duty 2* realises this and will occasionally let you cross town in an armour-plated tank, throwing plenty of soldiers in your general direction so there's something to do on the way. These sections of the game are undemanding but explosive. Conclusion? Walking is boring, tanks aren't.

> "Invent your own solution and survive by the skin of your teeth"

fire has died, leaving you exposed and vulnerable. In short, teamwork matters. Keeping your fellow soldiers alive is very important, if only for the selfish reason of having more bodies drawing fire away from your exposed ass.

The feeling of war camaraderie is helped by the soldiers fighting alongside you doing something to help. You'll see them return fire and use melee attacks to defend their position or mount assaults, actually killing enemy soldiers and clearing a path forward. Stand back and observe and you will see them make a difference. You'll feel proud. Then you'll run the other way while they're taking all the fire.

Madness... madness!

This brings us onto the gameplay itself. *COD 2* still falls under the FPS banner and shares its predecessor's love of set-piece objectives, such as sniping mortar teams or using gun turrets to fend off German counterattacks. The objectives vary depending on whether you're ploughing through the Russian, British or American campaign, but the idea is always the same – shoot them before they shoot you. However, there are plenty of differences separating this from the usual run and gun fare. Guns in World War II weren't accurate unless the soldier you were shooting at was close enough for you to reach out and poke him in the eye. Therefore, in the pursuit of realism, you're not going to be able to shoot the dots off a die with any weapon in this particular war. There's no crosshair and while stroking the left shoulder button lets you aim down the barrel of the gun, it still won't pack the military accuracy of modern weaponry. Throw in the clunky feel of each weapon and it should be frustrating. It certainly sounds frustrating. But somehow, it's not. There's no logical explanation as to why it's not frustrating. It just works. It feels right, authentic even. Better than that is the lack of spinning ammunition pick-ups floating a few centimetres off the ground. If you run out of ammo, you simply grab a rifle from a fallen soldier and carry on. It feels like you're inventing your own solution on the fly and surviving by the skin of your teeth. You soon learn to mix and match your weapons to the situation – the Kar98's long reload times makes it suicide in close encounters, while the trench gun encourages pointing and mock laughter from distant enemies. There's a logical coherence to *COD 2*, where everything makes sense and feels just as you would expect a real war to feel.

Grenades now play a much bigger role when fighting for survival. The Xbox 360 pads have four shoulder buttons rather than the two of old. This means Infinity Ward has found room to slot two grenade buttons. Without descending into GameFAQs speak, this means you can tap the shoulder button to throw a grenade. Without any convoluted menus, 43 button pressures and an unwieldy inventory to wade through, you're more inclined to use grenades and with a healthy amount of explosives found throughout each level – again, by raiding the dead bodies of fallen soldiers – you'll quickly settle into the habit of throwing a grenade, then using the ensuing explosion to take advantage of your »

GIMMICK

Team Effort / Watch your team-mates fight for you. Kick back, relax, and let them win. Then take all the credit



CARNAGE/ The realism of war is clear to see – it's shocking, but ultimately you've got a job to do

1 FLAG CAPTURED

"And so it begins. Capture The Flag, twelve players, set in the small Tunisia level where the buildings make for perfect ambush points in the middle of the level. The trench gun overcomes the M1 Garand in close quarters, leaving people (aka *gamesTM*'s Luke Albigés) to steal the flag."

2 REVENGE IS SWEET

"But the tight level design means revenge is never too far away. Before Luke reaches the home base with his flag, Sextaro gets the chance to catch up and stop the team scoring. The orgasmic moans of "ooh, well done" from team-mates make it worth it."

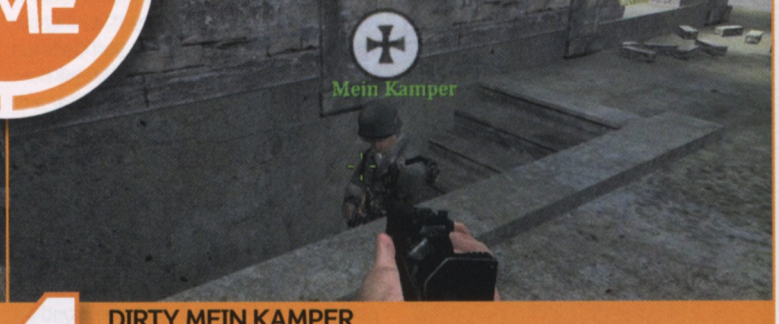




DEATH AND GLORY

LIVE TIME





3 PRESIDENT ASSASSINATED

"Search And Destroy was next, with both teams racing to one of the two points on the map to set the one-minute explosives. Die and you're out until the game is settled. Here's the president of Infinity Ward, Grant Collier aka Random, dying. He's a noob!"

4 DIRTY MEIN KAMPER

"**X360** freelancer Andy Hartup doing what he does best. Camping. Sniping. Earning himself the nickname 'dirty Mein Kamper'. "I'm not camping," he protests, staying rooted in the spot until someone shoots him in the head. Camping doesn't work too well in *Call Of Duty 2*."

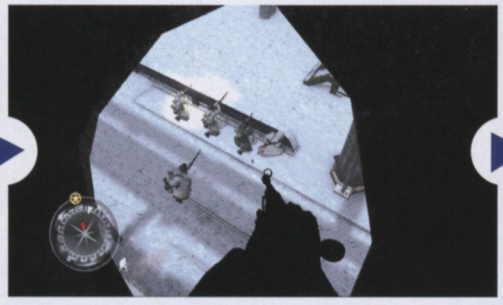
Facts ■ 1-16 player Death Match multiplayer ■ Capture The Flag ■ Future download packs

Play The Game War is hell, to prove it here's three wars we won earlier...

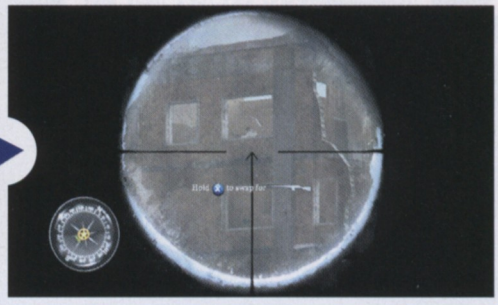
RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN



THE FIRST intense bit of action sees an open firefight across this snowfield as you try and force the Germans back into their headquarters. Chaotic but fun.



NOW YOU'RE slinking along an overhead pipe shooting down at the Germans. When they return fire, you can see the light pierce through the bullet holes.



THE FINAL assault starts as you pick off a German sniper opposite you. Your Russian comrades will use their binoculars to find him and shout his location.

BRITISH CAMPAIGN



SO WE'RE following tanks across a windswept desert. Well, hiding behind like a bunch of girly men. Stray too far left or right and mines will blow you up. Bah.



ONCE IN the desert trenches, killing the soldiers becomes fairly easy, especially if you break free from your group and trap them in a pincer movement.



WHEN YOUR team takes charge, it's an uplifting moment. Not because they're accepting responsibility but because you can use them as an early warning radar.

AMERICAN CAMPAIGN



STORMING THE hilltop is tough because the Germans have set up gun turrets and sandbag walls everywhere. Grenade throwing is the best of the skills you've learnt.



AND NOW the brown stuff has hit the fan. Planes flying overheard, tanks storming through the barriers, German officers raid the bunker. The hardest section of the game.



AND WHEN your smoke grenades go off? Everything becomes claustrophobic and panicked. Even worse is that the other side can throw smoke grenades too...



OFF GUARD/ These soldiers think they've got all bases covered... but they haven't clocked you ready to shoot

enemy's confusion. Fortunately, there's a grenade indicator showing you where nearby grenades have fallen, giving you a fair chance to scarper when the odd potato masher is thrown back at you.

That's one shoulder button explained. The other? Smoke grenades. These are essentially get-out-of-jail-free cards, with the smoke working as a shield to storm any tricky gun turrets. You start the level with four and these usually have to last until the closing cut-scene. It keeps the pace from sticking and stops the blood from boiling. The smoke effects look absolutely fantastic too. It's one of the rare occasions where a developer can justifiably wave his arms about shouting "volumetric fog!" without being laughed at. Yet another example, we're afraid, of graphics enhancing gameplay. Fellow developers watch and learn.

Best of all is the new health system. This genuinely makes a difference to the way the game is played. Previously in *COD*, you had to memorise the locations of past health packs and whenever your health hits critical levels, spend ten minutes backtracking to find them. Funnily enough, digging around rubble trying to find the last health pack only to die anyway wasn't fun. Now in *COD 2* though, when you're in trouble, you just hide somewhere and then rest up. It's as easy as that. There's no permanent damage for taking fire, so all you have to do is take cover somewhere and wait for the action to calm down. Your health is indicated by how hard your character is breathing, an easy-to-understand system. As soon as you hear your soldier puffing and wheezing away like Ron Jeremy at work, you know it's time to take a breather from the action and hide. Remember that hiding from the action while your fellow troops die isn't cowardly, in *COD 2* it's known as re-evaluating the situation and is perfectly acceptable gameplay.

Ain't got time to bleed

If there's one thing Infinity Ward hasn't learnt since *COD*, it's how to disguise pre-scripting. Once you slow down and start examining the chaotic scene around you, you can clearly see the seams holding the war machine together. As with the previous *COD*, there's an irritating reliance on certain characters surviving no matter what, so they can give the orders/blow up the wall/perform arbitrary pre-scripted events later in the level. Take American squad leader Sergeant Randall. He needs to stay alive

BATTLE CHATTER

They say it's good to talk, but then, not everything is worth listening to...

One of the touted new additions of *Call Of Duty 2* is Battle Chatter, where soldiers constantly talk and let you know what's happening around you. While the desperate yells of your team-mates as the finely tuned plans start to fall apart really enhances the game's atmosphere, it's debatable how useful the Battle Chatter actually is. "Potato masher!" they'll yell, as a German stick grenade bounces off scenery and lands absolutely nowhere in your vicinity – great, we don't know what we'd have done without it. The only time it really serves a purpose is when the soldier yells out objectives during the pre-scripted moments and even then, it's not that useful, as you can just check the corner of the screen to clearly see what your objectives are, minus irritating faux-Cockney accents. A good idea in theory then, but unfortunately, not so good in practice.



ON THE MOVE/ *Call Of Duty 2* doesn't make you run everywhere. Grab your team-mates and jump in your tank... just watch out for those bombers soaring overhead



SNOW JOKE/ Whether you're in the Russian, British or American campaign, your objective is to shoot them before they shoot you





> "Smoke grenades will storm any tricky gun turrets and the effects look absolutely fantastic"

to kick down some of the doors in the small French town of Caen, a job you're apparently ill-equipped to do yourself. He can take tank shells in the face with the only side effect being that he has to shake off the cobwebs.

Sergeant Randall secretly activating God mode when no one was looking isn't an isolated incident either. The enemy soldier who accidentally blows up the gate blocking your progress can't be killed. You can only pick up the Panzerschreck when the 'destroy tank' objective rolls around. You have to wait for Captain Price to blow up the door to the bunker, even though you have your own explosives. You also realise the freedom you initially think you've been granted isn't actually there either. Broken rubble seals off alleyways, minefields usher you towards the trenches in open desert and impossible inclines create valleys in muddy fields.

COD 2 hasn't fallen into the running-down-a-corridor-in-a-single-file trap as badly as the *Medal Of Honor* series has done, but it is clear that you're being pulled through the one obvious route available. This is classic funnel-neck level design, which is technical beanpole speak for "it's a bit linear." You'll hit every set piece from the level beginning to end and you'll feel like a bystander on a rollercoaster, joining the dots as you complete your objectives. Like a rollercoaster, it's spectacular and it's fun but you never feel in control.

The war's over

Inevitably, some people will say *COD 2* is exactly the same depiction of war that we saw on the last round of consoles, bar the Xbox 360 paint job and more men on screen. Some people will say that when you scratch away the paint, you can see flickers of a last-gen game dressed up in next-gen graphics. That's missing the point – *COD 2* is proof of how graphics can enhance the gameplay, ramming home the point that THIS IS WAR until you feel violated, ill and homesick like those fighting on the frontline. Then again, some people have not yet experienced this particular war. As Erasmus might say, they'll be delighted if they do. **Ryan King**

HIGHLIGHT: The first time you battle through a sandstorm will stick in the memory... next-gen volumetric fog, right here folks.

TIMELINE A tour of duty...



3 HOURS With the Brits, looking good

2 DAYS Nearly complete now...

1 WEEK Still, there's the multiplayer

COD 2

Call Of Duty 2 finally has the graphics to match its ambition, enhancing the gameplay immensely. Even being shackled to pre-scripting can't stop this war from breaking free

THE SCORE

- ⊕ Stunning atmosphere
- ⊕ Next-gen visuals
- ⊕ Strong AI squad
- ⊖ Too linear
- ⊖ Last-gen gameplay
- ⊖ Very shallow

8 OUT OF TEN

Mobile Games

MIDNIGHT POKER

Once you're at the table, there's no room for joking around. Your opponents will use their ultra-realistic artificial intelligence to wipe out your savings in no time, if you let them do it! All the characteristics of a real Texas Hold'em game have been included in this ultra-realistic simulation created by true Poker lovers.

Play 50

FOUR FOUR TWO TRIVIA QUIZ

FourFourTwo Trivia Quiz offers you the chance to test your knowledge in the ultimate football quiz on mobile! Start off with the National Cup. Winning this title will unlock the European Cup, and a victory at the European cup will unlock the International Cup! Are you up for the challenge!

Play 44

WAR OF THE WORLDS

War of the Worlds consists of 13 levels of pure shooting action in 5 different environments inspired by the film and its universe. You will marvel at the amazing graphics depicting Osaka, London, and New York as they are overcome by the tripods. In order to maximize your score, you must destroy as much as possible.

Play 42

MIDNIGHT POOL

Midnight Pool™ brings you into the competitive universe of a genuine American pool hall. You will face 8 original players, none of whom are ever at a loss for words! Choose from 3 available characters, then unlock the others in Tournament mode, where you can play with the rule set of your preference.

Play 39

ASPHALT URBAN GT

Asphalt: Urban GT™ takes you out on 8 tracks inspired by genuine places. Each track is part of a specific graphic universe and includes different tunnels and elevations that enable you to perform impressive jumps, among other things ... But watch out! Don't get flashed or stopped by the police.

Play 36

SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY

For the first time in the Splinter Cell series for mobile phones, you can use brand new weapons to confront your enemies, like Knives, Drones, Grenades and your enemies even have sniffer dogs to track you down in the dark!

Play 41

MIDNIGHT BOWLING

Besides the authentic spirit of the game, Midnight Bowling takes you to all of the hottest bowling alleys, from Star Light to Ocean Alley. Each time you'll discover a different but alluring setting. Exceptional gameplay, including the exclusive spin control: even after you've thrown the ball, guide it right towards a strike!

Play 52

NEW YORK NIGHTS

"New York Nights is a new kind of simulation game, with funny and unexpected situations. Thanks to its intuitive gameplay, for the first time on your mobile phone you can live and interact in New York: do bodybuilding, go to a concert, even dance in a nightclub!

Play 40

MASSIVE SNOWBOARDING

Massive Snowboarding allows you race on the worlds most famous downhill tracks. With state of the art 3D graphics and fantastic gameplay we promise you'll find it very hard to put that phone down. Plenty of tracks and characters to choose from with a banging soundtrack.

Play 53

SEXY POKER 2004

Play saucy strip poker whenever you want. Animated using brilliant artificial intelligence, your sensual partners take great pleasure in adding a little fantasy to your mobile. But watch out, these girls aren't easy and they all have strong personalities.

Play 10

MEDIEVAL COMBAT

Medieval Combat offers perfect gameplay and favors spectacular attacks: destroy parts of your adversary's armor in order to deliver increasingly deadly blows. The more you hit your opponent, the more you increase your magic gauge, to the point where you can unleash a devastating fury!

Play 49

2005 REAL FOOTBALL

2005 Real Football features realistic and extremely detailed animations (dribbling, scissor kicks etc), and captures the ambiance of a real match! These features, combined with graphics based on authentic 3D models, intuitive gameplay and improved artificial intelligence, make 2005 Real Football the leader in football games.

Play 43

To order a single game text the Item Code to 60111
eg. to order Asphalt Urban GT text Play 36 to 60111

£4.50 each

TRAIN WITH THE BEST

Martial Arts Videos

now on your mobile!

ATTACK2

ANTON VAN THOMAS
Wing Chun Master

Watch Ian Freeman show you what fighting methods work best on the street.

ATTACK1

IAN 'THE MACHINE' FREEMAN
UFC Veteran

ATTACK3

MICHAEL WONG
Tai Chi Combat

DEADLY ATTACKS

ATTACK5

NEIL ADAMS
British Olympian MBE

Some of the techniques shown: How to defend yourself and attack when the fight goes to the ground. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu World Champion shows you how its all done.

Brtish National Olympic Team coach Neil Adams MBE shows you effective Judo techniques that work in real life situations. No fancy moves here - just real methods that could save your life.

ATTACK4

Cage Rage
Mixed Martial Arts
DAVE O'DONNEL

This is your amazing chance to get up close and personal with some of the best martial artists from around the world, don't miss it...

Full colour and sound demonsration videos, showing effective street techiques. Learn what each art has to offer against various forms of attacks. All techniques are shown from numerous angles in slow speed with detailed instructions for easy learning. All the videos are taught in English for easy learning.

To subscribe just text the item code to 83535 eg. to order ATTACK4 just text ATTACK4 to 83535

Animations And Videos



Get the latest Simpsons animations on your mobile

To subscribe text SIMPSONS to 83535



Very Funny don't miss it!

To subscribe text BARTVID to 83535

Old Skool Ringtones



Ryu	11
Ken	24
Blanka	46
Guile	47
Chun-Li	104
E-Honda	121
Dhalsim	122
Zangief	123
M-Bison	133

STREET FIGHTER II

Only £1.50

Get the stage music from your favorite characters from this old skool classic. Text your character name to 83535 to order now

To order just text the name to 83535 eg. to order Ryu just text Ryu to 83535

If you need help ordering any product please call our helpline on 0870 8554194

Terms & Conditions. You must be 18 years old or over to use these services. By selecting a wallpaper, game, video or animated gif you are agreeing to download and view that wallpaper, game, video or animated gif. You will be billed the amount shown via reverse SMS. All phones must be colour and WAP enabled. Additional GPRS or GMS data transfer costs apply. No liability is accepted for any delay omissions or damage or loss of data incurred by any party. Games cost £4.50. Ringtones cost £1.50 each. Deadly attacks service is subscription service costing £4.50/week. Each video costs £1.50. You receive 3 videos/week. To opt out text back the keyword you used to opt in followed by stop or stop. The Simpsons video and animation service are subscription services costing £6.00/week. You receive 2 videos or animations/week. To opt out text simpsons stop or bartvid stop or stop at any time.

How HOT is your girl?





Think that your girlfriend is HOT property?

Why not send us a short video or photo and let us decide. Each winner every month gets their chance to star in a professional photo shoot and a cash prize of a 100 pounds.

Send us an MMS message with the attachment no bigger than 100kb. Text your entries to 07840 382185. Each entry costs £1.50



Hentai Animations

Only £1.50 each



Join the SEXY Manga Girls club now! To Subscribe text

HENTAI to 83535

To order a hentai girl animation just text hentai to 83535

Spoof Videos

Only 75p each

Watch the Bush & Saddam Gansta Rap, as they both go to WAR with their outrageous lyrics, to subscribe text

SPOOF to 83535



Get these hilarious Videos & News Bulletins sent straight to your phone

Pole Dancing



Get these fantastic High Quality videos on your mobile. To Subscribe Text

STRIP to

89095

Let us entertain you

To order your very own personal lapdance text STRIP to 89095

£1.50 each

Video Babes



Latest Pics

CANDY



Don't Miss It

TERRI



Brand New

ANNA



DEVON



SARAH



BRIANA

£1.50 each

To subscribe just text the name of the girl to 89095 eg. to order Candy text CANDY to 89095

The Hentai service is a subscription service costing £4.50/week. Each animation costs £1.50. You receive 3 animations/week. To opt out text hentai stop or stop. The Video Babes service is a subscription service costing £4.50/week. Each video costs £1.50. You receive 3 videos/week. To opt out text back the keyword you used to join followed by stop or stop. The spoof videos service is a subscription service costing £4.50 per week. Each animation costs 75p. You receive 1 video/day. To opt out text spoof stop or stop. The Pole dancing service is a subscription service costing £4.50/week. Each dance video costs £1.50. You receive 3 videos/week. To opt out text strip stop or stop. Games provider Gameloft Ltd. All rights reserved. For customer support please email us at customerservices@urmob.com or call us on 08708554194 Mon-Fri

NEED FOR SPEED MOST WANTED

You've read the Gotham review, now take a spin in the first Xbox 360 understudy

Release date/ 02 December 05

Xtunes
Recommended listening when playing *NFS*...
- Suffrajet – Mr. Man
- Primal Scream – Kowalski
- Queen – Don't Stop Me Now



In these early days of the Xbox 360 it's difficult to find a direct comparison to evaluate a game against, so you've got to feel sorry for the latest *Need For Speed*. Not simply because when placed on the starting grid alongside *Project Gotham Racing 3* there was always only going to be one winner, but also because *PGR3* simply highlights everything that is wrong with EA's first foray into next-gen racing.

The *Need For Speed Most Wanted* world of illicit street racing has been around for 10 years. Despite being casually dismissed by many connoisseurs of the genre, the series has been very successful. It's never tried to pass itself off as any kind of realistic simulation, focusing instead on pure arcade action and thousands of softcore gamers have appreciated just being able to jump behind the wheel of a stunningly shiny car and slide around a few corners. The last outing, *Need For Speed Underground 2*, was a pretty average racer that some members of the **X360** team played through to the end, whereas others dropped it like a bad habit. Regardless, it sold a whole lot of copies and an Xbox 360 upgrade was inevitable. The problem with *Most Wanted* is that it's more of an accomplished paint job rather than a complete performance overhaul.

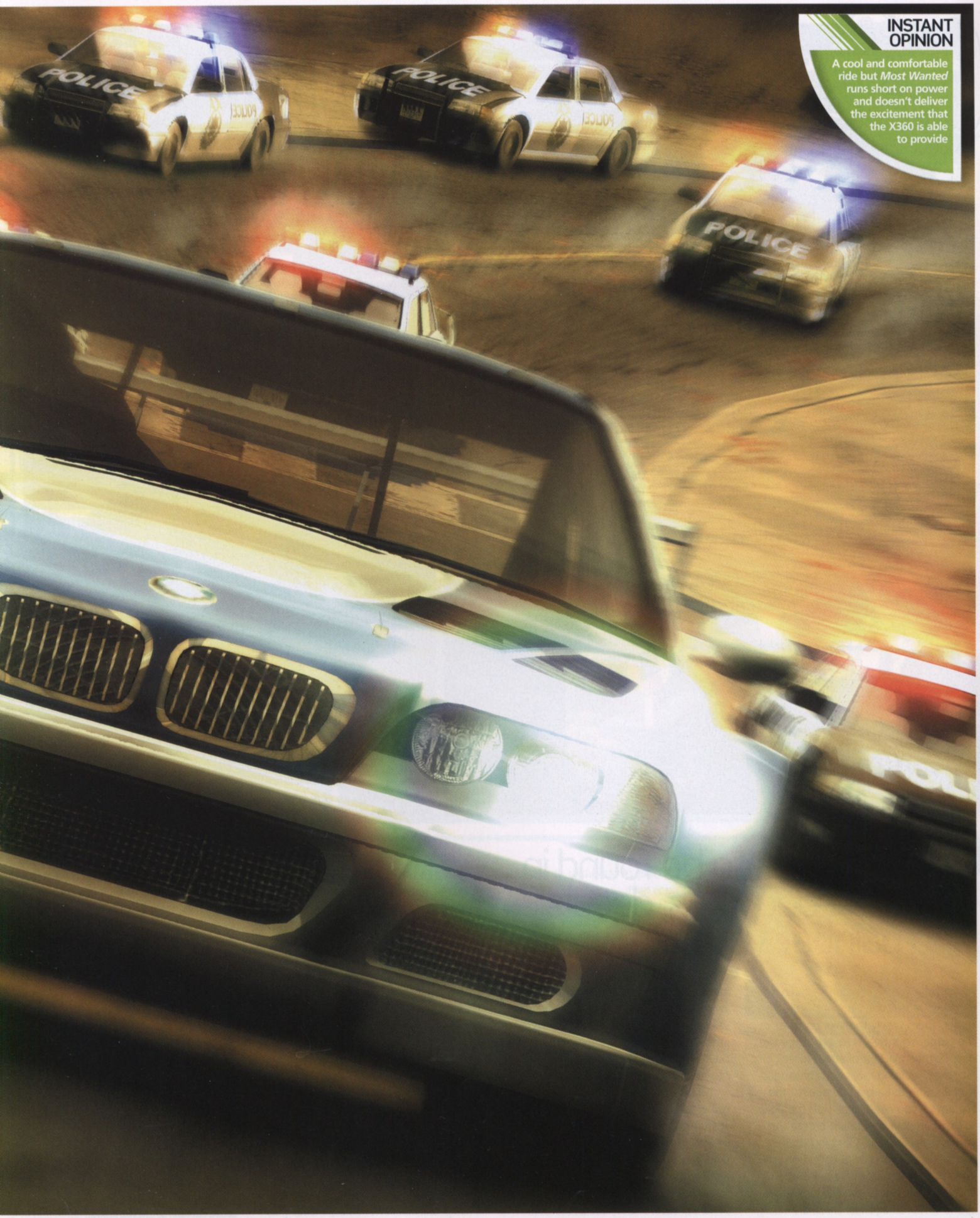
> "This game brings the underground racing scene back above ground"

Sitting down with *Most Wanted* for the first time smothered in the shimmering glow of a high-definition plasma screen, there is certainly something of a wow factor. Not the kind that draws a sharp intake of breath, but one that is instantly appreciative of how dazzling X360 games can look. *Need For Speed* has always been about bright colours and this is gloriously shiny stuff. The polished details, such as reflections and the real-time lighting and weather effects are excellent. The glare of the sun can be over the top and impair your viewing, and the spray trailing behind other cars on a rainy day is also an impressive nuisance.

However, for all the shine that *Most Wanted* offers, the gloss soon wears off and those impressive early moments faded when we started to take a more detailed look around. Split across four main locations, again locked off by the same impenetrable clear barriers as in the previous *NFS* games, there isn't anything too exciting about the environments you get to cruise around in. Sure, there are a fair few miles to race around but few places have any real personality. Worse still, when rolling along at just a few mph, the lack of sharp textures becomes apparent. Walls and grassy verges have been softened and stretched, creating a blurred look that is fine at 140mph. However, when you see the intricacies that other X360 games have (did we mention *PGR3* yet?) *Most Wanted* begins to look more like a cell-shaded paint job. If it were a current-generation Xbox we'd rate the visuals highly, but while we appreciate that the developer is still getting to grips with the new technology, we're already expecting a lot more.

Out on the streets, *Need For Speed Most Wanted* brings the underground racing scene back above ground with the very public presence of the police. Several games, such as *LA Rush*, have utilised meddling coppers as part of the challenge – a pain to duck and dive your way around, but *Most Wanted* gets its name because they are an »

Details
Publisher/ Electronic Arts **Developer/** In-house
Genre/ Racing **Players/** 1-4 (online) **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720



INSTANT OPINION

A cool and comfortable ride but *Most Wanted* runs short on power and doesn't deliver the excitement that the X360 is able to provide



Control

The standard Xbox controls are present: right and left triggers to accelerate and brake, only now the game feels heavier and more solid than on current-gen



BLOCK PARTY/ The game's AI is pretty good – often frustratingly so – and will eventually begin setting up roadblocks to prevent your progress. There are more police cars on screen in this Xbox 360 version, making these moments more frantic than usual

SHORT CUTS

A sign of things to come

Entering the career mode, one visual upgrade that works is the blend of real video footage and CGI animation in the cut-scenes that tie the story together. The actors were filmed against a green screen and superimposed over urban backdrops. They were also placed behind the wheel of a car and the effect works seamlessly. The absence of shitty lip-synching is always appreciated and the acting isn't too bad either.





ALLEY-OOP/ The success of racing in *Most Wanted*'s world is down to memorising the shortcuts and safe zones. Alleyways like this one will become essential to escape the police

> "The fun is to be found in throwing body kits, decals and paint at your car"

integral feature. From your first race the coppers are on your case, and you need to play them wisely to make progress in the game. Your goal is to get to the top of a 15-man blacklist of street racers. However, winning races and challenges isn't enough to earn a ride against the big boys – you need to piss off the police to build up your reputation before they consider you worthy. Climbing up the blacklist isn't as simple as collecting pink slips from beaten boy racers. Instead, each victory awards two markers to spend on six categories. Three are clearly identifiable as parts, performance and visual upgrades, with three other random selections to dabble in. The pink slip is in there somewhere but there are no guarantees that you'll be able to pull it out and win yourself some new wheels.

Making the best of what you've got in the wonderful world of car customisation is still an important part of the *Need For Speed* experience. It does seem like a toned-down version against the over-the-top modification mentality that you'll find elsewhere in *Forza*, but it's easily accessible and won't drag you away from the action longer than necessary. Performance upgrades for the engine, transmission and suspension are now solely available as packages rather than individual parts, so you don't have to pick and choose from a rolling list of manufacturers with insignificant differences. The only fine-tuning performance options you have are seven sliding gauges to tweak the car to suit your driving style. Again, the fun is to be found in throwing body kits, decals and spray paint at your car and seeing what sticks. There is still some unlocking needed to work through the list of items on offer, but there's plenty to play with.

So what's new?

The game plays almost exactly like its predecessors, with a free-roaming map (well, free until you hit those locked see-through barriers) with races, challenges, shops and car lots scattered around. These are marked on a large map and as well as using your GPS to cruise your way to them, you can now jump straight to each meet. There are still several shortcuts scattered around though, so it's worth spending time exploring each location to find your way around.

The events are very familiar with the traditional circuit, sprint and drag races,



THE TOLL/ Obstacles in the environment, such as toll booths, can easily be smashed through

Play The Game Three modes to explore in Most Wanted's world of racing

SPEED TICKET



DRIVE AS fast as you can. Cameras are marked and you'll have to hit set speeds to complete the challenge. It's kind of like the drag race but with set speed limits.



AN ADVANCED way to play the Speed Ticket mode is to build up a combination of tickets to outdo everyone else. Collecting numerous tickets equals bigger kudos.



ALTERNATIVELY, YOU can just use the mode to test your skills. With a host of different cars to use and tracks to race, this is a quick taster of the game's speedy thrills.

PURSUIT



BOTH IN-GAME and as a separate challenge, the aim is to initiate and sustain a police pursuit for a set time and then shake them off to evade capture at the end.



YOUR CHANCE to look for hideaways and safe zones. Also, it's great driving like a drunken monkey and having the racing underworld respect you for it.



A GOOD time to test your skills outside of the main game. Performing U-turns, handbrake turns and looking at the AI's reactions will let you know the game's 'flaws'.

BOUNTY/COST



THE SAME as a standard Pursuit challenge but you have a set amount of chaos to bring to the streets. Smash everything in your path and keep a mental note of it all.



PISSING OFF the police will increase your bounty, destroying everything in your path will increase the cost to the state and anger the police even more.



A GOOD mode to learn the layout of the land. On our second excursion we found the this fairground, a great opportunity for destruction and a good hideout.

but the tedious drift challenges from *Underground 2* have thankfully been dropped. A Lap Knockout race has been added (that'll be the Eliminator mode) and the overwhelming police presence has inspired a Photo Ticket mode where you have to be clocked by a camera at a certain speed or simply faster than your opponents. Pushing the speedometer to the extreme is the ever-faithful supply of nitrous. This time you don't have to pull off a few cool slides to boost your levels, instead you have a replenishing supply that should keep you in the running.

Become notorious

What you get from taking on a police pursuit is a bounty reward. This will earn you the level of notoriety you need to match your glorious victories and get those blacklist races. Pursuits can be picked up from the Milestone menu, which lists a number of additional challenges from the other racing modes. If you prefer to be a more reckless troublemaker you can instigate a pursuit just by driving like a loon when roaming the streets. Once the police are on your tail, the bounty on your head/car increases, the longer the pursuit lasts and the higher the cost to the authorities. You can, erm, 'speed' things up by trashing public property and drawing up a list of driving offences (ironically one of the hardest of these to be charged with is speeding). The more trouble you cause, the more police will enter the chase and the more your bounty increases.

As the central feature to the game, these pursuits can become something of a chore after a while, like the mini-challenge you can't be bothered with but have to complete to unlock the next level. The pursuit itself is pretty good stuff, after all, the satisfaction of slamming a police car into a concrete pillar and being rewarded for it is sweet indeed. They're a pretty smart bunch too, setting up roadblocks, laying down spikes and generally doing a good job (perhaps too good) at busting your pimped-up ass. You are tuned in to their radio frequency though, so you can listen in to the intelligent and accurately detailed conversations going on.

Fair enough, escaping the police shouldn't be easy, but in *Most Wanted* it's simply annoying. You have to stay out of sight for a certain amount of time until the pursuit is called off. However, with such a large environment to roam there are far too few places to hide out until the heat dies down. There are 'pursuit »



BOY RACER/ The game's focus on hot hatches makes it a different beast to *PGR3*

GIMMICK

BOUNTY HUNTER/ Let the police try to protect the streets from your 140mph monster, while you earn bounty points



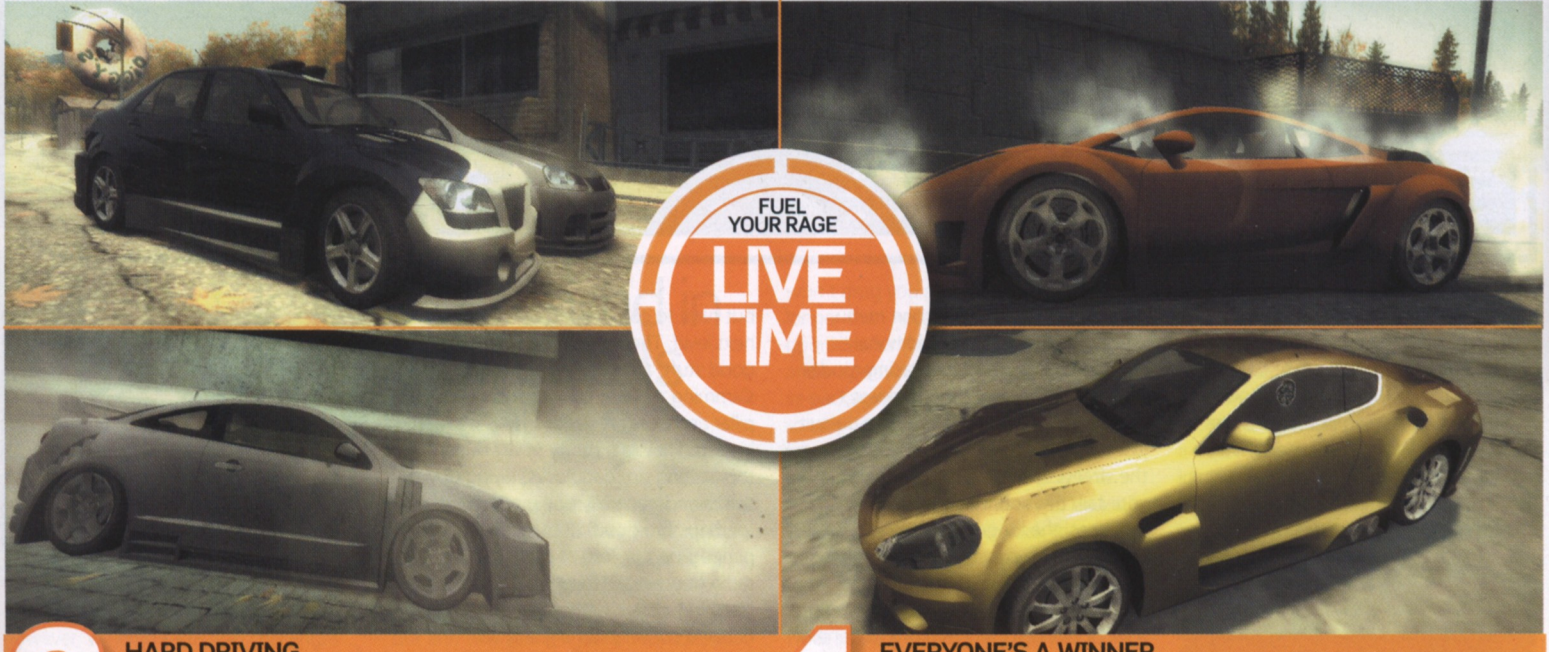
RAM RAID/ Though your car remains intact, you'll soon learn that destruction is at the heart of this racer

1 AT THE LIGHTS

"Things were tense. It was a tight grid full of seasoned racers and every car was revved to breaking point. Barely had 'Go' appeared on screen when the whole team hammered the nitrous for an early lead, but the inevitable first-corner pile-up left Ian as a clear leader."

2 CATCH UP

"With a self-refuelling nitrous tank, some tactical boosting was required as the lower order traded paint through some tight corners. In a selfless moment Ian stopped, smugly waving in his rear-view mirror and slammed into an oncoming car at 100mph."



3 HARD DRIVING

"There are no friends in a head-to-head sprint race and the glory of winning is soon lost as personal vendettas take root. Ryan was seething after Keith 'accidentally' bumped him into a wall and set his sights solely on repaying the compliment."

4 EVERYONE'S A WINNER

"Somebody won the race but bragging rights were evenly divided, as were the excuses. Finishing first was 'bullshit' because it wasn't as much fun as slamming Keith into a concrete pillar and everybody else would have won anyway if it wasn't for the crap handling of their car."

Facts ■ 1-4 player races online via a variety of modes ■ Spectator mode – watch friends race ■ Includes the new to *Need For Speed* Knockout (Eliminator) mode

CAR PARK

If you can flash the cash, you can look flash too and drive around in the car of your dreams...

It doesn't have the widest range of vehicles that many racers have rolled out onto the forecourt, but *Need For Speed Most Wanted* runs the classic tale of sports car fantasy.

Your first choice boils down to a shitty Fiat Punto or a Chevrolet Cobalt – which we painted a beautiful shade of orange and slapped an 01 decal on the side to create our own General Lee – but as the cash starts rolling in you can upgrade and get your hands on some more genuinely superior rides from the garages of Lotus, Porsche, Mercedes and Lamborghini.

Our favourite is still the Aston Martin DB9 just because it, well, it feels as cool as it looks. Plus, we get to fulfil a lifelong ambition of feeling like James Bond too... shame the makers couldn't arrange for the girls to come with it as well, but hey, we can't have everything.



WHAT'S THE RUSH/ The city has plenty of traffic to avoid and as you race around you will often run into bigger drivers than you who deserve some respect, such as those at the wheels of lorries and fire appliances, so watch out for these







BIG RIG/ We'd suggest you try to avoid head-on confrontations with the game's truckers

> You'll be slipping around like a newborn deer wearing banana-skin slippers on an ice rink

breakers' – destructive items such as water towers and toppling buildings to slow the police down, which can add a little creativity into the races. Frustratingly though, your pursuers are too fast to just shake off with a hit of nitrous and just when you think you've made a clean getaway, another copper will appear and the timer starts all over again.

More speed needed?

What also doesn't do *Most Wanted* many favours is that the game actually seems slower than *NFSU 2*. It's not exactly pedestrian and the need for speed is well fed with some fast and furious action, but the passion and panache is a little thin on the ground. The cars handle well and stick to the road a lot better, allowing sharper corners to be taken at speed, but sliding around with wheels screeching leaving toasted tyre marks is where the adrenaline is injected. Gripping to the road, the cars slow down anyway and when they do slide it's without the control that we'd expect.

There is some realism – catch a patch of wet grass and you'll be slipping around like a newborn deer wearing banana-skin slippers on an ice rink, but it's still not trigger-clenching stuff. Braking is for squares anyway, right? More so, a complete lack of damage other than an intrusively flapping bonnet takes away any responsibility. There are loads of obstacles to smash through, although a 140mph head-on crash into a concrete wall is only troublesome in that it will leave a nasty scratch on the bumper and you'll need to waste some nitrous getting quickly back up to speed.

As far as racing games go, *Most Wanted* is a solid effort with plenty of long-term entertainment on offer and it's a game that's hard to put down. However, while it looks good against the current-generation consoles, it is clearly some way off being a great Xbox 360 performer because it doesn't harness the power and potential that the console's engine can deliver. Give it a spin and you'll have some good times, but *PGR3* is the clear market leader and not even an eternal supply of nitrous oxide will help this racer keep up.

Ian Collen

HIGHLIGHT: Effects director David Footman was brought on board to film the actors against the green screen that was used for the game's cut-scenes.

TIMELINE A day at the races in *Most Wanted*



5 MINUTES You're shown the ropes



3 HOURS You take the Aston for a spin



1 DAY It's all about the chases

NFS MW

Decent entertainment but a bit short on adrenaline, this easy rider gets left as a tattered heap on the Xbox 360 starting grid in the blistering trails of *Project Gotham Racer 3*

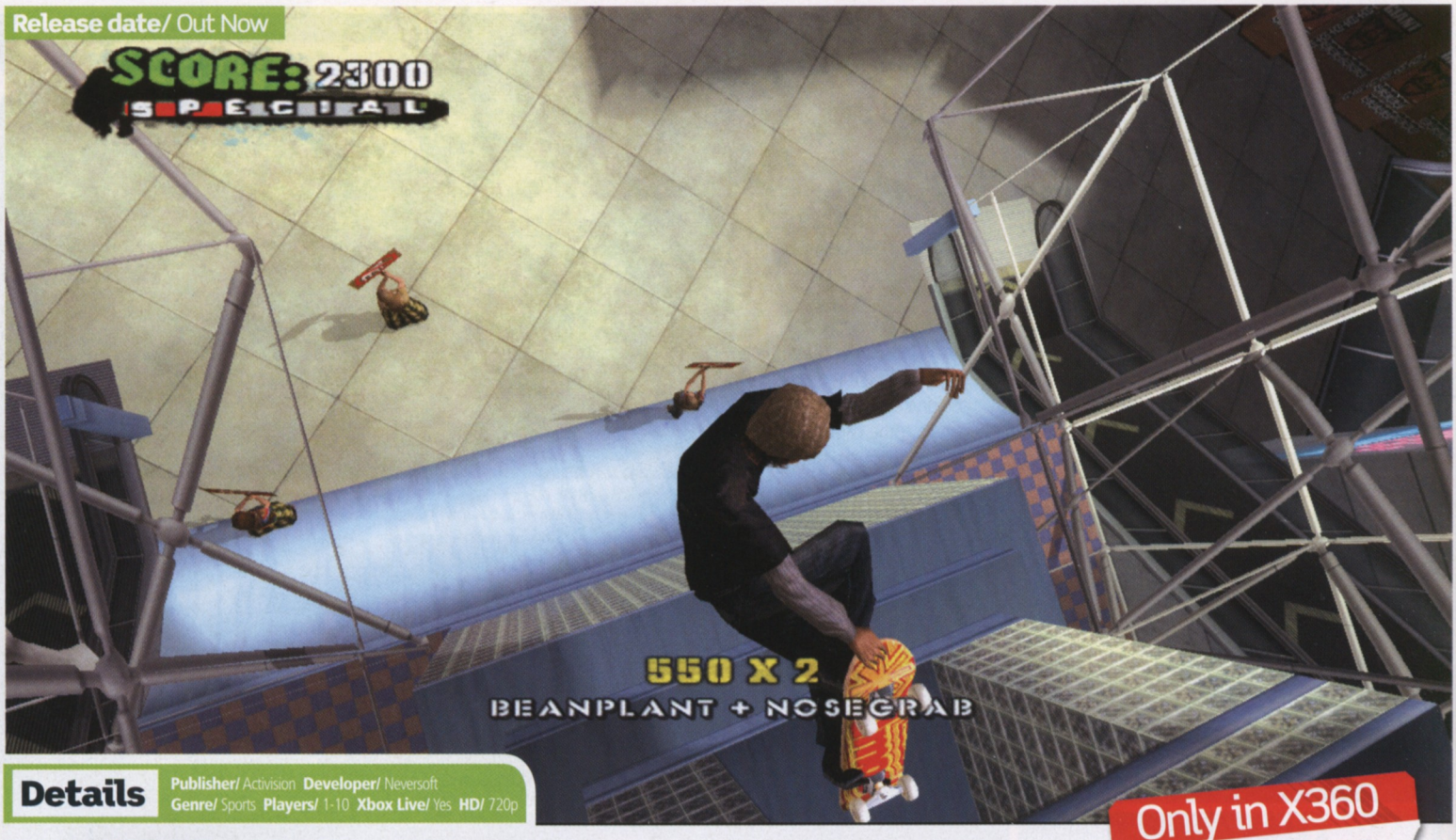
THE SCORE

- ⊕ Plenty to explore
- ⊕ Destroy obstacles
- ⊕ Looks good enough
- ⊖ Not too speedy
- ⊖ Frustrating chases
- ⊖ No real progress

7 OUT OF TEN

HIT OR HYPE? "Positively better than *Underground 2*" Ryan King, Issue 2. Sadly not

Release date/ Out Now



Details **Publisher/** Activision **Developer/** Neversoft **Genre/** Sports **Players/** 1-10 **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720p

Only in X360

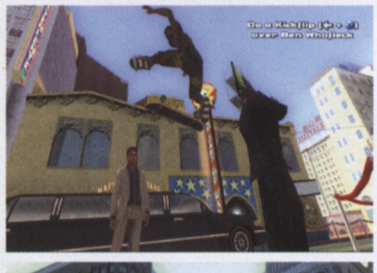
REVIEWED

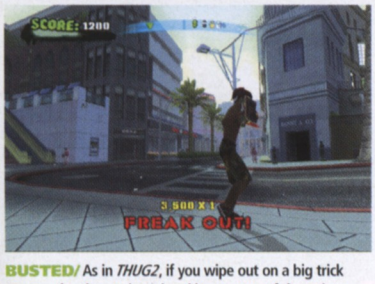
Hawk wipes out on X360

TONY HAWK'S AMERICAN WASTELAND

Tony returns with another skate white hope







BUSTED/ As in *THUG2*, if you wipe out on a big trick you can thrash your board and keep some of the points

The launch of a new console always brings with it a great deal of excitement, but inevitably it's also saddled with a degree of uncertainty, which is why – alongside the influx of new IP – it's always reassuring to see a few familiar faces. However, what isn't so pleasing is when that familiar face shows up and kicks you square in the balls, which is what the Birdman has done to the Xbox 360.

After achieving an almost unrivalled degree of success on current-gen consoles, Tony Hawk was always on the short list to kick-flip his way onto the X360. But it seems that Neversoft is so content with its latest instalment, *American Wasteland*, that not one aspect needed to be changed to make the leap from being an agreeable current-gen game to a stunning Xbox 360 launch title – not the story, not the options, not even the visuals. Despite being a series accustomed to change, *THAW* sticks with the formula that sees skaters taken out of their native skate parks and placed into a free-roaming city environment without making any attempt to push the envelope further.

On our first play we had to check the disc to be sure we hadn't slipped in the Xbox code by mistake. Though this version benefits from a higher resolution and smoother frame rate, in terms of character models and almost every other visual aspect, it falls short of the next-gen mark. This is disappointing, as the concept of *Wasteland* is pretty good – Hawk has been usurped by a dishevelled young shred-head who arrives in Los Angeles with dreams of skating the streets of the city where it all began. Not all goes to plan and as soon as he arrives he's beaten, blooded and left with only his slick skills for company. It's a good job that various flicks and tricks required to earn big bucks are easy to pick up and perform, allowing both veterans and newcomers to combo their way through each story-driven challenge.

The skating may be accomplished, but the game has some major flaws. Goals are straightforward with little imagination, and it tends to feel like an extended tutorial. The trick combos and side missions are enjoyable, but the free-roaming aspect is a tad farcical, having to rely on long channels to connect the different districts. We expected a whole lot more from videogame's favourite skate ace. **Keith Hennessey**

THAW

A decent skateboarding experience that lacks the innovation and imagination we expect from a next-generation title.

THE SCORE

- ⊕ Nostalgic Classic mode
- ⊕ Lots of customisation
- ⊕ Range of new tricks
- ⊖ A lazy Xbox port
- ⊖ Short story mode
- ⊖ Shoddy cut-scenes

5 OUT OF TEN

Xtunes

Recommended listening when playing *THAW*

- Sk8ter Boy - Avril Lavigne
- Heaven Is A Halfpipe - OPM
- What's My Age Again - Blink 182

Release date/ 02 December 05



Details **Publisher/** Electronic Arts **Developer/** In-house **Genre/** Sports **Players/** 1-4 **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720p







PAR THE COURSE/ It looks good but we've seen it all before on Xbox

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 06

Crouching Tiger, hidden add-ons

ON THE X360 DISC
- New golfers exposed
- Motion capture feature
- TV ad
- Audio commentary

Every year we look forward to the Tour coming to town because every year we notice the extra little touches that make *Tiger Woods* such an enjoyable golf game. We notice the tweaks to the animation, the new play modes, and every year each update evokes similar sentiments: 'if you liked the last one, you'll like this', 'another hole-in-one for EA' and it goes on to receive a respectable score. Well, this time we were hoping *Tiger* would shake off the tedium of tiny changes with the leap onto Xbox 360, but unfortunately, *PGA Tour 06* on the X360 isn't much of an improvement.

The increased texture resolutions and new swing animation only lead to superficial advancements rather than groundbreaking ones. The gameplay has undergone some slight adjustments with dual analogue mechanics introduced, making for a game that's accessible but not too routinely simple to stop it from posing a challenge. One stick is used to swing the club, while the other is reserved for placing the strike point on the ball, leaving you more vulnerable to a miss-hit. In the same vein, the putting dynamic has received treatment, now featuring a mapped grid to help read the green better. However, the grid is fairly pointless and there are still some balance issues relating to the strength of swing when making that vital putt.

> "The Game Breaker simply enhances your shot"

Infecting every EA game like some ferocious cancer is the Game Breaker and this year *PGA Tour* also falls victim. However, this function doesn't guarantee a hole-in-one, but simply enhances your shot, adding distance or accuracy. There are plenty of multiplayer modes too, as well as a comprehensive Game Face system, which allows you to create a virtual likeness of yourself.

Like almost all of EA's next-gen offerings, this serves one simple purpose – to re-establish the franchise on this new console. So while *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 06* may offer slight improvements, it's still merely an appetiser for what is to come in the future. **Keith Hennessey**

TIGER WOODS 06

New game mechanics have helped the series, but Tiger Woods' ball lies far from the Xbox 360's refined green

THE SCORE

- ⊕ New control system
- ⊕ Good Game Face system
- ⊕ New multiplayer modes
- ⊖ Pros not challenged
- ⊖ Not many improvements
- ⊖ Courses feel empty

7 OUT OF TEN

Xtunes

Recommended listening when playing *TW06*
- Eye Of The Tiger - Survivor
- Tiger Feet - MUD
- Wild Wood - Paul Weller

HIT OR HYPE? "Golf fans everywhere will be more than happy" Ian Dean, Issue 2. But gamers won't

Release date/ 02 December 05

ON THE X360 DISC
- Movie trailer
- Teaser trailer
- X05 presentation
- Hands-on preview
- Screenshot gallery
- Artwork gallery
- Audio commentary

Xtunes
Recommended listening when playing *PGR3*
- KISS – Detroit Rock City
- ACDC – Back In Black
- Guns 'n' Roses – Welcome To The Jungle

X360 CLASSIC AWARD

Details **Publisher/** Microsoft **Developer/** Bizarre Creations **Genre/** Racing **Players/** 1-8 **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720p

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 3

The first must-have game for X360

Tucked away in the outskirts of Liverpool, Bizarre Creations has been working away on *Project Gotham Racing 3* for the last two years. Sixteen-hour days have become the norm, as has the delivery of various take-away foods to quell the hunger of many an employee in an effort to bring you an offering of gaming goodness; to bring you this sequel to the number-one selling *PGR2*. Heart and soul has been poured continuously over this game, which is evident from the offset. Watching friends and onlookers drop their collective jaws as we began playing the review code for *PGR3* has got to be enough to tell you that this is a system-selling title.

A mere six pages isn't enough to impress upon you the importance of this title to Microsoft, nor are they enough to assure you of how much Bizarre has delivered. Critics will, of course, question how different it is from *PGR2*.

A quick recap: *PGR2* was probably the most successful racing game on the original Xbox, and for good reason too. Perfectly weighted between the arcade and simulation, the game defined the Xbox Live experience with the most



INSTANT OPINION

With its photo-realistic graphics and attention to detail, *PGR3* is the most advanced thrill ride on any console. Put simply, a work of genius

Only on X360

REVIEWED

More polished than Kojak

"Drive the most exclusive supercars at speeds most of us can only dream of"

comprehensive use of online play and community, before the likes of *Halo 2* stole its crown with the two little words, "Killing Spree".

How could Bizarre Creations improve in a way that would avoid the critique of only updating the graphics? The game speaks for itself on so many levels, it's extremely difficult to find one area that hasn't been improved, or doesn't rock like Gene Simmons in his glammed-up prime.

Each car is made up of between 85,000 and 105,000 polygons – that's eight times the polygon count of the cars in the previous iteration. It also means there are more polygons in the lowest detailed car than in the whole of Prince's Street from *PGR2*. The Brooklyn Bridge stage in *PGR3*'s New York circuit has more polygons than an entire city from the last game and it is only a small part of a few Big Apple circuits. Suffice to say, this game packs in the detail. With over 20,000 pictures taken at each locale over a three-month period, painstakingly recreated with the equivalent of one year's work on each city to make the environments as lifelike as possible, this level of detail is only possible on Xbox 360. New York, London, Las Vegas and Tokyo are recreated in near-photorealistic quality, allowing you to drive the most exclusive supercars at speeds most of us Punto-owning gamers can only dream of.

The McLaren F1 LM, Koenigsegg's CCR – the fastest cars in the world are in here. Then there are the Bentleys, Jaguars and anything listed as drool material by avid car fans, which are all available to drive in-game from the outset. There are no more car classes; no more playing 200+ hours to »







Control

The usual triggers method is used to handle acceleration and braking, and every car feels unique now. So much so you'll soon find a favourite



POLISHED TO PERFECTION

High Dynamic Response is here

Having drooled over the game on high-definition display with HDR effects abundant throughout the game, we can confirm that – after PS3 fanboys brought it into question – HDR effects are easily implemented on Xbox 360. You notice anything and everything. From the depth-of-field effects to the self-shadowing on the cars. Racing has never looked as good as this.

> "The most eye-catching and beautiful racing game ever seen, full stop"

unlock the Enzo. Every single car is available from the off, letting you tear up the competition either offline or on Xbox Live, which has to be said, is where this game is going to shine.

We'll touch on Live later, but firstly, there's something very important about this game that smacks of next-gen appeal. Every engine of every car in *PGR3* has been recorded from multiple areas of the cars. If there was only one edition of a car in the world, Bizarre and Microsoft worked their best schmoozing tactics to get that car in a test tunnel to record the sound from under the wheel arch. They even travelled to the owners' homes to record the car, and you'll hear that in the game. Whichever camera angle you choose by the newly appointed left shoulder button, you'll hear a different sound from the same engine, painstakingly modelled to perfection. Bizarre's sound team has really pulled out all the stops for *PGR3*, and when you feel like you're in the game without knowing it, they've clearly done their job.

Art imitating life

Immersion is what brings us onto the graphics. Just look at one of the screenshots on this very page. However, one thing we've learned from the Xbox 360 is that screenshots will never do it any justice. Every screenshot you've seen of *PGR3* to date has been an in-game shot. Using the best motion blur effect we've ever seen, the sense of speed and sheer beauty of the game cannot be conveyed in motionless form. Quite simply, this will be the most eye-catching and beautiful racing game you've ever seen. The little touches, such as the way the camera moves as you take the apex of a bend. The high-speed train overhead as you race round Tokyo's financial district, only noticing it as you've hit a wall again because you can't believe how good this game really looks.

One of the defining moments, when you really will find yourself shuddering, occurs on the New York circuit as you spin out of a bend at 120mph, the edges of the screen blur and bend, focusing attention into the centre of the screen and your perfect exit. Then, the very second you feel like you've nailed the game, and the Kudos points are flicking up in the corner of the screen, the Brooklyn Bridge rears into view. This is where *PGR3* steps up a gear, distances itself from every other racing game going and gets real. The many struts and pylons of the bridge blur across your screen, reflections bounce off the bonnet and the whole effect looks… real. The word photorealistic is bandied about liberally these days, at one point *Gran Turismo* was the real deal, but with *PGR3* the phrase means something. This game truly mimics the feeling of tearing under an iron suspension bridge on a hot summer's day. Switching to the awesome in-car view and looking to your left reveals your broken wing-mirror, which now shows multiple reflections on the smashed glass surface.

The power of the Xbox 360 hardware isn't even being used to the full extent – given that the team had only six months with finished development kits – but Bizarre is definitely leading the way when it comes to delivering next-gen »

GIMMICK

Gotham TV/ Set up your own race tournaments and invite gamers to watch your skills in action via Xbox Live



DIAL UP/ Each car has a different interior view to get used to. Some are perfect for racing while others restrict your sight – find a favourite

1 TOTAL EXPERIENCE

"Spinning out ten metres before the finish line and being overtaken by someone who's never played the game is frustrating, yet refreshing as it proves there's always room in *PGR3* to improve. Even veterans of the series will need to spend some time in the odd practice session."

2 DELICIOUS DISTRACTIONS

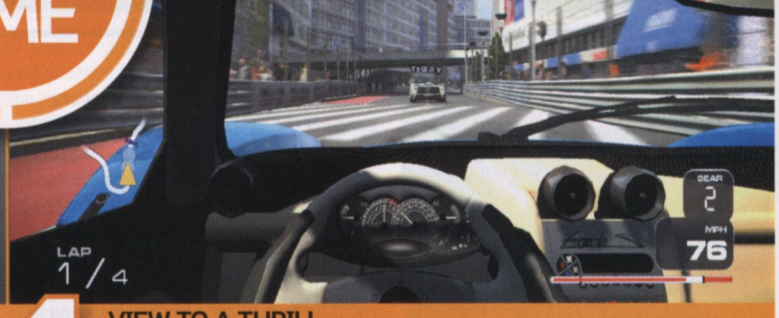
"The game looks amazing. So much so that the first few races we played saw Keith and Jay swerving all over the New York track as they gawped at the scenery. There were rumours of a passenger mode for online players – this would be a brilliant addition."





GET IN GEAR
LIVE TIME





3 TV GOLD

"The first time you race after being told you're on Gotham TV is scary, but winning gives you a rush like nothing before. This single addition to the game will guarantee it cult status online as every racer attempts to prove themselves live on the game's TV channel."

4 VIEW TO A THRILL

"Though the in-car view takes some getting used to, after a few races it becomes natural. The perspective enables you to focus attention on the race in front, and only occasionally when poor drivers like Keith come hammering up the inside will you need to glance off the track."

Facts ■ Online head-to-head ■ Team racing ■ Custom races ■ Gotham TV ■ Free and premium downloadable content

Custom Gaming *PGR3* features a details track editor to customise your races

PGR3's track editor is one of the best around

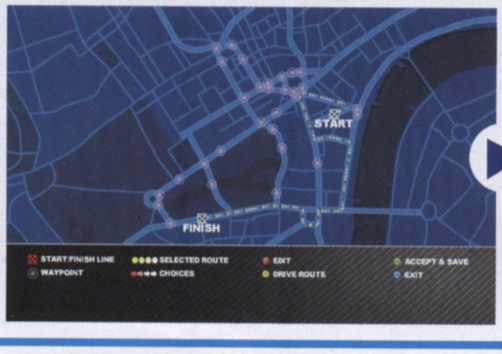
Selecting Playtime presents you with numerous options on- and offline. The inclusion of a race editor isn't the most original of ideas, yet when implemented as well as it is in this instance, it is a massive boost to fans of the series. You can create races in any of the game's cities –New York, Tokyo, Las Vegas or London – and once done, challenge friends to a cruise in your personalised tournaments.



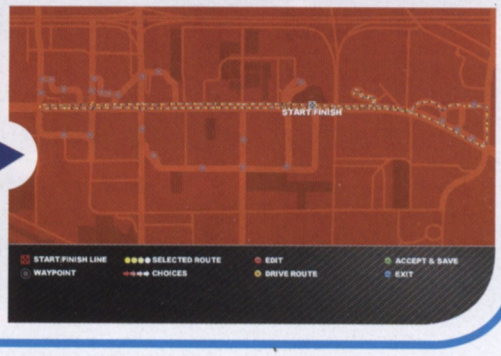
EACH CITY has multiple start and finish positions giving you freedom to create any size or style of race. Whether it's a fast speedway circuit or a multiple lap marathon with Chicanes and U-bends, everyone is catered for in *PGR3*. We picked London…

AFTER FIDDLING with the track editor for some time we decided to see what our London circuit felt like to race, so we took a quick test drive. This allows you to practise the corners, learn the straights and work on your times before you take it online.

SPEAKING OF online, the first thing we noticed when taking an edited track on Live was the slickness of the whole ordeal. So pleased with ourselves, we tried a new city, New York this time. The new track took no time at all and proved how easy the system is to use.









ALL ABOUT THE CARS/ You no longer have to dream about driving the fastest cars in the world – they're all in *PGR3*

graphical performance. The detail on each car, from the wheel nuts through to the reflections generated by possibly the most advanced cube map ever seen in a game, brings with it the most astonishing cars we've yet seen in a videogame. These cars have been recreated virtually with the love and attention that the most dedicated car enthusiasts would be proud of. It's car porn, pure and simple.

Challenge yourself

Whether you're playing online or offline, the gameplay is still as good, if not better than *PGR2*. The standard menu now greets you with Gotham Career, as well as Playtime, which includes the options to run street races, compete in more challenges, or design your own race circuit for Gotham TV. The career mode is where you play through the game as normal, with driving challenges replacing the old class section tests. Instead of starting with a Mini, you'll be presented with a challenge from one of the cities in the game, meaning there's no need to play through eight car classes to get to the American Muscle series again. It's a case of pick your challenge and whatever car you wish. Rip up the tarmac and earn yourself medals for pulling off outstanding TrueSkill against the clock. Ah, TrueSkill – these points are awarded for races won, best times, Kudos scores and game completion stats. They are then transferred to your Gamertag account so the game can match you with equally skilled opponents. You'll never humiliate another noob again. More crucially, the more points you tally by driving with style rather than luck, the more interesting tournaments will be open to you. For example, Gotham TV will be split into Heroes and Friends, everyone will be able to join a Friends game but only the best of the best will be invited into the Heroes tournaments. This means you can dip in and watch the world's top players race, or if you are one of the world's best, enjoy life on Xbox Live in Microsoft's very own version of an

BLURRING THE LINE

It looks so real that you'll weep tears of joy (and pain when your jaw hits the floor)

Motion blur effects are created by combining the frame buffers of a video output, resulting in the blurring of pretty much everything aside from the car. However, *PGR3* achieves its realistic motion blur feature using some of the most technically advanced coding used in a racing game. The effect is achieved by calculating the velocity of your focal point and then the change in speed of every in-game object in comparison to it.

Having the code running over three cores means different areas of the game can be slapped onto different cores, each capable of running two threads at once. So while the game engine is running on one of the cores, another can be assigned the task of blurring every single pixel displayed to draw a natural motion blur. The result is one of the most deceptively real racing experiences ever.



CAR COLLECTION/ There is a novel garage mode in that screams show-off, not content with just showing highly detailed car models, this game lets you walk around them







> "The most astonishing cars we've seen in a videogame... it's car porn. Pure and simple"

airport executive lounge. Even on Live, class rules everything.

It's also worth mentioning the differences in handling between *PGR3* and *PGR2*. They both have an adherence to realism, but *PGR3* is more liberal with the rules. If you ever picked up the pad with *PGR2* and span out on the first bend or got locked into a doughnut because you couldn't handle the braking, then fear not, as *PGR3* is less severe. Before the hardcore out there slam the mag down in disgust, we're not talking *Burnout*, just that this game is more lenient. You will still need to perfect the powerslide, handbrake turns and racing line to rack up the big TrueSkill points needed to impress fellow Livers and you can be sure that good *PGR3* players will always end a race around two hundred points clear of a newbie.

Must-have game

It really is hard to point out any downfalls in what is a great and much-needed launch title. In fact, launch be damned, *PGR3* is an out-and-out must-have game. Every aspect of this racer is polished, and every effort has been made to make this game more and more accessible. The sheer scale of the custom options from circuits to car types to race modes means there will always be a challenge for someone in the game no matter what their skill level or experience. While supercars are very impressive, we're slightly disappointed with the lack of Minis in this new tour through Gotham, but as 'Big Lips' Mick Jagger has often said, "you can't always get what you want." The soundtrack to the game is huge though, with many different styles from Mozart to the latest and greatest British bands and matches the race action perfectly.

If it's car porn you want, or the best racing game on either of Microsoft's consoles, you can't go wrong with *PGR3*. It's all about style and accessibility. The racing is as good as ever, but thanks to some tuned handling, a streamlined challenge structure and faultless customisation, anyone and everyone will be able to find their level, and then improve; making *PGR3* a game you *need* to own.

Gareth Williams

HIGHLIGHT: Racing the Las Vegas strip at night in one of the world's most powerful cars is unforgettable – you won't want to miss out on this.

TIMELINE Mesmerising good looks



5 HOURS These cars look amazing

3 DAYS It's too beautiful, no time to eat

10 WEEKS Lovely cars, can't leave house

PGR3

Excelling in more areas than any other racing game we've seen, *PGR3* really does define the next-gen racing experience and sets the standard for other X360 games to follow

THE SCORE

- ⊕ Stunning graphics
- ⊕ Perfect gameplay
- ⊕ Online features
- ⊖ No Mini's!
- ⊖ You hate racing
- ⊖ Can't come quick enough

9 OUT OF TEN

Release date/ Out Now



Only on X360

REVIEWED

Stuttering into the next-gen

Details
Publisher/ Activision **Developer/** id/Raven
Genre/ Shoot-'em-up **Players/** 1-8 **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720p





POWER UP/ Throughout the game your tech support will upgrade you with new-and-improved weapons

QUAKE 4

Not exactly earth shattering

Quake, like *Doom* before it, has become an institution on the PC. Whereas *Doom* has always been the cover star, *Quake* has simply sat quietly in the background amusing millions with its solid blend of atmospheric single-player action and some of the best multiplayer ever witnessed. Microsoft made a canny move ensuring that the latest *Quake* would appear on its brand new console, but it seems it may have got slightly less than it bargained for with id/Raven's latest collaboration.

Great expectations

So, why isn't *Quake 4* the world-beating launch game that it should be then? Surely it's pretty much the same as the PC version, which has cemented a position just behind *FEAR* as the second best FPS of the year. Well, the problem is that *Quake 4* really doesn't try anything new, and whereas other Xbox 360 launch titles like *Call Of Duty 2* and *Project Gotham Racing 3* can embrace 'me-too' gameplay and live to tell the tale, with this game it just seems a little on the tired side. This isn't much of a problem for fans of *Doom 3* and the like, who enjoy being shepherded down a series of corridors dispatching an enemy (or group of them) in each area – but for anyone looking for something that little bit more epic and awe-inspiring from the next-generation of consoles, the linearity of the game will be massively off-putting. After all, it was possible to wander through alien environments and blast things with a shotgun on the Xbox. The textures may look a little shinier, and the enemies a little more detailed, but the basic premise of the game has been done to death – and in some cases – it's even been done better.

Which format?

The decision to return *Quake* to both a single- and multiplayer experience has received mixed responses from the hardcore fans. On the one hand, it's great to see the story progress, but on the other, the single-player mode has never been the strongest element of the game: that has traditionally been the territory of *Doom*. Having spent time with both sides to the game on the Xbox 360, it's clear that the in-game engine is still geared much more towards that fast and frantic frag-fest that is *Quake* multiplayer than it is towards actually carrying a storyline

Xtunes

Recommended listening when playing *Quake 4*
■ David Clynick – *Perfect Dark* Soundtrack ■ The Streets – Dry Your Eyes Mate ■ Beastie Boys – Sabotage

TEAM PLAYER

Keep your men alive, soldier, you're gonna need 'em!

During most of the levels you'll be given a small crew of men to shoot Strogg with. This group will often contain a medic and engineer. The medic will replenish your health whenever you're not in combat, and the engineer will ensure that your armour is topped up after each fight. It pays to keep these guys alive as they could mean the difference between completing a level with ease, or frustratingly struggling through the same section over and over again. That, and their character models look pretty sweet too, so keep them around for eye-candy purposes!



LIGHT UP/ You'd think that by the 22nd Century, the torch would have evolved a bit? Still, it means games like *Quake 4* can look moody



SHOT IN THE DARK/ The frame-rate stutter can put you off your aim at times... poor





> "Anyone who appreciates a good run and gun will be more than pleased with what Quake 4 has to offer"

from start to finish. That's just a polite way of saying that the single-player campaign is pretty dull next to the multiplayer, and pretty quickly, most will become fairly apathetic to the struggle between humanity and the Strogg. It's not that the script or the premise behind the story is at fault – it's just that the game is so linear and clichéd that after a while it becomes pretty predictable. When this happens to a game that relies on shocks and surprises to keep the action flowing, problems start to arise.

However, it's not all doom and gloom; and anyone who appreciates a good run and gun will be more than pleased with what *Quake 4* has to offer. As has become standard with every id-approved game, the combat engine is razor sharp and extremely solid. There are no collision or clipping issues here, and every shot is pinpoint accurate. The weapon balancing is also pretty tight, helping the game maintain a fair yet challenging difficulty curve throughout the whole experience. The main problem is that the game's frame rate doesn't exactly run at a constant. In fact, it's pretty shoddy during some of the more intense action sequences, significantly reducing the enjoyment anyone will be gleaning from the game, as they attempt to stutter their cross-hair over the jerky enemies. Why on earth this is the case, after other more hardware-demanding games have managed to achieve a solid rate of 60fps is beyond our comprehension.

The end is nigh

The other issue is with the game's pace and longevity. *Quake 4* may not have the longest single-player campaign on the Xbox 360 but it by no means has the shortest, as anyone who picks up a copy of *Call Of Duty 2* or *Condemned* will be able to testify. And yet you will reach the game's finale sooner than you'd imagine – perhaps it's the overly dull level designs that seem to bring up the closing credits screen all too quickly – you may feel like you are playing on auto pilot after a few hours in *Quake 4*'s grip. With that said, there are plenty of Strogg to be gunned down in between the start and finish, and for fans of mindless, no-brainer action, this will be a massive plus for the game. The real problem is that there is little else beyond that, save for the killer multiplayer mode...

That's right, *Quake 4* comes with an updated version of *Quake III*'s multiplayer, and for Live users, this should be reason enough to fork out for a copy of the game. Although it's yet to prove itself over Microsoft's new-and-improved Live service, the theory behind *Quake*'s arena combat shows nothing but promise. The action on offer is without doubt the quickest and most ferocious combat that can be experienced on consoles, surpassing that seen in *Halo 2* and in some respects, *Perfect Dark Zero*. The painfully simple, yet utterly foolproof approach of offering up savage combat with a variety of powerful weapons just works so well for *Quake*. This game is undoubtedly one of the most basic multiplayer titles ever, and whereas this

HIT OR HYPE? "Quality first-person shooting of the highest order" **Will Johnston, Issue 1.** Almost Will, almost

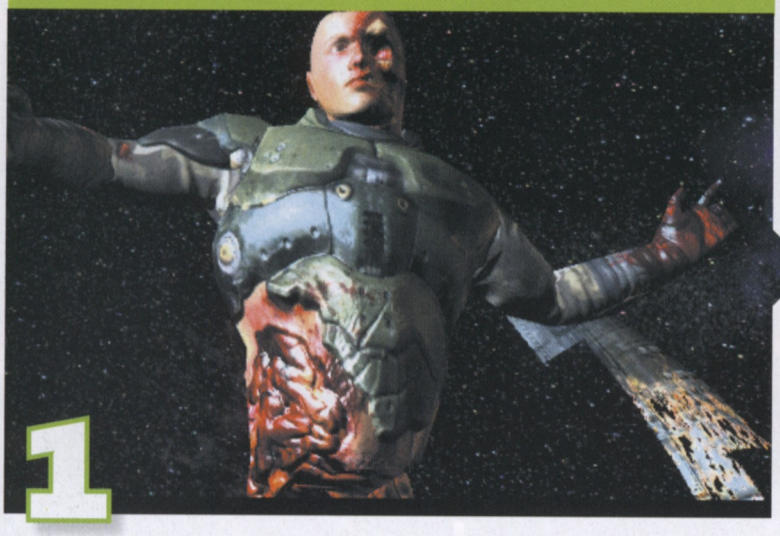
MAKING THE MAGIC HAPPEN

Blood, guts and double-hard space marines – this game owes a debt of thanks to Jimmy Cameron...

This is the very first cut-sequence you'll be treated to in *Quake 4* – a sad reminder that the game picks up right where *Quake II* left off.

In typical sci-fi style, Rhino Squad is dropping down to the planet surface in an extremely uncomfortable, easily shot-down, landing craft – the kind that every film since *Aliens* has used. If you want a parallel then look no further than *Starship Troopers*' invasion scene.

Once you've managed to overcome the shock of watching your buddies get annihilated by the Strogg, your first task on landing is to regroup with any other survivors of your squad. Leaving the Medic at the landing zone, you must head into the nearest building to find some more of your buddies. Things seem fairly normal for a Strogg-infested corridor compound, that is, until you get captured...







will help it gain a cult following amongst hardcore online gamers, the fact that the same in-game engine has been used to power the single-player campaign will leave most high and dry. *Quake* appears to have backed itself into a corner and is left with the option of offending the sensibilities of single-player campaigners at the expense of offering up more of the world's most addictive multiplayer.

Players really have to ask themselves what they are expecting from *Quake 4*. Sure, it's as basic as shooters come, but is that what you splashed £300 on a new console for? The game is incredibly atmospheric in places, but it never comes close to reaching the same levels of tension that are achieved in something like *Condemned*. The action is intense, but nothing remotely like Infinity Ward achieved with *Call Of Duty 2*. Where the single-player gameplay is concerned, it just seems like everything on offer has been done better elsewhere, even with the relatively small batch of games that constitute the Xbox 360's launch line-up. We could at least have hoped for a decent PC port, but the issues with the game's frame rate have meant even this simple task has left us disappointed. With the next generation of games, the lowest we've come to expect – even at this early stage – is a decent port.

More than technical issues, the problems are with the game itself. In single-player mode there's something deeply upsetting about battling through the most advanced shooter ever made, only to be greeted with a naff tank, mech, or tail-gunner section that seems to have been thrown in as a last-ditch attempt to add a little variety to the game. Why, oh why, does every FPS absolutely have to involve some sort of naff on-rails section that insults pretty much everyone who plays that game? Next-gen technology should be helping gamers fight through worlds in whatever



CLOSE UP/ The character models in *Quake 4* look pretty sweet, although we wouldn't recommend getting this close to inspect them too often as the AI will tear you a new arse – oh, right, the Strogg has already done that



KILLING ME SOFTLY/ Bah, who wants to kill someone softly when you've got a hefty chain-gun strapped to your arm? Pull the trigger, aim and hold on tightly to the thrill of the kill – id knows how to do violence





NO TANKS

Enough with the vehicle sections!

Quake features a number of on-rail, or token-vehicle sections, which are presumably here to break up the monotony of the endless corridor sections in the single-player game. The tank section is pretty simple, providing you can keep up with the frame rate long enough to shoot straight, whereas the Mech part of the game is as frustratingly slow as every other giant robot stage in most first-person shooters.

GIMMICK

Strogg on/ After being converted, you receive more health, run faster and can now access Strogg doors and terminals



THE SHOTGUN/ Why does every FPS come down to a shotgun? It's always the bloody shotgun!

> "It's as basic as shooters come but is incredibly atmospheric in places and the action is intense"

way they please, not restricting them to the same (although admittedly prettier) linear routes. We should feel like we're part of an epic struggle between two different races, not just one of a small rabble blasting stuff in buildings that seem to consist entirely of winding corridors. Even the boss fights, which have often been the high points in the *Quake* series, seem a little tame and predictable in the latest outing. Once again, there's no real fault with them other than the fact that gamers will have seen it all earlier in the year while they were struggling through *Doom 3* on their Xbox.

High hopes

Perhaps when the next *Quake* (or *Doom*) surfaces on the Xbox 360, the developer will be putting Microsoft's technology to better use. Maybe, the PC version will feel and look slightly dumbed down in comparison to the console game for a change. Either way, the aim for id in its next X360 game should be to at least eradicate some of the more irritating aspects of the game such as the extensive load times, and the fact that bodies fade away almost the second they hit the floor and that staggering frame rate. Would it be too much to ask for a simple melee button next time around? What about the chance to climb out of the corridors and roam around freely over a Strogg-infested landscape? If *Quake* fails to keep up with other FPS series in this generation, then it may once again find itself as no more than a hardcore multiplayer series with little to offer the offline gamer. For the time being, the multiplayer will be well received, but many will be left with an empty gaming stomach after this outing, and should expect more the next time Raven decides to shake the earth in this next-generation. **Andy Hartup**

HIGHLIGHT: ***Quake 4*** **contains a fully playable version of** ***Quake II*****. Chances are that it will provide more amusement than the actual campaign mode of** ***Quake 4*****...**

TIMELINE A brief history of violence



2 MINS	3 HOURS	2 DAYS
Our hero has arrived	Lumbering around in a Mech	You should have finished by now

QUAKE 4

The average single-player romp, complete with stuttering frame rate, means *Quake 4* doesn't quite live up to our expectations. Thankfully, a decent multiplayer mode saves the day

THE SCORE

- ⊕ Great multiplayer
- ⊕ Some intense combat
- ⊕ Sounds fine
- ⊖ Very linear
- ⊖ Poor frame rate
- ⊖ A sloppy PC port

7 OUT OF TEN

Release date/ 02 December 05

Details **Publisher/** Electronic Arts **Developer/** In-house **Genre/** Sports **Players/** 1-4 **Xbox Live/** Yes **HD/** 720p

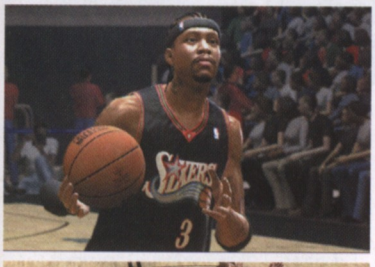
Only in X360

REVIEWED

EA's turning up the heat...

NBA LIVE 06

Ballers get their sweat on





SLAM DUNK/ With no more easy lay-ups, defenders have a physical presence, making scoring more satisfying

The little guy, the dark horse, the underdog or David fighting Goliath. Call it what you will, but no one was expecting *NBA Live 06* to do anything more than turn up and flash its next-gen biceps to an apathetic crowd before returning back home across the Atlantic. Yet here it is, with excited grown men gathered around a television screen all cooing "Ooh!" in unison as a virtual Dwayne Wade pulverises the basket with an explosive slam dunk. This is followed by embarrassed giggling. The giggling of a bunch of converted graphics whores, no less, who can't help but be drawn in by the visual punch *NBA Live 06* is packing.

The hardened gameplay over graphics campaigners will be wondering how this is relevant to the actual game itself, but the improved graphics affect every facet of *NBA Live 06*. For example, the players on court now have an actual physical presence, so defenders feel like defenders rather than helpless bystanders to ghost past on the way to an easy lay-up. That alone helps patch up the traditional weakness in basketball games – defending. It's no longer about picking the nearest player and stabbing the steal button in hopeless abandon, it's about filling the paint (that'll be the bit under the basket) with fat players made of burgers such as Shaq, à la real-life NBA tactics.

The same applies at the other end of the court. With all the players having a solid presence, it's easier to see players and to pass the ball around. Inevitably, gameplay does get messier as you approach the basket and everything starts to get a bit crowded – but it's still a big step in the right direction for the series. Best of all, *NBA Live 06* is actually fun to play. You will begin to put pressure on yourself to play with style because the animations will elicit child-like noises from onlookers. Simply put, *NBA Live 06* looks like Goliath, fights like David and is damn fun to play. And not even the graphics whores were expecting that.

Ryan King

Xtunes

Recommended listening when playing *NBA 06*

- He Got Game - Public Enemy
- Tough Guy - Beastie Boys
- Let's Get Dirty - Redman

NBA LIVE 06

With the gameplay to match its graphics bravado, this is a genuine surprise from the EA Sports stable.

THE SCORE

- ⊕ Looks stunning
- ⊕ Defending feels solid
- ⊕ Makes basketball fun
- ⊖ Some messy gameplay
- ⊖ Missing Dynasty mode
- ⊖ Long-ish loading times

8 OUT OF TEN

GO APE THIS CHRISTMAS

OUT NOW



AVAILABLE FROM WHSMITH AND ALL GOOD NEWSAGENTS

TEN OF THE BEST

LAME HARDWARE LAUNCH PUBLICITY STUNTS

With the launch of the Xbox 360 finally upon us, we take a look at past launches and mock the lamest, saddest and most desperate attempts at generating publicity in gaming... be warned, the cringe factor is high

01 "The Nintendo DS 'proper bo' UK Launch"

NINTENDO: MARCH 2005

For the launch of its DS handheld, Nintendo hired the talents of Avid Merion's *Bo'Selecta* bear for the midnight launch in London's Oxford Street. Yes, the same bear who swears all the time and gets erections in front of celebrities. Considering Nintendo's young fanbase, this could have been a disaster. He behaved himself though, posing for photos and no doubt becoming increasingly uncomfortable as the night wore on. Well, let's face it, being stuffed inside a couch exchanging pleasantries with kids for a few hours is never going to be fun.



02 "Sega's £12 million sponsorship of Arsenal"

SEGA: APRIL 1999

Not so much a launch-event gimmick, more a massive error of judgement on the part of Sega's marketing team. For some reason, Sega thought blowing a cool £12 million on getting the word Dreamcast on the shirts of one football team would be a much better idea than sensibly scheduled TV adverts showing off the features and new games of the machine. Now football may be a popular sport, but not everyone watches it, however, we think it's safe to say that 99 per cent of the population watches TV. Amusingly, the deal, which didn't work, lasted longer than the life of the Dreamcast. Good work Sega.

03 "Gizmondo spends loads of money on rubbish launch party"

GIZMONDO: MARCH 2005

Recently, Gizmondo made it into the mainstream news by hosting a launch party/C-list celeb bash in a swanky London venue, hiring the likes of Jay Kay and Sting to play at the event. The party was full of people who used to be in *EastEnders* or some failed pop act, as well as journalists and other industry people who were herded into a cramped room under the celeb quarters, where they spent half an hour queuing up for drinks and moaning that they weren't having much fun. Also, no one touched any of the demo pods. Oh dear.

04 "Bill Gates takes on all comers at the Xbox launch in NY"

MICROSOFT: NOVEMBER 2001

Launching a new, large, ugly looking console into a PlayStation-dominated world was tough for Microsoft, so for the Toys 'R' Us launch party in New York, Microsoft pulled out the big guns – an appearance by none other than Bill 'I'm richer than you' Gates, who bounded into the event with sinister peppiness, shaking the hands of those who had taken the time to queue up, and playing a lucky few at some games. People's champion The Rock also turned up, posing for photos with Bill Gates and fulfilling the dreams of everyone else. It was beautiful.

05 "Dreamcast brings Eubank and Benn together"

SEGA: OCTOBER 1999

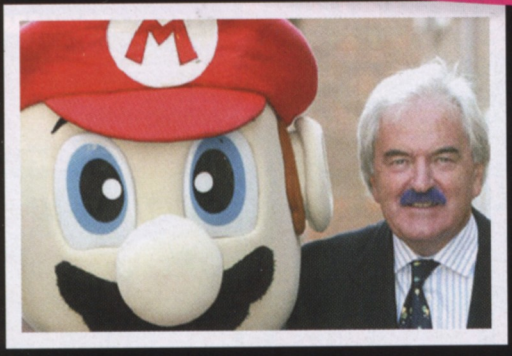
Similar to the DS launch above, the Dreamcast's UK event was even more pitiful and tragic. Sega invited Chris Eubank and Nigel Benn – known boxing adversaries – to the event, so they could play each other at comedy boxing title *Ready 2 Rumble*. They not only did this, but even hugged as they posed for pictures. This wasn't the most cringe-worthy sight though – that was when Eubank parked up his massive Dreamcast-branded 'big rig' outside the Virgin Megastore bringing Oxford Street to a standstill.



06 "Microsoft's MTV 'unveiling' of the Xbox 360"

MICROSOFT: MAY 2005

To reveal the Xbox 360 to the world, Microsoft organised a big MTV extravaganza, promising to blow the lid off the new console amid a shower of music and entertainment. The problem was, the show was immensely light on information, preferring instead to focus on live performances from The Killers and its hobbit host Elijah Wood. This wouldn't have been so bad, had it not been for a ton of more in-depth information being leaked onto the internet hours before it went to air. Like its own Internet Explorer, Microsoft itself has some pretty large holes in its security that clearly need plugging.



07 "Mario sponsors Des Lynam's moustache"

NINTENDO: OCTOBER 2005

Okay, so this isn't a hardware-related stunt, but just has to be mentioned. For the release of *Super Mario Sunshine*, Nintendo sponsored the moustache of Des Lynam (a fellow moustache enthusiast, just like Mario), painting it a fetching GameCube purple for the purpose of a few publicity photos. These involved a man dressed in a (bad) Mario outfit, some girls and of course, a slightly cold-and-dead-inside Des Lynam sporting his colourful 'tache and an expression that signified his loathing and deep regret at ever agreeing to be involved.

08 "Sega's surprise early launch of the Sega Saturn"

SEGA: MAY 1995

One of the most spectacular launch blunders is, unsurprisingly, the work of Sega. Concerned the Saturn needed a head start over the PlayStation, Sega brought forward the release of the machine without giving any magazines a suitable amount of time to tell the public about it. The result was an over-priced console with three games sneaking onto shelves without anyone really noticing. Oh, the shame of it all.

09 "The Gizmondo Store on Regent Street"

GIZMONDO: MARCH 2005

The other pitiful attempt at gaining publicity by the Gizmondo crew came from the opening of its dedicated store in Regent Street. Possibly necessary because so few other retailers actually want to stock the device, the Gizmondo store has proved to be an embarrassing reminder of the machine's failure ever since it was opened. Only a few doors down from the much better and immeasurably busier Apple store, people actually go to the Gizmondo store to laugh at it and the desperate sales staff who work there.

10 "Microsoft's Japanese pizza strategy"

MICROSOFT: NOVEMBER 2003

Probably one of the saddest attempts at generating interest in a failing console was Microsoft's decision to team up with Aoki's Pizza to offer Xbox-themed pizzas. The pizzas were sliced into quarters, with the dividing lines supposedly replicating the famous 'X' and came served in boxes shaped and designed like Xboxes. How clever. Also, orders over 2000 yen came with the chance of winning an Xbox… this was pretty bad, especially for the normally savvy Microsoft.



BACK CHAT

Have your say on last month's Ten Of The Best

Last month, our Ten Of The Best slot featured sinister *Dead Or Alive* forum comments and they certainly provoked a lot of responses from you:

"I think Kokoro's head is huge. You can't put the blame on her hair, as it's really thin and wouldn't cause her head to look so massive"
David, via email

"What on earth is that guy going on about when he says 15-year-old girls don't have breasts? I'm 15 and most of the girls in my class have breasts. It's pretty obvious that the person who said this has never touched a 15-year-old girl's breasts"
James, Bath

"These people who talk about female game characters on the internet need to get a life. THEY ARE NOT REAL!"
Tom, Yorkshire

"What's a *Dead Or Alive* comfort pillow? One is mentioned in the fourth quote. Where can I get one?"
Steve, via email

"My favourite character is Helena. She's not like the other girls who are all tarts in skimpy tops. Helena's clothes aren't perfect though, she dresses like a grandmother a lot of the time and should try to wear something a bit younger. I think Microsoft should give her more costumes. Tell Microsoft I have some ideas for some!"
Anon, Ireland

"I am upset and disturbed by some of the things people feel the need to talk about on forums. This is why I try to use the internet as little as possible"
Nicky, Kent

Next Month We'll print your thoughts on the launch day disasters over on the left, email your comments now!

Send your rants to:
backchat@x360magazine.com

DB Mob

NO CATCH · NO UNWANTED SUBSCRIPTIONS · LIVE HELPLINE · GENUINE SERVICE

WALLPAPERS


59457



56941



56945

59487

56951


56948



56937



56953



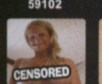
56933


59102

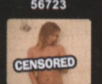

56723



56874



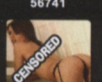
56871



56741



56719



56679



59895


59072



56750


56151



56445



59883



56022



59501


59884



59887



59900

VIDEO


59815
DIRTY ANNA GOES WILD IN HER BEDROOM


56301
NAUGHTY MONKEY


59838
TRIALS HERO


59839
RICH D**KHEAD


59832
TONY HAWK JUMP


56078
BENT OVER & READY


59846
GREATEST MOTO X STUNT EVER!!!

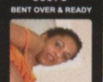

56233
LUCY TEASES


59833
TREADMILL BREAKER


59829
BOOTY SHAKER



59835
FILTHY LAUREN


56053
DARK & VERY DIRTY


56106
STRIPPING BRUNETTE


59587
ANDREA STRIPS



59477
ANGEL STRIPS



56049
NIPPLE TWEAKER


59446
MASSIVE BOOBS

2ADULT 2SHOW

HOT AND HORNY BLONDE WANTS YOU 56289	SEXY BRUNETTE PLAYS WITH HERSELF 56266
NOISY BLONDE RUBBING FRENZY 56282	BRUNETTE NAKED WANTING YOU TO WATCH 56168
STEAMY SELF-PLEASURE SESSION 56265	BRUNETTE TOY ACTION 56118

56079 - ASIAN BEAVER RUBBING ACTION
56081 - LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT I LIKE
56082 - BRUNNETE REVEALING ALL
56083 - VERY RUDE REDHEAD
56084 - BLONDE RUBBING ACTION
56087 - ORIENTAL TEASE DOES ANYTHING
56088 - SPANISH GIRL EAGER TO PLEASE
59593 - BLONDE GETTING DOWN & DIRTY
59594 - SEE ME DO NAUGHTY THINGS
59597 - ROAD-SIDE DOGGING
59598 - THREESOME STOOD UP
59600 - HIDE THE BLACK BALLS
59601 - LESBO TOY JOLLY'S
59603 - GIRLS NEW BEST FRIEND
59604 - DRUNKEN LESBO FUN

2ADULT 2SHOW

BLONDE BENT OVER SELF PLEASURE 59511	UPCLOSE RUBBING FUN 56266
WATCH MY FINGERS TEASE 59672	SECRETARY GETTING DIRTY 59691
GIRL ON ALL 4'S GETTING SEEN TO 59701	BLONDE RECEIVING BIG FUN 59700

59692 - NAUGHTY SECRETARY VIBRO ACTION
59732 - REAL DEEP, DEEP THROAT
59736 - MYA TAKING IT GOOD & PROPER
56901 - GOTHIC BABE SHOWING ALL
56842 - LESSIE TOUCHING FRENZY
56546 - UP CLOSE AND VERY PERSONAL
56360 - BENT OVER RUBBING ACTION
56326 - RED HOT TOY FUN
56345 - UPCLOSE AND SPREAD
56356 - SEE WHERE MY FINGER IS GOING
56325 - SEE WHAT MAKES ME WET
56321 - BRUNETTE RUBS AND TEASES
56319 - HORNY BABE AND REVEALS ALL
56343 - TAKE A LOOK AT MY PRIVATE AREA



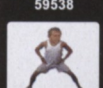
FOOTBALL STRIPPERS



56521 - ARSENAL	56530 - IRELAND
56523 - CELTIC	56531 - LIVERPOOL
56524 - CHARLTON	56532 - REAL MADRID
56525 - CHELSEA	56533 - MAN UNITED
56527 - ENGLAND	56529 - GLASGOW RANGERS
56535 - SCOTLAND	56536 - TOTTENHAM

ANIMATION

BRUNETTE RUBBING FUN 59308	BRITNEY TWO BIG MOUTHFULS 59534	SEXY PVC STRIPPER 59535
PAMMY & TOMMY BJ 59538	PARIS'S FAMOUS ROMP 59539	REESE'S RAUNCHY ROMP 59540


56017
DANCING BUSH


56021
SKELETON


56019
SHARK BITE


56009
JORDAN FLASH


59470
THE MATRIX



56011
ALIENS

TONES

TRUETONE XMAS CLASSICS

58250	Chipmunks With David Seville - Chipmunk Song
58251	Adam Sandler - Chanukah Song (Hanukah Song)
58252	Elvis Presley - Blue Christmas
58253	George Strait - All I Want For Christmas Is My Two...
58241	Bing Crosby - Winter Wonderland
58242	The Jacksons - Santa Claus Is Coming To Town
58231	Band Aid - Do They Know Its Christmas ?
58232	Bing Crosby - White Christmas
58234	The Pogues - Fairytale Of New York
58237	Dean Martin - Let It Snow
58238	John Lennon - Happy Christmas (War Is Over)
58239	Chris Rea - Driving Home For Christmas

POLY XMAS CLASSICS

52262	Hot Pantz - Give You One For Xmas
52265	Santa Clause Is Coming To Town
52264	Rudolf The Red Nose Reindeer
52260	Bo Selecta - Proper Crimbo
52261	Come All Ye Faithful
52263	Let It Snow
52266	Silent Night
52267	White Christmas
52268	Winter Wonderland

REAL LATEST

58056	Donald Duck Getting A BJ (Hilarious)
58051	Pulp Fiction - The Path Of The Righteous Man
58031	The GREATEST Female ORGASM EVER!!
58040	Italian Job - Blow the Bloody Doors Off
58043	James Bond - The Name's Bond
58044	Austin Powers - Alota Fagina
58055	Phoenix Nights - Garlic Bread
58022	Ace Ventura - Alrighty Then
58024	Dr Evil - Throw Me A Bone
58066	Star Wars - Jabba's Laugh
58138	Full Metal Jacket "Do You Suck.?"
58067	Buzz Lightyear - To Infinity & Beyond
58141	I'm Stood Next To A Ringtone W**ker

REAL MOAN TONES

58150	You Like That Ass Baby?
58152	Never Let This Guy Get Hold Of Your Lass!!
58151	Oh Yeah F*** That P***y
58156	Hear Me Climax!
58154	Don't STOP!!
58155	Oh F*** Me!!
58159	Climax Big Baby!!
58147	Ooh Yeah!!
58158	2 ADULT 2 SHOW
58153	2 ADULT 2 SHOW
58151	2 ADULT 2 SHOW

GAMES

COMPATIBILITY:
A: NOKIA B: MOTOROLA C: SAGEM D: SAMSUNG E: SHARP F: SIEMENS G: SONY ERICSSON

COLIN MCRAE RALLY '04



56503
ABCEG

The top console/PC rally game is finally mobile. This game stays true to the series by offering the same quality and feel as the original.

CRICKET



56506
ABDE

You are the best batsmen in cricket, can you score those precious runs, which will lead your team to victory?

BRUCE LEE

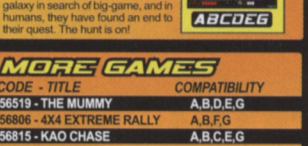


56501
ABCDEG

Control a Bruce Lee, using his self-developed fighting technique to decimate anything that stands in your way.

PREDATOR

TOP GAME



56513
ABCDEG

HIGHLY ADDICTIVE!
The Predators have scoured the galaxy in search of big-game, and in humans, they have found an end to their quest. The hunt is on!

WET T-SHIRT CONTEST



56497
AG

These Babes sure are hot and what a way to cool them down. Its a wet T-shirt competition. How wet can you get the babes?

TETRIS



56468
ABE

Arrange falling blocks in a way that they form horizontal lines. Once you score enough, you move to next level, and you will see a sporting clip.

GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS



56507
ABCDEFG

Enter the exciting world of amazing records in this mobile quiz. Challenge your friends or play alone in this hilarious trivia game!

MORE GAMES

CODE - TITLE	COMPATIBILITY
56519 - THE MUMMY	A,B,D,E,G
56806 - 4X4 EXTREME RALLY	A,B,F,G
56815 - KAO CHASE	A,B,C,E,G
56818 - POOL CHALLENGE	A
56821 - WIRELESS BOXING	A,D,F,G
56514 - SENSIBLE SOCCER	A,B,C,E,G
56814 - HEAD SKI CUP 2005	A,B,C,E,F,G
2 ADULT 2 SHOW GAMES	
56472 - STRIP POKER	A,B,E
56478 - BEAN RUNNER	A,B

DIRTY TXT JOKES

RUDE, CRUDE & VERY FUNNY!

RUDE JOKES >>

TXT SUB BOYS TO 80155

JOIN SUB BOYS FOR 50P PER JOKE TWICE A WEEK

CAN'T FIND

WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

TXT 5WANT (SPACE) YOUR MESSAGE TO 80155

EG: TXT 5WANT ALIEN REALSOUNDS TO 80155

XXX & SEXY STUFF FOR YOUR MOB

FROM ONLY £1

Spice up your mobile with these fantastic discount services. Get totally filthy films or saucy stripper movies. If you want pics, get our XXX rated pics or horny babe pics. Choose from one of the awesome services below!





XXX ADULT MOVIES >>
TXT FILM5 TO 69011
JOIN FILM5 FOR £1.50 PER MOVIE DAILY

SEXY MOVIES >>
TXT FILM5 TO 80155
JOIN FILM5 FOR £1.50 PER MOVIE TWICE A WEEK
TO JOIN FROM IRELAND TXT IREFILM5 TO 57856

XXX ADULT PICS >>
TXT BABE5 TO 69011
JOIN BABES FOR £1.00 PER PIC DAILY

SEXY PICS >>
TXT BABE5 TO 80155
JOIN BABES FOR £1.00 PER PIC TWICE A WEEK
TO JOIN FROM IRELAND TXT IREBABES TO 57856

HOW TO ORDER FOR JUST 1 ITEM

ADULT
TXT CODE TO 69011
EG: 56265 to 69011

EVERYTHING ELSE
TXT CODE TO 80155
EG: 59457 to 80155
TO ORDER FROM IRELAND: TXT IRE + CODE TO 57856

OR JOIN DBCLUB

JOIN DBCLUB FOR £4.50 PER MONTH AND GET 5 ITEMS FOR THE PRICE OF 1
ORDER 1 ITEM THEN ORDER YOUR NEXT 4 IN THE SAME WAY FOR FREE

ADULT
TXT DBCLUB + CODE TO 69011
EG: dbclub 56265 to 69011

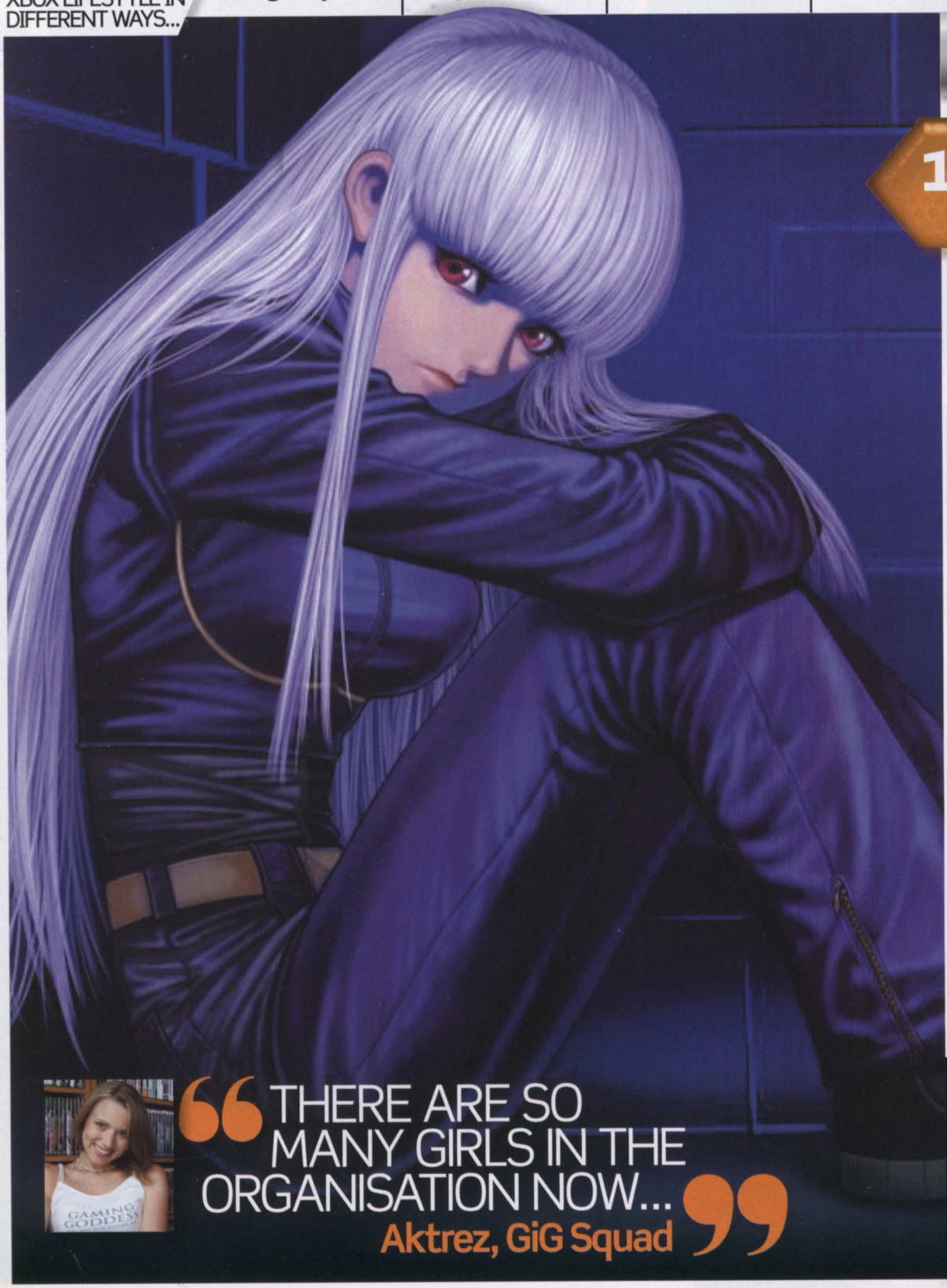
EVERYTHING ELSE
TXT DBCLUB + CODE TO 80155
EG: dbclub 59457 to 80155
TO JOIN FROM IRELAND: TXT DBCLUB + CODE TO 57856

Single pictures, packs, video, animation, football strippers and ringtones cost £4.50 (Ireland €6). Games cost £6.00 (Ireland €8). Charge messages sent in denominations of £1.50 (Ireland €2): You will be sent a WAP link to collect your item and a small additional network charge may be incurred. SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES: 69011 is for 18+ and 80155 is for 16+. Daily services are: BABE5 to 69011 (£1.00 per day), FILM5 TO 69011 (£1.50 per day). Twice weekly services are: BABE5 to 80155 (£1.00 twice a week), FILM5 to 80155 (£1.50 twice a week), BOYS to 80155 (50p* twice a week). *50p subscriptions are charged at £1.00 with every 2nd item free = 50p each. Irish Subscriptions are for over 16s only. IREFILM5 and IREBABE5 to 57856 (€2 twice weekly). DBCLUB: This is a monthly service which entitles consumers to purchase 5 items for the price of one from the following categories Wallpapers, Ringtones, Animation and Videos. EG: 2 Ringtones, 1 Wallpaper and 2 Animations for £4.50 (Ireland €6). To unsubscribe from any of these services text STOP to the number you used to join or email unsubscribe@dbmob.com. All 2Adult 2Show items are for over 18s only. Pre-pay users without enough credit will not receive items. Responsibility cannot be accepted for content ordered that is not supported by the handset or for delayed or distorted content delivery. Due to phone screen sizes/resolutions images downloaded may differ slightly from shown. TUNES: MCPS & PRS payments paid. TRUETONES: are not original recordings and are not sung by original artists and are not connected with the artist or associated companies in any way. CAN'T FIND IT: This initial service is not charged apart from the usual network message charge, with located content sent to you at our normal rate eg. Ringtone £4.50 (Ireland €6). DBMob is a product of K2 Media Ltd, PO Box 162, Kendal, LA8 8WW. Support line available between 9am to 5pm, Mon to Fri - +44 (0)871 200 3193.

COMMUNITY

X360
WE BREAK DOWN XBOX LIFESTYLE IN DIFFERENT WAYS...

NEWS	FEATURE	CUSTOMISE	LIFESTYLE	THE MARKET
Online news and gossip	Digging a little deeper into Live	Fine-tune your X360 experience	The latest DVDs and hardware	What's hot for downloading



X360 COMMUNITY CONTENTS

116 NEWS
Xbox Live Arcade explained. It could bring the likes of *Ghouls 'N Ghosts* and *King Of Fighters* to your console

118 HANDS-ON
We give you an exclusive lowdown on *Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter*'s multiplayer, complete with fat, juicy pictures, aren't you lucky?

119 RESIDENT EXPERT
Rinny talks about the TruePlayerz and how UK gamers are taking on the rest of the world. Rock on sister

120 FEATURE: XBOX LIVE Q&A
How do I transfer my Xbox Live accounts? Will *Halo 2* work on Xbox 360? It was easier back in the old days when letters were scrawled in crayon and bashed Nintendo

122 LIFESTYLE
Revenge Of The Sith and *Batman Begins* go under the microscope with Digital AV Cable outscoring them both

124 MARKETPLACE
Final Fantasy XI explained, five convenient lag excuses provided, next month's important dates revealed. Don't thank us, it's our jobs

"THERE ARE SO MANY GIRLS IN THE ORGANISATION NOW..."
Aktrez, GiG Squad

LIVE

RECOMMENDED DOWNLOAD

DOOM 3, NEW MAPS
Communications ("receiving area warehouse") and Surface ("lonely section of Mars base") maps are now available

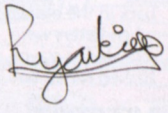


COMMUNITY EDITORIAL

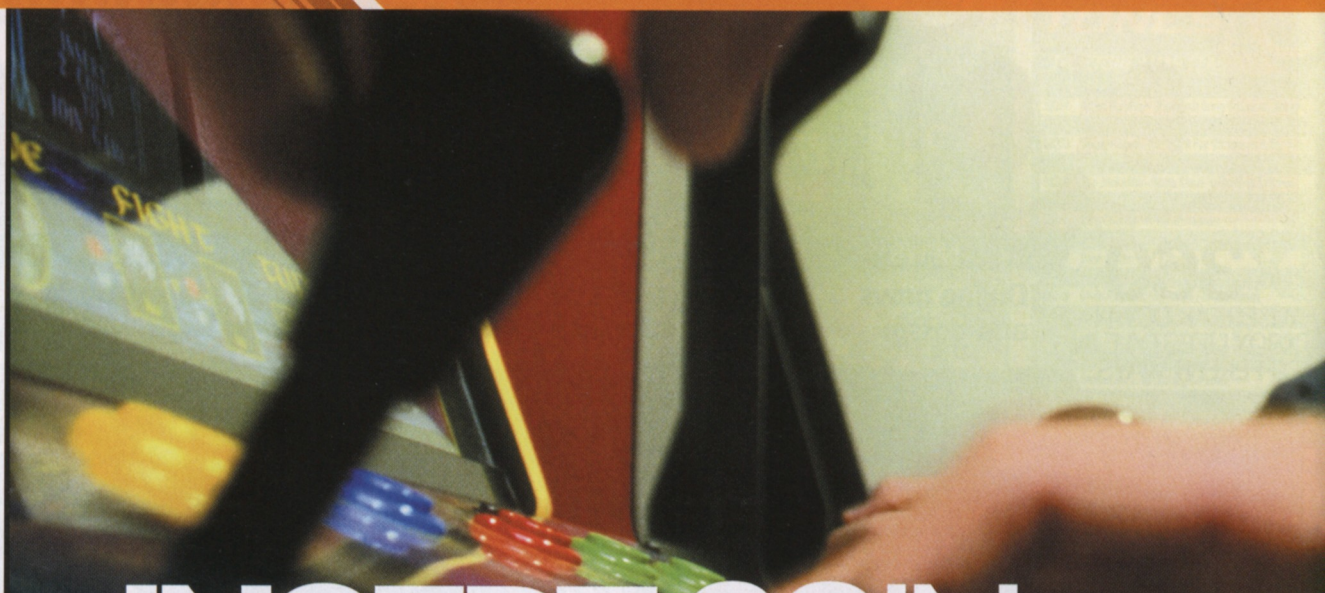
So... Xbox Live went down for a day and a million gamers limply shook their fists at the black and green God in the sky. This meant that an army of online warriors was forced to rummage through its games collection for something to tide them over for 24 hours. It's amazing how many gems are left untouched in the pursuit of higher Live rankings. Well, it's not amazing, but it's still surprising. *Oddworld: Stranger's Wrath*, *Chronicles Of Riddick: Escape From Butcher Bay*, *Fahrenheit*, even single-player modes in games such as *Halo 2*.

What are we trying to prove by bettering ourselves online? Why abandon these offline-only games with such haste? Is this a glimpse of the future? What will happen to single-player games? 24 hours later, these questions were forgotten under a chorus of "laaaag" as Live was restored to full power.

Happy gaming.



Ryan,
Community Editor
EMAIL ME: live@x360magazine.com



INSERT COIN

Xbox Live Arcade gets big name makeover

Microsoft has revealed Xbox Live Arcade will go under the surgeon's knife for Xbox 360, as part of Live's dramatic facelift for launch day. Yet again, Xbox Live Arcade will allow you to browse a variety of genres and download 'smaller' games for a small fee.

One big difference is that the new Xbox Live Arcade service will be integrated into the dashboard, avoiding the need for a separate disc. It will also take advantage of Xbox Live Marketplace, so payment will be easier. So where Xbox Live Arcade was clumsy and convoluted, it will now be quick and easy.

THE SAD TRUTH ABOUT XBOX LIVE...
You judge Live games by how good you are at playing them

"The next generation of Xbox Live Arcade for Xbox 360 will enhance the gaming experience for casual and competitive gamers alike, across the globe, providing something for everyone with world-class games and captivating content," said Peter Moore, vice president of marketing and publishing at Microsoft.

Peter Moore also revealed that plenty of big name developers have signed on to pledge their support for Xbox Live Arcade – names like Sega, Konami, Capcom and EA. Beyond that, there are plenty of smaller companies with an illustrious past who could all contribute killer titles such as *Pac-Man* (Namco), *NBA Jam* (Midway) or *King Of Fighters* (SNK Playmore). In total, 35 games are planned for summer 2006 and already, names such as *Smash TV* and *Gauntlet* are promised for Xbox Live Arcade.

> "Xbox Live Arcade for X360 will enhance gaming for casual and competitive gamers"

No price has been confirmed yet, but with last-gen Xbox Live Arcade seeing games priced between £4 and £11, it's reasonable to expect a similar pricing scheme again. However, one game will be included, preloaded on every X360 hard drive from launch, free of charge. *Hexic HD* is a puzzle game designed by *Tetris* creator Alexey Pajitnov. ■

CONFIRMED XBOX LIVE ARCADE GAMES

ASTROPOP
BANKSHOT BILLIARDS 2
BEJEWELED 2
CRYSTAL QUEST
FEEDING FRENZY
GAUNTLET
GEOMETRY WARS 2
HARDWOOD BACKGAMMON
HARDWOOD HEARTS
HARDWOOD SPADES
HEXIC HD
HOOPWORLD
JEWEL QUEST
JOUST
MARBLE BLAST ULTRA
MUTANT STORM RELOADED
OUTPOST KALOKI
ROBOTRON 2084
SMASH TV
WIK: FABLE OF SOULS
ZUMA



CONFIRMED XBOX LIVE ARCADE SUPPORT

ATARI
BIZARRE CREATIONS
CAPCOM
CODEMASTERS
CTXM
DIGITAL ECLIPSE
EA
EMPIRE INTERACTIVE
GAIA STUDIOS
GAMEHOUSE STUDIOS
GARAGE GAMES
GASTRONAUT STUDIOS
HAMSTER
HARMONIX
HIPSOFT
HUDSON SOFT
IWIN
KONAMI
LLAMASOFT
LOAD INC
MAD DOC SOFTWARE
MAJESCO
MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS
MIDWAY HOME ENTERTAINMENT
MUMBO JUMBO (UNITED DEVELOPERS)
NAKED SKY ENTERTAINMENT
NAMCO
OBERON MEDIA
PICK UP AND PLAY
PIXELSTORM INC
PLAYFIRST
POMPOM GAMES
POPCAP GAMES
Q ENTERTAINMENT
REALNETWORKS INC
REFLEXIVE ENTERTAINMENT
SECRET LAIR STUDIOS
SEGA
SILVER CREEK ENTERTAINMENT
SNK PLAYMORE
STAINLESS GAMES
STREAMLINE STUDIOS
TIK GAMES
UBISOFT
UWINK
VIVENDI UNIVERSAL GAMES
WAHOO STUDIOS
WANAKO GAMES
WILD TANGENT

VIBEOLOGY

Tiers
The order of best to worst characters is sorted into tiers, with a top tier, mid tier and bottom tier.

GGPO
Stands for Good Game Peace Out. A forum term but some Americans have started saying it on Live. Idiots.

Slide Sniping
Aiming with a sniper rifle by moving the player himself rather than moving the sights.



GIRLS ALLOWED

GIG SQUAD ARE GO

Another gaming girl group starts up

CONTINUING THE RECENT trend of up-and-coming girl clans, the female gamers at **WatchUsGame.com** have set up an off-shoot group called the GIG Squad. However, they are very keen to point out that they aren't a girl clan, but just an extension of Watch Us Game. "We aren't a clan or anything," explains captain of the GIG Squad, Aktrez. "We just need to put a marketing face on Watch Us Game. There are so many girls in the organisation now, it's hard to use them all when we are asked for interviews and for advertising. This way, it just makes it easier for the press to get their brains wrapped around the concept."

Because there's no sponsorship as yet, the GIG Squad are just about games and how much they like games. Made up of Aktrez, Morrigan, Saxy, FragGrrl, AngelPoo, Guardian8088 and Feyith, they're just girls who want to get other girls gaming, which is surely better than having to pretend to like the *Crazy Frog* game like the Frag Dolls do ("it's all a bit of fun!" says the one that admits to not actually playing games, anywhere, ever). And seeing how running this news story is going to see us accused of being sexist anyway… Ian likes Angelpoo, Ryan likes FragGrrl, Jay likes Saxy and Keith likes Aktrez. ■



GIRLS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN/ Watch Us Game's seven leading ladies insist that the GIG Squad are not a girl clan, and with no sponsorship as yet, they state they are all about getting other girls into gaming





IRONIC GAMING

Live moments you love to hate

OPERATION FLASHPOINT: ELITE

Oh boy, this is bad. "It might not look nice but it's gameplay that counts!" shout deluded fans. This is the gaming equivalent of going out with someone despite their ogre looks because they tell good knock-knock jokes.



GUILTY GEAR X2: RELOAD

This. Is. Quite. Lag. Gy. On. Line. Which is a real shame because it is one of the better fighting games available at the moment thanks to its weird characters and fairly deep system. We'd rather take Roman Cancels over random supers any day thank you very much. AND it has a pirate girl. Enough said, we think.



FIGHT CLUB

A new sport for those of you with a bit of time and money on your hands – ironic Live gaming! Play bad games on Live simply with the purpose of mocking the other players! Listen to their flimsy reasons for playing games like *Fight Club*, then laugh and Quit Match.



GAME OVER, MAN

Xbox Live cut off for 24 hours

ON 24 OCTOBER, Xbox Live went down for just over a day as Microsoft updated the online service for the Xbox 360 console. This meant no logging onto Live, no *Halo 2* matchmaking, no **Xbox.com** to visit in the meantime, nothing.

This might be understandable, you might think, but it still caused certain sections of the internet to hammer their fat fists on their keyboards with rage, demanding back their fun. The argument has been that if Microsoft can turn off Xbox Live for a day, Microsoft should add an extra day onto people's subscriptions. However, Microsoft are completely covered by the Terms & Conditions you agreed to when signing up for Xbox Live and have already stated that it WON'T be refunding anyone anything for the missing day. So there.



TRUEPLAYERZ XBOX 360 GIVEAWAY

THREE LUCKY gamers walked off with an X360 at the TruePlayerz tournament held in London – the last of the live shows was held on 20 November. By walked off, we don't mean stole them, we mean they competed in *Halo 2*, *Battlefield 2: Modern Combat*, *FIFA 06* and *Capcom Fighting Jam*.

There were some slightly tiresome elements to proceedings, such as UK FIFA champion Paul Gordon hosting an hour-long Game School where he'd offer valuable advice that boomed throughout the room such as, "don't get tackled in your own half." Cheers Paul. However, credit is due to TruePlayaz as not only did it help raise cash for charity but all the games actually ran on time, making a mockery of our "we'll turn up late, it'll be fine" attitude.

THE SAD TRUTH ABOUT XBOX LIVE...
The ten-year old that is whooping your ass has only just bought the game, and doesn't even like it

THUNDER IN PARADISE

Ghost Recon proves life can be a beach





KEEP ON SHOOTING/ Despite all the next-gen gimmicks, *Advanced Warfighter* still comes down to blasting the kegs off your foes

We'd spent the last 30 seconds stalking a guy who had just racked up three kills in a row. He thought he was the top dog, the big kahoona. We'd come out of hiding, sprinted across a beach, and were about to pop him in the back of the head when BAM, his buddy caught us.

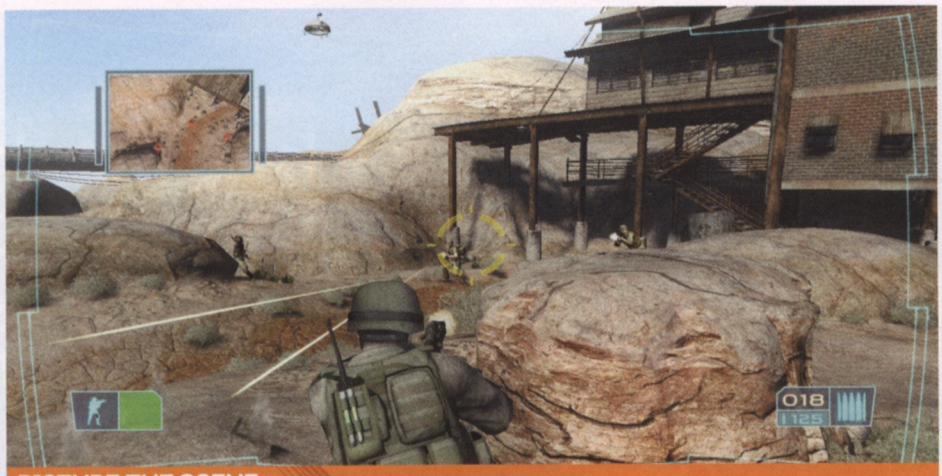
This was our first taste of *Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter*'s multiplayer mode. It turns out the guy in front was the big man of the show – luring us out so his partner could take the shot from a higher vantage point. It didn't take us long to work out where the camper was positioned, and as the next round began, we snuck to his cliff-top outcrop and caught him out.

The level we played was a beach-side map called Rocky Cove, with a stretch of open sand surrounded by rocky outcrops, small hills and cliffs. Spurs of rock and sand stretched into the sea and became perfect sniper spots – our recently deceased opponent was a fan. The rocks around the beach were a maze of nooks and crannies, perfect for stalking opponents.

The design of the map was crucial to retaining the feel of the single-player game. *Advanced Warfighter* is all about stealth and cover, so a multiplayer map needs to accommodate these skills. The beach map was good for sneaking, the outcrops of rock offered perfect sniper spots, while the rocky alleys were ideal for ambushes. In team games the map worked well, with players using each other as decoys to encourage the enemy away from the rocks as well as offering a number of hidden routes to the sniper spots, ensuring no one in this game was completely safe.

> "Keep your back to the wall and never run into the open"

As a run-and-gun exercise in a free-for-all Death Match, the map worked well too. The nooks and crannies of the rocks were a perfect hunting ground, with most players adopting the more cautious approach learned in the single-player mode – keep your back to the wall and never run into the open.



PICTURE THE SCENE...

16 eyes are better than two

YOU'RE PINNED down and under fire from all quarters, you need a safe exit, and thankfully you've got Picture-in-Picture. The PiP feature will really shake up how we play online shooters. Team games will become tighter and more tactical as certain players are assigned the role of 'spotter' and the others 'hunter'. If you are caught in an open area it's game over, so the opportunity to scan the area for snipers, ambushes and dug-in enemies will be vital.



All-seeing, all-knowing

Obviously, the big addition to the gameplay was the introduction of Picture-in-Picture from the single-player campaign. Using this you can skip through the helmet cameras of your team-mates and a get a wider picture of the battle. Why poke your head out to get blown off when you can just tune in to your sniper's point of view? It's a great addition that will really change the way we play online shooters – especially when this game's 16-player skirmishes take off. Plus, some of these multiplayer maps are huge, so using team-mates as spotters will be essential.

Gobsmacking graphics

We had played some way into the single-player campaign and experienced the game's urban scenery, but we had yet to play outside the opening missions, into the surroundings of Mexico City. This beach level gave a glimpse into the quality that *Advanced Warfighter* promises. The colours were rich and real, the water impressive and the textures solid. The burning yellows of the sun, white sand and clear blues of the water lent the map a freshness we hadn't seen since Ubisoft's shooter *Far Cry Instincts*.

Back to the multiplayer, and Ubisoft is promising total customisation. Before you jump into one of the 15 multiplayer maps you will have the opportunity to pick your class of warfighter – sniper, grenadier, etc – before customising the look of the character. As with Ubi's *Rainbow Six: Lockdown*, you will be able to change the build and look of the character, selecting facial appearance, gear and weapons. The same custom options stretch to the gameplay, with game type, duration and weapons all adjustable.

As well as the multiplayer versus maps there are also plans to include four-player co-op versions of the 12 single-player campaign missions, as well as extra 'quick' missions just for online co-op.

Our taste of *Advanced Warfighter*'s multiplayer map left us wanting more, and on a bigger scale. This side of the game hasn't been fully tuned yet and perhaps this is why the delay until February has occurred, but if Ubisoft gets it right, this is certain to be an essential Live shooter. ■

NEXT MONTH: If you can't get enough of this game, don't worry, we'll be getting deeper into *Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter* with a newer version of the code. Expect more revelations soon.

LIVE LIFER RINNY

A glimpse into the life of PMS' first lady of Live gaming...



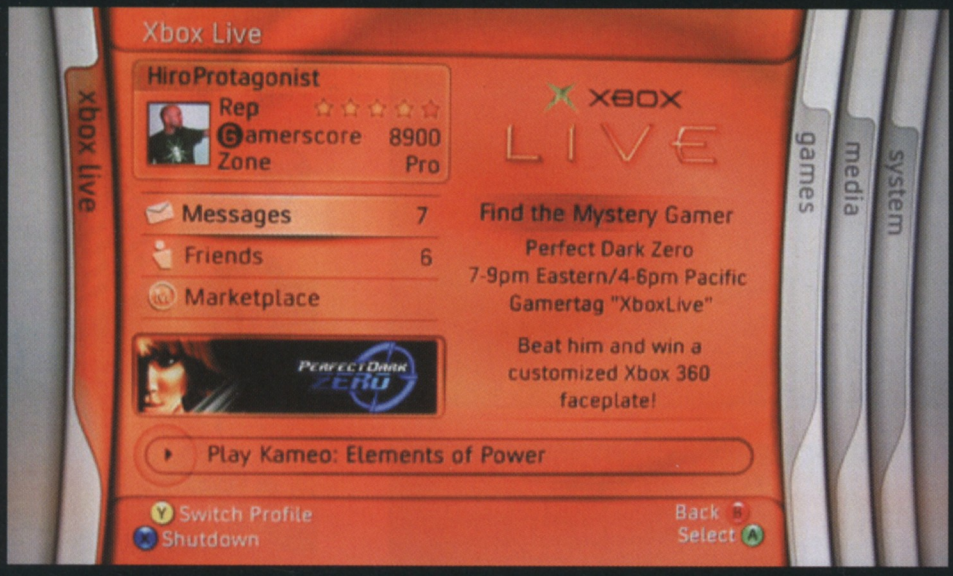
This last month has really been a welcome step forward in my gaming life.

I was lucky enough to be involved in a charity gaming event named Trueplayerz, held in London, and honoured to be invited to present at the Golden Joystick Awards for Girls' Choice game *Sims 2*. I have met and partied with some of the industry's finest, and exchanged headshots with the UK's first officially sponsored *Halo 2* competitive team – 4Kings. I have been lucky enough to become a voice, however small, for female gamers in the UK, and around me my PMS Sisters continue to spawn within various other events across the globe. I feel privileged to know that the more work we do, the more steps we are taking towards changing the industry's opinion of females in gaming. Developers are beginning to notice that we do represent over 40 per cent of online gamers, and, I believe, we are about to see a change in the way they approach their duties to the gamers they subscribe to.

Not only am I doing my best to represent female gamers, but I also strive to provide a global image of the committed UK gaming community. I have to say, it is immensely satisfying, and really kind of exciting, to know that we will finally have a recognised international force in tournaments such as the World Cyber Games' *Halo 2*. At finals being held in Singapore this month, the 4K team are about to really show the rest of the gaming world that we can kick ass, going up against big stars such as the USA's Team 3D's Ogres and Canada's Team EG's Sadpanda and gspot. These underground uprisings that I am discovering, give me hope for the next step in online gaming. Our team has a lot planned for the next 12 months and we will be representing at any event we can get to. However, the thing I'm looking forward to the most is meeting more and more gamers. There's no better feeling than meeting people I've gamed with before at these tourneys, and it all assists in building the strong online community I know we can have here in the UK.

Next month comes our new long-awaited platform – the Xbox 360 – and I can't wait to get on there and really maximise its capabilities. I truly believe we are about to embark on our greatest journey so far. I can't wait to see you all there.

Rin,
PMS Clan



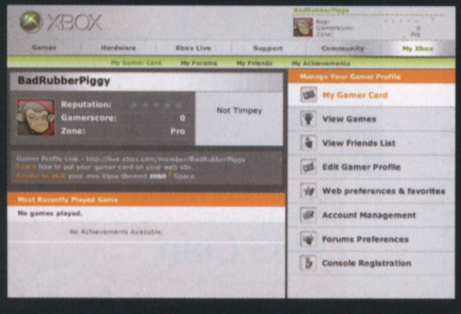
F.A.Q YOU

All your queries about the new Xbox Live format answered via the classic questions and answers format (we're original like that)

ORIGINAL XBOX

Will Xbox Live continue services on the original Xbox?

Yes. What's likely to happen is you'll see individual game servers slowly start closing down, as happened with *Steel Battalion* when its online Campaign Mode was shut down by Capcom on 30 September. The number of players buying Xbox games and using the Live service will slowly dry up after Xbox 360 hits the shelves. After that, it's up to the publisher whether they want to continue pumping money into servers for the dwindling original Xbox Live community, most of whom will have moved on to Xbox 360.



Will the original Xbox Live games such as Halo 2 work on Xbox 360?

This is a huge grey area with Microsoft at the moment, as backwards compatibility is the one area it has consistently managed to get wrong. After backtracking on the 'no backwards compatibility' train of thought, Microsoft has kept worryingly quiet after its promise that selected games will be compatible, which has left many internet forums free to run wild with speculation. This is one question that will only be answered on launch day.

XBOX 360

Is it true that you get Xbox Live free with Xbox 360?

Sort of, Xbox Live is split into two memberships – Gold, which works as the current Xbox Live does, and Silver, which doesn't grant you multiplayer Live options but does let you browse Xbox Live Marketplace. It's the latter that you'll be getting with your Xbox 360, as Xbox Live Silver is accessible straight out of the box. Ultimately, you'll have to cough up the cash if you want Gold, but anyone buying the premium Xbox 360 bundle will have a month's free trial first.

Will games feature lag on Xbox 360?

Yes, but the factor here will be developer experience. To get games online, developers have to encapsulate the network code and send as much data with the least amount of packets possible. For example, *Halo 2* has sticky aim to help ease any lag problems, as it means less data can be sent. A simple but effective trick and it's becoming more common to see developers come up with new and unique ways to combat lag, the result being that latter day Xbox titles don't suffer like they used to. Also, generally speaking, broadband speeds in the UK are improving, with serious Live players upgrading to faster speeds.

XBOX LIVE ACCOUNT

How do I transfer my current Xbox Live account on Xbox 360?

Head over to the redesigned **Xbox.com** and sign up. You'll have to answer a few questions such as your Gamertag, last few numbers of your credit card and other details to verify your Xbox Live tag, but once you're done, you'll have your very own Gamer Card that allows you to cross the consoles and activate your Gamertag on Xbox 360.

I've heard I can change my Gamertag. Is this true?

Yes. When transferring your account, you'll get one chance to change your Gamertag, good news for b1Gp1Mp1n69. It hasn't been revealed how this is done but it's been suggested that a message will be sent to everyone on your Friends List informing them of the change, so they don't panic when they see b1Gp1Mp1n69 has been replaced by MrSex.

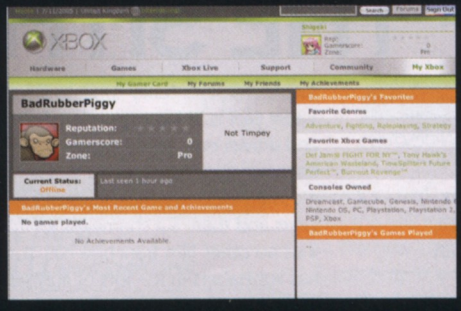
What about this Gamer Points thing I keep hearing about?

You can now score Gamer Points by playing games offline. Complete them and you'll score points, which show up on your profile, along with other achievements. For example, beat a boss in *Kameo* and your achievement will show up on your Gamertag, via a small avatar of its face. *The Outfit* rewards you with medals, which also show up on your Gamertag. All these achievements help Xbox Live assess what type of gamer you are and match you against players of a similar skill level.

DASHBOARD

I understand what Xbox Live Marketplace is, but you could buy downloads on the old Xbox Live service. So what's the difference?

The difference is really in the scope of Xbox Live Marketplace. Rather than having to own the specific game for narrowly focused downloads, there's now the option to buy demos, watch trailers, grab downloads and shop for user-created content. The central Xbox 360 button on the pad acts as a shortcut, bringing up a small menu to the left of the screen when pressed. This menu, along with other options, gives you Marketplace access, making it far more convenient than the convoluted methods of old.

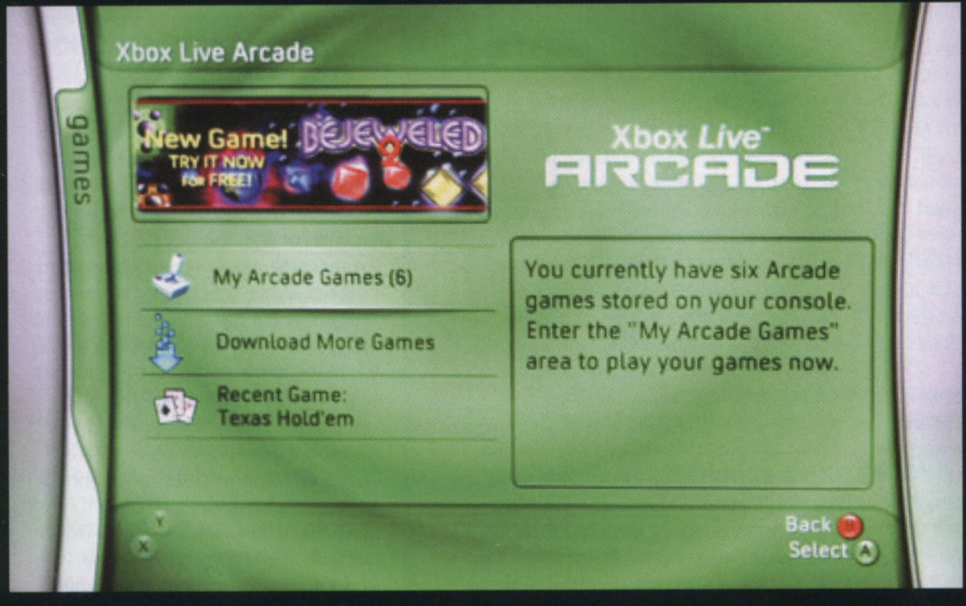




FULL DISCLOSURE/ All your offline achievements will now be displayed on your Xbox Live Gamertag for all to see (and laugh at)

What does Xbox Live Arcade do?

This is an extension of what was seen last-gen, a service that let you download demos of 'small' games, then buy the full version if you liked what you saw. Titles such as *Bejeweled* and *Ms. Pac-Man* were genuine gems amongst a generally uninspired bunch, but the bandwagon never really got rolling thanks to the relatively high prices puncturing its tyres. The pricing for this renewed Xbox Live Arcade assault hasn't been revealed as yet, but with the likes of Konami, Capcom and Sega on board, it seems it's far more likely to hit the mark this time around. Silver members get to download demos but you have to be a Gold member to be able to buy them.



I've heard I can send video messages over Live. How do I do this?

The new Community option will allow you to check voice and text messages from friends, which is great news for Live users. Even better news is that X-Cam will be released sometime in 2006, so you'll be able to send and receive video messages too.

NEXT MONTH: We'll see you on Live with our first reviews of *PGR3*, *Quake 4* and *FIFA 06 RTTWC*



X360 DVD OF THE MONTH

STAR WARS: REVENGE OF THE SITH

Finally, the story is complete – and so are we



INFORMATION

20th Century Fox • £19 .99 • Widescreen 2.35 • Dolby Digital 5.1 EX
DIRECTOR/ George Lucas
STARRING/ Hayden Christensen, Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman

RATING/ ●●●○○

EXTRAS RATING/ ●●●○○

The wait is over. The circle is now complete.' Or perhaps this: 'A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away'. Or maybe this: 'After two limp prequels, George Lucas' latest and arguably darkest *Star Wars* episode has left many sated but more disappointed.' You've more than likely read your fair share of *Revenge Of The Sith* reviews, all of which start in different ways, striving to be the definitive one, but ultimately they're all the same: irrelevant.

As is this one. Marvel as this review remarks on the dialogue that sounds like it was written by a baby extra-terrestrial mimicking the way human children talk when impersonating adults and you pay no attention to it. Hark as it states that this film contains acting that makes Jar Jar Binks look like a super-powered Olivier, and that the Anakin-eventually-turns to-Darth Vader plot is hideously underwhelming and drawn out, not to mention unconvincing, only for you to say "but it's *Star Wars*!" Fair point. This is *Star Wars* and there's a shameless joy to it that no other film franchise has. It also has lightsabers in it – lots of lightsabers, and with them some spellbinding duels that are a technical marvel, dazzling enough to almost make you forget the cack they interrupt.

Indeed, you only need to listen to the commentary to realise that Lucas stopped being the right man for *Star Wars* the moment he thought of it. And talking of extras, amongst a couple of fairly light featurettes and deleted scenes, there is an extremely good documentary. 'Within A Minute' spends two hours going through exactly what process goes on behind 60 seconds of film. It's marvellous stuff, even if you don't like *Star Wars*. Not that you'd have any just reason to, of course – it is *Star Wars* after all.

DVD EXTRAS: The extras are good, though generally quite lightweight. However, a highly detailed making-of documentary saves the day, making the DVD an essential buy.

Aaron Asadi

REPLAY

SZZZOW
» Mace Windu gets his lightsaber out. Cool, because, well, he was in *Pulp Fiction*.

BZZZUM
» Yoda gets his lightsaber out. We just like watching him dance around Palpatine.

CHUZZOW
» Anakin and Obi-Wan get their lightsabers out. We've been waiting so long for this.

DVDS

THE SKELETON KEY

BBC Worldwide Publishing • £17.99 • 1.85:1 • Dolby Digital 5.1
DIRECTOR/ Ian Softley
STARRING/ Kate Hudson, John Hurt, Peter Sarsgaard

RATING/ ●●●○○

EXTRAS RATING/ ●●○○○

LIKE MOST OF the recent horror fodder the big-budget studios are churning out, *The Skeleton Key* is light on gore and low on chills. But there's something enigmatic about Kate Hudson in the role of Caroline, the carer for an elderly man who's struck down by a strange illness that turns out to be linked with New Orleans' Hoodoo magic.

With little to go on but a series of clues that lead her to a room in the old man's house, Hudson uncovers dark secret after dark secret about the hoodoo, 'who-do-what-you-don't-dare-do' people of Louisiana. That is until the final act, which surprisingly houses a twist that most won't be expecting.

The extras are the most disappointing thing about this disc. At first glance, ten featurettes seem like plenty, but as various bits of information are reused and talking heads repeat themselves, you'll probably just want to magic the whole thing away.

Marc Chacksfield

MR AND MRS SMITH

Momentum Pictures • £19.99 • 2.35:1 Anamorphic • Dolby Digital 5.1
DIRECTOR/ Doug Liman
STARRING/ Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, Vince Vaughn

RATING/ ●●○○○

EXTRAS RATING/ ●●○○○

THE PREMISE IS simple: cast two of the most beautiful people on the planet (Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt) as married hired assassins, and get them to knock ten bales of crap out of each other. The outcome, however, is slightly more muddled. While director Doug Liman is clearly having a ball with the concept, he fails to remember that something similar was made ten years ago in the guise of James Cameron's *True Lies*. That said, Jolie and Pitt clearly 'connected' in their roles and the set pieces are explosive. There's even room for Vince Vaughn to pop up as comedy sidekick Eddie.

Two audio commentaries nicely relay anecdote after anecdote about the production, with Liman being his usual

nervy self, while the deleted scenes unfortunately are nothing more than extended versions of the ones in the film. As for the solitary featurette, it's what your skip button was made for.

Marc Chacksfield

BATMAN BEGINS

Fox Home Entertainment • £15.99 • 1.85:1 • Dolby Digital 5.1
DIRECTOR/ Christopher Nolan
STARRING/ Christian Bale, Michael Caine, Cillian Murphy

RATING/ ●●●●○

EXTRAS RATING/ ●●○○○

AFTER THE DEBACLE that was *Batman And Robin*, it was going to take something special to rejuvenate the *Batman* franchise. Thankfully, director Christopher Nolan came on board and injected a heavy dose of black magic. How did he do it? By going back to the beginning and telling the story of how the caped crusader came to be, as realistically as possible. Oh, and removing any trace of the bat nipples that plagued Joel Schumacher's last effort. The result is a dark, brooding epic that's both stylistically basic and brilliant.

This two-disc DVD edition does a commendable attempt at covering all bases. From pre-production to post-production, sets are analysed, most of the cast and crew are interviewed, and the new-look batmobile gets the test drive of its life. However, while the featurettes are enjoyable, they don't quite reach the places an audio commentary can. Still, the bat is back and better than ever.

Marc Chacksfield

ROCK SCHOOL

EMI Records (UK) • £17.99 • 1.85:1 • Dolby Digital 5.1
DIRECTOR/ Ros Ponder
STARRING/ Gene Simmons, Fiona Mussons

RATING / ●●●○○

EXTRAS RATING / ●●○○○

WITH JACK BLACK and his class of rockers proving such a hit in Hollywood, it was only a matter of time before it was snapped up and given the reality TV treatment. *Rock School* is set in a stuffy British boarding school with Black's tattered trainers being replaced by the 8-inch leather heels of KISS stalwart Gene Simmons. His job is to take a class of kids enamoured with classical music, bring them to their senses and turn them into a rock band.

Overall, it is Simmons' ability to soften the kids' stiff upper lips that makes for a charming and amusing production.

Keith Hennessey



THE SECRET'S OUT/ Batman isn't as superfit as he likes to make out – stairs often give him a bit of a stitch

HARDWARE

DIGITAL AV CABLE

DISTRIBUTOR/ Joytech • £14.99
CONTACT/ www.joytech.net

RATING/ ●●●●●

GRANTED, A SHINY new AV cable isn't the most glamorous of purchases alongside a new wireless pad or 5.1 sound system, but it is one of the more essential. If, like us, you are going to opt for the top-end Xbox 360 package and don't have an HDTV just yet, then you will need one of these cables, as the premium package only comes with a high-definition connection.

The cables themselves are a quality buy, featuring RGB Scart, a 5.1 optical connector for the best sound set-up and an S-video connection. This cable is everything to everyone. Best of all is the price. At fifteen pounds this is a fiver less than the official cable set. If you want the best possible picture on your standard TV, at a decent price, then this Joytech branded set is the one worth buying.

Ian Dean

NEWS IN QUOTES

"OSCAR-VEHICLE CRASH WILL BE RELEASED ON DVD THIS MONTH, GET THE TISSUES READY."
PATHE DISTR.

"THE LONE GUNMEN, MULDER'S ALLIES AGAINST THE MAN, GET THEIR OWN DVD BOXSET. THE DVD WILL BE AVAILABLE 30 JANUARY, DON'T MISS IT."
FOX HOME ENT.

NEO SE CONTROLLER

INFORMATION

Joytech • £19.99
CONTACT / www.joytech.net

RATING / ●●●●●

X360 BOOK OF THE MONTH

Joytech has a long history in the peripherals business, so it was no surprise to find the label ready and waiting with a new unofficial pad at launch. However, it was a surprise to see the higher than usual price tag.

Of course there's a reason for this, with the new Xbox 360 features it has become necessary for Microsoft to assign licences to third-party manufacturers in order to assure a standard of quality. So, despite being a shade or two more expensive than a last generation unofficial pad, you are guaranteed that this will work with every function on the new console. The central Guide Button is there to power up the console, signify the number of players involved and offer instant access to the console's multimedia functions.

The new shoulder buttons are present and easily used given the pad's very similar design and shape to the official. In fact, this is largely identical to the official pad, all except the chunky insulated cable extending from the front. That's right, there's no wireless pad from Joytech… yet.

All in all this is a great unofficial pad and the expensive licence Joytech has shelled out means you're guaranteed quality. Sure, it's not wireless so hardcore next-gen gamers will moan a bit, but the rest of us get a good pad.

JOY OF JOYS: A quality finish and all the functions you need for the X360 mean that in all but name this is an official pad. **Ian Dean**



FEATURES

» Guide button
Shoulder buttons and triggers
Integrated headset port
Dual Vibration Feedback

THE MARKET

FIVE LIVE EXCUSES

1 LAG
Lag. Laaag. Laaaaaag. The amount of lag is signified by how drawn out the word is and how much the player drones it rather than shouts it. The sighing admission of "laaaag" is Xbox Live's ever-reliable 'Get Out Of Jail Free' card. Use it and use it well.

2 CAMPING
Works brilliantly in the week-long honeymoon period when a game comes out and no one knows what camping spots to look out for and you can get away with blaming your woeful performance on other players camping.

3 NOOBS
Your team-mates aren't there to provide covering fire or flank support. They're there to take the blame and give you carte blanche to shout "oh my god, my team-mates are such noobs!" at every possible opportunity.

4 CHEATING
"Oh my god! Dude, like, WTF? How did you kill me? I was, like, shooting you for ages and you just wouldn't die! I swear man, you're like, cheating or something. Yeah, you gotta be cheating. Hey everyone! PimpSlayer is cheating!"

5 GAME SUCKS
It's not your gaming skills that are in question. Of course not. Those hours you spent learning all the camping spots, the combos, the respawn times haven't been in vain when you lose. Not at all. It's the game. It sucks.



X360 LOVES...

FINAL FANTASY XI

TO CUT STRAIGHT to the chase, X360's edition will run on the same servers as the PC and PlayStation2 versions, but we're promised "much more dynamic and visually impressive gameplay." Which basically means it'll look nicer. Everything else will remain the same and include all the expansion packs the PC and PlayStation2 versions were saddled with as standard. So you can be a thief, white mage, ninja, paladin or any other sub-class. The only bummer is that the Live headset won't be supported, with emoticons serving as the main way of communicating. This is basically going to be the videogame version of MSN Messenger then, minus the occasional "PIX PLZ!!!" requests and awkward silences.

X360 ALSO LOVES: Wireless pads, Sega, the Xbox Live player called Jerkn2YourVoice.

NEED TO KNOW...

LIVE CHECKLIST: RECEIVING FRIEND REQUEST

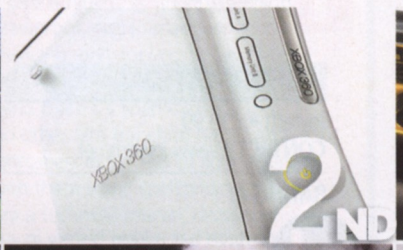
- Make snapshot judgement based on amount of spelling errors and numbers in Gamertag sending request? ✓
- Decide to add anyway so Friends List seems full? ✓
- Bigger Friends List makes you happy? ✗
- Half the people on your Friends List are strangers? ✓
- You delete them because you don't know them? ✗
- You spam them all with invites instead? ✓
- You feel a chunk of your life will ebb away as they delete you off their Friends List? ✓

LIVE CALENDAR

DECEMBER



1ST One last spurt of fun from Xbox before it's trampled underfoot by its rampant X360 brother – **ProEvoSoccer.co.uk** starts its online league.



2ND Finally – Xbox 360 is released in the UK! Small children sing songs of merriment, panpipe music is played and tramps dance in the street to celebrate.



14TH Make sure you check back at our **X360magazine.com** forums for details of a *Project Gotham Racing 3* tournament we'll be hosting on Live.



19TH The winner of EA's *FIFA 06* tournament collects his prize at the FIFA World Player Gala bash in Zurich, while Zinedine Zidane looks on confused.



25TH It's Christmas! Hurrah! Xbox Live will still be open, so Santa can play *PGR3* and call young children noobs once he's delivered them their X360s.



26TH An extremely good time to get back on Live with all the new owners around. Expect *Perfect Dark Zero* to be packed to the brim though.

TXT UK MOBILE GAMER

WWW.TXTUK.CO.UK

TO ORDER TEXT: MICRO+CODE to 88066

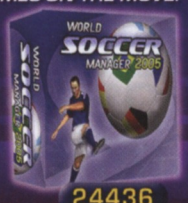
OR CALL: 0906 664 0819

MOBILE GAMES

PLAY THESE WICKED GAMES ON THE MOVE!



13168



24436



13188



22616



20224



12665



24581



12564



24438


15889



22760



15662



19960



15888



13089



17622



14995



23214



15676



14175



24029

RINGTONES

GET A REALTONE TO HAVE A REAL VOICE & BACKING TRACK AS YOUR RINGTONE!

REAL	POLY		
24368	24362	Arctic Monkeys	I Bet You Look Good
24613	24346	Kate Bush	King of the mountain
23923	23640	Robbie williams	Tripping
23515	23120	Pussycat Dolls	Dont Cha
23856	23124	Kanye West	Gold Digger
24198	23647	Friday Hill	Baby Goodbye
20001	20030	Daniel Powter	Bad Day
23653	23121	Sean Paul	We Be Burnin
24199	20047	Liberty X	Song For Lovers
24369	23506	Dannii minogue	Perfection
24200	23193	Mariah Carey	Shake It Off
24370	24363	Love Bites	You Broke My..
24203	24196	Bob Sinclar	Love Generation
22738	22731	Mylo	Doctor pressure
22710	22607	Gorillaz	Dare
23858	23499	Katie melua	Nine million bicycles
23859	23195	Kelly Clarkson	Behind These Hazel
24197	24194	U2	All Because Of You
24032	23393	Lee ryan	Turn your car...
24356	23820	Will Smith	Party starter

TO ORDER text: MICRO+CODE to 88066 or call: 0906 664 0819
Irish users can call 1580 444 552 or text their order to 57767

WALLPAPERS

GET A NEW LOOK FOR YOUR PHONE WITH A GREAT WALLPAPER!


24459



24089


16638



23864


24451



15843



23847



23036



24302



23761


24421



23561


24063



16033


11718



24103



23071



24423



24633


24412


17056


24427


16697


13302



14222


20083

TO ORDER text: MICRO+CODE to 88066 or call: 0906 664 0819
Irish users can call 1580 444 552 or text their order to 57767

SOUND FX

GET A CRAZY SOUND AS YOUR RINGTONE!

CODE		CODE	
11234	Crazy Chicken	12495	Explosion
12247	Sizzling Fart	12538	Gun Shot
13120	Blow Raspberry	15983	Wolf Whistle
14082	SouthP Fart Song	15984	Old Phone
12532	Evil Laugh	11760	Hey Big Boy

TV TONES

GET A TV TONE OR THEME TUNE AS YOUR RINGTONE!

CODE		CODE	
22697	Homer 32 Dohs	20024	LOG Papa Lazarou
22702	Homer Woohoo	22362	Chelsea Chant
22633	Darth Vader	22366	Liverpool Chant
22638	Scooby Doo	20203	Willy Wonka
22705	Tarzan Scream	19036	Lou and Andy

TO ORDER text: MICRO+CODE to 88066 or call: 0906 664 0819
Irish users can call 1580 444 552 or text their order to 57767

ANIMATIONS

WATCH SEXY BABES & FUNNY CARTOONS MOVE ON YOUR PHONE!



23999 24239 23204 16166 24422



13804


11418



23813


5260



17247


24050


22632


17771

TO ORDER text: MICRO+CODE to 88066 or call: 0906 664 0819
Irish users can call 1580 444 552 or text their order to 57767

3D CHARACTERS

GET 3D CHARACTERS ON YOUR PHONE!



CODE	
14020	SPIDERMAN
23170	Bowser
23172	Pikachu
15566	Dougal
16031	GTA Ceejay
16036	Halo

TO ORDER text: MICRO+CODE to 88066 or call: 0906 664 0819
Irish users can call 1580 444 552 or text their order to 57767

MOVIES

CHOOSE ONE OF THESE GREAT VIDEOS TO WATCH ON YOUR MOBILE!



24648 24664 22570 24643 23177 24654 14106 24661 24655 23179

TO ORDER text:MICRO+CODE to 88066 or call: 0906 664 0819
Irish users can call 1580 444 552 or text their order to 57767

Calls cost £1.50 from landline phones. Calls made from Mobiles may cost more. Callers must be 16 or over. Polyphonic Tones, Movies & Wallpapers and Animations cost £4.50 charged as 3 x £1.50 reverse billed messages. Java Games charged as £6. Realtones, Sound FX & TVTones charged as £6. You will incur stantard SMS, WAP and GPRS chrges where applicable. Please check billpayers permission before you call. Please check the website to ensure your phone is compatible. Please allow 24 hours for delivery in extreme cases due to network traffic. You may be contacted by TXTUK with Offers and Info. To unsubscribe call our Customer Care Line. Customer Care Numbers UK: 0871 872 1813 IRL: 01 248 9871. Address PO Box 51727, London NW1 8ZF. Thank You. (c) DRIV3R, DRIVER 3 - All rights reserved, Atari Interactive. All rights reserved. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.



































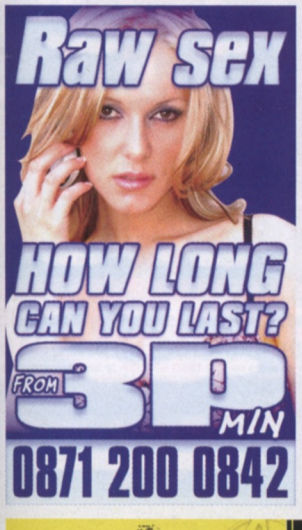


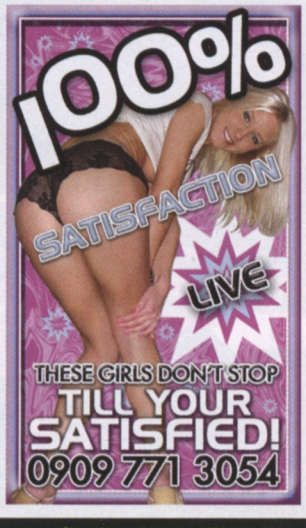




















the chaos network

Chaos Network Helpline 08704 541 000 (national rate).To send messages standard network operator rates apply. T&C's www.thechaosnetwork.com.
Over 18 bill payers only. 00 56 terminate Chile,Int call rates apply. Credit Card calls £2.99/min (national rate). 0870 calls £2.99/min (local rate)
Live calls recorded. 09068 £0.60/min. 090655 £1/min. 090650 £1.50/min. 09097 £1.50/min Chaos Network PO BOX 384, CB2 5LR

the chaos network

NEXT MONTH

» More fantastic games
» More fearless opinion



THE BIGGEST EXCLUSIVES...

TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND

First Xbox 360 screens
First Xbox 360 playtest
First Xbox 360 facts

THE BEST GAMES...

SPLINTER CELL 4
See the first screens of the Xbox 360 version!

SUPERMAN RETURNS
The Man Of Steel is back and we've got proof!

PREY
We catch up with 3DRealms' ambitious shooter

THE BOLDEST FEATURES...

XBOX 360 LAUNCH
Stories from the launch day. How was it for you?

XBOX LIVE OVERLOAD
We test everything on Xbox Live 360, will you be in the feature?

SUBSCRIBE NOW! TURN TO PAGE 27

ON SALE 28 DECEMBER



X360

Never miss a copy of your favourite magazine!

Ask your newsagent to order you a copy *TODAY!*

Dear Newsagent: Please reserve me a copy of **X360** each month until further notice. Many thanks

HIGHBURY ENTERTAINMENT

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Date: _____ Signed: _____

To the newsagent: Additional copies can be ordered from the wholesaler that supplies your Radio Times. Thanks for your support.

THE BRAVEST REVIEWS...

DEAD OR ALIVE 4
Tecmo's glamour girls prove looks can kill, only in next issue!

PERFECT DARK ZERO
Read the only honest review of Rare's long-awaited shooter!

PLUS MORE ON ALL THESE GAMES...

Ghost Recon AW / Football Manager 06 / Alan Wake
The Godfather / Sonic The Hedgehog / Fable 2
Final Fantasy XI / TimeShift / Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion
Battlefield 2 / Burnout Revenge / Fable 2 / and more...



TO ADVERTISE
CONTACT
ABI FLOWER
01202 209308
ABI.FLOWER@HIGHBURYGROUP.COM

CHAT ROOMS

CHAT OR DATE
from
0p
per min
WOMEN: 0800 075 1456
MEN: 0870 345 7068
GAY GUY: 0870 345 6899
GAY GIRL: 0870 345 7512
0800 = Free at all times
0870 = 1.5p w/end & 3.9p eve

MOVIE WEAPONS

MOVIE WEAPONS
From Battle Orders Ltd
For 30 years leading suppliers of reproduction arms, armour, replica guns, knives and Swords
• Secure on-line Site
• Showroom Offices, Stock and Staff
• Not A P.O. Box Virtual Company
• The best products at the best price with the best service
Others Promise, Battle Orders Deliver!
Over 2,000 lines
Legal to buy and own
www.battleorders.co.uk
Tel: 01323 4430182 Free Catalogues
Over 18's Only

GAMES EXCHANGE

SWAPWATCH
ARE YOU QUICK ENOUGH?
Swapwatch.co.uk is the easiest and most addictive way to swap your unwanted games and DVDs.
→ Play new games, see new DVDs and create your perfect game and DVD library.
→ Swap Xbox, PS2, Gamecube, Gameboy Advance and any Region 2 DVD.
→ Swap any game for game, DVD for DVD, game for DVD or vice-versa.
→ Upload your titles in seconds using our extensive barcode database.
→ Register free in minutes and pay only £1.00 per completed swap.
At £1.00 per item, you really can't buy or rent a game or DVD for less.
→ NO MEMBERSHIP, LISTING OR PICTURE FEES. ←
www.swapwatch.co.uk

TO ADVERTISE CALL ABI FLOWER ON 01202 209 308

+++ THE BEST MOVIES +++ IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS +++ BONUS FEATURES +++ EXCLUSIVE COMMENTARIES

ON THE DVD



BONUS DVD-ROM CONTENT
Free official wallpapers

EASTER EGGS CAN YOU FIND 'EM?

DEVASTATING VIDEO

SPLINTER CELL 4

Sam fisher turns evil, only on Xbox 360

TEASER TRAILER / AUDIO COMMENTARY

X360 DVD-ROM CONTENTS

MADDEN NFL 06
GEARS OF WAR
FINAL FANTASY XI
KING KONG
GUN
FULL AUTO
ENCHANT ARM
SPLINTER CELL 4
MOTOGP URT 2006
MASS EFFECT
RESIDENT EVIL 5
TIGER WOODS PGA 06
BATTLEFIELD 2



NINETY-NINE NIGHTS
ELDER SCROLLS IV: OBLIVION

FEATURES

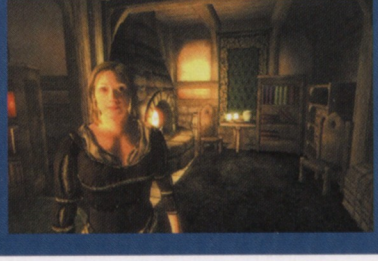
MASS EFFECT
BioWare teases us with the first footage of its epic sci-fi RPG!



XO5 SPECIAL
All the games, interviews and presentations as they happened!



ELDER SCROLLS IV: OBLIVION
Bethesda takes us through the unique world of Tamriel



FULL AUTO
Sega proves there's more to racing than just Time Attack!



*DVD only available with magazines sold in the United Kingdom



X360 AUDIO COMMENTARIES

Listen to the alternative commentary to hear what we have to say about the games



NEW TRAILER STUNNING GAMEPLAY DEMO!

FIFA 2006
ROAD TO THE WORLD CUP

Watch us play EA's finest football game!

IN-GAME VIDEO / AUDIO COMMENTARY



PGR3

MULTI-ANGLE HANDS-ON PREVIEW /X05 PRESENTATION / LAS VEGAS TRAILER / SCREENSHOT GALLERY / ARTWORK GALLERY / AUDIO COMMENTARY



PERFECT DARK

MOVIE TRAILER / TEASER TRAILER / X05 PRESENTATION / HANDS-ON PREVIEW / SCREENSHOT GALLERY / ARTWORK GALLERY / AUDIO COMMENTARY



KAMEO

HANDS-ON PREVIEW / X05 PRESENTATION / AUDIO COMMENTARY



Step-by-step guide on how to use your DVD-ROM

1 Insert the DVD and, using your Xbox DVD Movie Playback controller, press the directional buttons to navigate the menu.

2 Press Select to choose the option you want, and then use Back or Menu once you're done. Now sit back and watch your feature of choice.

3 To listen to our alternate audio on selected trailers, press Display. Press right twice for audio, then press Select for the commentary track.



1

PREVIEW PAGE 44

MOTO GP URT 2006

"Going on Climax's record, it should be amazing"

TEASER TRAILER / GAMEPLAY TRAILER / SCREENSHOT GALLERY / AUDIO COMMENTARY

X05 SPECIAL REPORT
XBOX 360 LAUNCHES IN EUROPE!

X05 feature / Robbie Bach / X360 Dashboard feature / Kameo feature / PGR3 presentation / PDZ presentation / Peter Moore

BONUS DVD-ROM CONTENT
27 Trailers+
7 Features
17 Team audios

DISCLAIMER
If no disc is here call: 01202 200 200
Faulty disc? Please return it to: X360, Highbury Entertainment, Paragon House, St Peters Road, Bournemouth, BH1 2JS
DVD ONLY AVAILABLE IN UK

2



FEATURE PAGE 56

ENCHANT ARM

"One of the most promising RPGs coming out of Japan"

TEASER TRAILER / SCREENSHOT GALLERY / ARTWORK GALLERY / AUDIO COMMENTARY

3



NEWS PAGE 20

GEARS OF WAR

"When Gears Of War ships next year there won't be too many games to compete with it"

TEASER TRAILER / GAMEPLAY TRAILER / SCREENSHOT GALLERY / ARTWORK GALLERY / AUDIO COMMENTARY

THE UN-HOLY FAMILY

"THE FULL JUGULAR-RIPPING, HARDCORE, HELTER SKELTER DEAL"
KERRANG!

"CRUEL, SADISTIC AND DISTURBING"
TOTAL FILM



SPECIAL EDITION INCLUDES
- 2 MINS PREVIOUSLY UNSEEN FEATURE FOOTAGE
- 2 COMMENTARIES
- OVER 2 HOUR MAKING OF DOCUMENTARY
- DELETED SCENES AND A WHOLE HELL OF A LOT MORE!

Available on DVD and UMD 26.12.05

momentum PICTURES

© 2005 Cinelamda Internationale Filmproduktionsgesellschaft mbH & Co. 1 Beteiligungs- KG. All Rights Reserved.

HMV
top dog for music·dvd·games