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XBM

XBOX

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YOU are Sam 'Serious' Stone, a legend in our time. Sam is our only hope against mischievous miscreants and their evil leader, the one called 'MENTAL'.

The only way to get Mental and save us all, is to use an ancient artefact called the 'Time Lock', to teleport back in time.

Don't ask us how or why this is happening.

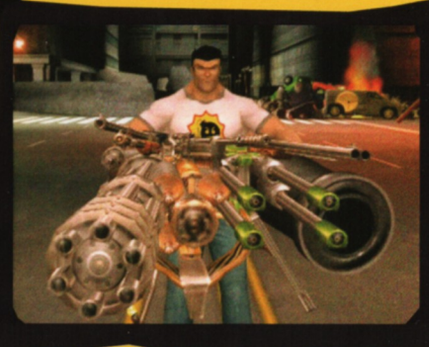
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PC Gamer - 92%

"It's the rumble of the century and you're in the ring with no-one to tag"







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XBOX

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XBM ISSUE 14



It's not necessarily about the ability to change your voice. It's not only about being able to communicate with the people you're playing with. It's not as simple as being able to play against human opponents. Xbox Live, as we've discovered this month, is just as much about community as it is gaming.

With every nightly play of Xbox Live, we've found that we've become more and more comfortable with the idea of it (at first playing games with strangers' voices in our ears was more than a little obtrusive) and felt at ease talking to these people. We're now at the stage where we're happy simply chatting to people while waiting for games to begin.

Topics range from who's in the *Celebrity Big Brother* house to the weather in Massachusetts, to the usual videogame banter and exchange of opinions about games. This is a good thing and a slightly unexpected bonus to the experience. In time, who knows where it might lead?

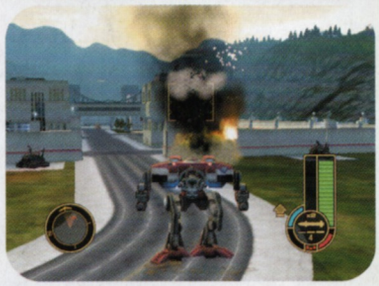
We're not talking about political movements here, more a kind of club where a love of videogames is what we all have in common. Y'know, it's just nice to talk to people who share similar interests to you.

NICK JONES
EDITOR









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DOOM 3
PAGE 20
SHOWCASE: It's almost too dark to see but this update of the classic PC shooter is heading to Xbox!



UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP
PAGE 52
REVIEW: A first-person shooter to rival *Halo*? Find out in our massive Xbox Live-tested review.



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4
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REVIEW: Has Neversoft run out of ideas for the original extreme sports game? Nah...

XBM

THE UK'S PREMIER UNOFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR XBOX GAMING



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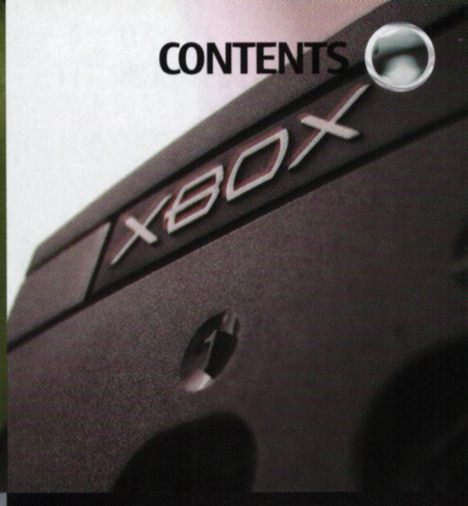
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METAL GEAR SOLID 2 SUBSTANCE

pg06 THE GAME THAT INSPIRED A GENERATION JUST GOT BETTER...







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To make navigating XBM easier we've colour-coded each section for you, so you'll know exactly where you are at all times!

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- REVIEW
- FEATURE
- SOLUTION



INFORMATION

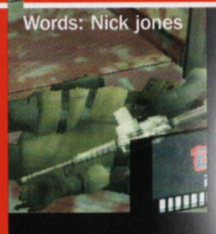
- **PUBLISHER** Konami
- **DEVELOPER** In-house
- **GENRE** Stealth-'em-up
- **RELEASE DATE** March 2003

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE

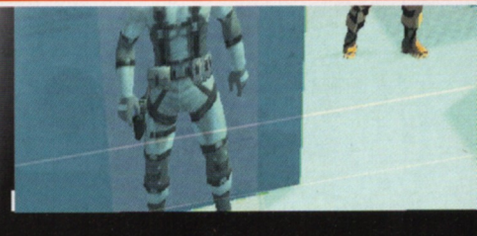
THEY SAID IT WOULD NEVER HAPPEN. THEY SAID METAL GEAR WOULD BE ONLY ON PLAYSTATION2. THEY WERE WRONG BECAUSE HERE IT IS AND THERE'S MORE THAN YOU COULD POSSIBLY IMAGINE...

Words: Nick jones









MOVING PICTURES

Think of MGS2 Substance as three games for the price of one. You get the entire Sons Of Liberty game (as seen on PS2), you get the VR Missions (some 200 missions, a sort of puzzle mode) plus the Snake Tales and bonus games which, apart from other things, enable you to play with Snake instead of Raiden!



PLAY AS SNAKE

Remember: always give the public what they want! Who was really pleased to be playing most of *Sons Of Liberty* as Raiden? Not us, that's for sure. *Substance* enables you to play most of the Cell Missions as Snake himself. Ah, much better...



With all the huge games coming to Xbox next year, *Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance* is up there with the likes of *Halo 2* and *Fable*. It's one on the biggest games on PS2 and will be on Xbox too. But here's the good bit: Substance will be out on Xbox first and will not only contain the entire *Sons Of Liberty* game but a whole lot more besides.

Think of it as one of those super-special limited edition DVD boxsets you get. The core of the game will actually be the VR Missions (if you've played *Sons Of Liberty* on PS2, you'll remember the characters making references to these), which are the training missions that Foxhound operatives go through before they get to go on a mission proper. But this is no simple training mode. The missions are split into 200 (yes, count them) separate tests of stealth, ability with weapons and all round examinations of you in situations that ▶

XBM INFO

***Metal Gear* began its life more than 15 years ago on Nintendo's NES console. The stealth gameplay was even present then...**

IT'S LIKE...

SONS OF LIBERTY



...MEETS...

TRON



1 AGAINST THE CLOCK

☒ In this, one of the bonus games, Snake has to eliminate all the guards in the level within the time limit. Other bonus games include finding and freezing bombs and 'Hold Up' where you have to sneak up to guards and force them to surrender.



2 FIRING BLANKS

☒ Your choice of weapon is of the utmost importance in *MGS2*. If you're trying to be sneaky then it's probably best to use the tranquilliser gun but if you're facing something bigger then maybe an air-to-air missile might be more appropriate...



3 HIDE AND SEEK

☒ Once the guards have been alerted to your presence they'll immediately jam your radar. This means that you will have to stay out of view until they calm down and stop looking for you.



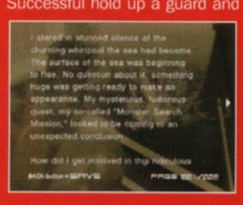
LIMITED EDITION

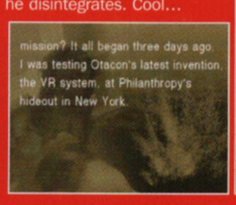
There's an awful lot to do and open up in *Substance* – think of it as a special edition on the PS2 game. It's unconfirmed yet, but there may also be a bonus DVD included about the making of *MGS2*!

"MISSIONS ARE SPLIT INTO 200 SEPARATE TESTS OF STEALTH"

SNAKE TALES

☒ Snake Tales (clever, isn't it?) are five separate stories that take place during the events of the *Sons Of Liberty* game – hence they take place in the same locales. What you get is a bit of story, Snake transporting (we assume in his memory) to different areas and talking part in different mini-games. These include bomb disposal, elimination of guards and hold up. Successful hold up a guard and he disintegrates. Cool...









▶ you might face in the game. Each one has to be completed within a strict time limit – putting you under pressure and also making you want to play each one again and again to get a better time. This part of the game plays a lot like a puzzle game – trying to figure out which route of which methods you need to employ to get the best time is highly addictive.

But this is not all you get. Snake gets to take part in what are called 'Snake Tales'. This is essentially the 'Big Cell' part of the *Sons Of Liberty* game from Snake's point of view with a load of bonuses and mini games thrown in for good measure.

SAY CHEESE

You'll always have a trusty Kodak at your side so you can take snaps as you play. These can then be stored on the hard drive and then... er, viewed at a later date.







Remember the bit where you have to go around the platforms freezing bombs? You get to do this with Snake only you also get some of his reminiscences of the tanker mission at the beginning. With these bits you're transported back in time and have to complete special objectives such as holding up a certain number of guards or eliminating a specific number of guards within a time limit. It plays much like the VR section, only set within the 'real' world.

And if that weren't enough there is even more to *Substance*. Being successful at the other parts of the game unlocks even more game modes – the ability to play as ninja (with his own specific missions) being the undoubted highlight. You can also get extras like a tuxedo for snake – a reference to James Bond, no doubt.

XBM INFO Kojima has been working in the games industry since 1987. And he's not just responsible for Metal Gear Solid...

DEVELOPER HISTORY

(PS2) 2002



METAL GEAR SOLID 2

(PS2) 2001



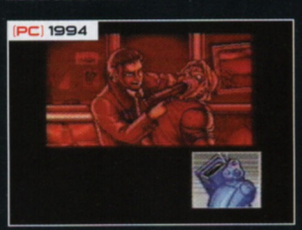
Z.O.E.

(PSONE) 1998



METAL GEAR SOLID

(PC) 1994



POLICENAUTS

(PC ENGINE) 1992



SNATCHER

(MSX) 1990



METAL GEAR 2 – SOLID SNAKE

(MSX) 1987



METAL GEAR

VR MISSIONS

With 200 VR missions in total, Substance is going to take a long time to complete. Each is divided up into one of four different categories and is played from both Snake and Raiden's point of view. And each mission is timed – top scores on each mission will unlock the secret stuff...

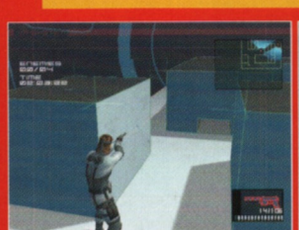


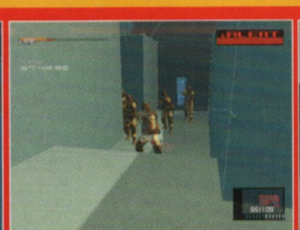




STEALTH

The objective here is to reach your sneak point without being seen by anybody. And there's no running away either – once a guard spots you it's mission over.







ELIMINATE

The same levels as the Stealth missions but this time you have to eliminate all of the guards on the level *without* being seen.







WEAPONS

Each mission is designed with a specific weapon in mind – you get five missions for each weapon.







FIRST PERSON

More weapon-based missions, this time they all take place from the first-person viewpoint. Movement is with the left stick, aiming with the right.





Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance is up there with the likes of *Halo 2* and *Fable*

KOJIMA SPEAKS!

He's the closest thing that the videogames industry has to a Hollywood film director, he's responsible for the whole stealth-'em-up craze in videogames. Possibly. XBM fired a few qs at Substance's director...



XBM: What's new about *MGS2: Substance*?
Hideo Kojima: The addition of 200+ VR stages, 100+ Alternative Missions stages where you are given missions utilising the tanker and Big Shell, and five Snake Tales episodes that are totally new stories with Solid Snake being the main character.

XBM: Why have you chosen to update the game in this way?
HK: *MGS2* is a story-oriented game. Because the story governs the game, there was relatively less freedom for the player. With *Substance* we can offer so much more fun that comes from the action gameplay element without being bound by the story line. And we also wanted people to enjoy being Snake in the Snake Tales episodes.

XBM: Have you changed any of the mission objectives, the placement of objects and so on?
HK: We haven't touched the *Sons Of Liberty* story at all. That story is completed and had been concluded as it was. The 100+ Alternative Missions are totally new mini-missions, each having new mission objectives.

XBM: Do you feel the game will open up *MGS2* to a new audience?
HK: Those who have already played *MGS2* will enjoy the VR Missions, Alternative Missions, and five Snake Tales episodes – plus the skateboarding, of course.

Those who did not play *MGS2* can now pick this up and enjoy so much more. They get to appreciate the story-driven *Sons Of Liberty* and the gameplay-driven missions in which you can appreciate the well-designed controls and the fun action.

> "We wanted people to enjoy being Snake in the Snake Tales episodes"









IT'S ONE OF THE BIGGEST GAMES ON PS2 AND WILL BE ON XBOX TOO

DETAILS, DETAILS...

It's the little touches that we like, like the way that the screen goes darker for a few seconds when you come out of the sunlight as your eyes adjust to the darkness and how, when your character is wearing a mask and you go into first-person, you can see through the goggles.



XBM INFO

The music for *Sons Of Liberty* was composed by Harry Gregson-Williams who also wrote the music for Hollywood blockbusters such as *Enemy of the State* and *Spy Kids*.



☒ **BONUS:** Completing levels in the VR Missions opens up special extras – you can play as Ninja (he even gets his very own missions) and Snake gets his own tuxedo.

BOMB HUNT

One of the best mini-games to play is the Bomb Hunt game. As the name suggests, you have to hunt down and diffuse hidden bombs within a strict time limit – these can be hidden anywhere, even on the guards!





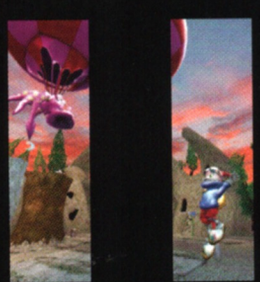
WHO NEEDS NINE LIVES WHEN YOU CAN CONTROL TIME?



Rewind time to uncover secret areas.



Hit fast-forward to get an extra burst of speed.



Hit pause to freeze your enemies or grab the goodies.



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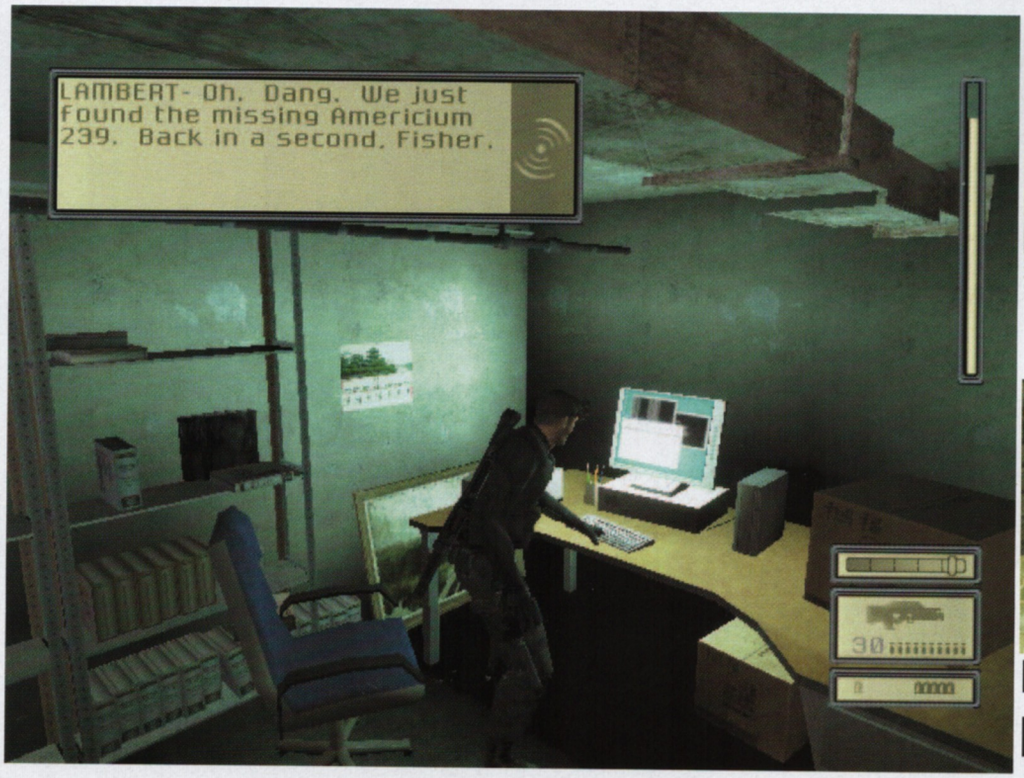
GOSSIP, GAMES, EVENTS, LAUNCHES, RUMOURS AND RELEASE DATES...

We don't want to return to the playground and shout 'my console is better than your console' at the Nintendo faithful. But we can't help but feel a little bit smug about the fact that the Xbox achieved what many thought was impossible by overtaking the GameCube in European hardware sales.

After a shaky start, the Xbox has found its footing with great exclusive games, the imminent launch of Xbox Live, and plenty of advertising. With a gaming public which has been all too willing to dismiss the console before the battle had even begun, it's amazing to see just how many have been converted to Xbox because of the amount of great games on the horizon and the quality of the graphics. Can you honestly say that after owning and playing an Xbox for a couple of days that you can look at the picture quality on the PS2 without complaining about the blocky characters and grainy visuals? Keep spreading the word.

XBM NEWS IN 60 SECONDS...

Sales of the Xbox overtake those of the GameCube in Europe and the UK, putting the Xbox in second place in the console race before Xmas... We look into the future at six games which will be coming up in the New Year, including epic destroyer game ***O.To.Gi*** and a new ***WWE*** brawler... XBM brings you the gaming charts from around the globe which include a Japanese horseriding RPG and ***The Lord of the Rings*** **game from EA** which has been released in America... Our huge New Year compo is on page 17... And we have **an extensive Q & A session with The Collective**, famed for making *Buffy* and now working on *Indiana Jones*...





UNREAL DEAL: Xbox Live has already boosted sales in the US, can it do the same here?



A CAT: We need more Japanese-developed games like Blinx.

FISHER KING: The exclusivity deal with Splinter Cell can only boost sales.

XBOX TAKES THE LEAD

IN THE RUN-UP TO XMAS XBOX SALES FLY PAST GAMECUBE!

After a shaky start and seven months of fierce competition, Xbox has taken a clear lead over GameCube, both in week-on-week hardware sales and in terms of the installed user base in the UK.

The sharpest rise in sales so far occurred in the week ending 10 November, when the Xbox's weekly sales in the UK rose by 46 percent to 15,102, while the GameCube only rose by just over 2 percent to 6,839. In terms of the amount of consoles installed in homes around Britain, the Xbox has now sold 233, 503 units, while the GameCube is lagging behind on 230,876.

Although at launch GameCube sales initially raced ahead of Xbox due to a high degree of brand loyalty from gamers, a series of price cuts as well as console/game bundles being sold at retail means that the Xbox has taken the lead over the GameCube on the British high street. It has already been admitted by several developers that developing games exclusively for the GameCube is less profitable than creating a game for the PS2 or the Xbox due to the high development costs and lower profit margins.

While the entire hardware market is booming in the run-up to Christmas, the GameCube has dropped far further behind than anyone anticipated: having experienced an upturn for two weeks following the October release of *Super Mario Sunshine*, the Cube quickly fell behind the Xbox again after the announcement of the SEGA Triple A pack, which included two SEGA triple A games with the console. There were also a series of advances which made gamers take note: the acquisition of Rare, the introduction of the S Controller, two new prime-time television advertisements, plus some blockbuster titles including *FIFA 2003*, *Blinx* and the hugely anticipated *Splinter Cell* – they've turned the tide for Microsoft.

Still, even with these advances, the PS2 remains in an unassailable position, having sold 39,719 units in the week ending 2 November. Microsoft is going to have to turn a few more tricks before it catches up with Sony. ■



THE WAY OF SEGA

We're not preaching the demise of the GameCube but there have been similarities:

Company bosses have vehemently denied that they are ditching the console. Vice President of Nintendo of America's sales and marketing, Peter MacDougall, made a statement about the company's commitment to the console at the Gerard Klauer Mattison conference in New York: "Nintendo is in the software business – to stay. Nintendo is in the handheld business – to stay. And Nintendo is most certainly in the home console business – to stay."

Does anyone remember this? "We're not giving up on Dreamcast. We'll continue to support the platform well into the next 18 months, and beyond that, as long as it is profitable." This came from Charles Bellfield, VP of Corporate and Marketing Communications at SEGA, January 2001. It discontinued the machine two months later in March.

SEGA®



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SOMETIMES YOU JUST DON'T WANT TO SHARE...

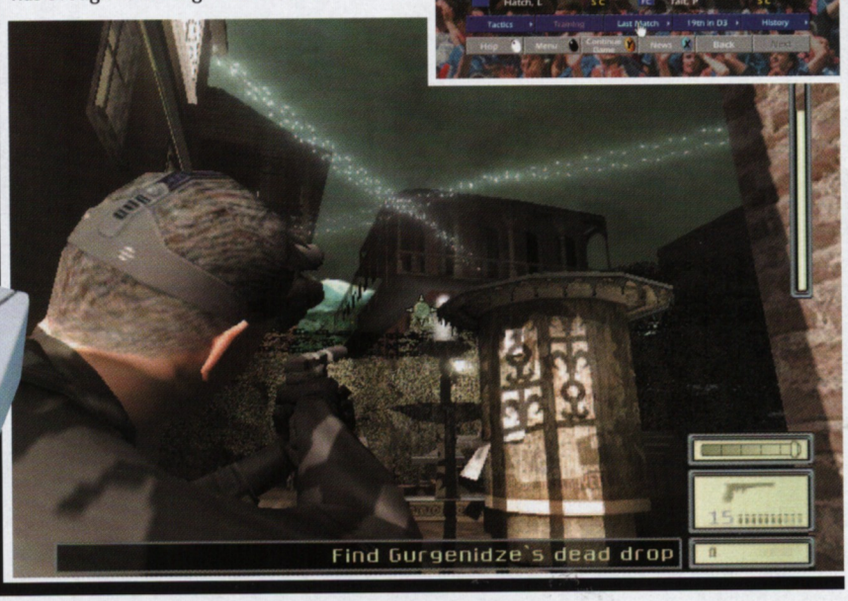
Signing up some of the biggest titles around as Xbox exclusive has helped to give Microsoft quite an edge. Just as Sony has learnt through its experiences in gaming, Microsoft has been aware that having highly sought-after games appearing on its console is one of the best methods of shifting hardware.

One of the most wanted games this Christmas, *Splinter Cell*, is only available on the Xbox, while a series on other big name releases games help improve the position of the Xbox; *Blinx*, *SEGA GT 2002*, and Live-enabled *Unreal Championship* plus the recent acquisition of Rare all point to Microsoft's continued investment in Xbox.

As well as this impressive portfolio, the Xbox's internal hard drive means that it is the only console with the capacity to run *Championship Manager 02/03*. The game, which previously could only appear on PC, has brought meaning to the lives of thousands of armchair managers. Michel Cassius, the Director of European Publishing for Xbox said: "18 of the world's most wanted games are available this Christmas – but only Xbox gamers will be able to experience the excitement. These exclusives join an already strong portfolio of titles, the breadth and depth of which is especially remarkable since Xbox has not yet even reached its one-year anniversary in Europe."

CHAMP MANAGER: This highly detailed game can only run on Xbox and PC.





YOU'VE BEEN XBOXED!

THEY SAID IT WOULD BE A GREEN XMAS

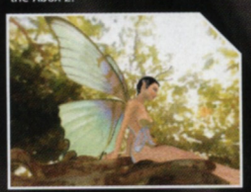
The announcement that Microsoft will be releasing a translucent green version of the console and its S Controller has further whet the appetite of the gaming public. The console will look the same as the development kits used by developers and journalists. Microsoft has yet to set a date for its release, but if the console doesn't hit the shelves before Christmas, we strongly suspect a 14 March 2003 launch to coincide with the launch of Xbox Live and the first anniversary of the console's launch in Europe.



XBM XTRA

FUTURE GEN GRAPHICS

Since creating the G Force 2 graphics card for the Xbox, American hardware developer NVidia has been anything but idle. An announcement came from the company about an update for the card, called 'G Force FX' for the PC. After the positive response from the public and developers about the graphical capacities of the Xbox, it is highly likely that this card will be used in the Xbox 2.



BAD LUCK STRIKES XIII

The release of Ubi Soft's first-person shooter *XIII* has been delayed until the third quarter of 2003. UK PR manager for the company, Faye O'Donohue, stated: "Because quality is always our priority, we have decided to take additional time to ensure that this game is as close to perfect as possible."



LIVE HITS 200,000 IN STATES

A week after launch in the US, Xbox Live has sold 150,000 starter kits and, as the kit enables guests, over 200,000 have connected to the largest and first fully dedicated online gaming arena. The original retail kits sold out in under a week, and sales of Live-enabled games shot up by 120 percent.

XBOX LIVE

OH GOD!

It had to happen. The most appalling batch of pop hopefuls yet, *The Rivals*, has been turned into a game by Vivendi Universal. In a rush job which amazed even industry stalwarts, the game is on PC already. We hope against hope that this sickening and tuneless release doesn't make it onto Xbox.



NEWS

GOSSIP, GAMES, EVENTS, LAUNCHES, RUMOURS AND RELEASE DATES...

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE, WE BRING YOU THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE MOST PROMISING FUTURE RELEASES...

NEW GAMES ROUND UP

WWE Raw 2 – Ruthless Aggression

Publisher: THQ
Release Date: Spring 2003




PR QUOTE

"Experience the most brutal wrestling action ever seen backed by the power of the Xbox. *World Wrestling Raw 2* explodes into the ring!"
THQ Press Release

THE STORY...

After several successful outings on multiple formats and a legal wrangle with the World Wildlife Federation over possession of the name WWF, the WWE no longer makes any grammatical sense and no longer claims to be a sport. *WWE* lumbers onto the Xbox like a very big man in tiny glistening underpants.

XBM COMMENT

The updated roster contains 45 'superstars', including Hulk Hogan. As the franchise ploughs on in a seemingly uncontrollable money-making spin, it adds more ludicrous and elaborate matches, this time including Fatal 4 Way and Battle Royal. If the fight dynamics are improved, we'll play it, but this troop of 'athletes' are really starting to bore us.

World Championship Snooker 2003

Publisher: Codemasters
Release Date: Spring 2003




PR QUOTE

"World Championship Snooker 2003 will bring all the skill, tension and atmosphere of professional snooker matches to game screens"
Codemasters Press Release

THE STORY...

Featuring new, complex artificial intelligence systems which use neural network techniques and an advanced and enhanced game physics engine, *World Championship Snooker 2003* is presented with television-realistic camera views including in-pocket, over-pocket and pocket-to-player cameras.

XBM COMMENT

If the idea of spending an afternoon sitting on your sofa watching two men in bow ties hit balls around a green felted table makes you hard, then this is your wet dream, with some really classy looking graphics and beautifully reflective balls. If, however, you find watching snooker as interesting as watching toast cook, then this is going to be lost on you.

O.To.Gi

Publisher: From Software
Release Date: TBC




PR QUOTE

No PR yet available for UK

THE STORY...

They're few and far between, but From Software is a big name in Japan which is still supporting the Xbox. *O.To.Gi* is an epic RPG which draws on the legends and fairy tales of Japan's Golden Age. Although there is as yet no UK release date, the title is out on 12 December in Japan, and we are awaiting confirmation of a UK and US release.

XBM COMMENT

Coming from the company that made *Armoured Core*, *O.To.Gi* mixes samurai and ninja-style fighting with a haunting atmosphere and demonic creatures. In traditional Japanese style, The story line will have more twists than Chubby Checker. We'd really like an epic *Final Fantasy*-style RPG to get our teeth into.

Top Spin

Publisher: Microsoft
Release Date: TBC




PR QUOTE

"'*Top Spin*' ...is the complete tennis experience for all gamers who want nothing less than the world's No 1 ranking."
Matthew Seymour, Top Spin Producer at Microsoft Game Studios

THE STORY...

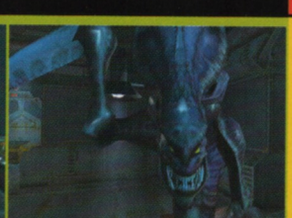
There is no story, bozo. It's a tennis game: you play through tennis seasons and tournaments against 16 world-class players in the hope that you can achieve the world number one rating. Not only do you have 16 world famous players to choose from, but you have a create player mode, in which you can modify your player, both in looks and skill, to be a world-beater.

XBM COMMENT

There hasn't been a tennis game to beat *Virtua Tennis* on Dreamcast, but with the graphical capabilities of Xbox this should be able to top it. The Create-Player mode sounds like a great asset with its personality creation mode – you can make your player like Sampras or bring back the hot-headed days of John McEnroe and Jimmy Connors to centre court.

Starcraft: Ghost

Publisher: Vivendi
Release Date: TBC

PR QUOTE

"We're very excited about returning to the *Starcraft* series. Our roots are based in console gaming, and we look forward to developing this universe for the next-generation console system".
Mike Morhaime, Blizzard Entertainment president and co-founder.

THE STORY...

Players take on the role of a lethal Ghost operative trained ruthlessly for 20 years in the art of espionage and tactical combat. Working as part of a highly trained team, operative Nova must engage in a series of story-driven missions in planetary battles as well as highly secretive undercover missions.

XBM COMMENT

When this was unveiled at this year's Tokyo Games Show, the announcement confirmed that Blizzard, which has been out of the console market for some time, is co-publishing this game with masters-of-its-art, Capcom. *Starcraft* on PC was a highly detailed and absorbing play, and this new game, tailored for the console market, should be equally as good.

Doctor Muto

Publisher: Midway
Release Date: April 2003




PR QUOTE

"Once inside Dr Muto's insane world, gamers will go mad morphing and mutating into various creatures in the quest for universal supremacy over Dr Muto's arch nemesis."
Helene Sheeler, Vice president of marketing, Midway.

THE STORY...

Doctor Muto is the stereotypical mad scientist: squinting through pebble thick glasses, his crazy hair and stained lab coat make him look dangerous. He is as well: Doctor Muto has accidentally destroyed the planet he lives on in an explosion from one of his experiments. Your task is to rebuild the planet by collecting resources from other nearby planets.

XBM COMMENT

Sounds good. As Muto you get to morph into five creatures including a gorilla and a spider, as well as explore 22 levels set on four planets. You can also invent, create and use weapons and gadgets, plus make use of the genetically engineered slaves to trigger switches. We hope this cross-console release will be more than a standard and predictable platformer.

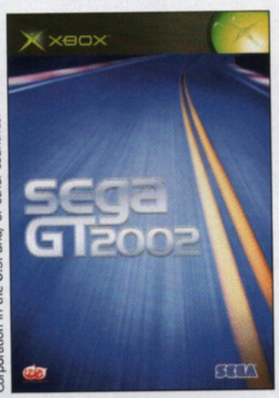
Wicked deal!

Xbox special pack **£179.97**

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Includes:
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Blinx game
Sega GT2002 game
Jet Set Radio Future game

Total price of individual items £284.96

Save **over £100***

big W

WOOLWORTHS

WELL WORTH IT

*On the price of these items purchased individually Xbox special pack available while stocks last. Subject to availability.

XBM XTRA

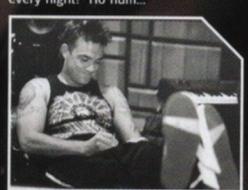
DOAXBV TO BE OUTDONE?

Out to steal the limelight from the *DOA* girls, *Outlaw Volleyball* features girls looking even less dressed, if that's possible. Coming from the people who brought us *Outlaw Golf*, the game will be Xbox Live enabled and features 16 characters (of either sex) who you can either team up with or play against, plus 16 different environments.



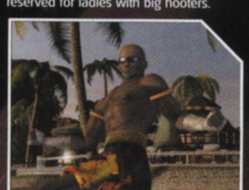
ROBBIE GIVES UP THREESOMES FOR THE XBOX

As the biggest ego in show business goes on his first European tour in two years, the biggest marketing budget in gaming gets behind him. Xbox is one of the headline sponsors of Robbie Williams' next tour, with Robbie going on record as saying: "I love playing Xbox at home, and now I get to play it every night!" Ho hum...



RODMAN AND DOA

Basketball superstar Denis Rodman has signed up to put the voice to Zack in *DOA Volleyball*. Zack gets the girls to his island under false pretences, but isn't a playable character in the game. That's a role reserved for ladies with big hooters.



WORLD CHARTS

UK TOP TEN

1	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Activision
2	Blinx: The Time Sweeper	Microsoft
3	Lord of the Rings: Fellowship of the Rings	VU Games
4	TimeSplitters 2	Eidos
5	FIFA 2003	EA
6	Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	VU Games
7	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Eidos
8	Rocky	Rage
9	Conflict: Desert Storm	SCI
10	Reign of Fire	Bam!



Tony Hawk's 4 is superior to *TH3* in every way. The question is: where next? How can you improve on perfection? Another game is inevitable, but the better these games get the further Tony has to fall.



Although *Blinx* might have its flaws, it is unusual and innovative enough to make it a worthy purchase , especially if you're longing for a decent platformer on the Xbox.



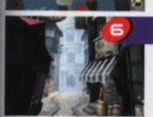
This is a less than mediocre game which suffers with poor fight dynamics, lacklustre mapping and average graphics. There is very little to recommend it.



A massive improvement over the original *TimeSplitters*, this release is pure, undiluted fun either in multiplayer or alor e once you get to grips with a rather awkward control system.



Control has been tightened up and simplified to make playing *FIFA* as fast and fluid as the game itself, while the realism of the graphics makes great use of the Xbox's visual capabilities.



The boy wonder storms into the chart in this faithful translation of the second book. *The Chamber of Secrets* benefits from a solid story line and some amusing sub-games.



It will take extreme patience and perseverance to get through, but this game is highly addictive, incredible looking and has fantastically innovative missions.



At the heart of *Rocky* lies a fighting system as buff as Sly Stallone himself. Both the two player and the movie mode are hugely playable and addictive.



As long as there is pain and suffering in the world, there is going to be a game franchise out there. This has strong, solid gameplay and a great co-op mode.



Reign Of Fire looks quite impressive, creating a suitably post-apocalyptic world where humans and dragons do battle; the same can be said to a lesser extent about the gameplay.

JAP TOP TEN

1	Blinx: The Time Sweeper	Microsoft
2	Crimson Sea	Microsoft
3	Steel Battalion	Capcom
4	Ex-Chaser (BlackStone: Magic and Steel in UK)	Xicat
5	Kakuto Chojin	Microsoft
6	Maximum Chase	Microsoft
7	Innocent Tears	Kobe
8	Jockey's Road	Koei
9	Quantum Redshift	Microsoft
10	Murakumo	From Software



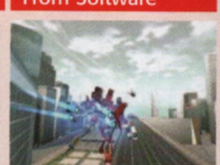
CRIMSON SEA

Play against an unknown enemy that hides in the shadows of a game which puts 1000 morphing alien enemies in your sights at once. Out in the US now – unconfirmed for the UK.



JOCKEY'S ROAD

Play in a bizarre horse racing RPG in which you play through from rookie racer to world class champion. As yet, there are no plans to release this outside Japan.



MURAKUMO

The former Japanese Xbox number one is a mech fighter set in a massive experimental city which the player has to guard against attack. As yet unconfirmed for the UK.

USA TOP TEN

1	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4	Activision
2	Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance	Konami
3	Medal of Honor: Frontline	EA
4	NFL Madden 2003	EA Sports
5	Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets	EA
6	Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Eidos
7	Unreal Championship	Infogrames
8	Shenmue 2	Capcom
9	Lord of The Rings: The Two Towers	EA
10	Halo	Microsoft



TONY HAWK'S 4

Taking the top spot once again, Tony Hawk surpasses himself and raises the benchmark for extreme sports games in the process.



HARRY POTTER

Released just as the film hit theatres worldwide, the Americans buy into the Harry Potter *magic. Most shouldn't be too disappointed either.*



LOTR: THE TWO TOWERS

The United States gets the movie tie-in version of LOTR *before we do but it's being released here in February. Not too long to wait then...*

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WIN NEW YEAR GOODIES!

WIN ALL THESE GAMES AND MORE

Not getting what you want for Christmas? Allow us to help out...

As you all know, Christmas is a time for giving and we at XBM being a generous bunch of fools have decided to take this to the extreme. We've managed to organise a massive collection of Xbox games and games-related merchandising for *you*, the lucky reader.

The massive 40-plus games include *Blinx, Hitman 2, Quantum Redshift, TimeSplitters 2, SSX, Commandos 2, Jet Set Radio Future, Rocky, Aggressive Inline, Madden 2003, Buffy, Simpsons Road Rage, Championship Manager* and loads more. Along with that you'll also get some bizarre videogame-branded items like a *Turok* claw, various t-shirts, a cool little radio-controlled car, *Reign Of Fire* beer mats, a mini air hockey table, a football, a denim jacket, a nodding Bart Simpson and other goodies. We're even going to throw in some third-party peripherals and cables to the hamper as well!

And if you don't get lucky runners-up will receive anything from a t-shirt to an Xbox game or a third-party peripheral. Basically until we run out of stuff to give away! Since this is such a mammoth collection we figured we'd make the questions a little bit more difficult this time but XBM regulars shouldn't have too many problems.

QUESTIONS

How did Dan Wilson die in XBM issue 9?

A. Impaled by pool cue B. Hit by a car C. Buried alive on the beach

Which team members were tied up in XBM issue 11?

A. Nick and Mike B. Mike and Keith C. Dan and Nerys

What role did Kendall play in XBM issue 8?

A. Sniper B. Commando C. Seductress

Send your answers on a postcard to Great Xmas Giveaway, XBM Issue 12, 87 Cobham Road, Ferndown Industrial Estate, Wimborne, Dorset, BH21 7QB.

1ST PRIZE

An Xbox
Over 40 games
Collection of peripherals
Various t-shirts
A variety of games memorabilia

RUNNERS UP

Xbox games
T-shirts
Peripherals

RULES

The editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. Employees of Paragon Publishing or any companies related to this competition may not enter. There is no cash alternative. The closing date for entries is 2 January 2003.

XBM would like to express an extra special thanks to: Acclaim, Activision, Bam! Entertainment, Codemasters, EA, Eidos, Gamester, Infogrames, Joytech, Logic3, Midway, Microsoft, Rage, Swing!, SCi, Saitek and THQ.

XBM XTRA

BARGAIN HUNTER

COMET
Bargain: Xbox and SEGA Pack plus Package
Includes: Console, *Jet Set Radio Future*, *SEGA GT 2000*, *Halo*, the DVD remote controller and *Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey* on DVD.
Price: £196.91
Combined RRP: £230
SAVING: £33.91



HMV
Bargain : Buy an Xbox and get £20 off any full-price Xbox games you buy at time of purchase.
Includes : Xbox and as many games as you can afford for £20 each
Price: Up to you
Combined RRP: £200+
SAVING: £20 PER GAME

TOYS R US
Bargain : Buy an Xbox for £158, which includes a copy of *Max Payne* and *Conflict Desert Storm*.
Includes : Xbox and two top games
Price: £158
Combined RRP: £240
SAVING: £82

MIDNIGHT CLUB II
Take 2 has announced that the sequel to the bestselling PlayStation2 game is to appear on the Xbox. Angel Studios, which was recently acquired by Take 2, is developing the high-speed racer, which is set in three of the biggest cities in the world – LA, Paris and Tokyo.



LIVE ALIVE
More than 50 Xbox Live-enabled games – including *Counter-Strike*, *Midtown Madness 3*, *Halo 2* and *Project Gotham Racing 2* from Microsoft Game Studios, plus *Star Wars Galaxies: Empire Divided* from LucasArts Entertainment Co – are scheduled to launch in 2003 and beyond. More than 60 game publishers are currently working on Xbox Live-enabled games.





"We feel that we've truly brought Indy to life in our game"

DEVELOPER INTERVIEW

XBM HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH SOME OF THE HEAD HONCHOS AT THE COLLECTIVE, THE DEVELOPER BEHIND THE CHART-SMASHING *BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER*. CURRENTLY WORKING ON *INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB* FOR LUCASARTS, IT SEEMS THAT THERE IS NO STOPPING THIS DEVELOPER'S OUTPUT OF FINELY CRAFTED MAJOR LICENSES.

THE COMPANY'S THREE VICE PRESIDENTS AND CO-OWNERS, GARY PRIEST, DOUGLAS HARE AND RICHARD HARE TOOK TIME OUT FROM THE ADVENTURES OF INDY TO ANSWER A FEW OF OUR QUESTIONS...

XBM: First of all, where did your rather otherworldly name 'The Collective' come from exactly?
GARY: When we started the company, we threw several names into the mix but The Collective seemed to stick. I was returning from San Diego after a day trip on the Amtrak and this was one of the names I thought summed up our desire to create a development environment based upon teamwork and collective minds all working towards a common goal. It didn't come out of any kind of reference to *Star Trek* and the Borg as some people think, as at the time I was clueless about *Star Trek*, until we later developed *Deep Space Nine* of course!

XBM: Is the same graphics engine being used for both the *Buffy* and *Indy* games?
GARY: Yes. We created the 'Slayer' engine for *Buffy* but with the thought in mind that we would extend and use it for *Indiana Jones* and other future titles. Along with Slayer, we also created a world-class editing tool called 'SlayEd' which we use to construct our worlds and implement gameplay. We're currently porting the engine to PS2 and GameCube and next year we'll start work on the next generation of the engine, which will use some elements of *Slayer* as well as introduce some pretty amazing new technologies.

XBM: How does the story of *The Emperor's Tomb* fit into the whole Indiana Jones universe?
RICH: The majority of the events portrayed in the *Emperor's Tomb* take place in 1934. Therefore, it is actually intended as a prequel to the *Temple of Doom*. (*Temple of Doom* is set in 1935; *Raiders of the Lost Ark* in 1936).

The story concerns the secret history of the First Emperor of China, his search for immortality and the incredible tomb in which he was buried more than 2000 years ago. Not to give too much away, Indy becomes involved in a quest to locate the tomb and an artefact of incredible power buried within it. Of course, as one might expect, a number of dangerous competing groups are attempting to locate the artefact or protect it; including Nazis and members of an occult Chinese triad, the Black Dragons. We have strived to create a story that is a worthy and important chapter in the Indiana Jones universe. Although the *Emperor's Tomb* is a prequel to the films, wherever possible, we have woven in familiar scenarios and characters; including Wu Han.

XBM: Have you had the opportunity to use Harrison Ford's face for the game?
RICH: Yes, we were able to use Harrison's likeness in the game and we have tried not only to faithfully capture his features but also his facial expressions and mannerisms. Although it was not possible to record Harrison's voice, frequently the voice-alike sounds uncannily like him. Coupled with the visuals, we feel we've truly brought Indy to the life in our game.

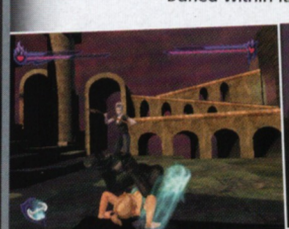
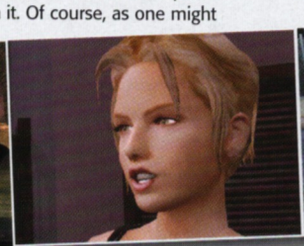
XBM: Traditionally, Indy has only used a whip, a pistol and his fists. What other weapons does he have access to in the game?
RICH: Actually, in the films, Indy frequently defends himself by grabbing and wielding anything he can lay his hands on in the heat of the moment. This is the approach we adopted for our combat: Indy can basically pick up anything in the environment and use it against his opponents; including chairs, bottles, swords, crowbars, shovels, pistols, nunchukas, grenades, table legs, and machine guns.

Although we have considerably widened the player's arsenal in comparison to previous *Indiana Jones* games, we have ensured that Indy's traditional weapons of choice (his fists, pistol and whip) remain at the heart of the combat and that their flexibility is faithfully recreated. For example, Indy can swing his whip widely to push multiple opponents back or use it to grab a single enemy, pull him in close, and then finish him off with a devastating punch. Thanks to our engine's extremely powerful free-roaming combat system, the player will enjoy a uniquely satisfying mixture of world-class hand-to-hand brawling and stellar shootout sequences.

XBM: Do you feel that you have managed to capture the humour of Indy and his character?
RICH: I think we've done a pretty good job of capturing the essence of the humour that you'd expect from the license. As with the movies, the game's not a laugh-riot but there are many times during the course it where the player should have a smile on their face.

XBM: Roughly how many hours of gameplay are there? How many levels are included?
RICH: It's hard to say because it varies according to the commitment and ability of the person playing it but I think 20 – 30 hours would be a good estimate for an average player. There are 10 levels in the game made up of 55+ unique maps that will take the player on an adventure spanning the globe.

XBM: What else have the members of your company been involved with? Did any of them work on any well known titles before joining The Collective?
RICH: Wow, that's a long, long list. Here's a small sample: *Xcom*, *Sacrifice*, Coin-Op *Street Fighter II Turbo (Hyper Fighting)*, *Grim Fandango*, *Starcraft*, *Midwinter*, *Of Light and Darkness*, *Red Faction*, Coin-Op *Savage Quest*, *Dark Reign*, *WeaponLord*, *James Bond: Tomorrow Never Dies*, *Terminator II*, *Sid Meier's Colonization*, *Virtual Pool 2*, *No One Lives Forever*, *The Neverhood*, EA's *Strike* series, *ToonStruck*, *Total Annihilation*, *Civilization*, *Return to Castle Wolfenstein*, *Tribes* etc. The list really could take up a page. Seriously though, I've been making games since 1986 and I've never worked alongside a more talented or passionate group as we have here now.




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48 MICRO MACHINES



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PlayStation.2

GAME BOY ADVANCE

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INFOGRAMES

NEWS

GOSSIP, GAMES, EVENTS, LAUNCHES, RUMOURS AND RELEASE DATES...

SHOWCASE

THIS MONTH

DOOM III

Running time	2.02 mins
Rating	15
Genre	First-person shooter
Producer	id Software
Release Date	2003 TBA

WITH DOOM 3 ON THE PC ONLY A FEW MONTHS AWAY NOW, THE XBOX VERSION ISN'T GOING TO BE FAR BEHIND. A RECENTLY RELEASED TRAILER SHOWED THAT THIS IS GOING TO BE ONE HELL OF A GAME. QUITE LITERALLY...



Helmet under his arm, our hero descends into the madness. Tough guy, huh?



The zombie lunges and argh! They're quicker than they look! A couple of shots to the head and he's finished.



But he's not alone – drawn to the sound of gunfire, his 'buddies' make a grab for our hero. Lucky he packed that machine gun, right?



Our hero takes cover – this is not a diner that would be too happy about being disturbed.



We gaze on as the creature rips the guts from out of the hapless victim, spraying blood around the room.



Uh-oh we've been spotted! But instead of attacking, the creature pegs it. Was he startled by the sight of our hero?



Our hero suddenly comes to a halt – there's something not quite right here...



Up above two minigun-wielding demons are lurking – hopefully they won't see him.



Lock and load! They're after one thing now – the taste of human blood. Yummy.



He steps out from the *Aliens*-esque elevator and surveys the darkness around him. This'll be hell, then...



Blood smeared on the floor. A bad sign... the way that light is swaying, casting moving shadows is an ominous sign...



Through the door and... Shapes lumbering out of the gloom! Zombies everywhere – that pistol doesn't seem to up to the job.



With zombies dispatched he moves on to the next room, only pausing to admire the lovely lighting effects and textures.



And suddenly there's a terrifying banging noise. A hideous abomination tears its way through a wall of pipes and disappears off into some toilets.



We follow... and what do we see? A fatter zombie being made a meal of by the dog thing. Not particularly pleasant...



But wait – the zombie dude isn't dead yet! Up he gets and begins his moronic shuffle towards us, spilling his guts as he goes.



Back out into the corridor and what should we find waiting for us? The dog/creature/beast thing! A few squeezes on that machine gun trigger are enough to put him to sleep.



Next room and we're getting into the guts of the scientific base now. Some strange goings on here... Scientists meddling with nature again are they?



Only one attacks – fortunately he adopts the 'run at the human' instead of the 'shoot human with ruddy big gun' attack pattern.



He's easily dispatched but where's the other one got to?



Oh, he'll be sneaking up from behind then. Our hero falls in a hail of bullets but remains conscious long enough to see himself eaten by the demon. Nice.

NEWS

GOSSIP, GAMES, EVENTS, LAUNCHES, RUMOURS AND RELEASE DATES...

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2

NEW SHOTS OF THE SEQUEL TO THE BEST RACER ON XBOX!

Publisher: ..... Microsoft
Developer: ..... Bizarre Creations
Players: ..... TBA
Out: ..... Winter 2003

Although it's not due out until winter 2003, new shots of Bizarre Creations' sequel to the brilliant *Project Gotham Racing* have been leaking out of Microsoft at a steady rate. These new pics confirm that the game will feature classic cars – this Mercedes – and a host of others are promised. A total of 50 cars will feature in the final game.

We're not expecting *Project Gotham 2* to be that far removed from the superb original. However, it will feature at least two new cities – Edinburgh and Hong Kong, and it will have online play via Xbox Live. And, of course, a load more cars including the brand-new Enzo Ferrari. Bring. It. On.

"A total of 50 cars will feature in the final game"



NEW SCREENS

XBOX ONLY

XBOX LIVE







PHOTO REALISTIC: As with the first *PGR*, the cities in the sequel have been rendered to an almost obsessive level of detail, using photos and video footage to get them just right.

BURNING RUBBER: The look of the game may be ultra-real but the handling of the cars remains distinctly arcade, making *PGR2* one of the most enjoyable racing games on Xbox.

CITY LIFE: Again the tracks are based on the real street layouts of the real cities – two have been confirmed so far: Edinburgh and Hong Kong. We can't wait to see how Bizarre is going to create the latter...

The ultimate football management game returns exclusively for Xbox!

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ONLY ON XBOX

"As good as football management games get"

XBM

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NEWS

GOSSIP, GAMES, EVENTS, LAUNCHES, RUMOURS AND RELEASE DATES...

"Deadly Alliance is taking the series back to its roots"











Publisher: .....Midway
Developer: ..... In-house
Players 1-2
Out: .....14 February

DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME KIDS!

Everybody knows *Mortal Kombat*. It's the controversial franchise that refuses to die. The whole concept seemed like a good idea to start with but then by the time you got to trilogy compilations and mythologies the whole point was lost. Finally *Deadly Alliance* is taking the series back to its bloody roots. Which means a quality beat-'em-up on the Xbox – it's about time that those *Dead Or Alive* girls had some competition.

The game not only plays well (and is surprisingly technical) but it looks superb, as you can no doubt see from these screens. The fighters now get bruised or cut with every encounter and the use of blood is even more over the top than before. If that's possible. By the end of a three-round bout you can barely see the nicely textured floor for the claret covering it. Apparently, this is the game that the original *Mortal Kombat* was envisioned to be. Good wholesome family entertainment...

MORTAL KOMBAT: DEADLY ALLIANCE



DEAD OR ALIVE XTREME BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Publisher: ..... Microsoft
Developer: ..... Team Ninja
Players: 1-2
Out: ..... February 2003

ANTICIPATION RATING GOING OFF THE SCALE!

This game has featured in XBM in several consecutive issues, but with screenshots like these to being leaked out of Tecmo, we can't help but feel that you need another update. As the girls bask in the sun, swatting up on their ball handling and girl vs girl skills, there's plenty of time for playing 'dress up doll' with them.

There are over 200 different swimsuits for you to choose from and no end of accessories to collect and give out as gifts, including some rather fetching flowers, shades, and hair accessories.

Mini-games include hopping floating pads in the pool and taking part in Black Jack sessions at the many casinos in Jack's resort. If you want to get into the slightly more manly side of the game, the actual dynamics of the volleyball are impressive and there are many different types of shot, with varying direction and speed to think about. Besides, just look at those hooters.











NEWS

GOSSIP, GAMES, EVENTS, LAUNCHES, RUMOURS AND RELEASE DATES...

NEW SCREENS



KEN DO: The game covers a host of locations from around the globe, including Prague, Hong Kong, Istanbul, and a mountain fortress somewhere in China. There are ten different locations in all.

PACKING PISTOL: As the star of three movies based around the time of the Second World War, Indy doesn't have the mega-weaponry of modern heroes – but his whip, gun and a good-natured charm usually get him through.

FACE OFF: Although The Collective have had the benefit of face mapping from Harrison Ford himself, this screenshot doesn't show it off at it's best. The sound-alike makes a pretty good job of his voice too.

INDIANA JONES AND THE EM

WORLD FAMOUS ACTION HERO MAKES A COMEBACK AS THE BIG SCREEN BECKONS ONCE MORE...

Publisher: .....LucasArts
Developer: .....The Collective
Players 1
Out: .....Spring 2003

Makers of the acclaimed *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* game have turned their hand, and their in-game engine, to a new license. This time Indiana Jones and a brand-new set of adversaries traverse crocodile-infested waters, castles and underwater palaces in search of the mythical 'Heart of a Dragon' black pearl, which is rumoured to give its possessor the power to control the minds of others. A multi-national alliance of underground Asian society, the Black Dragon Triad, and German mercenary Albrecht Von Beck have teamed up to claim the Pearl for themselves. Indy, at the behest of the Chinese government, is on a mission to retrieve it and return it home to the Chinese museum.

Our hands-on experience with the *The Emperor's Tomb* tells us







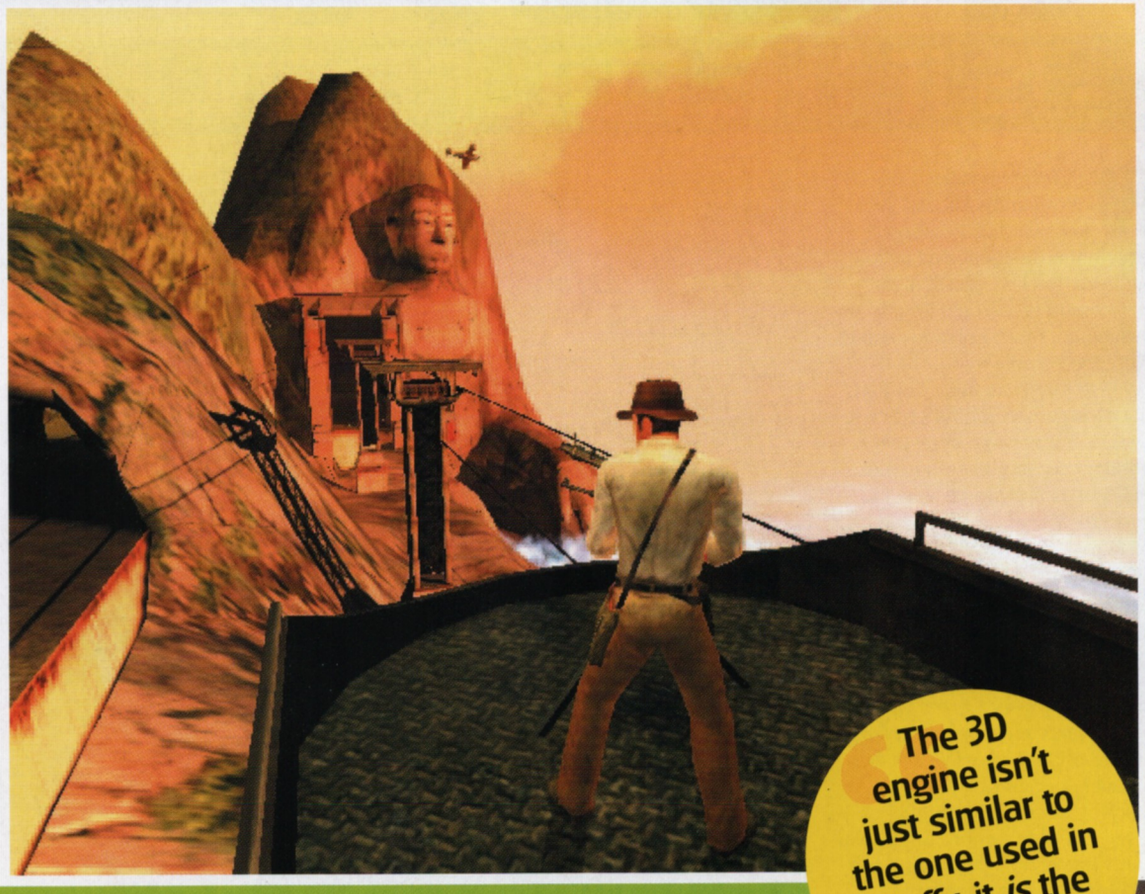








FIGHT THE LADIES: Indy doesn't usually choose to punch out women. But when there's two of them coming at him with razor fans, someone's going to get a couple of jabs to the jaw, and it ain't gonna be the man in the hat.





BIGGER GUNS: Not limited to a pistol, Indy can pick up other weapons on the way – including this sniper rifle.



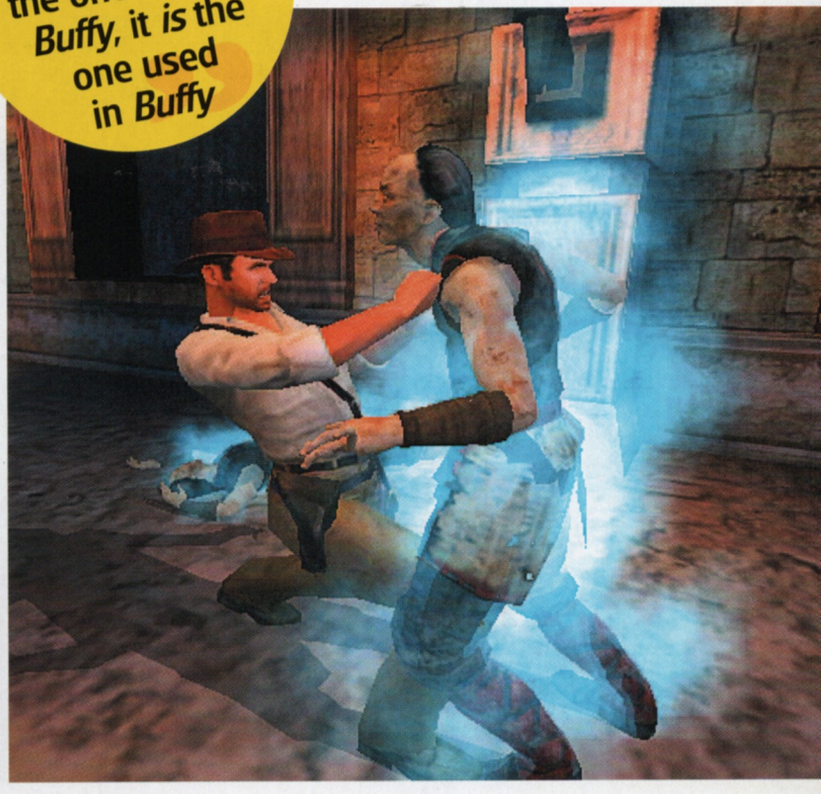
DEMONIC: He may look like a statue, but he's been activated by evil spirits and he's deadly with a sword.

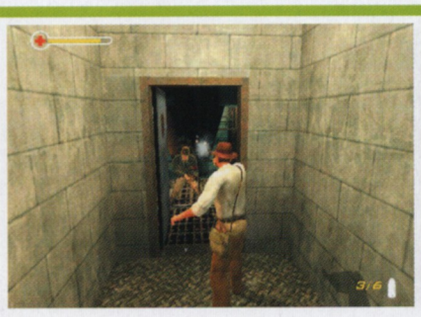
The 3D engine isn't just similar to the one used in *Buffy*, it *is* the one used in *Buffy*

PEROR'S TOMB

that the 3D engine which supports the game isn't just similar to the one used in *Buffy*, it *is* the one used in *Buffy*. Indy's moves, beyond the crack of his whip and his pistol, are exactly the same as those enjoyed by the Slayer, begging the question: will we fall for it a second time around?

Indy uses martial arts as well as chairs, shovels as table legs to fight off the myriad of attackers. At least the worldwide settings differentiate these screenshots from the backdrops of Sunnydale. Lets hope there's no chance of an appearance from shrieking sidekick Short-Round in the Hong Kong setting.







NEWS

GOSSIP, GAMES, EVENTS, LAUNCHES, RUMOURS AND RELEASE DATES...

SOAPBOX

XBOX LIVE - IS IT THE FUTURE ONLINE?

IN THREE MONTHS TIME XBOX LIVE WILL LAUNCH IN EUROPE. MICROSOFT HAS HERALDED IT AS THE FUTURE OF GAMING. BUT IS IT? COULD XBOX LIVE FAIL? WHAT CAN MICROSOFT DO TO MAKE IT SUCCEED? AND WILL IT CHANGE THE WAY WE PLAY GAMES FOREVER? XBM INVESTIGATES...

With fewer than 250,000 Xboxs in the UK and with just over half a million people in the UK connected to Broadband, the first question you have to ask is, is this right time to be launching the most ambitious online venture the console market has known? Not only are there not that many Xbox gamers for the service to appeal to, but because Xbox Live is dependent on Broadband Internet, the take up is likely to be slow to begin with. Michel Cassius, head of Xbox Europe, agrees: "At the beginning it will appeal to a subset, a percentage of people who own an Xbox, but with time I think it will be a driver because people will buy an Xbox because they want to play online." But he sees a bright future, "In a few years' time, people will ask themselves, 'Shall I watch TV or play Xbox Live?', because there will be as much programming depth to Xbox Live services as television. 'Shall I play with my friends tonight?'" You could draw a parallel with any new technological venture. Being there at the beginning increases the chances that you'll be there at the end.

At present there is a public beta test taking place with 30,000 gamers around Europe evaluating the service. Of course it's not just about Europe – Xbox Live launched in the States last month where in the first week 150,000 Xbox Live starter kits were sold. It's also worth noting that US Xbox sales rose by 18 percent in the same period. But Microsoft isn't expecting a huge boom in the UK to begin with. Cassius again, "What we've said is that we'll have tens of thousands of people online by the end of this calendar year, hundreds of thousands next year. What we know is that online gaming is the next big thing. It's the trigger for people to look at gaming in a different way, not something that I do on my own but something I do to socialize."

So it appears that Xbox Live is something that is for the long term and that Xbox is just the beginning – it's likely that Xbox Live will outlive Xbox, Xbox 2, Xbox 3 and so on and so on. But what could make Live a huge success? The answer to that is probably the same forces that drive the console market, namely marketing and Triple A games that can only be played on one format. In this area Live excels – none of the other players in the market have anything on the scale of Xbox Live – it's a format that Nintendo and Sony do not have access to.



Michel Cassius, Head of Xbox Europe



At present we're looking at traditional PC-like online games being developed or standard multiplayer games adapted for online gaming. This will change in the future and Xbox Live's Voice Communicator is set to be at the heart of development. Cassius reckons that new and innovative genres will come from the advent of high speed online gaming, "I've seen some design of games where voice is now a part of the game itself, no longer just a form of communication. You'll need to use voice to perform actions within the game. For example, you'll need to whisper to prevent other people hearing what you say."

We can look to the PC for examples of this. The recent explosion of MMORPGs, has proven that there is a market out there for dedicated online games. The success of *Phantasy Star Online* on the

RELATED LINKS

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THE COMPETITION



Nintendo

The GameCube has been manufactured with Internet in mind – Nintendo has announced two add-ons: a standard 56k modem and a Broadband adaptor. However, the company has yet to confirm its online plans and has adopted a 'wait and see' policy. So far there's one big game (available in Japan-only) that makes use of the online technology: *Phantasy Star Online*.

Sony

The PS2 Broadband service recently went online in the US (you have to buy the hard drive/Ethernet adaptor) with only a handful of games available, amongst them *Madden 2003* and *SOCOM*, the latter coming with a headset similar to the Voice Communicator. However, Sony has no dedicated servers set up for its Broadband service and has left that up to the publishers to deal with along with pricing.

ONLINE GAMES THAT HAVE CHANGED THE WORLD



Quake

The *Doom* phenomenon was just a taster of what was to come with *Quake*. The first action online game that enabled a lot of people to play in one game at the same time. It was also the game where 'clans' came into being and spawned dozens of mods and downloadable levels.



EverQuest

The online RPG had been done before but not on this scale and not with this kind of popularity. One gamer famously described it as, 'addictive as crack,' and there were many stories of people playing for 24 hours or more at a time. The first game that coined the acronym MMORPG, or Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game.



Counter-Strike

An FPS like *Quake* but this 'mod' required players to work in teams – one the SWAT team attempting to rescue hostages, the other the terrorists. It spawned from *Half-Life* but became more popular than its daddy. The teamwork aspect of this game would work brilliantly with the Voice Communicator – indeed, a version of *Counter-Strike* is heading to Xbox next year.

Dreamcast has also proven that the online RPG isn't just restricted to those gamers with a monitor and a keyboard. Unsurprisingly, plenty of MMORPGs have been announced for Live including one from UK software powerhouse Rare.

But that's not all – free, downloadable content will be a major reason to buy into Live. Ubi Soft has already confirmed that it'll be supporting the downloadable content aspect of Live with *Splinter Cell*, with the recent announcement that new levels will be free to Xbox Live subscribers. Needless to say, this aspect will lengthen any game's lifespan. And then there are sports games too – imagine a football game where the summer's transfers are automatically uploaded to your game.

> ***Voice is now a part of the game itself, no longer just a form of communication***
>
> **Michel Cassius, Head of Xbox Europe**

The jury's out as to whether Xbox Live will be a success or not. Potentially it could be the biggest thing to happen to gaming since a certain Japanese playing card making company decided to release a game called *Donkey Kong*. It could be a shot in the arm for an industry that is saturated in too many 'me too' games and inject some originality back into gaming. It could spark an entire new online community. First things first, though. People need to know about it. They also need to try Xbox Live for themselves and this is up to Microsoft's marketing arsenal. "If you build it, they'll come," as someone once said in some film about baseball. They've built it, we've tried it and we like it a lot. The question is: will you?

You can read about XBM's playtest of the Xbox Live beta on page 38.

Are you looking forward to Xbox Live? Do you think it will be a resounding success or a disastrous failure? Will it change the face of videogames forever? Have your say on our forum: **www.totalgames.net**

NEWS

GOSSIP, GAMES, EVENTS, LAUNCHES, RUMOURS AND RELEASE DATES...

COMPLETE LISTINGS

RELEASE SCHEDULE

WITH THE HIDEOUS NUMBER OF GAMES RELEASED LAST MONTH THE LIST FOR DECEMBER LOOKS QUITE PITIFUL BUT DON'T BE PUT OFF AS THERE ARE SOME QUALITY GAMES IN THERE. AND IF THAT ISN'T ENOUGH YOU CAN START PLANNING YOUR PURCHASES FOR NEXT YEAR!

DECEMBER 2002

BMX XXX	Acclaim
Kakuto Chojin	Microsoft
NBA Inside Drive 2003	Microsoft
Robocop	Ubi Soft
Serious Sam	Take2
Shenmue 2	Infogrames
Strident: Shadowfront	Phantagram
ToeJam & Earl 3	SEGA
Whacked!	Microsoft



WHACKED!

Publisher: Microsoft
Developer: Presto
Genre: Beat-'em-up

☒ This is one of the first games to be Xbox Live compatible and it's also going to be the game you get free when buying the Live pack. Silly but fun to play for a while.

XIII	Ubi Soft

JANUARY 2002

Battle Engine Aquila	Infogrames
Dead Or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball	Microsoft
Frogger Classic	Konami
Indiana Jones And The Emperor's Tomb	Activision
Panzer Dragoon Orta	SEGA
Pulse Racer	Jaleco
Risk	Infogrames
Super Bubble Pop	Jaleco
The House Of The Dead 3	Infogrames
World Racing	TDK



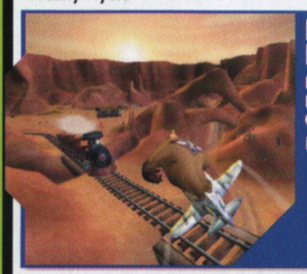
WORLD RACING

Publisher: TDK
Developer: Synetic
Genre: Racing

☒ The release date on this one has been pushed back for fine tuning. Since the game was already looking quite good this should mean a quality title.

FEBRUARY 2002

Armada 2: Exodus	Metroid
ATV Quad Racing 2	Acclaim
Batman: Dark Tomorrow	Ubi Soft
Dark Angel	Vivendi
Falcone: Into The Maelstrom	Ubi Soft
Freaky Flyers	Midway



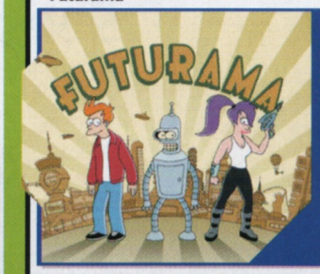
FREAKY FLYERS

Publisher: Midway
Developer: In-house
Genre: Racing

☒ You can tell from the name that this isn't the kind of game to take itself too seriously! A far more preferable choice over PC-style flight sims.

FEBRUARY 2002 CONTINUED

Freedom: Battle For Liberty Island	EA
Furious Karting	Infogrames
Futurama	SCi



FUTURAMA

Publisher: SCi
Developer: Digital Illusions
Genre: Platformer

☒ A fantastic show makes its videogame debut. We know the whole official license is a worry but Groening's personal touch should mean that fans won't be disappointed.

Gladius	Activision
Jayne's USAF	Xicat
Kung Fu Chaos	Microsoft
Midtown Madness 3	Microsoft
Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance	Midway
Racing Evoluzione	Infogrames
Starsky And Hutch	Empire
Star Wars: Knights Of The Old Republic	Activision
Vexx	Acclaim

MARCH 2003

Club Football Series	Codemasters
Dead To Rights	EA



DEAD TO RIGHTS

Publisher: EA
Developer: Namco
Genre: Shoot-'em-up

☒ We reviewed the import version of this game a few months back and loved it. Now it's finally picked up a UK release we can hardly wait.

Defender	Midway
Evolution Snocross	Konami
Galleon	Interplay
Haven: Call Of The King	Midway
Jurassic Park: Project Genesis	Vivendi
Lamborghini	Rage
Mafia	Take2
Malice	Vivendi
Metal Gear Solid 2: Substance	Konami
Mission Impossible 2	Infogrames
Paris Dakar 2	Acclaim
Rayman 3: Hoodlums World	Ubi Soft
Rollercoaster Tycoon 2	Infogrames
Snooker 2003	Codemasters
Stake	Metro 3D
State Of Emergency	Take2



STATE OF EMERGENCY

Publisher: Take2
Developer: Rockstar
Genre: Beat-'em-up

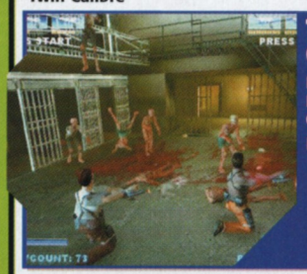
☒ This may not be the controversial crime-filled Rockstar game of choice but this is the perfect title for a bit of old-fashioned mindless fun.

MARCH 2002 CONTINUED

Steel Battalion	Capcom
The Great Escape	SCi
TOCA Pro Race Driver	Codemasters
Untitled driving game	Capcom
V Rally 3	Infogrames
Zapper	Infogrames

APRIL 2003

Dino Crisis 3	Capcom
Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter	Vivendi
Midnight Club 2	Take2
Return To Castle Wolfenstein	Activision
Rolling	Rage
Sniper	Capcom
Soul Calibur 2	EA
SWAT: Global Strike Team	Vivendi
The Last Ninja	TDK
Twin Calibre	Rage



TWIN CALIBRE

Publisher: Rage
Developer: Rage
Genre: Beat-'em-up

☒ Having duel pistols of any kind in a game makes for great fun. Rage has taken this one stage further for a full-on, action-filled bloodbath!

WWE: Crush Hour	THQ
WWE Raw 2: Ruthless Aggression	THQ
Yager	THQ

MAY 2003

Crimson Skies: High Road To Revenge	Microsoft
Dungeons & Dragons Heroes	Infogrames
Enter The Matrix	Infogrames
Ghost Master	Empire



GHOST MASTER

Publisher: Empire
Developer: In-house
Genre: Strategy

☒ Getting to play a ghost in a game is a brilliant idea. And we're not talking friendly *Casper* style here: in this game you get to terrorise humans!

Indy Racing League	**Codemasters**
Speed Kings	**Acclaim**
The Hulk	**Vivendi**

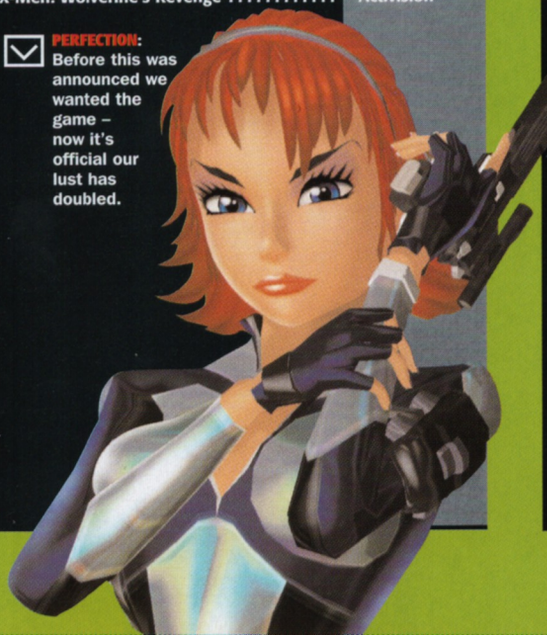
JUNE 2002

Duality	**Phantagram**
Evil Dead: A Fistful Of Broomstick	**THQ**
Fable	**Microsoft**
Operation Flashpoint	**Codemasters**
Outlaw Volleyball: Spike Or Die	**TDK**
Pillage	**Metro 3D**
Rainbow Six: Raven Shield	**Ubi Soft**
Shining Lore	**Phantagram**
Unseen	**Microsoft**

REST OF 2003

Alter Echo	THQ
Amped: Freestyle Snowboarding 2	Microsoft
Banjo-Kazooie 3	Microsoft
BC	Microsoft
Breakdown	EA
Breed	CDV
Bulletproof Monk	Empire
Burnout 2	Acclaim
Charlie's Angels	Ubi Soft
Conflict Desert Sabre	SCi
Conker's Other Bad Fur Day	Microsoft
Counter-Strike	Vivendi
Crank The Weasel	Midway
Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon	Ubi Soft
Dead Or Alive: Code Chronos	Microsoft
Deus Ex 2: The Invisible War	Eidos
Doom 3	Activision
Driver 3	Infogrames
Dronez	Metro 3D
Far Cry	Ubi Soft
Fatal Frame	Microsoft
Finding Nemo	THQ
Fireblade	Midway
Fishing Live Online	Microsoft
Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse	3DO
Halo 2	Microsoft
Jacked	3DO
Kameo: Elements Of Power	Microsoft
Kill Bill	Vivendi
Kingdom Under Fire 2	Phantagram
Lord Of The Rings: Two Towers	EA
Maximum Chase	Microsoft
Moto X	Konami
Muzzle Flash	Microsoft
Nightcaster 2	Jaleco
Ninja Gaiden	Microsoft
Orchid	Argonaut
Pac-Man World 2	EA
Perfect Dark Zero	Microsoft
Phantasy Star Online	SEGA
Project Gotham Racing 2	Microsoft
Psychonauts	Microsoft
Rare Racing (title TBA)	Microsoft
Soldier Of Fortune 2: Double Helix	Activision
Shaun Murray's Pro Wakeboarder	Activision
Shaun Palmer's Pro Snowboarder 2	Activision
Shayde: Monsters Vs Humans	Metro 3D
Shoot To Kill: Columbian Crackdown	Codemasters
Spy Vs Spy	TDK
Starcraft Ghost	Vivendi
Star Wars: Galaxies	Microsoft
Sudeki	Microsoft
Tao Feng: Fist Of Lotus	Microsoft
Team SAS	Rage
Top Spin Tennis	Microsoft
Tork	Microsoft
True Crime: Streets Of LA	Activision
True Fantasy Live Online	Microsoft
Warhammer 40,000	THQ
X-Men: Wolverine's Revenge	Activision

PERFECTION: Before this was announced we wanted the game – now it's official our lust has doubled.



TOP 10 MOST WANTED

WITH MOST COMPANIES CONCENTRATING ON THE CHRISTMAS RUSH AND KEEPING THEIR 2003 TITLES CLOSELY GUARDED THERE HASN'T BEEN ANYTHING NEW ANNOUNCED RECENTLY TO GRAB OUR ATTENTION...

NEW POSITION	LAST POSITION	GAME TITLE
1	1	**HALO 2** So close and yet so far away! It may be Christmas 2002 but you're not going to be able to play this game until Christmas 2003. Watching the trailer still gives us goosebumps.
2	2	**FABLE** There hasn't been anything new said about this game since the official name change last month but it's safe to say that you're not going to be able to look anywhere in 2003 without seeing this title.
3	3	**PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2** In the last *Project Gotham* the final car was the incredibly quick Ferrari F50. We like Ferraris. They're fast, fun and scream masculinity. Which is why we're pleased to hear the new Enzo model is in this game.
4	4	**DEAD OR ALIVE VOLLEYBALL** After a quick play of the beautiful *DOA Volleyball* over at the Tecmo headquarters our anticipation on the game has not been sated. Next month the game will finally assume its rightful place at our side.
5	5	**KAMEO: ELEMENTS OF POWER** The very idea of a game from Rare on the Xbox is enough to put a smile on our face but *Kameo* does much more than that. We can only dream of the puzzles on offer thanks to the shape-shifting heroine.
6	6	**NINJA GAIDEN** Incredibly fast, this game is full of fight scenes that wouldn't look out of place in a Jet Li movie. Only you're the choreographer calling the shots *and* the stunt man performing the fancy moves!
7	8	**XIII** The more we see on this game the more we like it. Admittedly, cel shading is nothing new and numerous games have used it in the past. None, however, has done it in such a stylish way as *XIII*.
8	9	**METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SUBSTANCE** Now available in America, *Substance* has shown itself to be more than just a rehashed game with a handful of simple additions. This release is going to keep you busy for a long time.
9	7	**DEUS EX 2: THE INVISIBLE WAR** We haven't seen anything new on the game for absolutely ages and the new November release date brings tears to our eyes. No fair – we want this stunning first-person RPG right now!
10	10	**PANZER DRAGOON ORTA** Never ever get on the wrong side of a girl. Especially when she's riding a huge multi-form dragon with a penchant for destroying everything that moves. It looks stunning, moves fast and features non stop action.



ACTIVISION

XBOX | PlayStation | PlayStation 2 | NINTENDO GAMECUBE | IMP | RACE OF CHAMPIONS

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Grind, Skid, Drift and Slide!
Compete to become the Champion of Champions in this new style rally action racer
Slippery when Wet, Muddy, Snow-covered...
Tear up the terrain on 19 massive tracks in fully interactive environments
Taste the Dirt. Taste the Victory!
Check out the hairpin twisting, brake-screaming action in 19 fully licensed rally cars
REMEMBER WHERE THE GAME ENDS
RALLY
FUSION
MICHELIN
RACE OF CHAMPIONS

THE KNOWLEDGE

PERFECT YOUR SET-UP

You've already got the best console on the market: isn't it about time you got the set-up to match? That old portable your mum passed on when they got an upgrade for the bedroom may have been free, but think about what it's doing to the look of the games. The Xbox can run games at 125 million polygons per second, and has an Intel 733MHz NVIDIA graphics processor: Your ancient, handed down TV has such a low capacity to process that kind of detail that it skips the small print and goes straight to the dotted line.

It's not just picture quality we're concerned about either. Have you ever read the credits and realised how many people are actually involved in creating soundtracks for games? Entire orchestras create musical scores, actors create whole personalities with their vocal abilities and the Xbox has the ability to transfer this to your speakers in full Dolby Digital 5.1. It doesn't really do it justice if the TV you're playing on is still emitting a tinny, mono whine then, does it?

Just as you get your Xmas lists ready, XBM is giving you all the information you need to create your perfect set-up, whatever your budget...

THE ESSENTIALS

- TELEVISION
- SPEAKER SYSTEM
- SCART CABLE
- EXTRA CONTROLLERS

EXTRA BUDGET?

- AMPLIFIER
- SUB WOOFER

LOW BUDGET AROUND £250

If you can scrape together 300 quid or so, we have separated the cheap tat from the inexpensive but high quality merchandise.

PHILIPS 21PT4457

£178.99 Philips

Although you can get TVs for under £150, we'd go for this Philips model. It has a good, high definition picture and has a few extras which we liked: the NTSC playback is a feature you often don't get on lower range TVs and means that you can play all your import games without a converter. It also has FTS (a flatter, squarer tube), which has the effect of reducing distortion and improving contrast and sharpness. It's the closest thing you can get to flat screen on this kind of budget.

INSPIRE 2.1 CONSOLE 2400

Creative £34.99

This is one of the cheapest speaker systems on the market and is created with the console in mind. The sub woofer is heavily reinforced and bangs out the bass of explosions while the two satellite speakers deal with the mid to high–end sound effects and music. The speakers feature magnetic shielding, which means that they won't interfere with the picture quality if you put them next to the TV, and the sound enhances your gaming experience without breaking the piggy bank.

X CONTROLLER

Play-X £11.99 X2

Although this is one of the cheapest controllers on the market, the X Controller is built like a tank and should be able to withstand even the most violent button bashings. Built with the layout of the regular controller, The X has fully analogue buttons, two memory card slots, some of that nonesensical 'turbo' tomfoolery which none–one needs, and rubberised grips on the handles which smell like swimming pools.

"Enhance your gaming without breaking th piggy ban

PS TO X-BOX CONVERTER

Play-X £12.99

If you've recently upgraded from PSone and have controllers from the old system knocking around, you could save yourself a packet and the shock of transition from a small, compact controller to a hulking great behemoth by investing in this. The PS to Xbox converter allows you to play the Xbox with PlayStation controllers, saving you at least a little expense if you already have controllers lying about.

SCART CABLE

MadCatz £4.99

Your budget has reached its limit and you still need a SCART cable, so grab this one from Mad Catz. It's only a fiver, and doesn't have any extras, but it does the job, and does it admirably.



SPECIAL MENTION

PANASONIC TX32PB50
£1399 from Panasonic

Most televisions process information at 50-60 Hertz. The Panasonic TX32PB50, though, processes at 100 Hertz, meaning that the picture is clearer and totally flicker free, regardless of how fast the Xbox is sending the images, making it the perfect choice for the gamer who has a little bit of extra cash to throw around. The picture quality of this widescreen, flatscreen TV is unmatched in its class.



EQUIPMENT



THE COST	
PHILIPS 21PT4457	£178.99
INSPIRE 2.1 CONSOLE 2400	£34.99
PS TO X-BOX CONVERTER	£12.99
X CONTROLLER	£11.99
SCART CABLE	£4.99
	TOTAL: £255.94

HIGH BUDGET AROUND £1000

You've been saving up for a while now, and, what with your birthday and Xmas coming up, your parents are going to stump up a few quid so you can set yourself up with a home arcade worthy of the best. Well, not quite the best, but it's a big step up and will improve the quality of the visuals, sound effects and gameplay no end...

SONY KV 32L35
£878.85

It might not be so good with consoles, but Sony makes a pretty good TV when it puts its mind to it. This 32" beauty has pure flatscreen which eradicates any distortions, wherever you sit in relation to the screen, has four viewing modes and comes with its own stand/cabinet which can easily house the Xbox and another console or video/DVD player. There are also two SCART inputs at the back for better connection, which means you can plug the TV and the Xbox both in at the same time. The TV comes with its own Virtual Dolby Digital, but you'll be wanting to beef that up with a set of speakers...

> "This 32" beauty has pure flatscreen which eradicates any distortions"



VIDEOLOGIC ZXR-500
Videologic £79.99

It might be one of the most inexpensive Dolby Digital 5.1 surround sound systems on the market, but this set of speakers works wonders. Although it doesn't feature a massive amount of programmable buttons or adjustable levels, the Videologic ZXP has been programmed to transmit Dolby 5.1 in exactly the way it was intended. Get your ears buzzing at half the price.



ADVANCED CONTROLLER
Joytech £19.99 X3

If you want to get your hands on a pad for less than the price of the official, but which works as well, you could do a lot worse (and we've seen some of the others, we know) than get hold of the Joytech Advanced Controller. It has all the features of the Official and solidity not often found in cheaper third-party joypads (detachable D-pads, anyone?).



DIGITAL AV CABLE
Joytech £14.99

It's not the cheapest cable on the market, but it's the best, and even for a low budget set-up, this is a sound investment. Although we don't want to admit to getting excited about a cable, this one has enough tricks up its sleeve to make you feel like you bought a pair of towelling socks and found out that each one had a can of John Smith's in it. The 24 carat gold AV SCART has separate RCA audio outputs which connect to your speakers, plus an S-Video connector in case you ever need it, as well as Optical Output, in case you upgrade to digital or want to plug your CD or mini disc into your speakers.



THE COST	
SONY KV 32L35	£878.85
VIDEOLOGIC ZXR-500	£79.99
ADVANCED CONTROLLER	£19.99
ADVANCED CONTROLLER	£19.99
ADVANCED CONTROLLER	£19.99
ADVANCED CONTROLLER	£19.99
DIGITAL AV CABLE	£14.99
	TOTAL: £1033.80

RICH RICH RICH UNLIMITED FUNDS

We know there must be some gamers out there with unlimited funds, so we have tested some of the very best quality kit out for you. And when you've got it all set up in your Penthouse overlooking the Thames, can we come round for a night of Japanese beer, beluga caviar and a four-player on Halo? Please?

TELEVISION



WIDESCREEN PHILIPS PIXEL PLUS 36PW9607
£2,000 Philips

We'd firstly like to point out before anyone asks, that we deliberately chose a non-Plasma screen. The fact is that Plasma screens tend to burn out after a few years, and most importantly, don't detect light guns. And with *House Of The Dead 3* soon to be released, hopefully spawning a flurry of imitators, a screen that doesn't detect shooters would be a travesty.

So: the Philips Pixel Plus 36W9607. Not the catchiest name in the world, but the power behind it and the sharp look of the 36" screen more than make up for it. A sophisticated design with curved corners means that this TV not only processes information at a ridiculous rate, but it looks pretty mean while it doing it. The Pixel Plus has advanced processing software, which doubles what most TVs can do: where most process at 1,024 x 625, this runs at 2,048 x 833: and with the Xbox firing out at 125 million polygons a second, this can just about keep up with it. Pixel Plus improves the picture depth and definition, and the flat screen enhances the colour and contrast plus eliminates any chance of distortion.

The Pixel Plus picture quality is so good, that it can show up some of the less visually impressive aspects of poorer games: Thankfully, this TV is forgiving enough to give you a get out clause: if you set it to 'Double Lines', it adjusts the vertical resolution and enhances even the poorest of games with rich colours and incredible sharpness.

The Pixel Plus comes with it's own sub woofer and surround sound speakers, but you can still upgrade...

HIGH RESOLUTION RGB SCART CABLE
£14.99 Microsoft Import
For use with High Resolution TVs



AMPLIFIER



YAMAHA DSP-AZ1
£1,999.95 from Yamaha

The amp, if you can afford one, is the kingpin of the speaker system, enabling you to fiddle endlessly with volume, levels, balance and bass until you get the ideal sound for whatever it is you're tuning your ears to. This beast of an amp weighs nearly 30 kgs and looks deceptively like a very plain and simple black box. But the hidden control panel houses simple audio and function commands, as well as inlets which make it easy to plug a games console directly into it. The Amp supports all major sound formats (42 in all), including Dolby Digital 5.1, and features de-coleration and bass management, amongst other essential and fully adjustable facets.

SUB WOOFER



AAAHHHHH!

There is just too much choice. We really couldn't make our minds up. On the one hand, we loved the deep, understated power of the Waterfall Hurricane; we loved its smooth, dark glass surfaces and its solid, compact splendour. But the Celestion Soundstyle 300 was modern, elegant, a wee bit cheeky and with an edge of sophistication we were sure was winking at us.

SPEAKERS

CELESTION SOUNDSTYLE 300
£1,199.99 Celestion

Imagine you've got all the space you need, polished wood floors and one of the coolest gaming areas in living history: you need the Celestion Soundstyle 300. The tinted green (they must have made them to match the Xbox) curved glass of the two AVF302's leaves the two metal speakers suspended beautifully in mid-air. You can get them in Beechwood too, if you want a less space-aged look, but we loved the Sci-fi appeal of these see-through speakers.

There are two little satellite speakers which have little ball joints, meaning that they're easy to direct, and the central speaker goes on top of the TV while the sub needs to go behind the sofa.

Not only does it look good, but this speaker system gives an alarmingly clear, fast and clean sound. The whole range of musical tones are replayed with accuracy which is set in a vast arena of sounds, putting you so far into the game that you'll find yourself wearing a green armoured suit and touting an oversized gun even while you're sitting on your sofa.

OR

WATERFALL HURRICANE
£1,999 Waterfall

We thought that some of you might not have a huge amount of space to spread your speakers in, so we picked these with the idea that they would fit into even the smallest room. The Hurricane's five speakers and subwoofer are sleek, dark, glass edged and have a hint of boxy menace about them. This system uses Waterfall's own Low Diffraction Surrounding (LDS) technology, which uses a complicated system of paper cones and rubber to create a better flow of sound.

Whatever this system is, it works. This sound system clarifies every single noise and fires it at you from places in the room you didn't even know existed.



STYLISH CELESTION: Not only does this speaker system look like something from Close Encounter, it sounds like the spaceship coming over the hill too.



CONTROLLER



VIBE ALPHA
£400

Beautiful thing, this. A fat black box with a snakeskin cover that booms out the depth charges like a pile driver, it looks dangerous, and could have the plaster falling off the ceiling during the opening scenes of *Medal Of Honor*. You can hook it up on high or low input, with low being the better of the two as it lets the sub use its own amplifier, making it easy to mix with the speakers.

Be warned though: don't try and hook this baby up to a lesser set of speakers: its bass will drown out every other sound in the vicinity.

CONTROLLER S
£24.99 X4 Microsoft

We may have got used to the size of the controller, but that doesn't mean that we actually like it. Thanks to the listening ear at Microsoft which actually responded to our complaints about the motorhome which was the standard controller, we can finally get our mitts on this little beauty for just twenty five quid. And now that we know that we can get the smaller, more compact Controller S, formulated for those slightly smaller Japanese hands, that's what we want. And if we've got unlimited funds, we'll have three for our mates, and another one to replace the monstrous original that came with the console.

THE COST

PHILIPS PIXEL PLUS 36PW9607	£2000
CELESTION SOUNDSTYLE 300	£1199.99
OR WATERFALL HURRICANE	£1999.00
YAMAHA DSP-AZ1	£1999.95
VIBE ALPHA	£400
CONTROLLER S	£24.99
CONTROLLER S	£24.99
CONTROLLER S	£24.99
CONTROLLER S	£24.99
DIGITAL AV CABLE	£14.99
TOTAL: £5714.89 OR £5713.99	

XBOX LIVE HANDS ON

IT'S CUTTING EDGE FOR SURE BUT IS IT THE 'FUTURE OF GAMING' AS MICROSOFT WOULD HAVE US BELIEVE? XBM WANTED TO SEE FOR OURSELVES. XBOX LIVE MAY NOT LAUNCH UNTIL MARCH NEXT YEAR BUT BY SIGNING UP FOR THE PUBLIC BETA TEST WE ARE ABLE TO BRING YOU OUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF XBOX LIVE...

FROM SET-UP TO SWITCH OFF, XBM PRESENTS A NIGHT IN THE LIFE OF XBOX LIVE...

18:42
The install disk is in the DVD drive; the Ethernet cable in the back of the Xbox and it's updating the software...

18:45
And before you know it, a new option is available on the Xbox dashboard. Selected! And the console is now linking to the Xbox Live server. Right then, agree to the terms and conditions and... well, from here you can view and change your account details, view and amend your friends list and fiddle with all the settings. Let's send an invite to someone...

18:50
Right, while we're waiting for a reply, let's get into it. *Whacked!* is in the drive and it's looking for online games. If you go for a Quick Match (a feature on all Xbox Live games) the server looks for people who are closest to you geographically, making the games as quick as possible and avoiding slow-down and lag. If you like you can specify to play against gamers in the US or Japan but with the transatlantic (and with Japan being halfway round the world) there's a chance these games may be quite slow.

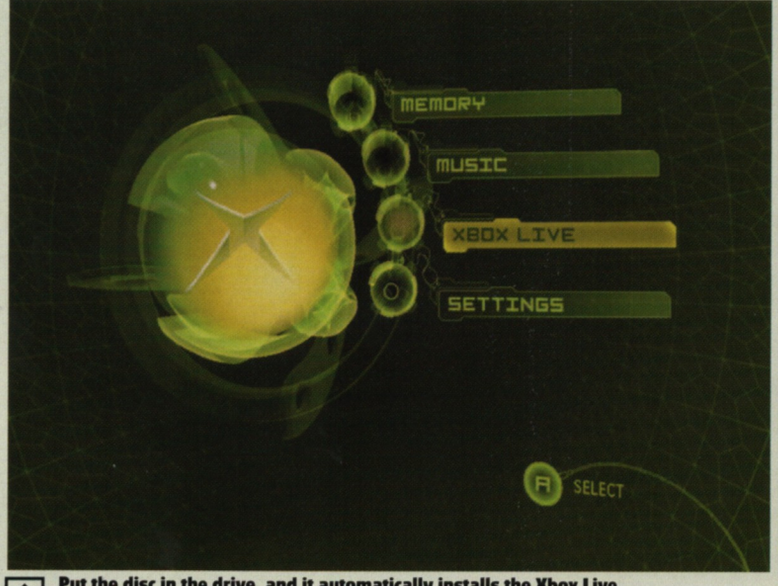
18:51
Anyway, we've been presented with a list of games – some are games in progress and some are waiting for someone to join. We also have the option of setting up our own game. We select Xboy's game. A quick look through the options and we choose... robot voice masking! If you speak while choosing your voice masking you can hear your own voice masked with that voice. Very strange it is too.

18:52
Ahem, the other gamers are getting impatient – it's time to play! Initial impressions aren't that great – *Whacked!* proves to be a little bit limited in terms of gameplay but is still quite fun. Oh and people are speaking in our heads: "This game rocks!"... "I love that weapon"... "Get away from me!" Plenty of banter and friendly jibing. It's going to take a little bit of getting used to...

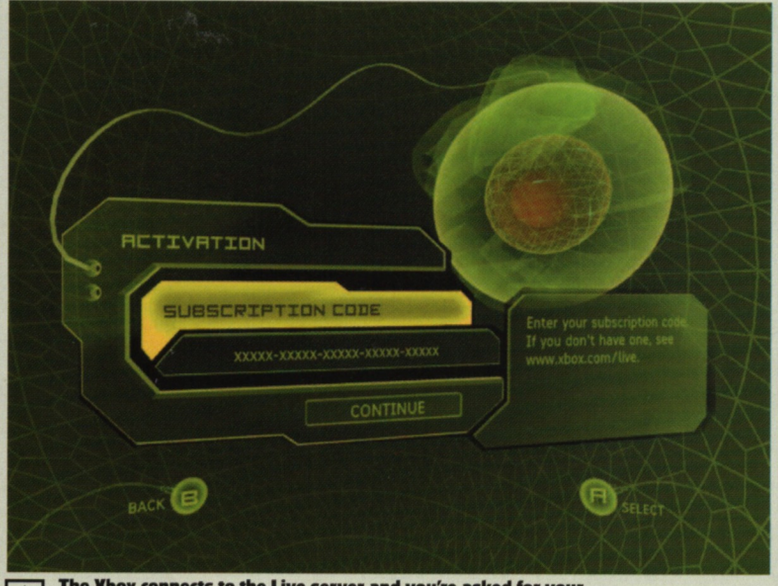
19:32
We've finally relaxed a little and the strange voices in our heads seem natural. But that's enough of *Whacked!* for now, it's time for a bit ▶

HOW TO GET ONLINE

It's this easy to start playing Xbox Live...



Put the disc in the drive, and it automatically installs the Xbox Live software onto the hard drive.



The Xbox connects to the Live server and you're asked for your subscription code – this comes with the Xbox Live starter kit.

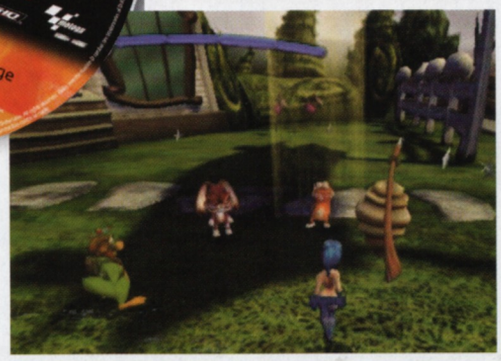
STARTER PACK

So what exactly do you get for your money?

Forty quid buys you an Xbox Live starter kit. For that you get the Voice Communicator, *Moto GP* and *Whacked!* plus a year's subscription to Xbox Live. It'll be available in the shops 14 March next year – coincidentally one year exactly after the launch of Xbox itself!



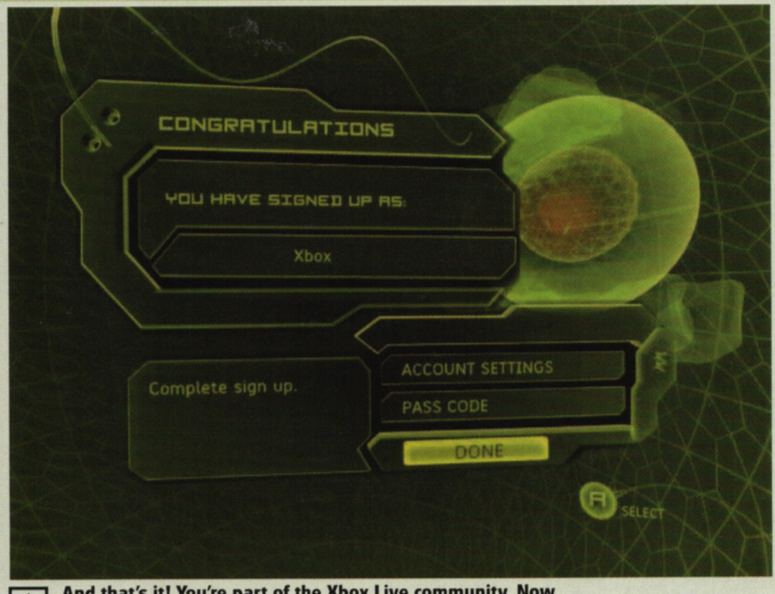




WHACKED!: Not the best game ever created but a nice gentle introduction to Xbox Live.



Next, you choose your Gamertag. Remember: this stays with you forever, so choose wisely!



And that's it! You're part of the Xbox Live community. Now get playing!



THE KIT

LIVE TERMINOLOGY

BROADBAND

The Internet connection needed to play Xbox Live. Operates anywhere between two and 20 times faster than a standard 56k modem. Contact NTL, Telewest or BT for more information – it'll cost anywhere between £15 and £35 per month to have Broadband installed but this can also be used for your PC. AOL Broadband and Freeserve do not currently support Xbox Live.

SERVER

Supercomputer that handles all the data to and from your Xbox across the Internet. Microsoft currently has four main servers in operation: two in Seattle, one in Tokyo and one in London. These then feed smaller servers across the US, Japan and Europe to enable you to play Live against anyone in the world.

LAG

Describes a connection that is suffering from slow-down. This may be due to too many users on a server or if the other players are a great distance from each other.

GAMERTAG

Your Xbox Live identity. This is your name in *every* Live game and on every Live leaderboard and, like Hotmail, there can only be one. If you want to be known as 'Fragmaster' then expect '247' to be tacked on the end, so choose something original.

VOICE COMMUNICATOR

The headphone/microphone set that enables you to communicate on Xbox Live.

PING

Measures the speed of your Live connection. The lower this number, the quicker your connection to Xbox Live is.

VOICE MASKING

A clever bit of software that transforms your voice to sound like any number of different people or things. There are general voices built into the software but developers can make their own specifically for their games.

FRIENDS LIST

A list of people that you've met online and play against frequently. People have to agree to be on your list. You will also be able to see at a glance if they're online or not.

of *Moto GP*. Do we have to switch the Xbox off to swap games? No, actually we don't. This part was designed as part of Xbox from the off – you can simply open the tray and swap the discs over – no need to switch off and lose the connection. Good, eh?

19:40

Okay, we've been stuck in *Moto GP* for quite some time now and we're beginning to see what a difference online gaming can make. *Moto GP* is a good game in its own right but with Live, it's a whole new ball game. Apart from racing against human opponents (vastly superior to AI) the chat thing works well for setting up games. The trouble is, everyone seems to be a bit shy when playing... or are they just concentrating on the game?

20:51

As good as *Moto GP* is, it's time to go for the daddy. It's time for *Unreal Championship*, a game that was designed from the offset to be used with Xbox Live. Quickmatch puts you straight in a deathmatch against random players at different skill levels and... it's all a bit hectic. It's fast, gruesome and extremely intense. Just how this kind of game should be. Voice chat seems to be limited to the occasional "Ha, ha, you're dead" type thing but we're not bothered. Excuse us for a minute while we play this for a while...

22:10

Yep, this is it, what we were expecting of Xbox Live. A brilliant game populated by humans and not AIs. This is soooo good. But enough of the deathmatch, it's time for some team play. XBM teams up with ElectricAngel, Boomboy and Earth to play a little Double Domination. This is the game where your team has to occupy two given points for ten seconds – if you do this you score a point, the first to ten takes the game.

22:31

At last, the voice chat has a practical use – you can use it to communicate with team members! "Call for help!" "Team up" "Come with me"– that kind of thing... it would be useful, however, if you could *see* who was talking on-screen – some kind of icon perhaps? There's no doubt that this is what all the hype has been about. Just imagine what *Halo 2* is going to be like!

02:12

Okay, we're getting a little bleary-eyed – too many frags, not enough blinks. It's time to call it a day. It's safe to say though that this has been a promising start to Xbox Live's life. It has delivered everything that we expected so far: easy to use, no problems with speed and some top-notch gaming action. It may not be the future of gaming just yet but it has the potential. Boy, does it have the potential...

THE GAMES WE PLAYED

WHACKED!




The Xbox Live beta test comes with two demos – this is the first. A party game cum shoot-'em-up, *Whacked!* features several games from simple 'blast the other players' to 'blast the other players and collect the stars that they drop'. Not the best showcase for Xbox Live but it is free. So stop complaining already.

MOTO GP





The second of the demos – THQ's excellent racing sim reveals itself as something of a winner on Xbox Live. You can do all the racing stuff as with the offline game (in itself a lot of fun) but the stunt mode takes on a whole new meaning with the inclusion of human players. Great fun and a laugh if you're playing with the right people.

UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP




The daddy of online gaming – this is the kind of game that Xbox Live was built for. The one-player game is a bit poor but play it online and bam! – it's a whole new experience. Voice chat in the deathmatch modes is pretty superfluous but in the team games it's essential. The best rely on the voice to coordinate attacks.

GHOST RECON




Not far behind *UC* as a game that was made for online play, *Ghost Recon* excels in the squad-based multiplayer aspects. However, this does require that people can cooperate and not just run off shooting stuff willy nilly.

MECH ASSAULT




The one-player game is pretty decent but the Live game is even better. It kind of works like *Halo* combined with a simple resource management game – you choose how much money you want to spend on your attacking units and defensive units. The idea is to capture an enemy's base.

LIVE FEATURES

☒ FRIENDS LIST

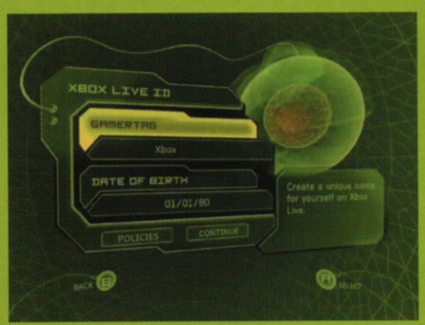
Here you can store all the Gamertags of your friends and enemies. It's simple to add someone to your Friends List – you send an invite to someone online and if they agree, they'll be added to your List. It's that simple. You can then easily see if they're online or not just by viewing your Friends List.

☒ CHALLENGES

Can be issued to anyone – for example someone ahead of you on a ranking list (think 'most frags' in *Unreal Championship*) or you simply challenge someone on your Friends List. All you have to do is click on their name and an option comes up to challenge them. If they're playing another game online then a message will pop up on their screen asking them to play you.

☒ VOICE MASKING

Bored of sounding like you? Always wanted to be able to talk like a little girl? Then this is for you. Xbox Live comes with built-in software that will mask your voice, changing it to one of several different styles. Developers can also make their own masking so it could be used in a potentially more creative way as well...





GAMES CONFIRMED TO SUPPORT XBOX LIVE FOR 2002/03

HALO 2:	online play and TBC download levels
UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP:	online play and download levels
MIDTOWN MADNESS 3:	online play and download new cars
SPLINTER CELL:	download levels
WHACKED!:	online play
MOTO GP:	online play
NFL FEVER 2003:	online play
PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2:	online play, download cars (TBC)
AMPED 2:	online play
COUNTER-STRIKE X:	online play
FISHING LIVE ONLINE:	online play
UNTITLED MMORPG FROM RARE:	online play (required)
TOPSPIN TENNIS:	online play
DOOM 3:	TBC online play
GHOST RECON:	online play
PERFECT DARK ZERO:	online play (TBC)
PHANTASY STAR ONLINE 2:	online play
RALLISPORT CHALLENGE 2:	online play
TOCA RACE DRIVER:	online play
MECH ASSAULT:	online play and download levels
TRUE FANTASY LIVE ONLINE:	online play
STAR WARS GALAXIES:	online play (required)
UNTITLED MMORPG FROM MICRO FORTÉ:	online play (required)
LAMBORGHINI:	online play
RAINBOW SIX: RAVEN SHIELD:	online play
STARCRAFT GHOST:	TBC online play
TOEJAM & EARL 3:	download levels, characters and music
STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC:	download levels and characters
CRIMSON SKIES:	download new plane models (TBC)
UNTITLED RPG FROM BIOWARE:	online play/download levels
BOMBERMAN ONLINE:	online play
XIII:	online play



UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP

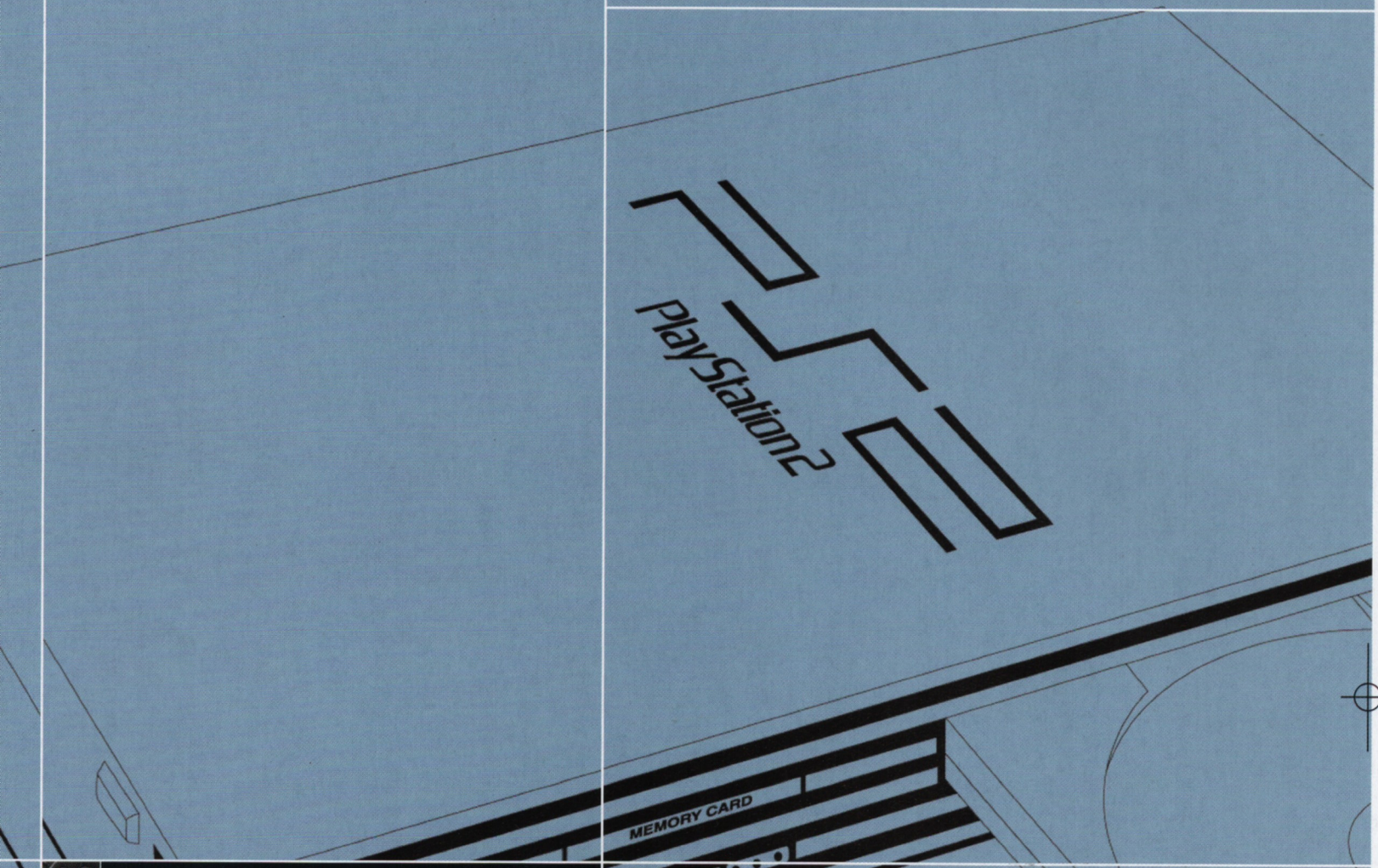

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING


DOOM 3


COUNTER-STRIKE X

THE UK'S BEST UNOFFICIAL PLAYSTATION2 MAGAZINE

132 PAGES! OF PS2 GAMING





PLAY

PLAY ISSUE 97
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Unreal CHAMPIONSHIP

www.unrealchampionship.com









Worthy opponent or moving target?

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XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED

EPIC GAMES

DIGITAL EXTREMES

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PREVIEWS






FIRST PLAY!

KAKUTO CHOJIN

THE DARK, WARPED WORLD OF MULTINATIONAL HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT...



"HAVING TWO LEVELS OF FIGHTING TO MASTER FOR EACH CHARACTER LENGTHENS THE GAME'S SHELF LIFE"

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** Microsoft
- **DEVELOPER** Dream Publishing
- **GENRE** Beat-'em-up
- **RELEASE DATE** Spring 2003

DEVELOPER HISTORY

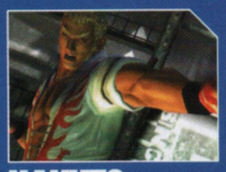
- THE BOUNCER

- TOBAL

HARD SELL

"KAKUTO CHOJIN REPRESENTS THE NEXT LEVEL IN STREET-FIGHTING REALISM"

PRESS RELEASE



KAKUTO CHOJIN
pg44



STAR WARS: KOTR
pg46



MACE GRIFFIN
pg47



SOUL CALIBUR 2
pg48

THE CHARACTER DESIGN LEANS TOWARDS THE DARKER SIDE OF HUMAN NATURE, FOCUSING ON DESPERATE CHARACTERS WITH VIOLENT PASTS









The dark, seedy environments of *Kakuto Chojin* indicate that this game is going to be a good deal less glitzy than your average *DOA* punch-up. Set within the remits of an Asian Fist of Fire tournament, *Kakuto Chojin* features 12 fighters, with one further player to unlock. The character design leans towards the darker side of human nature, focusing on desperate characters with violent pasts, each of which has been trained in their own specific martial art or Western fighting style. The characters come from nations all over the globe and their fighting styles reflect this, with Kung-Fu, Muay-Thai, Jeet Kune Do and Tae Kwon Do represented alongside Western-style pit fighting.

Each character has a dark and light side (essentially, a change of costume), but also has a further, more powerful fighting style in the shape of their Kakuto Chojin mode, which you can access after winning the tournament. In Kakuto Chojin mode, the character can utilise their special attacks almost constantly; moves which were previously only usable when your attack meter flashed yellow after a series of impressive hits. Having two levels of fighting to master for each character lengthens the game's shelf life and gives the more experienced players faster and more expert moves to master.

The control system is unusual in that the developers have made a conscious decision to avoid including basic punch and kick buttons. They have instead concentrated on putting in place high, medium and low attacks, which are either punches or kicks according to the skills of the fighter and their position in relation to their opponent. The positioning of the player on-screen is another key focus for the game: unlike previous beat-'em-ups, *Kakuto Chojin* gives you the option of not just blocking and dodging attacks, but escaping to re-position in a more advantageous position. *Kakuto Chojin* also includes a four-way fight, in the shape of either a *Battle Royale*-style all-out battle, as well as a Capture the Crown fight, in which players face three opponents to see who is still standing when the timer runs out.

The game has already got its detractors, but it is an interesting prospect: members of the Development team at Dream Publishing have been involved in *Tekken*, *Boshido Blade* and *Virtua Fighter*, and *Kakuto Chojin* is already looking like it won't be pulling any punches.

IT'S LIKE

☒ Weird, otherworldly fighters use a variety of styles of attack in a series of very dark, smoky environments.



MAKING MOVES

It's more than just a beat-'em-up



The graphics take advantage of the processing power of the Xbox, giving sweat-drenched skin, and leather or PVC clothing a reflective sheen. The movements, which have all been motion captured with the aid of martial arts experts, are impressively fluid, with a frame rate of 60 per second which doesn't even slow down in four-player mode. As well as moving beautifully, the characters, environments and music all work in synchronicity to create an atmosphere full of suppressed violence and dark menace. Oh, and the girls have got dynamic tit-bounce, if you must know.

BLACK AND WHITE

For every yin, there is a yang: especially in Kakuto Chojin. Each fighter has an alternate costume, meaning that you can choose between the light and the dark side. Although, admittedly, clothes do not maketh the man...

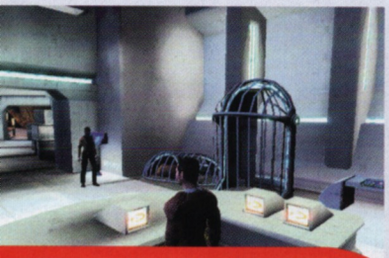


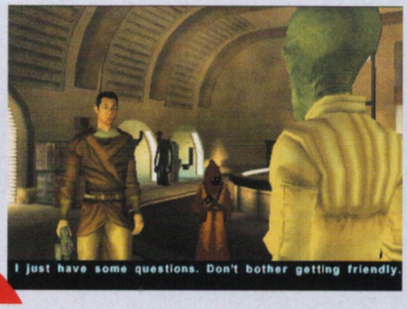
ASAD

Asad hails from Somalia and is an expert in Muay-Thai. Does anyone else notice that he bares a striking resemblance to a certain elastic armed Dhalsim?

KHAN

Khan is an expert in torture as well as his chosen fighting style, Kung Fu. XBM prefers his 'dark side' outfit, as it means we don't have to watch his sickening gut ripple as he moves.





XBM EXCLUSIVE!





STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC

CAN A GAME LIVE UP TO THE MYTH OF THE ENDLESS TRILOGY?

The first ever *Star Wars* RPG is in development at BioWare; a company which has previously been involved largely in PC titles. Vaulted by LucasArts as the 'first major RPG on the Xbox', the story focuses on an epic conflict that took place between the Jedi and the evil Sith Lords some 4000 years before *Episode 1*.

As a Jedi Knight struggling to survive and defeat evil in the intergalactic war, you play as either a male or female and can choose to be Scoundrel, Scout or Soldier. Your Jedi Knight travels with a group of up to three others, some of whom come from species recognisable from the *Star Wars* films, including human-sized Wookies, à la Chewbacca.

The design gives it a very cinematic feel, with a third-person perspective and some highly detailed environments awash with atmospheric effects such as wind, dust and footprints. Although this kind of visual quality is unusual for an RPG, the makers of the *Knights of the Old Republic* have used their experience in the field and stuck to the old rules, meaning that you run into fights and let the game negotiate hits and misses according to your character's status.

BioWare plans to include over 60 hours of gameplay which constantly tempts you towards the Dark Side. From what we've seen, *Knights* may well be one of the few *Star Wars* games, *Pod Racer* aside, to live up to the prestige of the license.

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** LucasArts/Activision
- **DEVELOPER** BioWare
- **GENRE** RPG
- **RELEASE DATE** 7 February 2003

DEVELOPER HISTORY



MDK 2: ARMAGEDDON



BALDUR'S GATE II: SHADOWS OF AMN



SHATTERED STEEL

HARD SELL

"WE WILL BE ABLE TO BRING BIOWARE'S STRENGTHS... TO THE STAR WARS UNIVERSE IN A WAY THAT WILL DELIVER AN AMAZING GAMEPLAY EXPERIENCE"

RAY MUZYKA, BIOWARE



"KOTOR MAY BE ONE OF THE FEW STAR WARS GAMES TO LIVE UP TO THE LICENSE"

"THE FIRST MAJOR RPG ON THE XBOX"

FREAKIN' WEIRDO: There are plenty of familiar faces in the game to keep *Star Wars* aficionados more than happy.



ALIENS: There are several alien bases for you to visit on different worlds in the *Star Wars* universe.



USE FORCE: Or use the Force. Taking on a large number of attackers means that your Jedi powers should come in handy.



DARTH VADER'S LIGHTSABER

The force needs to be cut out of this one, master...

In terms of adhering to the look and feel of a *Star Wars* film, *Knights of the Old Republic* does remarkably well, featuring recognisable settings such as Tatooine and the dress and weaponry traditionally associated with the Jedi Knight. This means that, yes, you do get your own lightsaber to play with, and not only that, you can customise it with crystals which determine its attributes: you can even make it double ended, should you so desire...






FIRST PLAY!

MACE GRIFFIN: BOUNTY HUNTER

NO THIS DOES NOT HAVE BOBA FETT IN IT!

When this game dropped off the EA release schedule we were worried that it had disappeared for good. Luckily for us *Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter* is still coming to the Xbox via publisher Vivendi Universal.

The game is a first-person shooter set in the distant future where aliens and humans are racing to colonise space. Something, admittedly, that isn't that original but here's the kick – the game features seamless transition between first-person shooting and deep space battles. Sound familiar? Well *Falcone* is doing exactly the same thing and should be hitting the shelves at roughly the same time.

However, where *Falcone* is going for action over story this game is going for a gripping story littered with espionage and political conspiracy. You play an ex cop framed for murder and out for revenge. Not that the action should suffer – the developer previously worked on the PC classic *Starlancer*. It's not clear at this stage how free-roaming the game is going to be but locations include refineries, huge spaceships, a variety of planets and an alien cattle ranch! No game should be without one.

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** Vivendi Universal
- **DEVELOPER** Warthog Entertainment
- **GENRE** First-person shooter
- **RELEASE DATE** March 2003

DEVELOPER HISTORY



- **STAR TREK INVASION**



- **RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP XTREME**



- **LOONS: THE FIGHT FOR FAME**

HARD SELL

"MACE GRIFFIN IMMERSES PLAYERS IN A UNIVERSE OF HUGE CORPORATIONS AND FUTURISTIC GUNSLINGERS"

TORRIE DORRELL, BLACK LABEL GAMES

IT'S LIKE

- Futuristic Star Wars environments in a game style that is also being tried by the Virgin Interactive title Falcone.









EXCLUSIVE!

SOUL CALIBUR 2

WELCOME BACK TO THE STAGE OF HISTORY...

The original *Soul Calibur*, which appeared on Dreamcast, remains one of the best beat-'em-ups ever created. The mix of a *Tekken*-style fighting system, 3D environments and yes, weapons, was hard to resist. And the character design was, like so many Japanese fighting games, flawless.

Not ones to sit back on their laurels, Namco has been working on the follow up for two years, building on the original's success and perfecting the fighting system. This time the events take place in the latter part of the 16th Century – when the West and the East rediscover each other. Fighters from each hemisphere are fighting it out for possession (or destruction depending on the character) of a mythical blade (the Soul Blade), which it's said will bring terrible destruction to the world.

All the fighters from the original game make their returns and at least one new one: Raphael, a sword-wielding knight in the vein of Seigfried. And judging by these arcade screens, it seems that *Soul Calibur 2* will have little competition in the looks department. The arcade board is actually based on PS2 hardware, so it should look even better on Xbox.

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** Electronic Arts
- **DEVELOPER** Namco
- **GENRE** Beat-'em-up
- **RELEASE DATE** TBA 2003

DEVELOPER HISTORY

[PSONE] 1997



TEKKEN 2

[DC] 1999



SOUL CALIBUR

[PSONE] 2000



RIDGE RACER V





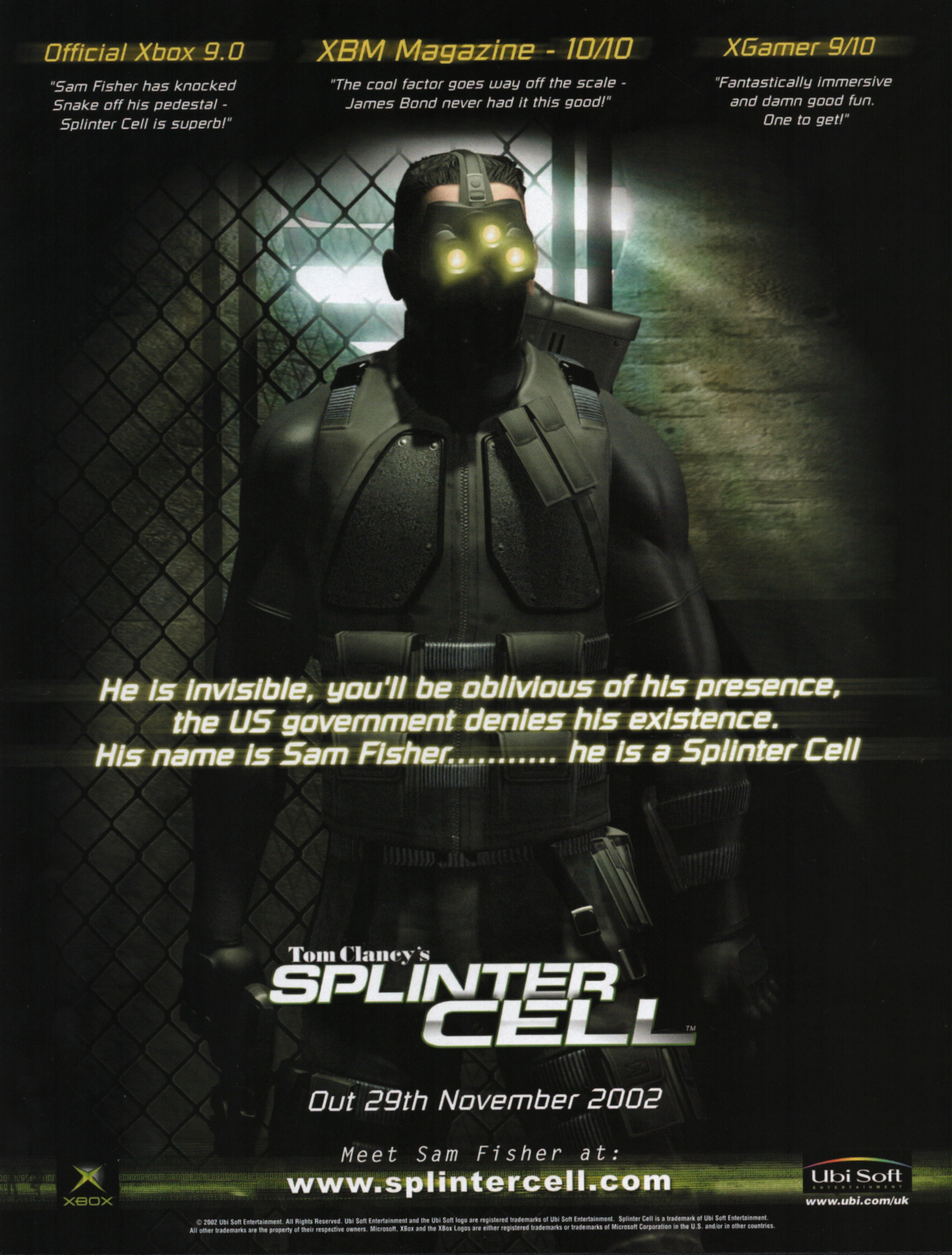


"THE CHARACTER DESIGN IS, LIKE SO MANY JAPANESE FIGHTING GAMES, FLAWLESS"



CLEVER CLOGS

The arcade version of *Soul Calibur 2* features a password system which saves your progress in the game – you can then enter your password on any machine in the country and pick up where you left off!



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REVIEWS

YOUR NO.1 SOURCE FOR DEFINITIVE XBOX REVIEWS

JOY TO THE WORLD!

The festive season is here and just as prophecy foretold: The game starved masses, never satisfied, cried in unison: "Please sir can we have some more?" And so it was that the booming response from the videogame god shook shelves all over the country: "But of course you can. Play to your heart's content, play until your thumbs are weary and then play some more."

After the amazing display of fine games last month we thought we'd never see such a cram-packed issue of XBM. How wrong we were. What with the handful of games we simply didn't have space for last month and some gigantic new titles like *Unreal* there's plenty to keep you happy. If only every month could be like this one! Okay so some of the games may not be all that (see *Total Immersion Racing*, *Terminator* and *Robot Wars*) but everyone gets a pair of socks or two at Christmas don't they?

MIKE RICHARDSON
GAMES EDITOR

THE GREAT XBM SCORES...

10	Stunningly original, games don't get any better than this!
9	Brilliant game lacking only in ultimate ambition.
8	Excellent piece of work needing the odd refinement.
7	Good, fans of the genre should overlook the rough edges.
6	Above-average game but no real depth or detail.
5	Average at best, anything here is surely flawed.
4	Crap game with scrappy graphics and no originality.
3	Painful to play, heaped with bugs and no gameplay.
2	Diabolical game that only offers pleasing cover art.
1	It boots up! A game to avoid at absolutely all costs.

UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Make new friends online... and kill them in ingenious ways!

pg52



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

pg58

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"THE GREATEST MULTIPLAYER GAME YOU'RE EVER LIKELY TO PLAY"



GHOST RECON pg64



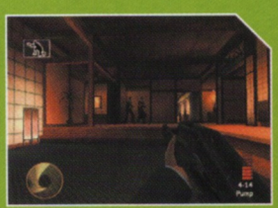
HARRY POTTER pg69



MECH ASSAULT pg74



SUPERMAN pg78



007: NIGHTFIRE pg82

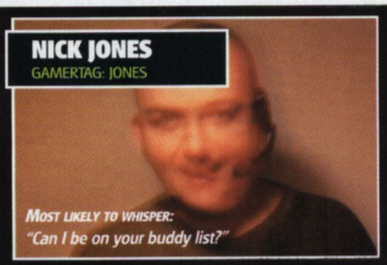


THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD 3 pg90

GAMER-TAG: WE'RE IT

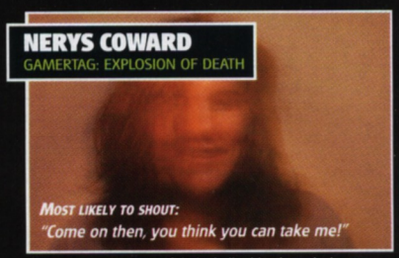
The XBM team get online. The world will never again be a safe place to reside! Where you gonna run to? Where you gonna hide? Nowhere...

NICK JONES
GAMERTAG: JONES



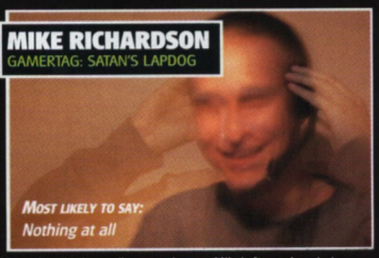
Not yet comfortable with the whole Xbox Live thing, Nick can't understand why people actually want to talk to him. Not used to such friendly social contact he became quite emotional during the first few games. A tear could even be seen on his cheek during a bout of *Whacked!* – but then that could've just been the game.

NERYS COWARD
GAMERTAG: EXPLOSION OF DEATH



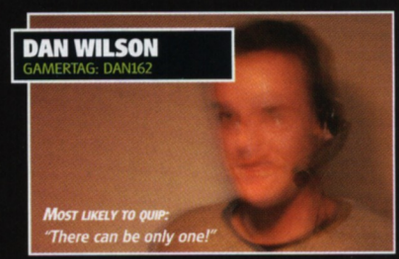
Most people come out of their shell a bit when playing games online, safe in the knowledge that they're probably never going to meet their opposition. Nerys is already a confrontational person but on Live she turns into a raving psychopath and usually scares everybody off the servers. Some would say a game in itself.

MIKE RICHARDSON
GAMERTAG: SATAN'S LAPDOG



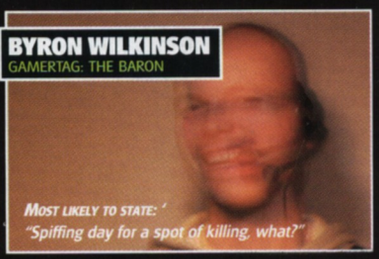
Disturbingly the smile never leaves Mike's face when he's playing Xbox Live. We're not entirely sure why. In fact, he rarely speaks to the other players, only muttering the words, 'Good morning children' under his breath every time he scores a kill in *Unreal Championship*. We only hope that Microsoft's Live police get here soon.

DAN WILSON
GAMERTAG: DAN162



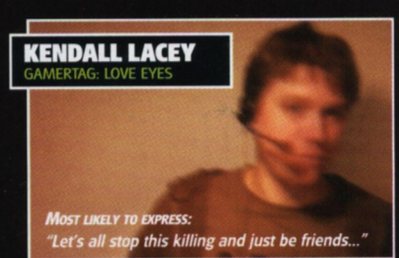
Infuriated at the commonness of his name, Dan has made it his lifetime mission to eliminate all other Dan's – on both Live and in the real world. With each fresh kill he changes his name as he slowly moves towards his goal. He actually started as Dan247 and is currently stalking target number Dan161 who lives in Leeds.

BYRON WILKINSON
GAMERTAG: THE BARON



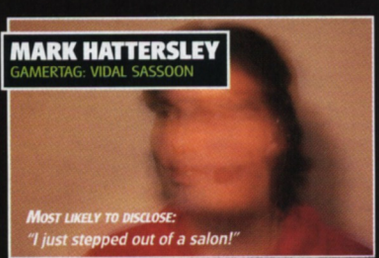
Our resident stiff upper Brit keeps getting requests from opponents all over the world asking exactly where he got his voice masking patch. Nobody can quite believe that this is his real voice and we even have a sneaking suspicion that he has one of those crafty *Mission Impossible 2* plasters stuck on his Adam's apple.

KENDALL LACEY
GAMERTAG: LOVE EYES



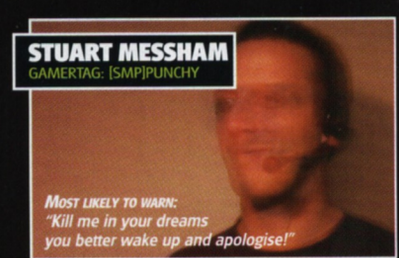
Everyone approached the Xbox Live phenomenon in a different way. The ever suave Kendall has seen the opportunity as a way to deliver his love to the entire world. Is the world ready for such a massive overdose of the Lacey? We don't know but we beg of you: look at his eyes – he has so much love to give.

MARK HATTERSLEY
GAMERTAG: VIDAL SASSOON



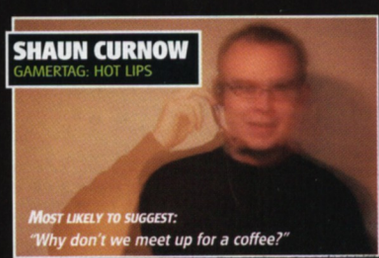
Playing online is something of an annoying distraction to the man with the most coiffeured barnet on the XBM team. Instead of taking time out of the relentless gaming sessions to fetch his pudding, make some tea or even take a leak, Mark takes his headset off only to run to the mirror and reach for the hairspray.

STUART MESSHAM
GAMERTAG: [SMP]PUNCHY



Ever since he had Broadband installed Stuart has been playing *Unreal Championship* solidly for days on end with no break. This is beginning to scare us as he is becoming a little bit more than obsessed with it all and is already organising a clan of elite players.

SHAUN CURNOW
GAMERTAG: HOT LIPS



Going online with Xbox Live means that you can download loads of cool stuff, meet new friends and play games. For others it also provides a hunting ground to find a partner and this is Shaun's goal. Surprisingly, so far no one has accepted his more than generous offer to exchange photographs.















UNREAL CHAMPIO



XBM BIG GAME

XBM XBOX LIVE

XBM ONLY ON XBOX

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** Atari
- **DEVELOPER** Digital Extremes
- **GENRE** First-person shooter
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **PLAYERS** 1-32
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** Yes
- **XBOX LIVE** Yes (downloads and online play)
- **WEBLINK** www.unrealchampionship.com
- **RELEASE DATE** Out Now



DEVELOPER HISTORY

Apart from slight variations here and there, this is essentially the same game as you've got on the Xbox. Only you need to fork out for a ridiculously high spec machine to run it on the PC.



UNREAL TOURNAMENT 2003

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES .net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

IT'S STRANGE HOW AN ULTRA VIOLENT GAME CAN UNITE PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD...

NSHIP

A few years back a couple of developers realised that they were wasting time by spending valuable hours weaving intricate excuses for the non-stop killing. So, in what was then a radical departure, *Quake 3 Arena* and *Unreal Tournament* were born into the world. A blatant conspiracy with several major telecommunications companies as phone bills all over the world tripled – no FPS fan could live without a nightly fix of online gaming.

This hasn't changed and there are now even more dedicated multiplayer games to choose from on the PC. Every one of them infectious regardless of game quality simply because the player knows that he is competing against a fellow member of the human race. This is an contagious virus that appears to be spreading to the Xbox with the imminent launch of Live and the latest instalment of the *Unreal* saga.

There wasn't really much hype around this game in the office. It was pretty much a given that this game would be fun to play regardless and we couldn't wait to get our grubby little hands on it. This is why it came as a surprise that the game was initially a major letdown. Diving into a game and letting rip against bots is great fun and the AI is sufficient but after a few hours it becomes apparent that *Unreal Championship* is missing something.

And we're not talking about the vehicles we were promised. Nor are we talking about the dense fog that parts in a pretty swirl as a missile passes through



UNREAL IS A DOG WITH ONE TRICK AND ONE TRICK ONLY

XBM INFO

To play *Unreal Championship* online you'll need to have the Xbox Live pack which is due to be released in March next year and a Broadband connection at home. Check with your phone company to see if this is available in your area.





OPEN FIRE: When a target is near death they start to catch fire – makes it easier to spot them running around!



IN THE LINE OF FIRE: You get the feeling that they don't want anybody to make off with their flag?

it. The fact that these trinkets have been lost on the way to the final version does not matter. The game plays like a dream without them and to be honest if these features hadn't been mentioned months before we would have been none the wiser. No, this does not bother us.

What is missing however, is any kind of effort on the one-player side of the game. We're not asking for pointless missions or a story to make us laugh and cry – it's just that this game is a massive step back from the solitaire slaying of *Unreal Tournament*. Begin a one-player game and you first have to choose your team to take into the championship. Choose wisely though because the obscene amount of characters to pick from now have stats that denote accuracy, speed, health and agility. This may sound crap but it actually works really well – especially since the stats improve throughout the championship.

With the team picked you then enter into the ladder games of the championship against other teams. There are seven encounters for each type of game. So that's seven capture the flag, seven double domination and so on. Seven? This does not take long to finish and on normal difficulty setting an experienced first-person shooter could finish the 28 battles in a day with few problems.

POWER UP

Take the red pill and see just how deep the rabbit hole goes...

Dotted throughout the levels you'll see mini-capsules. These contain adrenaline and are added to the meter in the top right-hand corner. You can also increase adrenaline by racking up kills. When this hits 100 you can activate some of the special moves. These include a short-term damage modifier, regeneration and invisibility.





EXTREME CLOSE UP: You rarely get to appreciate the character models as everything is moving so fast, but they are cool.

SPOILER ALERT

Warning – this will in no way ruin your enjoyment of the game!

You've risked your own life, hundreds have died at your hands (including team-mates) and a severe psychological imbalance has no doubt nuzzled into your brain. So what do you get for all this? A pat on the back and a gold trophy! Is that it? If this were us we'd turn that rocket launcher on the organisers of this cowboy championship.



Once you're done you have one final amusing battle against your own team members (now with built up stats) before the championship is over. Once that's finished you cannot go back into the championship unless you start again from scratch. Surely it cannot have been that hard to set up some kind of perpetuating league system against the other teams in the game?

As it is all you can do after finishing the championship is enter into one-off skirmish battles where, amazingly, the set-up options are practically non existent. The great thing about *Unreal Tournament* was being able to create bizarre deathmatch games where the rocket launcher was the only weapon and health values began at ten. In *Unreal Championship* all you can do is choose your level and the game type. Even kill and time limits are decided for you! Very lazy indeed…

The one-player side of the game could've been so much more. As it is *Unreal Championship* is a dog with one trick and one trick only. But what a trick to have stashed in the repertoire. There's no doubt about that the main reason to buy this game is for the multiplayer. Sending a bot flying in a bloody spray with a well-aimed rocket or launching a lightning bolt into its cranium is good fun. Change that bot to a human however, and you've got hours…no months…hell even years of enjoyment to be had.





GAME ON

There may only be five game modes to choose from in Unreal Championship but they're all good fun…

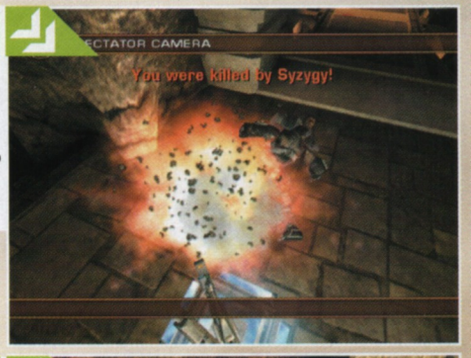
Deathmatch

This is your basic tag 'em and bag 'em killathon. Games last for a set time or until the required frag count has been met. The best tactic here is to stay alert and keep on the move. Those that camp generally tend to become sitting ducks ripe for hunting.



Team Deathmatch

This is the same deal as the basic deathmatch only this time you have to watch who you're shooting and occasionally back up your team-mates. If you can persuade the other players to sweep through the areas with you the frags should be easy.



Capture the Flag

An old game mode, we know, but the classic Capture the Flag never fails to amuse. Team tactics are essential for a win as you need to have both flags in your base to score a point. Send the action freaks in and let the campers set up around the base.



Double Domination

It may sound like some kind of kinky game but Double Domination is one of the more entertaining team games you can play. On each of the levels there are two points that need to be held for ten seconds to gain a point. Easier said than done.



Bombing Run

Mad and hectic it may be but this game is pure fun. Both teams start at opposite ends of the map and a ball is dropped into the centre somewhere. Grab the ball and make it to the far end to score some points. Oh, and ball holders can't use guns…



[LEVEL 1] BRING THE PAIN

TEAM BUILD MENU

Within less than a minute of getting the game out of the packaging you'll be running around moody corridors killing bots with the best of them!

XBM INFO

☒ The renowned Redeemer guided nuclear missile that was seen in *Unreal Tournament* is missing from this game but in its place you get a targeted satellite strike.



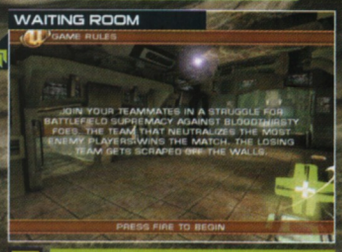
1 ☒ Before you can enter into the bloody battle arenas of *Unreal Championship* you need to select your own character and choose which bots you'd like to accompany you in your team. Some are fast and agile whilst others rely on strength and accuracy. A nice balance of skills should sort you out.



2 ☒ This ladder screen shows your progress through the various game modes and tells you which team your next battle is going to be against. From here you can pick which of your team members you want to take into the next battle and plan tactics for the up and coming game.



3 ☒ Once you're ready it's time to enter the arena. The inevitable loading screen gives you a cheesy description of the approaching arena and reminds you of what type of game this is. In this case it's a team deathmatch game with a ten-minute or ten-frag limit, depending on which is reached first.



4 ☒ Once the level has loaded the game will not start until you press the fire button. You can, however, at this point freely move around the level to check out the terrain. Handy for making notes on where health and big-hit weapons are located as well as decent camping spots.



5 ☒ When the battle begins you normally hit ▼ at this point to bring up a Team Orders menu, but the first deathmatch game is a simple one-on-one to ease you in, so this is not needed. Get used to the controls and start laying down some fire on the enemy representative.



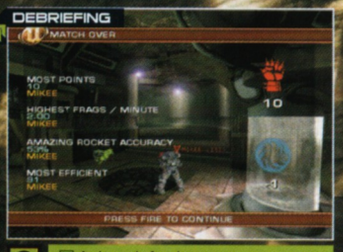
6 ☒ The first level is quite small so you never go for too long without encountering the opposition. There's also a decent selection of weapons lying around to play with – like this superb, ammo-guzzling minigun. Even on the harder difficulty settings you shouldn't have too much of a problem.



7 ☒ Depending on which character you chose at the start you get a different default weapon when you first enter each arena as well as the basic machine gun. If you're lucky you'll get the rocket launcher which makes getting those all-important first few kills extremely easy.



8 ☒ Get to a stage like this where you're nine kills up on the opposition and you can start to have some real fun messing around with enemy bots. Tease them by picking off small amounts of health or see how high you can send their body flying from a low-aimed rocket strike!



9 ☒ At the end of each stage you get a report screen telling you which team won. There are also a variety of awards that are handed out for accuracy, efficiency, kill counts and so on. This doesn't affect you but it can help out the overall stats of computer controlled bots on your team.



POINT, SHOOT, KILL, REPEAT...

This isn't exactly one of the hardest games to pick up and play. It's not like it's rocket science. Well rockets are involved but...oh hell – you know what we mean!



1 Let's face it, this button is going to be the one that is used the most in the game! The primary fire function is your first step to racking up some kills in the game. It's all self defence you understand.



2 The other trigger allows you to activate the secondary function – all of the guns in the game feature an additional firing mode of some sort. When you're holding the rifle pulling the trigger activates the zoom.



3 You only need to use this really in the single-player team games. Pressing the button brings up a menu of commands that tell friendly bots to defend, attack and so on. This button also taunts.



4 The missile launcher is one of the most devastating weapons in the game – especially if you've got a steady hand. Keep the target over an enemy and you can lock on for a quick easy hit.



TAKEN FROM BEHIND: The AI in the game is quite impressive – usually sneaking up on a bot is impossible.



THE MEXICAN WAY: Consistent moving and strafing is a must but every so often you get a good old-fashioned toe-to-toe slug.



THE X FACTOR

The non-stop action in this game makes for a massive adrenaline rush. Racking up a double head shot kill ranks as an almost euphoric moment.



THERE IS SOMETHING EVEN MORE SATISFYING ABOUT CAPPING A STRANGER ON LIVE THAN THERE IS KILLING A FRIEND SAT NEXT TO YOU

XBM INFO

After seeing so many games on the Xbox that make use of the *Unreal* engine it's nice for a change to see a title that uses the engine and is actually called *Unreal*.





BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED: The Lightning Gun takes ages to recharge after each shot but if you hit your target the damage is huge.

XBOX LIVE

The whole point of *Unreal Championship*, this Xbox Live business, innit? And we say: bloody brilliant it is too. The most pleasing aspect is that playing *Unreal Championship* on Xbox Live delivers what the single-player game only hints at. It's fast, talking to the other players is vital to the game and there are plenty of different games for players of all abilities. It makes a good game a great one. It's as simple as that.



DOWNLOADS EXTRA LEVELS, NEW CHARACTER MODELS (TBC)

The game modes may be few but each one is enjoyment incarnate, the level design puts any other first-person shooter to shame and the weapon balance is (as ever with *Unreal*) superb. We dread to think how many hours of play testing this game went through to reach such perfection but we're guessing it was a lot. The game is immense fun to play in split-screen (although some annoying slow-down does occur in four-player) but hook yourself up online and the addiction is instant.

It's strange but there is something even more satisfying about capping a stranger on Live than there is killing a friend sat next to you. The headset of course plays a big part, and it's amazing how fast you can build up a sense of camaraderie in a team game like Double Domination or Bombing Run. Even if you are talking about last night's revelation in *Eastenders* instead of tactics.

So should you go out and buy *Unreal Championship*? Well this is a tricky one because this is the greatest multiplayer game you're ever likely to play. To call it 'amazing' is a severe injustice. But herein lies the problem – you're not going to be able to play on Xbox Live until March next year. Sure, buy it now and get some practice in but don't expect too much to start with as you will be missing out on the real meat of the game that is online play. This basically makes for two entirely different games. One is good. The other is truly sublime. **MIKE**

VERDICT

UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP

SECOND OPINION

There's no doubting that *Unreal Championship* is a good game (some may say great) but unless you're in to your multiplayer fragging madness this is unlikely to appeal greatly. The fact that the single-player mode sees you taking part in the same kind of games that you do in multiplayer will put many off. For those of us who don't want to be constantly charging around capturing or protecting a flag or base *Unreal* offers precious little. If you like to have a little more time to think and enjoy progressing through a story then this one isn't for you.

DAN

ALTERNATIVELY

TIMESPLITTERS 2
Eidos

Not as pretty to look at but it does have some extensive multiplayer gaming to offer and a moderately decent one-player mode.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
The lighting effects, textures and constant weapon effects are enough to turn any frown upside down.

SOUNDS
The use of surround sound for the action and the voice masking for Live play is superb.

GAMEPLAY
The one-player game is a massive letdown but the multiplayer battles make life worth living.

LONGTERM
You'll tire of fighting with bots but human opponents guarantee a constant supply of fresh blood.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
+ Amazing multiplayer	– Very lazy one-player
+ Looks gorgeous	– Can slow down in split-screen
+ Weapons to die for	– Not as much fun without Broadband
+ Superb level design	

Overall

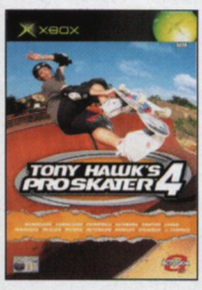
A stunning game that is let down by a sloppy one-player mode.

9 OUT OF TEN

YET AGAIN ACTIVISION IS LEAVING FOOTPRINTS FOR OTHER EXTREME SPORTS GAMES TO FOLLOW IN

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** Activision
- **DEVELOPER** Neversoft
- **GENRE** Sports
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **PLAYERS** 1-2
- **DOLBY 5.1** No
- **WIDESCREEN** No
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.tonyhawksproskater.com
- **RELEASE DATE** Out now



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

THE REMOTE CONTROL SKATE VIDEO THAT NEVER ENDS...

DEVELOPER HISTORY

The previous game was a massive success as the franchise showed yet again why it was the leader of all things extreme.



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET
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WALLPAPER
INTERVIEW
MOVIES



IT'S THE LAW: Oh look, a police officer beating up some friendly protesters – how very original indeed.



ANIMAL MAGIC: We've heard of skitchin cars but what about elephants!? Don't try this at home kids.

The original *Tony Hawk's* game was groundbreaking and the sequel built on that success, bringing you an even more innovative extreme sports experience. Then out came the stunning number three and gamers everywhere became addicted all over again. So now we're onto number four and counting. You'd think that the developer would be running out of juice by now but this couldn't be further from the truth.

It almost pains us to say it but *TH4* is the best *Tony* game to date and yet again Activision is leaving footprints for other extreme sports games to follow in. So what is it that makes this game so innovative? Well it's really only two simple features – which may not sound

BACK 2 SKOOL

Tony's grown up a bit since the previous games (he is over 30 after all) and the classic school is replaced with the more mature college.

THERE ARE SO MANY REASONS TO KEEP COMING BACK TO THIS GAME IT'S RIDICULOUS



1 When you first enter the level it's a good idea to cruise around for a bit and get used to your surroundings as well as the new additions to the control system.



2 To start with only the amateur challenges are open to you. Most of the ones on the first level are more fun than difficult – like this timed street luge run.



3 Unlock the pro challenges and things can start to get tough. Like racking up a 50,000-point combo in one hit using the college flagpole and benches.



4 The ultimate challenge in each level is specific to each character. One of the final tasks on the college level is to send Tony on a 900° over a 24-foot gap.



THE X FACTOR

Skaters' jaws everywhere are going to hit the floor when they see the massive range of sublimely animated flatland moves on offer.

XBM INFO

One of the hidden skaters in this game to unlock is Iron Maiden zombie Eddie! He has some cool special moves and some amazing deck designs that any Maiden fan would be proud to own.

like much but it changes the way the game is played, massively increasing the enjoyment factor.

The first major change to the game comes with the control system. Don't worry everything is still familiar and easy to pick up – developer Neversoft would not be stupid enough to change the basic controls. What has been done however, is a sort of refinement to fit in the ever-growing array of tricks possible on a skateboard. There are now so many moves in the game you're constantly surprised by accidentally 'happening' across new additions.

This is where the double tap feature comes in. Go for a grab and you can now press B once or double tap it, giving you 16 possible combinations before you add alternate directions or those all important special moves. The same goes for grinds but it doesn't stop there. Once you're on a grind you can double tap either Y, B or X to tweak out the current grind into a new one without taking the board off the rail. This may sound complex but the controls remain completely natural.

A similar control system has been applied to the now completely revised flatland trick system. In *TH3* you had a handful of flatland tricks that could be used as special moves when the meter was full, but this didn't really capture the free-form spirit of flatland. Something that is nigh on impossible. Or so we thought. Now you can go from a manual into one of nine flatland moves by double tapping various buttons and continue the combo by double tapping another combination of buttons. Add to this some new flatland specials as well as the rotation button and you can pull off



PIG SICK: The Gloucester Old Spot wasn't too impressed by our nose manual handstand.



SMOOTH CRIMINAL: Kickflips happen incredibly quickly make fine examples of the animation.

SPIN RIGHT ROUND

Taking extreme sports to the...er...extreme?

You may have seen a movie before of Burnquist or Tony going around a loop. Very impressive we're sure you'll agree, but in this game that idea has been taken one stage further. The final pro challenge for the returning Burnquist requires you to perform tricks upside-down whilst jumping over a split loop! The gap gets increasingly bigger, making each trick more and more difficult, but crack it and you get to watch a movie of the man himself doing it. After a few attempts of course.







1 WHAT'S THE SCORE?
☒ Your top score within each challenge is recorded regardless of whether you complete it or not. So, if you want you can come back to the challenge to try and beat it.

2 HOME GROWN PRO
☒ There are over ten different skaters to choose or you can create your own personal custom pro. You don't have to finish the game with every rider but each one has a pro-specific challenge.

3 DO IT FOR THE KIDS
☒ The right-hand side shows which challenge you're on and exactly what's required. When attempting a challenge you also get a timer at the top of the screen that pops up.

ALCATRAZ SWEEP

Well what do you expect when you put a jackass into a game like this?

The mad fool that is Bam Magera lives up to his antics on the telly for his final pro challenge in the game by deciding to race down Alcatraz in a trolley. You've got three runs in total to crack. The first is empty, enabling you to get used to the cornering, the second features a few obstacles to jump and the third is an extremely difficult slalom course.









an array of complicated technical manoeuvres that warm the soul.

Another big addition to the controls in this game make it possible to perform proper spine transfers. Before these were either automatic or activated by holding up at the top of the ramp, which sent skater and board flying half way across the level. But now you can hold down both triggers to roll over a spine in one smooth motion. This can also be used on normal ramps to pull off a smooth exit onto the top of the ramp. So if you do have a desire to pop up and manual along the top of a vert before dropping back in, you can. With the other changes to the moves and you can get some edge of the seat games of Horse going.

With all these changes to the moves, some fantastic animation on the riders and gorgeous looking visuals we were content to just cruise around the huge levels. And this is where the second big change comes in: before, you entered a level and the clock was ticking, so you felt obliged to attempt the handful of challenges thrown at you. The game was still great fun but it almost felt like a chore to get through and there was no real reason to enter levels outside of the main Career mode for free-roaming fun.

Now, however, you enter a level, there is no timer ticking down to ruin your fun and there are no challenges thrown in your face. You have to find your own challenges by talking to people about town. This is hardly revolutionary stuff but it changes the pace of *TH4* and it has allowed the developer to come up with some slightly more ingenious challenges.

You still get the 'collect SKATE', 'medal the competition' and 'get X score' but



DAMAGE CONTROL: After extended sessions it is possible to completely grind the graphics off your board.

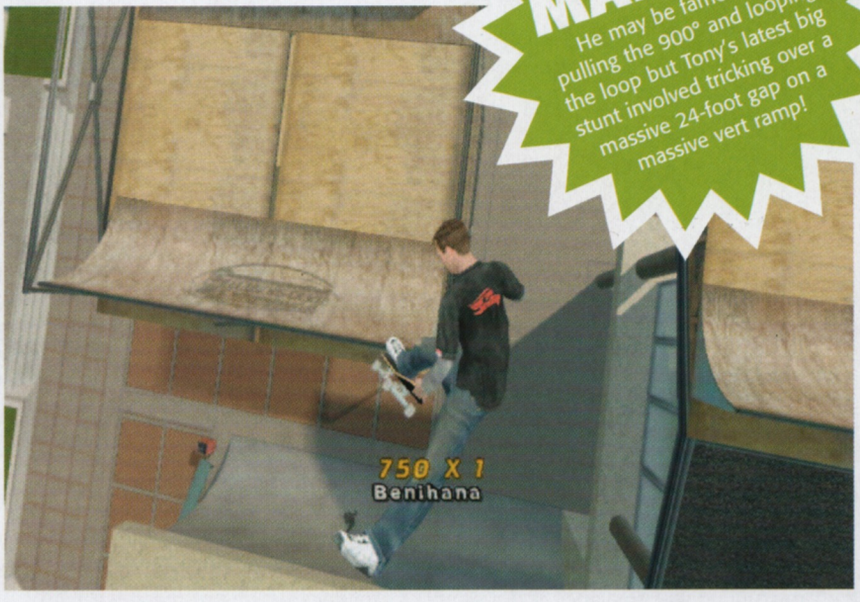


DEATH METAL: One of Caballero's special moves involves strumming on a guitar...



SIZE MATTERS

He may be famous for pulling the 900° and looping the loop but Tony's latest big stunt involved tricking over a massive 24-foot gap on a massive vert ramp!







these are buried amongst the 21 challenges on each stage. Then you've got the fun challenges like catching runaway monkeys, street luge runs, tagging buses, saving a painter from jaws, helping a prisoner escape Alcatraz and downhill shopping trolley racing!

Unlike previous *Tony* games this one is going to take you a long time to crack. The sheer number of challenges should be enough to keep you thumb tied and the fact that the game is far from a walkover is a bonus. Some of the tasks that get thrown at you are mind-bending – like performing tricks upside-down on a loop with the top cut out!

Even if you've fully completed all three previous games you're going to find some serious tests of skill here. And when you're finished you've got plenty of other features to ensure value for money. Each level contains a couple of mini-games to play. These include tennis in San Francisco, baseball at Alcatraz, rhino charging at the zoo and so on. Then you've got the gaps to find and the cash to grab from those hard to reach places.

You actually get money for most things you do in this game that can be spent in the shop on extra skaters, hidden levels, movies, new decks, clothes and cheats. There are so many reasons to keep coming back to this game it's ridiculous! Which is why this game is a must-buy regardless of the fact you may own *Tony 3*. The all-singing and all-dancing *Tony 4* is its superior in every way. The question is: where next? How can you improve on perfection? Another is inevitable but the better these games get the further *Tony* has to fall.

MIKE

VERDICT

XBOX

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

SECOND OPINION

Give the public what they want. A simple philosophy but more difficult to attain than you might imagine. The *Tony Hawk's* series has been the master of this for four games now and there's no sign of it letting up. The fourth is exactly what you'd expect: it builds on the previous games while retaining the elements that made the earlier games so good. It's nothing revolutionary but then that's not what you want. With that said, *THPS4* is far ahead enough of the competition to remain the best extreme sports game for some time to come.

NICK

ALTERNATIVELY

AGGRESSIVE INLINE
Acclaim

One of a kind just now, it makes a change from the usual extreme sports games and is great fun.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
The levels look great, the animation is cool and you even get damage to both rider and board!

SOUNDS
The sound effects are authentic and the varied music collection superb. If you don't like it, use your own!

GAMEPLAY
The developer has excelled here beyond anything you could hope for. A very addictive game.

LONG TERM
The latter challenges will bring tears to your eyes and the multiplayer keeps you going for ages.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Amazing levels	⊖ Still a niche market
⊕ Refined trick system	
⊕ Superior career mode	
⊕ Loads to do	

Overall

The extreme sports game that consistently does the job and then some.

9 OUT OF TEN

XBM INFO

☒ The game is more down to Earth than its name, because despite having a distinctly Japanese look and feel it was made in Guildford, Surrey.



INFORMATION

- ☒ **PUBLISHER** Infogrames
- ☒ **DEVELOPER** Lost Toys
- ☒ **GENRE** Shoot-'em-up
- ☒ **PRICE** £44.99
- ☒ **PLAYERS** 1-2
- ☒ **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- ☒ **WIDESCREEN** No
- ☒ **XBOX LIVE** No
- ☒ **WEBLINK** www.losttoys.com
- ☒ **RELEASE DATE** December

BATTLE ENGINE

THE WORLD'S BURST ITS DRAIN AND IT'S UP TO YOU

DEVELOPER HISTORY

☒ Lost Toys is a relatively new developer whose only previous game *MoHo*, was a fairly forgettable collection of futuristic gladiatorial combat games.



MOHO

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It's the future and, as per usual, it's all gone a bit pear-shaped. This time it's not aliens or meteorites but good old-fashioned water that's causing all the trouble.

Thanks to ecological mischief-makers, the world's gone *Waterworld* and all land has suddenly become prime real estate worthy of a big war. You've been thrown into the midst of battle in a mighty machine of war named the Battle Engine Aquila. This metallic monster can run around the remainder of the islands blasting tanks and troops into merry oblivion, whilst at the touch of a button you can take to the skies and remove any aerial annoyances (although you can only fly for a limited time).

First impressions of *Battle Engine Aquila* are somewhat disappointing.





TAKE TO THE SKIES: It's not all running around on the ground. Occasionally you can blast into the air to take out planes and check out the landscape.

You've got this massive crab-like walking/flying Gundam-style monstrosity under your control, but you get stuck inside the cockpit and don't really get to see it in all its glory. At this point it suddenly looks like every other first-person shooter on the market except you've got glimpses of machinery bouncing up and down the sides of the screen.

Although it initially looks a lot like a *Halo*-style shoot-'em-up at first, you soon discover that the game plays like the *Mechwarrior* series mixed with a large dose of *Star Wars: Jedi Starfighter*-style flying action. You are on a small island that is under attack from waves of enemies, these arrive in dropships that contain troops and tanks that are supported by aerial fighters and bombers. You're hardly alone though: the island is readily stocked with an allied force and has airports, tank factories and troop

XBM INFO

The Aquila is a constellation near Aquarius lying across the Milky Way. Depicted as an eagle, Aquila is named after the bird that belonged to Zeus.

THE X FACTOR

Check out those explosions. You just don't see particle effects like that on any other system.

INCOMING

Like fish in a barrel...





Like many Xbox games, it's the little things that you miss at first but notice later that are impressive. In *Battle Engine Aquila* it's the sheer amount of enemies that are flitting around each level. You've got the dropships flying in, hundreds of troops piling out, tanks rolling around, jets buzzing overhead and bombers doing their stuff. And that's just the enemy: you've also got everybody on your side piling in too – all with no slow-down. It's impressive in an understated way.



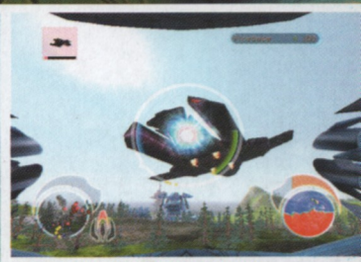
ALL ALONE: You'd best not be caught separated from your army when Battle Engine Aquila is around, sonny!



THE MECHWARRIOR SERIES MIXED WITH A LARGE DOSE OF STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER







TAKE THAT DROPSHIP DOWN: The best way to get through the levels is to go for the dropships as soon as you can.

AQUILA

TO MOP UP THE MESS...

barracks that produce a steady supply of friendly forces to face down the hordes of foes. Each mission is an ongoing war with you tipping the balance in favour of your allies; essentially you flip between air and land preventing the various forces from destroying your bases (at which point it's all over).

As you expect, the mighty Aquila itself has a limited amount of energy and ammunition, but there is a permanent recharge point that you can use at any time (although you have to take time out from the battle to recharge your batteries).

So it plays far more like an action shoot-'em-up than a traditional first-person shooter, there's nothing linear about the gameplay: there are no buttons to push or keys to find and although you are given mission objectives, you're free to go about each level taking out the enemies in any order. At the end of each mission you're graded on performance and the level progression splinters off into easy or difficult missions depending on how well you do (similar to the mission progression system used in *StarFox* on the N64). Do well and you'll get to play harder missions as you go, start performing badly again and you'll be bumped back down to the easier levels.

It is hectic fun that's packed with (largely mindless) violence. There's not too much strategy involved and it's mostly a case of getting stuck in and following mission orders to take out the right enemies first. It soon gets repetitive though with most missions involving similar enemies and following a similar structure. However, it is a good blast for a few hours.

MARK

VERDICT

BATTLE ENGINE AQUILA

SECOND OPINION

It seems there's 'trouble at mill' in the future again (when will we learn?). Missions in *Aquila* tend to be of the 'put paid to the invading enemy forces while protecting the fleet' variety, but with a decent range of killing tools at your disposal it's reasonably enjoyable fare if you're not looking for anything too deep or thought provoking.

Due to the repetitive nature of the missions however, it is unlikely that *Battle Engine* will keep your attention for too long, so its replay and long-term value have to be questionable.

DAN

ALTERNATIVELY

PHANTOM CRASH
Phantagram

The best mech game on the market – think robots married with *Gran Turismo*...



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Impressive explosions but the textures on the levels themselves are fairly bland. We'd rather see Battle Engine Aquila from the outside as well.

SOUNDS
The sound effects are excellent, but the speech is a bit bland and the music is instantly forgettable.

GAMEPLAY
It's a fantastic blast that departs from the usual linear-based, maze structure of a shoot-'em-up to offer frantic blasting action.

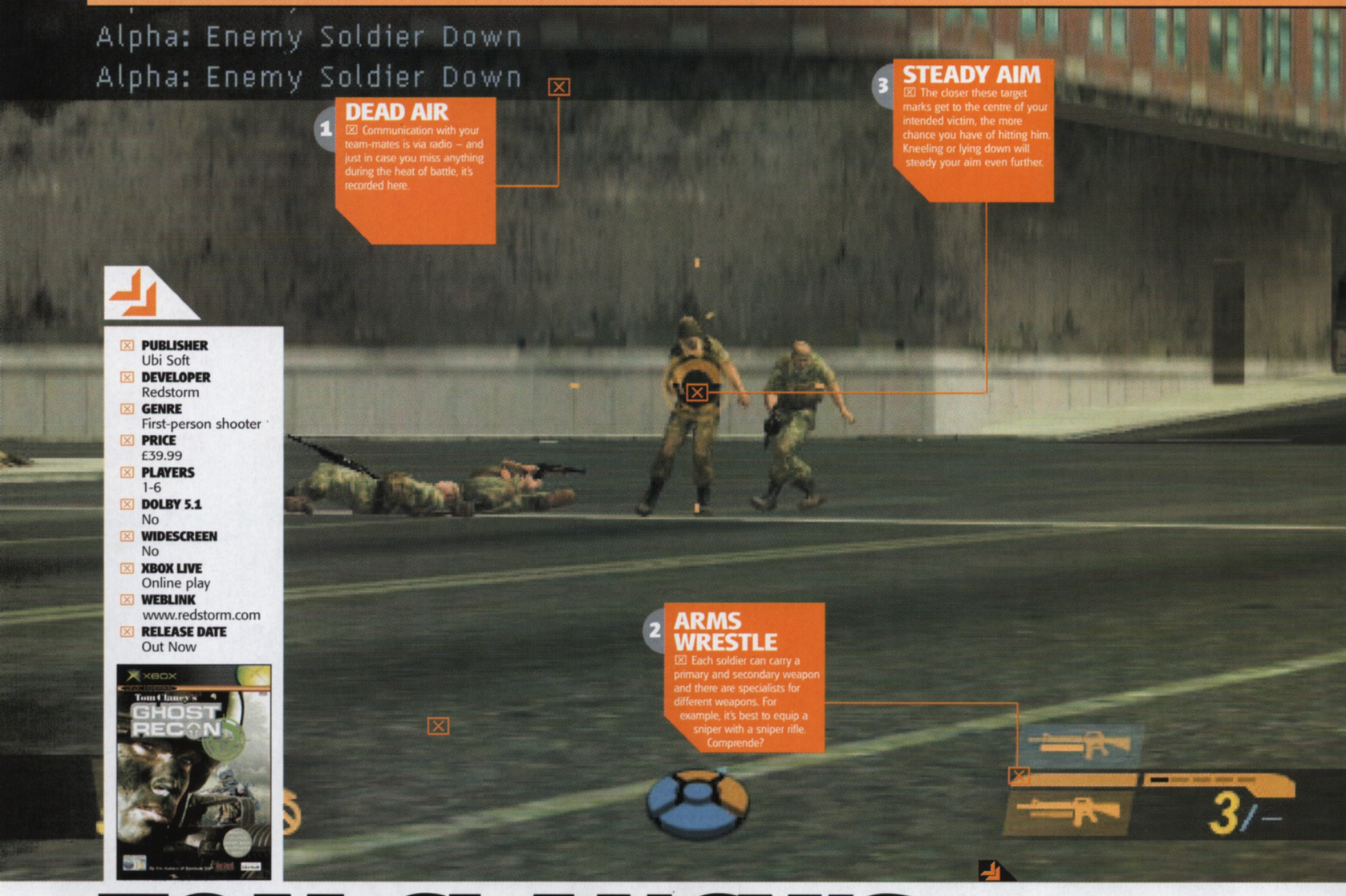
LONG TERM
The branching structure of missions offers an incentive to play the game repeatedly. Sadly, most of the missions are far too similar.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Big explosions	⊖ Repetitive gameplay
⊕ Air and land-based gameplay	⊖ Bland looking landscape
⊕ Frantic missions	⊖ Lack of variety in enemies
⊕ Branching mission structure	⊖ Limited weaponry

Overall

Although it's a great blast, and a welcome departure from the usual shoot-'em-up, this Mech-based game lacks any real strategy and soon gets repetitive.

7 OUT OF TEN



- **PUBLISHER** Ubi Soft
- **DEVELOPER** Redstorm
- **GENRE** First-person shooter
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **PLAYERS** 1-6
- **DOLBY 5.1** No
- **WIDESCREEN** No
- **XBOX LIVE** Online play
- **WEBLINK** www.redstorm.com
- **RELEASE DATE** Out Now

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON

LOCK AND LOAD: HELP THE GOOD OLD U S OF A SAVE THE WORLD!

DEVELOPER HISTORY

A Tom Clancy game done right. Takes the stealth genre to new heights. *SC* met with all-round acclaim and will no doubt be the benchmark that future stealth releases will have to aim for.



SPLINTER CELL



XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET
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XBM
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WALLPAPER
INTERVIEW
MOVIES

Sometime in the not too distant future the old Soviet states are in trouble. A rebel Communist uprising has begun in these countries, joined forces with members of the Russian army, and is threatening to destabilise not only the region but the entire world as well. Ho hum. So what we have here is your typical post Cold War 'thriller' – a world where the Ruskis are the bad guys and the Americans play the cavalry. It's like a Fisher Price 'My First War' or something.

So anyway, up you step to take command of 'the Ghosts' – a crack commando unit known for its stealth and efficiency. Or according to Clancy, "the very tip of the spear". Yep, it's your job to infiltrate these trouble spots and stamp out the resistance before things get out of hand and old Mother Russia is marching up the White House lawn.

Ghost Recon is a squad-based game. You have two teams of three men under your command and as such you can issue orders (done via a satellite map thing) and swap between soldiers at any point. Belying its PC heritage is the fact that *Ghost Recon* is a simulation. We're talking one-shot kills and controls that wouldn't be too out of place in flight sim. You generally move from point A on the map

THE X FACTOR

Play online with humans as your team-mates? Only Xbox could do this...





"WE COULD PICK ON GHOST RECON FOR ITS SHABBY GRAPHICS, ITS OUTDATED GAMEPLAY, ITS LACK OF SURPRISES"



WHO YA GONNA CALL?: *Ghost Recon* is at its most tense when you're indoors. Sadly, you spend most of your time in the open air.



CHAOS FROM ORDERS: Waypoints can be set for your troops to follow. You can also issue three simple commands: halt, advance and advance at all costs.

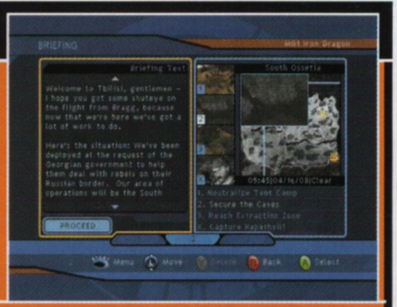


XBM INFO

☒ Tom Clancy, who was reportedly worth over $190 million dollars in 2001, is the co-owner of the Baltimore Orioles professional baseball team.

XBOX LIVE

In theory *Ghost Recon* should be the ideal game for online play – with six humans playing the roles of the members of the Ghosts. In practice, though, this takes cooperation – something that people on Xbox Live are not exactly known for. Or least in our experience. There's also a problem with the source, i.e. the game – better games make for better online experiences. So no, we're not entirely convinced – the Live experience should have been great but it's not. Boo.



DOWNLOADS Extra levels (TBC)

to point B, sometimes onto point C, clearing your way though hostiles and generally rescuing UN troops, destroying downed aircraft and mopping up the mess. It's this simulation aspect that makes *Ghost Recon* a different prospect from all the other samey (*Halo* excepted) first-person shooters on Xbox. But different doesn't necessarily mean better.

Our main point of contention is with the levels of boredom. The game worlds are generally huge, sprawling things, occasionally punctuated by enemies camping out waiting for you to pass by. The trouble with this is that (because of camouflage we assume) you rarely spot an enemy before they see you. And by the time you realise you're under fire your team-mates have 'dispatched' the said enemy. Not a lot of fun, you'll agree.

There's also a real lack of tension to the game – a situation where one shot can mean the difference between life and death should be tense, you should be worried about keeping a good look-out for the enemy but you're not. Maybe this is because most of the game is set outdoors, maybe its because the enemies pose no real threat. But certainly more in the way of indoor action would have made up for this.

We could pick on *Ghost Recon* for its shabby graphics, its outdated gameplay, its lack of surprises. But we won't. We'll pick on it because it is tired. A tired old game with very little to say for itself. Please Tom Clancy, we know it made for good source material for your books but leave the Cold War behind. It's over already. **NICK**

VERDICT

TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON

SECOND OPINION

☒ On the PC *Ghost Recon* was a good game, enjoyable to play in both single-player and multiplayer. But then this port happened. To be fair this game does suit the console market quite well. The team control system is nowhere near as complicated as other Clancy games like *Rainbow Six* and the missions remain fun to play. However, this game has not aged at all well. This is apparent with the visuals and the gameplay. Sit this game next to *Halo* or *Unreal Championship* and ten out of ten cats ignore *Ghost Recon* every time.

MIKE

ALTERNATIVELY

SPLINTER CELL
Ubi Soft
☒ Tom Clancy's other Xbox game. The rhetoric's similar but it's a much better game.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
If you had a two-year-old PC, this would look good. You have an Xbox therefore it doesn't.

SOUNDS
Nice sound effects, and a 'rousing' military score.

GAMEPLAY
A simulation first-person shooter. Makes a nice change from the norm but we'd take *Halo* over this any day.

LONG TERM
With Xbox Live you could be playing these missions for months. If you're not convinced by the style, you won't be.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Strategy/action combo	⊖ Two-year-old PC graphics
⊕ One-shot kills	⊖ AI too vigilant
⊕ Huge missions	
⊕ Xbox Live	

Overall

A serious shooter for serious people. *Ghost Recon* is a bit too 'PC' for our liking.

6 OUT OF TEN



1 HIT THE BAR

☒ Find out *everything* about a player's career. From his current value, past injuries, his wage and if he's conceded any goals directly from corners that may hinder his country's progression to a major international competition's final stages.

2 AGE CONCERN

☒ The older a player gets, the more his stats fall until he retires from international football to save his country's blushes by not conceding goals directly from corners or freakish free kicks.

3 STATS DON'T LIE

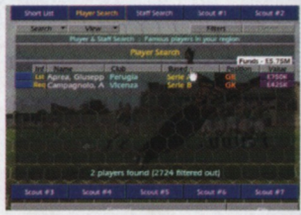
☒ Every attribute has a rating out of 20 – goalies are low on Flair, Finishing and Tackling but high on Positioning, Reflexes and Preventing The Ball From Going In The Goal Directly From a Corner.

INFORMATION

- ☒ **PUBLISHER** Eidos
- ☒ **DEVELOPER** Sports Interactive
- ☒ **GENRE** Sports
- ☒ **PRICE** £44.99
- ☒ **PLAYERS** 1-2
- ☒ **DOLBY 5.1** No
- ☒ **WIDESCREEN** No
- ☒ **XBOX LIVE** No
- ☒ **WEBLINK** www.cm3.com
- ☒ **RELEASE DATE** Out now



CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER SEASON 02/03







DEVELOPER HISTORY

☒ The first *Champ Manager* game on console, the best football management game on console.



CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 01/02

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES .net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

THE BEST FOOTY MANAGEMENT ON CONSOLE AND IT'S AN XBOX EXCLUSIVE!

We were perhaps a little hasty with our review of the last *Championship Manager* game. As massive fans of the PC version we all assumed that the Xbox incarnation would be every bit as good. We were wrong. It still remains, by a considerable margin, the best footy management game on console but after a prolonged period of play (we're talking six seasons here) we began to notice how the game almost stops generating young players – in turn making a lifetime's management career impossible.

We begin this review of *Season 02/03* with a little trepidation and a warning – this *Champ Manager* may do exactly the same but we have no way of telling you, playing for six seasons would take months of dedicated play and we don't have the time!

So with that in mind what do you get with this update? Well, the title gives the game away a little – it's first and

IT WILL STILL DOMINATE YOUR LIFE AND TROUBLE YOUR SLEEPING AND WAKING HOURS

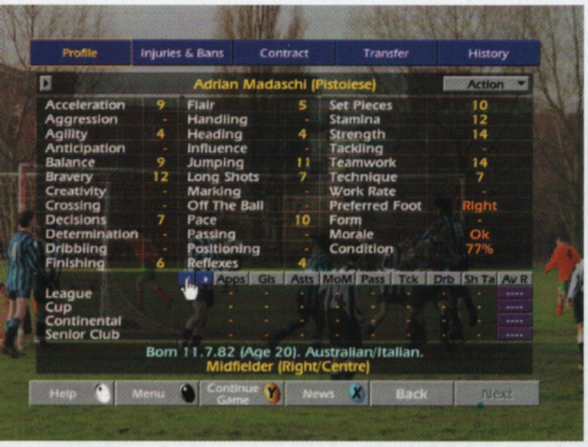
STATO'S DELIGHT



With no match graphics, Champ Manager relies on your imagination to create the action…

It does this by swamping you with names and numbers, with figures on passes attempted, passes completed, with shots on target and percentage of possession. The commentary on the match engine is superb but so are all the numbers. And the game remembers all of these, for every game played, forever. Frightening, isn't it?

TRY BEFORE YOU BUY: Less well known players have blank stats. Get your scouts to check them out to fill 'em in.



SWEET FA: Sven is still the manager of England but a search for Swedish superstar U Johnson turned up no results.





XBM INFO

Sports Interactive is currently working on an all new *Championship Manager 4* game for the PC. It's set for an Xbox release, but no date has been confirmed yet.



THE X FACTOR

All the players, all the leagues, all the realism. No football management game can even come close.

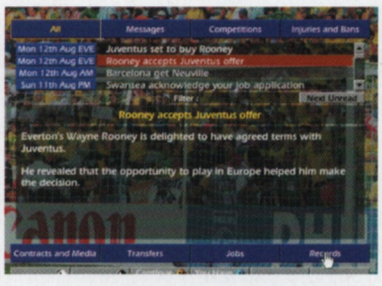
foremost meant as a seasonal update, with all the transfers over the last year, all the managerial changes all in place. So yes, it does this perfectly. But, and here's something that PC owners will baulk at, that's all it does. You see, previous season updates have always included tweaks over the last – the ability to compare players, request things from your club's board, protest to the FA and so on – small but significant tweaks that serve to enhance the feeling of realism. And we get nothing? Sorry, there is one enhancement – the joypad rumbles when a goal is scored. Woopee-freakin-do. And they've also included the new FIFA transfer regulations, so you now only get specific transfer windows. But it's hardly an enhancement that really improves your experience.

Aside from this, it's *exactly* the same game as *Season 01/02*. Which is obviously no bad thing. You can still only run three concurrent leagues (as opposed to all the leagues in the PC version), the processing time is obstructive (there are times when the game will process for ten minutes or more) and the control interface is a little clunky. Still, if you haven't played the last version, this is just about as good as football management games get.

So there you have it. *Championship Manager Season 02/03* is still a great game. It will still dominate your life, trouble your sleeping and waking hours, obsess you as much as your love for your favourite team, but is it worth buying if you've already got *01/02*? We're not convinced but if you're fanatical about having all the right players in the right places (for the beginning of the season anyway) then you'll see it as an essential purchase.

NICK





VERDICT

XBOX

CHAMP MANAGER SEASON 01/02

SECOND OPINION

If you've already got a copy of *Championship Manager Season 01/02* then there isn't enough here to warrant a purchase. *02/03* is the same quality game and will prove just as threatening to your relationships, family and loved ones mainly here, with other human beings. If you've just got hold of an Xbox then it makes sense to plump for this version, but to be honest unless you are completely anal about your stats you'll find just as much enjoyment in either version. Let's hope that *CM4* makes us an offer we can't refuse…

DAN

XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Purely functional but almost every word links to the relevant page. Works brilliantly.

SOUNDS
Crowd chanting is about the limit. The pointer makes a nice 'plonk' noise when you move it though.

GAMEPLAY
The best in the business. Takes place in your imagination so can get better and better. God help you if you know someone else playing…

LONGTERM
We have reservations over long term playability with *01/02* running out of young players after a while. We could be wrong though.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ All players are present and correct	⊖ No real new features
⊕ Superb match engine	⊖ Lack of official photos
⊕ It's soooo believable	

ALTERNATIVELY

FIFA FOOTBALL 2003
EA Sports

Tired of watching (or imagining) football? Try this.



Overall

A great game but if you bought *Season 01/02* six months ago you'll be pretty disappointed.

8 OUT OF TEN

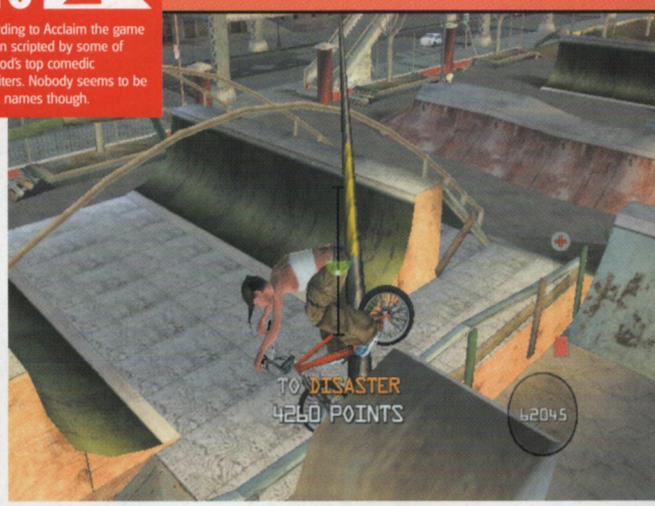


HOOKER DELIVERY BOY

☒ Part of the game sees you collecting local hookers for the jive-talking pimp. It's like pizza delivery, only heavier, and with less dressing.

XBM INFO

☒According to Acclaim the game has been scripted by some of Hollywood's top comedic scriptwriters. Nobody seems to be naming, names though.

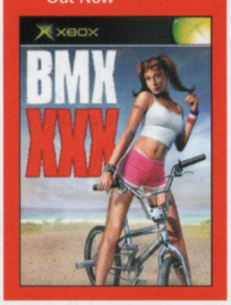






INFORMATION

- ☒ **PUBLISHER** Acclaim
- ☒ **DEVELOPER** AKA Acclaim
- ☒ **GENRE** Rad Sports
- ☒ **PRICE** £44.99
- ☒ **PLAYERS** 1-4
- ☒ **DOLBY 5.1** No
- ☒ **WIDESCREEN** No
- ☒ **XBOX LIVE** No
- ☒ **WEBLINK** www.bmxxxx.com
- ☒ **RELEASE DATE** Out Now



PUBLISHER HISTORY

☒ Acclaim is responsible for many games, *Turok Evolution, Aggressive Inline, Burnout* and this little beauty: 'Join Mary-Kate and Ashley for the sweetest birthday bash ever. Go cruising, earn your license and do the things you've only dreamed about... until now'. Aww, bless!

PSONE [2002]



MARY-KATE AND ASHLEY SWEET 16: LICENSED TO DRIVE

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES .net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

BMX XXX

BITCHES AND DIMES; NICKELS AND HO'S! IT'S DAVE MIRRA IN ALI-G LAND!

Oh dear, oh dear! What have we got here? Take *Dave Mirra's BMX*, add a few foul-mouthed pimps, prostitutes and tramps, strip out Dave (because he obviously doesn't want to be associated with such a depraved product), and serve it up to anybody looking for a cheap thrill.

We rarely see games this desperate for attention. You traipse around on your BMX collecting cans for homeless tramps, picking up hookers and giving them a ride back to their pimps, collecting cash for the strip clubs and fetching toilet paper for portaloo-trapped buds. Don't get us wrong – we're not coming down on this game because it has adult content (we've all outgrown plumbers) – but because it doesn't feel adult in any way whatsoever. Whilst playing you feel yourself regressing to an earlier age when *Sam Fox's Strip Poker* on the Spectrum was risky stuff, and not just a bit crap.

So, if you're so hard Mr *XXX*, where's your body count? If you want to make an outrageous BMX game, skip the swearing and let's see something more original for a change. We want to see a BMX game that calls attention to itself because of its brilliant trick system, because of its sublime graphics, because of its interesting and innovative tasks. Not because the game features some gratuitous nudity.

We don't want games to swear at us – we can swear for ourselves. Let's see a bit of real courage: you want to impress us? Be the *Grand Theft Auto* of BMX games not *Beavis and Butthead* on a bike.

MARK

VERDICT

XBOX

BMX XXX

SECOND OPINION

☒ It's all a little bit sad really isn't it? This game is no better than *Dave Mirra 2*. In fact, it's actually nowhere near as much fun to play. And yet, like moths to a flame, we pick up and play *XXX* because it features a raunchy adult theme and naked flesh. Which is, apparently, synonymous with BMX riding – just look in the streets if you don't believe us. Yes, this game is quite enjoyable to play but the control system could still do with some work and, as much as it pains us to say it, we would prefer pros over pros.

MIKE

ALTERNATIVELY

JET SET RADIO FUTURE
SEGA
☒ Sack *XXX* and get a genuinely radical rad-sports game instead.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Nice big levels, but the textures are horrifically bland and the animation is every bit as ropey as *Dave Mirra* was.

SOUNDS
Excellent tunes from De La Soul, KRS One, Eric B and Rakim and Motley Crue! Shame about Green Day, but you can't have everything.

GAMEPLAY
It's *Dave Mirra's BMX* isn't it? Oh yes it is: it just is! Wasn't particularly good back then; isn't particularly good now.

LONG TERM
There are lots of missions and, if you still find Ali-G funny then you'll probably find plenty of laughs along the way.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Swearing	⊖ Lousy gameplay
⊕ Hookers	⊖ Shoddy graphics
⊕ Pimps	⊖ Questionable ethics
⊕ Tramps	⊖ Unstable controls

Overall

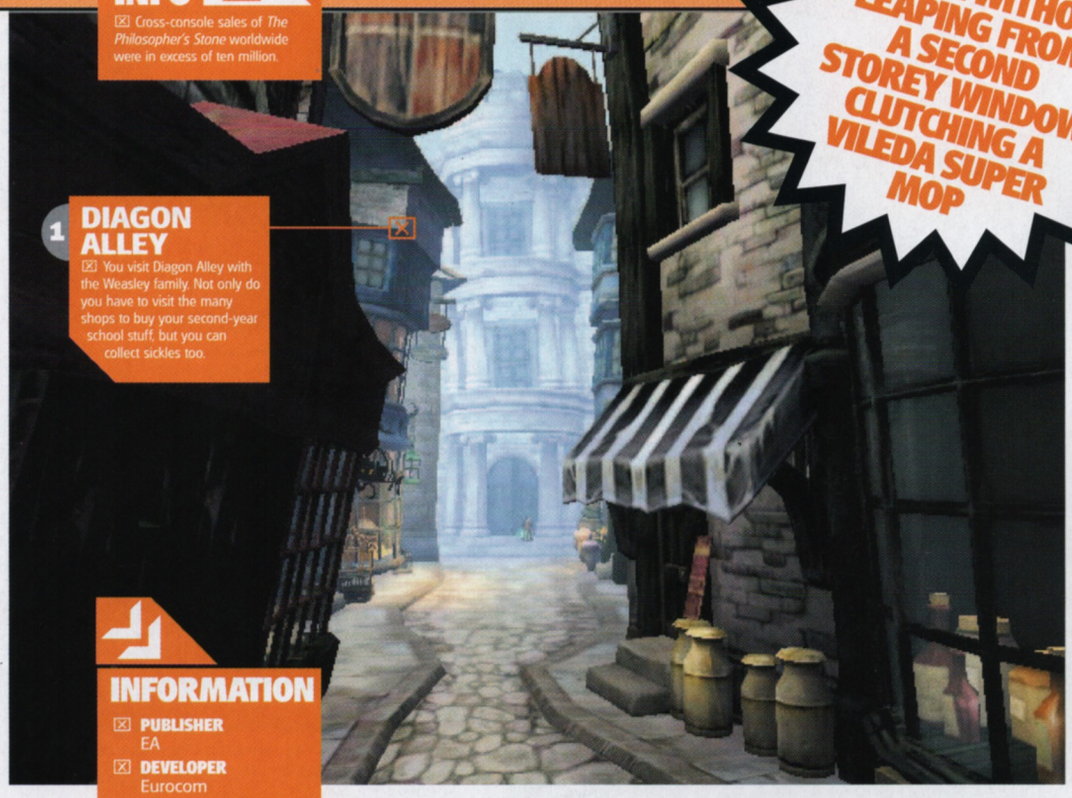
All the swearing in the world does not make a bad game good.

4 OUT OF TEN

XBM INFO

☒ Cross-console sales of *The Philosopher's Stone* worldwide were in excess of ten million.

'BE' HARRY POTTER WITHOUT LEAPING FROM A SECOND STOREY WINDOW CLUTCHING A VILEDA SUPER MOP



1 **DIAGON ALLEY**

☒ You visit Diagon Alley with the Weasley family. Not only do you have to visit the many shops to buy your second-year school stuff, but you can collect sickles too.





INFORMATION

☒ **PUBLISHER** EA
☒ **DEVELOPER** Eurocom
☒ **GENRE** Adventure
☒ **PRICE** £44.99
☒ **PLAYERS** 1
☒ **DOLBY 5.1** No
☒ **WIDESCREEN** No
☒ **XBOX LIVE** No
☒ **WEBLINK** harrypotter.ea.com
☒ **RELEASE DATE** Out Now



HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

IS SOMETHING TERRIBLE ABOUT TO BE UNLEASHED?

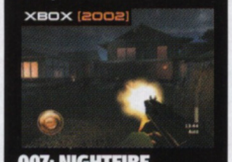
Having played *The Philosopher's Stone* on the PSone last year, we were expecting more of the same from EA. Young Potter's last console outing was a fairly shabby mini-game montage which was all extras, but with no substantial central plot to go with it. We were pleasantly surprised, then, by this simple but well crafted adventure which follows the story Harry Potter's second year at Hogwarts even more faithfully than the film.

As you take to the streets of Diagon Alley and the corridors, classrooms and Quidditch pitches of Hogwarts, you'll notice clean, colourful and largely solid graphics make up an environment big enough to portray the vastness of Potter's world, but not big enough for you to become aimlessly lost. A good job has been done of…well, pretty much everything. You can collect jellybeans and pumpkin pastries to maintain your health levels, cast spells, which you acquire more of throughout the game, and meet up with the full cast of characters whilst solving many a non-challenging puzzle. You follow a linear progression through the story, which is interspersed with bouts of roaming in back rooms and alleyways in search of Wizard Cards, mini-games with gnomes, flying around the grounds and forays into other famous wizarding areas.

As a game for kids and *Potter* devotees, this is an entirely reasonable effort which gives them the chance to 'be' Harry Potter without actually wrapping a sheet around their shoulders and leaping from a second storey window clutching a Vileda super mop. As a game for adults who have little interest in Harry's mythology and hype, *The Chamber of Secrets* is a good looking game which is too linear and far too easy to follow to offer any real challenge. **NERYS**

DEVELOPER HISTORY

☒ Reviewed in this issue (page 82), the Xbox version of the game to accompany the new *Bond* movie is a very impressive work. Eurocom has been involved in other kids' games too – they made Disney's *Atlantis*.



007: NIGHTFIRE

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES .net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

VERDICT

XBOX

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

SECOND OPINION

☒ The books, the films, the copious amounts of merchandising and now, quite unsurprisingly, a videogame with full *Harry* endorsement. Alarm bells are ringing but as much as we tried it's quite difficult to hate this game. Although it offers nothing amazingly original it is genuinely quite enjoyable to play and fans will lap it up. This is where the problem lies though as, generally speaking, kids are the main fans and even we found a few of the puzzles frustrating. So parents prepare to get annoyed!

MIKE

ALTERNATIVELY

TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER
EA

☒ One of the few games for kids on this console, this is still nowhere near as good as *HP*.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
The simple but well designed and detailed environments are pitched perfectly for the style of the game and its audience.

SOUNDS
An impressive and atmospheric musical score is accompanied by fairly well done vocal sound-a-likes.

GAMEPLAY
The linear plot is aided by a number of mini-games and sub-plots in which you help out your fellow spell-casters.

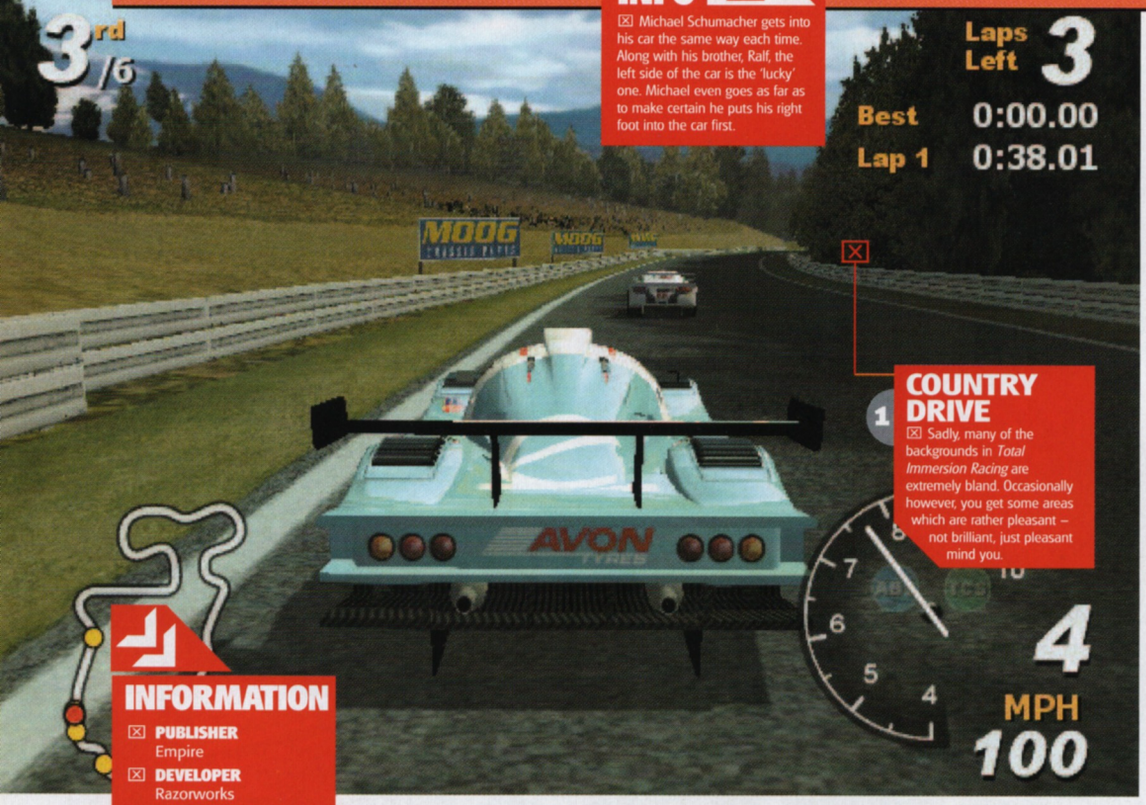
LONG TERM
Once you have played through, you can go back in for the mini-games and wizard cards if you are especially thorough.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Faithfully follows the story	⊖ Too linear story progression
⊕ Superb voice acting	⊖ If you don't like *Harry*…
⊕ Very simple RPG elements	⊖ Can become repetitive
⊕ Some impressive environments	⊖ Too many gnomes

Overall

A strong, enjoyable platformer which faithfully translates the book but can become repetitive.

6 OUT OF TEN



XBM INFO

Michael Schumacher gets into his car the same way each time. Along with his brother, Ralf, the left side of the car is the 'lucky' one. Michael even goes as far as to make certain he puts his right foot into the car first.

COUNTRY DRIVE

Sadly, many of the backgrounds in *Total Immersion Racing* are extremely bland. Occasionally however, you get some areas which are rather pleasant – not brilliant, just pleasant mind you.



RACING RIVALS: You'll find drivers that take exception to you for little reason. They become your 'rivals' and try to impede your progress in a weak fashion.



ON YOUR MARKS: Ah, the excitement and expectation of the starting grid – it's all way downhill after here though in *TIR*.

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** Empire
- **DEVELOPER** Razorworks
- **GENRE** Racing
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **PLAYERS** 1-2
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** No
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.totalimmersionracing.com
- **RELEASE DATE** Out Now



PUBLISHER HISTORY

Haul cargo or complete specific mission-based objectives to make more money than your sibling rivals, in order to gain control of the family business. Very enjoyable

XBOX (2002)



BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET
TOTAL GAMES net XBM
EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
WALLPAPER
INTERVIEW
MOVIES

TOTAL IMMERSION RACING

ER, WHAT SHOULD WE BE GETTING IMMERSED IN EXACTLY?

The highest quality driving technology, real world race cars, tracks and immersive gameplay. Or so the press release for *Total Immersion Racing* led us to believe. Having played this for the past few days we think we've been grossly misled...

Our first lap induced cries of, "It's a MegaDrive game" – not promising. What we have here is a particularly sub par title that does indeed feature real world cars and circuits (how revolutionary) combined, sadly, with mostly crap graphics and dull gameplay.

The car models are passable but they hover above the tracks; the environments, however range from pretty awful to just plain bland. It lacks the all the finesse and subtlety of the quality racing titles that we've seen so far on Xbox. You can smash into as many as cars as you like and not a mark will appear. Call us pedantic but a bit of collision damage when you hit another vehicle at over 100mph should be in there, right?

You have a choice of playing a single race, in single or multiplayer, or embarking on a career with a team. We managed to make an enemy on our first race (scary), which should mean that revenge would be in store at a later date. Our enemy, Bond his name was, took revenge by, wait for it... driving in front of us or next to us in an annoying fashion! Well, we certainly learnt our lesson there.

In case you haven't guessed by now, *Total Immersion Racing* is a very weak effort and contains little that will draw players in, let alone actually immerse them. Steer clear! **DAN**

VERDICT

XBOX

TOTAL IMMERSION RACING

XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Is it a MegaDrive? Is it an Atari ST? No it's *TIR* and having seen what Xbox is capable of this falls a long way short. A very long way.

SOUNDS
Generic engine noises and dance tunes as you race, accompanied by your team manager stating the bleeding obvious.

GAMEPLAY
It's dull – the cars are fairly unresponsive and it soon gets tedious ploughing your way around these 'real world' tracks.

LONG TERM
It's safe to say there won't be a lot of life in this, even though there are various tracks and teams/cars to unlock. It just doesn't grab you.

SECOND OPINION

Walk into your local videogame retailer and you'll see driving games are popular. They're everywhere, you cannot get away from them. Which is exactly why it's a mystery how anything like this can be released. With so much to choose from you'd have to be pretty damned stupid to even consider a title that looks like a throwback from the PSone. This certainly doesn't offer any kind of immersion' as promised in the title. Although we do have a great desire to find all copies of this game and nuke them into orbit. It's the only way to be sure.

MIKE

ALTERNATIVELY

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING
Microsoft

Still standing tall as one of the best racers on Xbox.



Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ The sky looks nice on some tracks	⊖ Poor graphics ⊖ Dull gameplay ⊖ Does nothing new ⊖ Not immersive in slightest

Overall

If you're going to spend £40 on a racing game then don't fritter it away on *TIR*. It's really a rather poor effort to say the least.

3 OUT OF TEN

from the darkest

part of your game

to the glory cries

of victory

www.logic3.com

SOUNDSTATION HEAR THEM COMING, GET THEM FIRST

SoundStation3 has a compact and innovative design which enables it to blend seamlessly with any modern day home entertainment system. The powerful 2.1 Sub-Woofer system delivers 200 Watts of high quality sound, enhancing the gaming experience on all current formats.



SOUNDSTATION 3

SoundStation2 is the essential gaming 2.1 Sub-Woofer audio enhancement. Compatible with all current console formats and delivering 300 Watts, it is a must have accessory for any serious gamer.



SOUNDSTATION 2

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XBM INFO

Christian Bale made his big screen debut in Spielberg's *Empire Of The Sun* and went on to star in more recently in the big screen version of Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho*.

APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION

Playing as the dragon means that you can really allow your evil side to come to life. Just flying around burning humans can actually be most enjoyable.







YOU'LL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL, AS THEY WON'T THINK TWICE ABOUT TURNING YOU INTO A HUMAN KEBAB!

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** BAM!
- **DEVELOPER** Kuju
- **GENRE** Action
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **PLAYERS** 1
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** No
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.bam4fun.com
- **RELEASE DATE** Out Now



DEVELOPER HISTORY

Realistic racing action with some of the world's most desirable cars. You're never gonna get to drive these in real life so check out the pixellated versions. You don't even need insurance. Or a licence...



LOTUS CHALLENGE

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET
TOTAL GAMES.net XBM
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INTERVIEW
MOVIES

REIGN OF FIRE

LOOKING FOR A GAME THAT DOESN'T DRAG-ON?

Have you ever wandered around the English countryside and wondered what the future will look like? Well, *Reign Of Fire* transports us to 2024 and it's not the shiny futuristic metropolis that you might be expecting – turns out dragons are attempting to wipe out the human race and only a small bunch of freedom fighters can save us from complete annihilation.

Joining the resistance team against the flying menace, you traverse the charred land looking to kill as many of the flying beasts as you can. Luckily, your tanks and trucks are armed with enough weapons to blow the dragons to kingdom come, but you'll have to be careful as they won't think twice about turning you into a human kebab! As well as destructive weapons, there are also more peaceful tools such as water cannons that can be used to put out the fires sweeping the land.

Of course it's all very well playing the hero, but what you really want to do is control the hulking beasts – so it's good to learn you also take control of an infant dragon and help the angry adults wipe out the humans. The longer you play, the more powerful this creature becomes and soon you'll be flattening huge areas with a single flame. Sweet!

Reign Of Fire looks impressive, creating a suitably post-apocalyptic world, but everything is so brown that the visuals become rather samey very quickly. The same can be said to a lesser extent about the gameplay but as long as you are not expecting a classic, *Reign Of Fire* is worth firing your Xbox up for. **KENDALL**

VERDICT

XBOX

REIGN OF FIRE — XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Some nicely animated dragons, but thanks to their destructive breath, everything in the game is a shade of brown...

SOUNDS
Throughout the adventure, the epic sounds swell in the background and give the game more of a cinematic feel.

GAMEPLAY
Some of the driving sections can become rather frustrating, but once you're in charge of the dragons, things hot up...

LONG TERM
Once you've seen the dragons in action, you've pretty much seen it all. It's likely to be a short-lived thrill.

SECOND OPINION

It doesn't take a genius to see that it's much more enjoyable to scorch human beings from above than it is to 'burn' around in a jeep taking out dragons as they cause havoc. *Reign Of Fire* can be a bit frustrating, especially when you are trying to control the driving of that jeep and where you're supposed to be shooting. Graphically it doesn't push the Xbox and it's apparent that this is another average title relying on a license. It plays reasonably but is hardly a title worthy of more than checking out at the local video shop for an evening.

DAN

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
+ Dragons	− So brown...
+ Fire!	− Driving scenes monotonous
+ Two distinct styles	− Nothing mind-blowing
+ Great epic soundtrack	− Early dragon action not epic

ALTERNATIVELY

STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER
Activision

Okay, there aren't any dragons in it, but you do get to fly around saving civilisation!



Overall

Reign Of Fire should find favour with fans of the big screen version, although it can become annoying at times. Certainly worth a look however.

5 OUT OF TEN

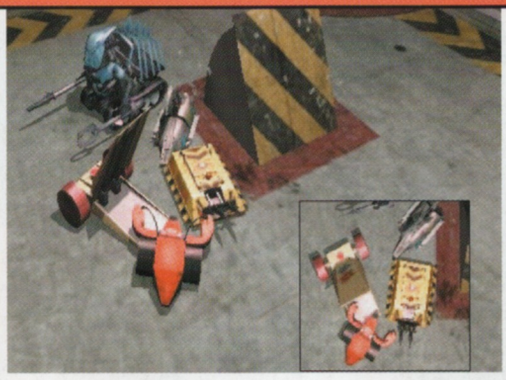
XBM INFO

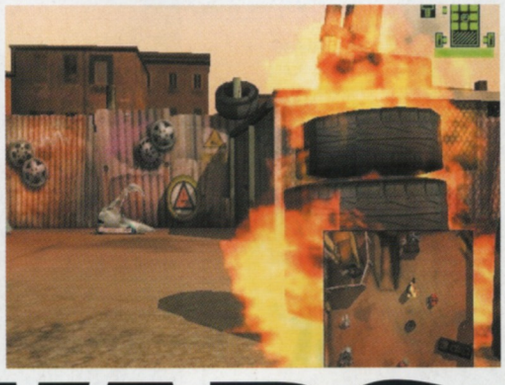
Apparently four million viewers watch *Robot Wars* every week. This probably has nothing to do with Craig Charles but may be due in part to Phillipa Forrester's charms.



1 GET YOUR GEEK ON

As well as being able to create your own robot, you can take control of 'famous' craft from the show. Consider yourself a true geek if you knew that this robot is called Hypnodisc.





INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** BBC Multimedia
- **DEVELOPER** Climax
- **GENRE** Action
- **PRICE** £44.99
- **PLAYERS** 1
- **DOLBY 5.1** No
- **WIDESCREEN** No
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.bbc worldwide.com
- **RELEASE DATE** Out Now



ROBOT WARS: EXTREME DESTRUCTION

ROBOT-EERS STAND BY AND PREPARE TO BE DISAPPOINTED...

The best thing about this game is that without having to appear on TV parading your lack of a social life you can, in the privacy of your own home, live out your geek fantasies by naming and building your own robot and then taking it into battle. Sadly though, soon after cobbling together your first machine from a range of body parts, engines, wheels and weapons, *Robot Wars* reveals itself to be one of the most shoddy and cack-handed titles yet witnessed on the Xbox.

Although the atmosphere of the TV series is here – the real-life commentator incessantly barks throughout and there's many of the more 'famous' bots from the show – control of your robot is just plain dire. Firstly, there's hardly any gradient in turns; secondly there's little feeling of weight or inertia when moving or in using of your weapons, but most damning is the AI of the opposition.

No matter which game mode you play, your opponents do one of two things: either stick to you like a magnet or act confused. More often than not, they do both. Add to this that you've got only a small degree of control of your own robot and you'll soon find that battles become a disappointing and uninvolving mess, punctuated by jerky visuals and little sense of doing damage.

This game has barely any redeeming features other than its license, yet even the most diehard *Robot Wars* fan could glean little fun from a title so barely lacking in gameplay. **BYRON**

VERDICT

ROBOT WARS: EXTREME DESTRUCTION

SECOND OPINION

On the face of it *Robot Wars* is quite an enjoyable game. It's got a suitably metal interface, the overactive commentator from the show is in here, the robots are all in place (both house and otherwise) and the control system on the pad is the same as an RC layout. This is all good. If you're a *Robot Wars* fan then you're going to be ecstatic with excitement. That is until the novelty wears off, something that happens very quickly. If only Phillipa Forrester was in here then we would have a reason to return to the game.

MIKE

XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Badly animated robots, lame effects, uninspiring locations and a jerky camera make this one ugly looking game.

SOUNDS
There's very little sound going on apart from the hyperactive shouting of the commentator who's often out of sync with events.

GAMEPLAY
The controls are so unrefined that playing can end up being more like watching your robot get unconvincingly pushed around.

LONG TERM
There are eight game modes but again, when the playability is so dire why bother?

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Build your own robot	⊖ Appalling controls
⊕ Lots of game modes	⊖ Shaky graphics
⊕ Features robots from the series	⊖ Ropey physics
	⊖ No Phillipa Forrester

ALTERNATIVELY

STEEL BATTALION
Capcom
Should show us Brits a thing or two about how to make a real robot game.



Overall

A waste of a potentially fun license by a 'game' that is in all honesty unmitigated dross.

2 OUT OF TEN

DEVELOPER HISTORY

A very high quality game that's undoubtedly the best bike title available for your Xbox. Considering how good *Moto GP* is, it's amazing how crap they've made *Robot Wars*.



MOTO GP

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET
TOTAL GAMES .net XBM
EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
WALLPAPER
INTERVIEW
MOVIES

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** Microsoft
- **DEVELOPER** Day One
- **GENRE** Shoot-'em-up
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **PLAYERS** 1-8
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** Yes
- **XBOX LIVE** Yes
- **WEBLINK** www.xbox.com /mechassault
- **RELEASE DATE** 22 November



1 DEMOLITION MAN

As a general rule, if a building exists in this game it can be dropped to a few inches of rubble. Don't worry, all innocent families have been long evacuated – hey, it works for our consciences.

2 BIG BOYS TOY

You cannot fault the mechs in this *Mech Assault*. Every single one of them looks distinct enough to spot different makes and the animation on each small part is more than commendable.

3 CONDITION CRITICAL

When you finally manage to wear down an opposing mech you get the pleasure of watching a ridiculously large screen-filling explosion that confirms the kill.

MECH ASSAULT

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO NICE FRIENDLY ROBOTS LIKE JOHNNY FIVE?

DEVELOPER HISTORY

Another shooter from Microsoft that has achieved what some might call success! Come on, you own the game, you know what it's about and you dream about it at night. And if you don't, you must be weird...



HALO: COMBAT EVOLVED

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET
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EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
WALLPAPER
INTERVIEW
MOVIES



CITY CRISIS: There's no real reason to be doing this but it's just too much fun to stop.

What a fantastic idea for a game *Mech Assault* is. Watch as big robot walk around. Smile as big robot shoot at stuff. Laugh as big robot create pretty explosions. Then sit back on the cathartic merry-go-round as it all happens again. And again. And again. And...aaaargh!

Don't get us wrong, this is a decent enough game but it is such an amazingly unoriginal and blatantly lazy idea. Now we know that there isn't much you can do with a mech shooter but this game does feel like it is doing nothing more than going through the paint by numbers routine. For the main part of the game you take control of one of a variety of mechs which you then take through a series of 'destroy enemy target' missions.

You do get the occasional variety in the missions (for example: defend) but they all involve laying waste to enemy forces. This is a great shame because the game looks amazing in motion,

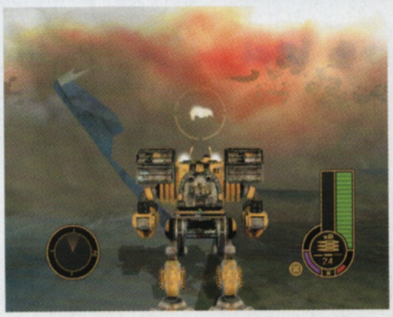
THE X FACTOR

Levelling entire cities building by building is what makes playing this game worthwhile.





GOING SNOWHERE: On the snow-covered levels the mechs leave a trail of footprints in the snow. Completely useless but a nice touch.



FALLOUT: Take out a big enough target and a huge shockwave erupts outwards, destroying your vision.

XBOX LIVE

Mindless killing, flying rockets and streams of hot lead do make for the perfect online deathmatch game. However, the lack of an ability to customise your mech in any major way does take a lot of the fun out of it. Choosing a mech type is not enough – we want to be able to tinker with every bolt before we show it all off on Live. Still, it is good for a game or two.



DOWNLOADS Levels and, potentially, new Mechs.



XBM INFO

☒ The *BattleTech* license has spawned numerous videogames under the name *MechWarrior*, trading card games, board games, tabletop battle games, fictional novels and much more.

controls well and features some superb action. If only this action had been broken up in some way or a few original ideas had been implemented. Other mech shooters like *Steel Battalion*, *Phantom Crash*, *Gun Metal* and even *Robotech* featured a new approach to the genre. Sadly, this isn't the case here. But if you're after some mindless action then this is the place to come.

Mech Assault is essentially a console version of *MechWarrior* and is based around the official *BattleTech* license. If you know the name then you will no doubt be pleased to hear that all of your favourite mechs are in here, looking as familiar as ever, complete with all of the authentic weapons. It's a shame there's virtually zero opportunity to chop and change parts or even weapons but there are plenty of different mechs to choose from so it doesn't become too much of a problem.

The weapons you do get are as you might expect. Machine guns, lasers, missile launchers and so on. Bizarrely, every gun has infinite ammunition – the game doesn't even try and cover up the mindless action. The idea behind this is that when you pick up a power-up you're limited as to the number of shots you have with that power. As soon as you run out you're back to your basic laser, rocket launcher or whatever.

It's actually a good job that you have unlimited ammo at your fingertips because the real fun in *Mech Assault* comes not from destroying the enemy but from blowing up buildings. Pepper a tower block with shots and the glass will erupt outwards, entire sections of buildings crumble and flames lick the sides before its ultimate collapse. If ever a company were to make a 3D version of *Rampage* this is exactly how we would imagine it to turn out.

And it's the same kind of person that is going to enjoy playing *Mech Assault*. This is not a bad game. Not by a long way but you are going to find it getting very repetitive very quickly. And it's kind of difficult to justify buying this for the multiplayer when you could buy *Unreal* or something like that. A definite try before you buy. **MIKE**

VERDICT

MECH ASSAULT

SECOND OPINION

☒ At certain times there's nothing more satisfying than levelling an entire city using an array of powerful weaponry. And then again at other times it's just as good to play videogames. *Mech Assault* looks very good and affords you the opportunity to blow to pieces a large number of buildings, vehicles and foot soldiers (plus civilians too should you be so inclined). For the first few levels it's all very enjoyable but after a while it becomes something of a chore as you blast your way through the various mission objectives that each level throws up.

DAN

ALTERNATIVELY

PHANTOM CRASH
Phantagram
☒ This mech shooter may not look as nice but is slightly more original, a lot more in-depth and is quite addictive to play.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
There's no denying we've seen better but the action looks impressive and the building destruction is superb.

SOUNDS
The use of surround sound is good and the battle sounds should keep the neighbours awake.

GAMEPLAY
To start with the game can be gripping but you soon realise that there isn't anything in the way of depth.

LONG TERM
There are plenty of levels and they're not easy, but the only reason to return is for multiplayer mayhem.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Get to blow up buildings	⊖ Completely unoriginal
⊕ Lots of action	⊖ Soon gets tired
⊕ Looks quite good	⊖ Non customisable mechs
⊕ Controls well	

Overall

Looks great and is enjoyable to play for a while until monotony sets in.

7 OUT OF TEN



XBM INFO

Rising crime in Bangkok recently meant police were ordered to take a drastic measure: Stop golfing while on duty. No officer, including superintendents, was allowed play unless their neighbourhood was absolutely crime free.

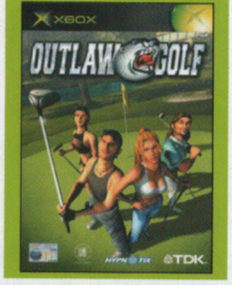
SUMMER OF LOVE

Unsurprisingly, one of the most popular choices of player with the XBM team was this young lady, Summer, who along with her lesbian buddy, Autumn, kept us well entertained throughout.

OUTLAW GOLF TAKES A LIGHT-HEARTED APPROACH BUT STILL DELIVERS A QUALITY GAME

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** TDK Mediactive
- **DEVELOPER** Hypnotix
- **GENRE** Sports
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **PLAYERS** 1-4
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** No
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.tdk-mediactive.com
- **RELEASE DATE** 29 November



PUBLISHER HISTORY

Battlecry boasts a slick engine and is thick with action, but the gameplay mechanics fall short and it fails to offer enough depth for it to become something that would last in the long term.



ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES.net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

OUTLAW GOLF

AH, THE GENTLEMAN'S GAME...

When we got a hold of the import version of this it's fair to say we gave it a real good play-test both inside and outside office hours. We were smitten with our first golf game on Xbox and awarded it an impressive nine out ten. That was then, but this is now however, and there's a new guy in town...

Outlaw Golf is a great game – the physics are excellent, the graphics good and the ensemble of scumbags included makes for some extremely entertaining golfing. We liked it a lot back then and we still like it a lot now. However, having recently received *Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003*, it's cast *Outlaw* in a rather different light.

Outlaw Golf falls short of *Woods* in many ways: it lacks the subtlety and club control, the real life locations and golfers plus the sheer number of courses and gameplay modes – to name but a few of its shortcomings when pitted against EA's beast. So it's fair to say that fickle folk such as we are, there is a new apple of our eye.

Hypnotix's title will appeal to a great many who don't take their golf too seriously, those who do will more than likely swing towards *Tiger*. *Outlaw Golf* takes a light-hearted approach but still delivers a quality game; the controls are simple and easy to get into (plenty of people in this office will testify to that) and it looks superb. If you fancy some amusing adult themes mixed in with your golfing then this one might be the game for you. **DAN**

VERDICT

XBOX

OUTLAW GOLF

XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Both the character models and the environments in which they play look very smart. In general the presentation of the game is excellent.

SOUNDS
The sound is good but the witty remarks of the commentator get annoying, as is the spectator who laughs at every poor shot you play.

GAMEPLAY
Easy to get into and play. The controls are simple and the physics of the game mean that the golfing is smooth all round the course.

LONG TERM
As good as it is, it won't take too long to unlock everything and it's then that the inclusion of only three courses feels a bit paltry.

SECOND OPINION

How fickle are we? Seduced by the 'hilarious' characters, the intimidating courses, the simple and intuitive controls, we were bowled over by *Outlaw Golf*. Once the best golf game on Xbox, it is now second to EA's mighty *Tiger Woods PGA Tour*. The latter is a real golf game. Real players, real courses and (most importantly) a real challenge. It's not that *Outlaw* is a bad game, it's still great fun (especially with mates) but the humour has worn a bit thin with time. Sadly, *Outlaw* just doesn't make the cut anymore, let alone the leaderboard.

NICK

ALTERNATIVELY

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003
EA

EA puts a beauty within inches of the pin.



Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
+ Characters are great	− Unforgiving AI at times
+ Gameplay is excellent	− No real locations
+ Violence in golf	− Boasts only a fraction of what *Tiger 2003* has
+ Adult themes	

Overall

A thoroughly enjoyable golfing experience but its limitations become apparent after a while.

8 OUT OF TEN

XBM INFO

☒ The post-apocalyptic environments of the future that feature in the game were actually based on Hull.

THIS BOILS DOWN TO YOU MOWING WAVES OF T-800S AND SOLVING PRE-SCHOOL PUZZLES

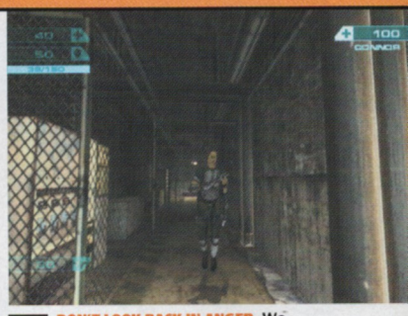


1 I WILL BREAK YOU!

☒ Shooting the Terminator models in different places will see them disintegrate accordingly. Here we've blown one of the blighter's heads off. Terminated!



THE GOOD OLD SAYS: What was that Nan, they don't make 'em like they used to...



DON'T LOOK BACK IN ANGER: We don't won't to see behind us, we've already been there.





TERMINATOR: DAWN OF FATE

"I'M A FRIEND OF SARAH CONNOR. CAN I SEE HER PLEASE?"

INFORMATION

- ☒ **PUBLISHER** Infogrames
- ☒ **DEVELOPER** Paradigm Entertainment
- ☒ **GENRE** Shoot-'em-up
- ☒ **PRICE** £39.99
- ☒ **PLAYERS** 1
- ☒ **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- ☒ **WIDESCREEN** Yes
- ☒ **XBOX LIVE** No
- ☒ **WEBLINK** www.infogrames.co.uk
- ☒ **RELEASE DATE** Out Now



Nope, sorry mate, the only 'Conner' here is Infogrames. Nice bike though. And so the disappointment begins...

Dawn Of Fate is a game that 'alludes' to one of the greatest James Cameron films ever – a classic piece of Eighties sci-fi artistry that redefined the term 'cold-blooded killer' and introduced us all to a certain strain of Austrian Oak. Unfortunately, although the game takes place in the same universe, the repetitive gameplay is more than a little wooden too.

It's 2027 and you, as Kyle Reese, are locked in cyborg warfare with that virtual pussy, Skynet. Unfortunately, what this confrontation of potentially epic proportions boils down to is you mowing down waves of T-800s and solving what amount to pre-school puzzles.

'What no suspense?' you ponder. Nope, and there's no time-travel-disbelieving ex-waitresses administering 'good field dressings' or impromptu chases in redneck pick-ups either. Dawn Of Fate is set firmly in an environment of the future, reminiscent of the flashbacks from the first movie, but ultimately failing to conjure genuine feelings of nostalgia.

The main complaint, and one that may well also get Cameron's goat, would be the illogical camera which totally changes position without warning and laughs when you end up running into brick walls. What's more, the first level is broken by so many unnecessary cut-scenes it's as if there's an overly pernickety director standing behind you with a clapperboard.

Blasting fans may find intermittent enjoyment, but it lacks the kind of quality touches we expected. In an era where gamers are spoilt for quality FPS/adventure games this stands out purely because of the license and is worth a rental only. **STU**

DEVELOPER HISTORY

☒ Some sloppy graphics aside, *MX Rider* remains one of the most subtly addictive racers on the PS2. Mud splats, interactive crowds and hugely responsive controls means that this title really deserved more credit than it achieved.



MX RIDER

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES.net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

VERDICT

TERMINATOR: DAWN OF FATE

SECOND OPINION

☒ If time travel becomes possible sometime in the future then someone should go back and destroy the computer system that spawned *Terminator: Dawn Of Fate*. If ever a game managed to simultaneously frustrate and disappoint so much then this is it. With a brilliant license at its disposal *Terminator* is a linear blast-'em-up with no subtlety and a camera that will have you howling at the screen within five minutes. Little wonder then that we received review code after this pitiless beast had hit the shelves. Coming to second hand stores near you soon...

DAN

ALTERNATIVELY

MAX PAYNE
Take2
☒ A little too easy, but a truly engaging story line.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Set in an apocalyptic, futuristic environment indicative of the flashbacks from the films, there are well-versed atmospherics at play here.

SOUNDS
In a game that fails to echo the intensity of the original film the sounds are surprisingly adept and well worth turning the volume up for.

GAMEPLAY
Hugely linear with a minimal amount of variety. Lock-on to killing machine, fire at it, watch it burn. And as for that camera...

LONG TERM
Varying difficulties give you the chance to replay and test how good you really are. By no means a real 'stayer' though.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Plenty of action	⊖ Underused license
⊕ Big levels	⊖ Repetitive
⊕ Big sounds	⊖ Bare bones action
	⊖ That f***ing camera

Overall

A game that, whilst not an utter turkey, really disappoints because of the masterful license at its whim. No doubt it feels no remorse though.

5 OUT OF TEN



1 SUPER TROOPER
☒ Follow the arrow, find the enemy, lock onto them and then decide which of your special powers you are going to use to finish them off. Here the laser vision is the weapon of choice.

XBM INFO
☒ Fans of the DC comic will be pleased to see some of Superman's most infamous enemies, including Bizarro, Metallo, Cyborg, Mongul and his arch nemesis – Lex Luthor.





INFORMATION

- ☒ **PUBLISHER** Infogrames
- ☒ **DEVELOPER** Circus Freak Studios
- ☒ **GENRE** Action/Adventure
- ☒ **PRICE** £39.99
- ☒ **PLAYERS** 1
- ☒ **DOLBY 5.1** No
- ☒ **WIDESCREEN** No
- ☒ **XBOX LIVE** No
- ☒ **WEBLINK** us.infogrames.com/superman_themanofsteel
- ☒ **RELEASE DATE** Out Now



DEVELOPER HISTORY

☒ Circus Freak Studios doesn't have a huge number of titles under its belt. While recently working on a number of *Test Drive* titles, its first foray into the game world was *Looney Tunes Racing*.



LOONEY TUNES RACING

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES .net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

SUPERMAN: THE MAN OF STEEL

IS IT TURGID? IS IT PLAIN? AFRAID SO, SUPERMAN...

It seems that Infogrames has a bit of a thing for the Man of Steel. Maybe it's the tight-fitting outfit. Possibly the immaculately coiffured hair. But hot on the tail of *Superman: The Shadow of Apokolips* on PS2 and GBC arrives another game featuring the same man in tights – *Superman: The Man of Steel*. However, as you may have gathered from the screenshots, this title is far more faithful to its DC Comic origins rather than the recent animated series. Which is good news in anyone's book.

Unfortunately, despite help and support from DC comics, *The Man of Steel* falls into the same trap as its cartoon counterpart – it's all show and no go. Even though it looks superb and Metropolis has never been replicated so beautifully, you'll never become immersed in the gameplay. When most tasks simply involve following a direction marker, targeting the enemy and then using one of your super powers (freeze breath, laser vision or a hearty punch) to dispatch them, there is little to encourage you to play more. Especially if you take into account the awkward control system and dreadful voice-overs. Even the horrendously average *Spider-Man: The Movie* comes across as more rewarding. Overly linear games are unlikely to ever appeal to gamers, and it's about time that developers cottoned on to the fact.

Maybe super heroes are better suited to paper and the big screen than to the black and green box. A dreadfully wasted opportunity – especially when it looks so good. **SHAUN**

VERDICT

XBOX

SUPERMAN: THE MAN OF STEEL

SECOND OPINION

☒ There is little doubt that *Superman* is something of a visual achievement. The cityscapes and locations look great, but scratch beneath the surface of the sumptuous graphics and the gameplay is found severely wanting. The controls are awkward and make combat a pain in the ass, the voice-overs provoke tedium quickly and you soon realise that it ain't what it should be. No doubt the release of *Superman V* on the big screen will bring with it a slurry of videogame releases, let's hope that they improve on the dynamics of this title.

DAN

ALTERNATIVELY

HITMAN 2
Eidos

☒ Can't fly. Has no super powers. But 47 can kick Superman's ass from here to Sicily.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Looks sumptuous, smooth and immensely detailed. Well, the game needs something going for it...

SOUNDS
Awful voice-overs. Superman makes an annoying 'ow' sound every time he is hit – so much that you'll want him to die.

GAMEPLAY
Amusing for a short while, but then dreadfully repetitive, albeit for different environments.

LONG TERM
A younger audience may find a greater long-term appeal than the hard-core gamer.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Looks awesome	⊖ Crap voice-overs
⊕ Frame rate rarely drops	⊖ Repetitive gameplay
	⊖ Awkward controls
	⊖ Far too linear

Overall

Another wasted comic book license. Developers: Stop going for the obvious solution and you'll be onto a winner!

5 OUT OF TEN

- 3D ACTION SHOOTER WITH INCREDIBLE CEL SHADED GRAPHICS.
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- TRANSFORM FROM MECHA, OR GUARDIAN TO A JET FIGHTER AT ANYTIME.
- TWO PLAYER SPLIT SCREEN ACTION.



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THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

Once you get in the opposition's half of the court you are up against a clock. Fail to get a shot in and you'll surrender possession to the opposition – so get a move on matey!

XBM INFO

Inside Drive features more than 1000 animations on player models, with enhanced skin textures, hundreds of individually modelled heads and custom body types for each and every player. Great!



MY CAMERA NEVER LIES: A number of camera angles are available to choose from.



VERY TIDY: The players and locations look good, as they did in the previous version.

YOU STILL HAVE A GAME THAT SITS SOMEWHERE BETWEEN SIM AND ARCADE

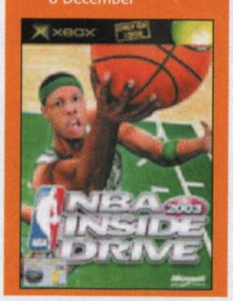


NBA INSIDE DRIVE 2003

SLIGHT UPDATE ON THE WAY...

INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** Microsoft Game Studios
- **DEVELOPER** High Voltage Software / Microsoft
- **GENRE** Sports
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **PLAYERS** 1-4
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** Yes
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.xbox.com/nbainsidedrive2003
- **RELEASE DATE** 6 December



It's over six months since the previous version of *Drive* hit the shelves – so an update was just what the doctor ordered, right? If you're a fan of the last game then there's no reason that won't enjoy this: it's basically the same.

Drive 2003 has a few additions to its former incarnation, the newly added Dynasty mode being the main one. As the name suggests you build up a dynasty by virtue of a fantasy draft option. You also get the chance to create players by accumulating points during play by achieving certain goals, ten rebounds in a game for example. These points can be used to enhance your team. This should certainly add longevity and is the big plus point over the last version.

Aside from the aforementioned addition little has changed, you still have a game that sits somewhere between sim and arcade. The gameplay is good without being great and the overall presentation of *Inside Drive 2003* is tidy enough. Graphically we have few qualms – player models are well done and actually resemble their real life counterparts, the stadiums are fine but the crowds are lifeless. The commentary is superb and adds a lot to the atmosphere of a basketball game.

Drive 2003 is a slight update of a decent game but with other similar titles making significant additions to their gameplay it's in danger of stagnating. However, *Inside Drive 2003* remains an enjoyable title in both single and multiplayer and is worth a couple of days rental at the very least. **DAN**

DEVELOPER HISTORY

It doesn't seem like all that long that ago that we had this one in for review (it was only just over half a year ago to be precise). *Inside Drive 2002* was a decent enough basketball sim but it was found wanting overall and lacked any real sparkle.



NBA INSIDE DRIVE 2002

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES .net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

VERDICT

XBOX

NBA INSIDE DRIVE 2003

SECOND OPINION

Ah, it seems that Microsoft is going the way of EA. Year after year of roster updates and little else. This 2003 edition is almost indistinguishable from the 2002 version and for that we boo you, Microsoft. In it's own right *NBA Inside Drive 2003* is a decent game and especially fun with two humans against the computer. But if you own the last game there is very little reason to get this. Let's hope Xbox Live and its promise to update sports game rosters automatically comes to fruition. Then we can say goodbye to games like this.

NICK

ALTERNATIVELY

NBA LIVE 2003
EA

Another update of a sport that's not very popular on these shores.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
The player models are good but overall *Inside Drive 2003* just lacks that bit of polish that would make it truly outstanding.

SOUNDS
The commentary is excellent and accurate as it keeps pace with the game well. It's a shame the rest of the game isn't up to this standard.

GAMEPLAY
It's easy to get into and there are plenty of moves at your disposal. Default speed is a bit sluggish so crank it up to make it more enjoyable.

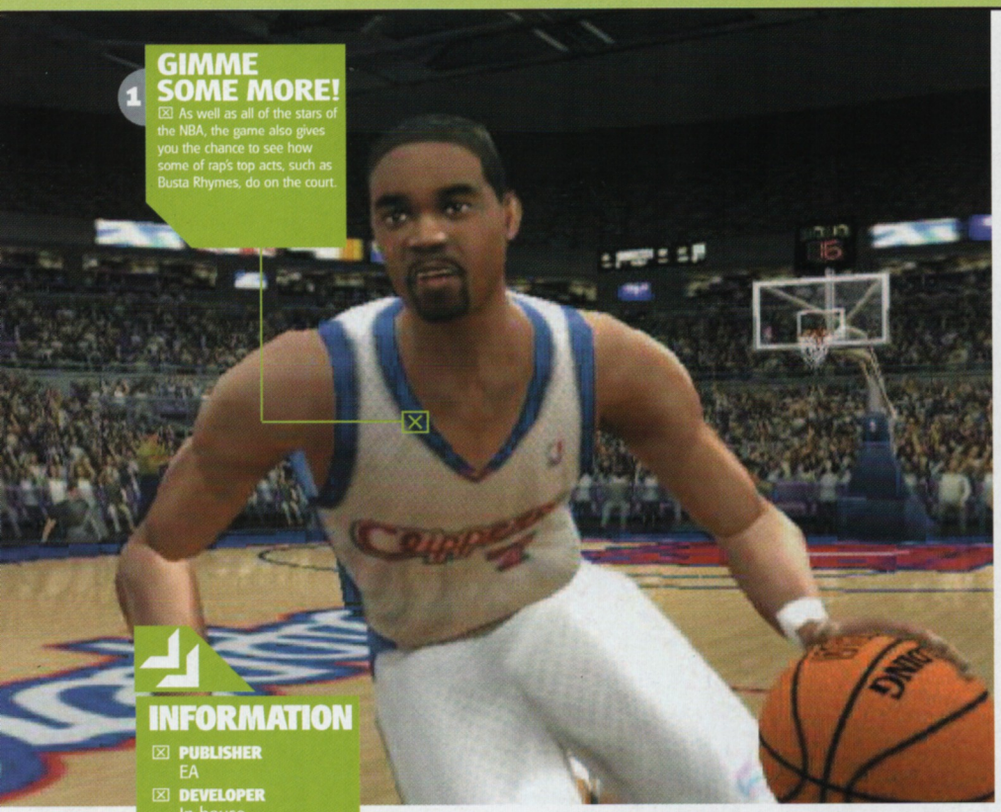
LONG TERM
The addition of the Dynasty mode adds significantly to the life of Drive 2003 – it should keep you busy for a fair old while.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
+ Great commentary	– Not much different to *2002*
+ Solid gameplay	– CPU teams rarely miss shots
+ Player models spot-on	– Crowd animations poor
+ Dynasty mode	

Overall

With the addition of the Dynasty mode *Drive 2003* is a solid basketball game that fans of the sport should enjoy.

7 OUT OF TEN



1 GIMME SOME MORE!
As well as all of the stars of the NBA, the game also gives you the chance to see how some of rap's top acts, such as Busta Rhymes, do on the court.

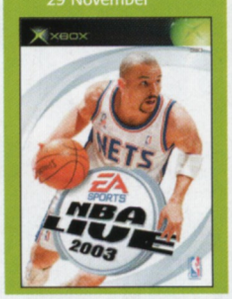






INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** EA
- **DEVELOPER** In-house
- **GENRE** Sports
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **PLAYERS** 1-4
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** No
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.easports.com
- **RELEASE DATE** 29 November



PUBLISHER HISTORY

If you're a fan of US sports, then you'll also want to pick up a copy of *Madden 2003*, EA's brilliant American football title. Easy to get into and totally addictive, *Madden*'s crown ain't slipping!



MADDEN 2003

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES.net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

NBA LIVE 2003

GET THOSE NON-MARKING PLIMSOLLS ON, IT'S TIME FOR A BIT O' B-BALL!

When the Xbox appeared, we may have expected all the games released to have the 'all singing, all dancing' brilliance of *Halo*, but the reality is that whatever console people buy, they will always want their favourite franchises to come along for the ride. Thus, whichever next-generation console you picked, you'll find plenty of EA Sports titles to choose from. It's easy to be cynical about the yearly updates of these games, but the games themselves remain as playable and addictive as ever.

NBA Live 2003 brings the authentic basketball experience onto the Xbox and has everything a fan of the sport could want. All of the NBA teams and players are here and you can enjoy anything from a single exhibition match to an entire season of games.

The visuals are excellent, with the power of the Xbox ensuring that all of the participants look eerily real and the spitting images of their real life counterparts. The action is incredibly fast and the style of the game means that often a spectator could mistake it for a televised game – it even includes TNT's Mike Fratello giving entertaining colour commentary throughout, alongside Marv Albert (commentator on American TV's NBA broadcasts) who is always on hand with play-by-play info. He'll also give you all the help you need to take on the pros in a handy series of tutorials.

If you're looking for a realistic and fun basketball game, then *NBA Live 2003* will not disappoint. This is definitely a three-pointer!

KENDALL

VERDICT

XBOX

NBA LIVE 2003

SECOND OPINION

There's not too much to pick with holes about with *NBA Live 2003* except for the fact that it's merely an updated version of *2002*. The gameplay is solid and extremely enjoyable once you get in to it and as ever with an EA title it is presented well. If you actually give a monkey's about having the right player with the right team then grab this title – if you're not so fussed and already own *2002* we wouldn't recommend the upgrade. Since the fundamentals of the sport are unlikely to change neither is the production line of basically updated rosters...

DAN

ALTERNATIVELY

NHL 2003
EA
Even more EA Sports action, this time on the ice.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
All of the players are well animated and look spookily like their real-life counterparts.

SOUNDS
As usual with EA sports titles, the action is complemented with a whole host of groovy tunes.

GAMEPLAY
It's basketball! As close to the real thing as you could hope for. Fast, furious and devilishly addictive too.

LONG TERM
There is plenty here to keep you coming back for more. At the very least until the 2004 edition arrives anyway!

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Real players	⊖ Not for arcade freaks
⊕ Authentic locations	⊖ Still 'just' basketball
⊕ Fast action	⊖ Very American
⊕ Great sonics	⊖ Why can't we kick it?

Overall

Decent basketball action for those looking for a more authentic sports title. As close as you can get to playing in the real NBA!

8 OUT OF TEN



INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** EA
- **DEVELOPER** Eurocom
- **GENRE** First-person shooter
- **PRICE** £44.99
- **PLAYERS** 1-4
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** Yes
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.ea.com
- **RELEASE DATE** 29 November

JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE

DEVELOPER HISTORY

The N64's *The World Is Not Enough* had its moments with slick graphics plus an addictive single-player game, and was met with all-round positive reviews.



THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET
TOTAL GAMES .net XBM
EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
WALLPAPER
INTERVIEW
MOVIES

WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU MR BOND...



CLASSY BIRD: No bond game would be complete without a bit of classy totty and *NightFire* does not disappoint. Bond even gets a few snogs in here and there.

Ever since *GoldenEye* it's been with feelings of trepidation that we've inserted subsequent *Bond* games into our consoles. We've always known that they weren't going to live up to that seminal classic, but there's always been that glint of hope. EA's latest offering, developed by the same team that brought us *The World Is Not Enough*, is not *GoldenEye* but there's plenty in the game for it to stand up and be counted as a genuinely class title.

The general formula hasn't changed greatly from *Agent Under Fire* – you assume the role of Bond and embark on a (mainly) first-person adventure in order to put paid to the evil schemes of a villain called Drake and his odious Phoenix Corporation. There are 11 missions on offer that take you to a number of different locations across the globe. The variety of locations coupled with different objectives in each one means that the proceedings are kept lively and entertaining throughout. First-person adventure levels are broken up by driving or shooting-while-being-driven levels, although it is obvious that

NIGHTFIRE IS A MASSIVE IMPROVEMENT OVER THE LACKLUSTRE 007 TITLES THAT HAVE PRECEDED IT



YOU'RE GOING DOWN: The sniper rifle is an essential part of the Bond armoury and gets rid of troublesome goons quick smart.



WATER BABIES: Driving sections aren't just land-based you know – there is a bit of sub-aqua fun to be had here too.



THE X FACTOR

Even vegetarians would enjoy *NightFire* as it is possible to take out enemies without actually killing them. Just sneak up and stick your weapon in their back...

XBM INFO

In one of the James Bond movies the man with the golden groin actually got married. In *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1969) Bond married Tracy de Vincenzo, who, rather predictably, got killed at the end.

FRAGGING HELL!

Plenty of multiplayer goodness...

There are some 13 different multiplayer modes on offer, each offering a number of different arenas to play in. While there is nothing particularly revolutionary about these it's good to have some degree of choice about how you can slaughter your mates. Of these modes six have to be unlocked by achieving specific goals during the single-player game.

the main first-person mode is where the game's real strengths lie.

What has changed from previous *Bond* outings is just how playable this game is – courtesy of a few clever additions. You *can* go wading through the levels in a gung ho fashion if you like but there are also rewards to be gained for using stealth; rewards like the unlocking of new multiplayer skins and modes for example. Rather than taking an enemy out why not sneak up behind and disarm them, grab their weapon and knock them out? You can do that in this game and using stealth will significantly add to the points and Bond Moves that you collect on each level. A third-person view is also used to good effect as you control Bond during action sequences such as going from building to building across a single wire.

Another welcome element is the fact that each of your weapons has a secondary function, a silencer that Bond can slip onto his pistol or a laser sighting for the assault rifle for example, and combined with the selection of gadgets at your disposal there is more than enough to keep you amused as you progress through the game.

NightFire is well paced and visually it's a crisp looking title – the actual likeness to Brosnan during cut-scenes and third-person action scenes has been extremely well realised. The various environments on offer look great and the character models are generally solid – something that wasn't so much the case in *Agent Under Fire*.

With *Bond* games we kind of know what we're in for before playing but *NightFire* is a massive improvement over the lacklustre *007* titles that have preceded it. Gone are the horrible loading times between just a couple of rooms and graphically it has taken great strides. Many will enjoy taking on the role of Britain's foremost secret agent again, and for entertainment value there's enough in *NightFire* to say that this is the best *Bond* outing since that rather good one back on the N64. **DAN**

VERDICT

JAMES BOND 007: NIGHTFIRE

SECOND OPINION

Ah, we *haven't* been expecting you, Mr Bond. Or that is a decent *Bond* game from EA. After the shambles that was *Agent Under Fire* (what was with those loading times anyway?) *NightFire* comes as a huge relief – it is what a good *Bond* game should be. Lots of suitably secret agent objectives, lots of variety (the opening sequence is excellent) and plenty of Bond girls. *NIghtFire* doesn't quite capture the spirit of *GoldenEye* but comes damn close.

NICK

ALTERNATIVELY

TIMESPLITTERS 2
Eidos

Brilliant multiplayer and single-player mode is very enjoyable too this time.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
The environments and character models look good and the likeness to Brosnan during cut-scenes and third-person scenes is excellent.

SOUNDS
If that *Bond* theme isn't enough to get you going then you'd better see a doctor. Voice samples can be a little repetitive at times however.

GAMEPLAY
Nice variety of objectives to fulfil during levels and the overall gameplay has been improved greatly since the last *Bond* outing.

LONGTERM
The game gets better the higher the difficulty you play it on. Playing through the single-player game well opens up parts of the multiplayer.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Graphically sharp	⊖ Driving sections not great
⊕ Stealth elements	⊖ Gadget/weapons get mixed up at times
⊕ Engaging gameplay	
⊕ Plenty of multiplayer	

Overall

Bond is getting back on form here, while there is still some way to go it's great to really enjoy a *007* title again.

8 OUT OF TEN



INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** Take Two
- **DEVELOPER** Crotean
- **GENRE** FPS
- **PRICE** £39.99
- **PLAYERS** 1-4
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** No
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.take2games.co.uk
- **RELEASE DATE** Out Now

SERIOUS SAM

FIRST-PERSON SHOOTERS JUST GOT A LOT MORE SHOOTING...

PUBLISHER HISTORY

The initial *Serious Sam* won numerous awards but the online update to the acclaimed original features more levels, guns, options and most surprisingly, an even higher enemy count.



SERIOUS SAM: SECOND ENCOUNTER

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES .net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES





The name of course, is ironic. There's nothing staid or sober about *Serious Sam* – there' s no tense skulking in the shadows, no stealthy shots to the back of someone's head, there's not even much use of sniper rifles. As a conversion of an ageing PC title, *Serious Sam* comes from a lineage when *Doom* was king of the hill, a time when body count was paramount and sniper rifles (in videogame terms) simply didn't exist.

Such retro beginnings though, don't necessarily condemn this straightforward shooter to the dustbin of history. Although unashamedly pilfering from id software's classic, *Serious Sam* adds to the tried and trusted gameplay of shoot, dodge and shoot with a little twist – extra shooting.

From the time you hit the ground (in fact, about .005 of a second later) it's obvious that this particular game is all about action. And with a back story so hackneyed – travel in time to ancient Egypt and kill a malicious evil that threatens the world – events thankfully stay at a pitch somewhere between frantic, frenzied and frenetic.

Playing this title is like one long deathmatch only the grunts you're up against are far from clever. In fact, the entirety of *Serious Sam* is uncomplicated, straightforward and unpretentious. From the plain and expansive levels to the character design and simplistic puzzles through to the *Duke Nukem*-style blunt humour, everything about this game shouts just one thing – 'kill'. That then is what makes this game such a laugh yet it ultimately proves to be both its biggest strength and its greatest drawback.

The upside of a game so mercilessly devoted to unsophisticated blood–letting is... well, exactly that. *Serious Sam* currently outdoes any other shooter out

SERIOUS SAM OUTDOES ANY OTHER SHOOTER IN TERMS OF THE SHEER AMOUNT OF STUFF TO MAIM



YOU'RE FIRED: No matter what your adversary they're all susceptible to a bit of gunishment.



BADA BING: Multiple kills increase your score, which, in turn, gets you extra lives.



THE X FACTOR

The weapons make Serious Sam a laugh to play. Look – here we've got a portable cannonball launcher!

YOU'VE GOT MAIL

Slay it with a letter...

Even though you're unlikely to get lost in *Serious Sam*'s linear levels you'll see a mail icon flash on screen every now and then which tells you what to do to progress. What the letters invariably tell you is that you've either got to kill everyone, flip a switch, or collect items to continue. The mail service also gives you information on adversaries and highlights their weaknesses. For most of them, they unsurprisingly seem to have a penchant for dying when shot.

there in terms of the sheer amount of stuff to maim and kill. Expect to blast winged creatures, blow charging bulls to bits and run terrified from headless things that sprint at you sporting bombs for hands! You should, however, expect to do so again, again and again,

Whilst the generous save points and ludicrously ample supplies of ammo spare this game from many of the irritations of the FPS genre, its pure arcade-style gameplay proves limited. Enemies will soon become over familiar and what initially seemed like a glut of weapons also has its limits.

In fact, *Serious Sam* was initially released as a budget PC title and the longer you spend playing the more obvious this becomes. Admittedly there is a lot of fun to be had gunning around with this game, but unlike the best first-person shooters out there, prolonged time spent with this title reveals no hidden nuances, techniques or surprises.

As ever the longevity of this game is added to by a very competent and enjoyable co–op option and an array of multiplayer modes. Yet, whilst no other title so comprehensively devotes itself to the provision of unfettered hi octane shooting, *TimeSplitters 2* and *Halo* are quite simply; much better games and more deserving of your £40. **BYRON**



UGLY BUGGER: Although most of the enemy modelling is not much to look at, they do make pretty colours when they blow up.



GOING HOME IN AN AMBULANCE: One of the less powerful weapons is this machine gun – it still does the job though.

XBM INFO

Serious Sam was spawned from that renowned cultural hotspot and nexus of cutting age software development – Croatia!

VERDICT

XBOX

SERIOUS SAM

SECOND OPINION

Disengage your brain, roll up your sleeves,get ready for some killing then you'll find that *Serious Sam* is an enjoyable game not a million miles away from something like *Duke Nukem*. There are plenty of levels, tons of enemies and some serious hardware upgrades on offer for your shooting pleasure. In single-player it's fun but it's more entertaining with a friend in co-op, especially if you switch the friendly fire setting on. The sound and visuals are solid and we liked the nutters who come screaming towards you – one for the gun nuts amongst you.

DAN

ALTERNATIVELY

UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP
Atari

Serious Sam might play like a deathmatch but this is the real thing however.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Very PC-like in form and character design but there are some very pleasing visual fireworks to be witnessed.

SOUNDS
Hardly an epic soundtrack but the sound effects are perfectly decent whilst the odd spoken quip from Sam might just make you laugh.

GAMEPLAY
As straightforward as stapling you finger to the trigger, and if you see anything move – then shoot in its direction. That's about it.

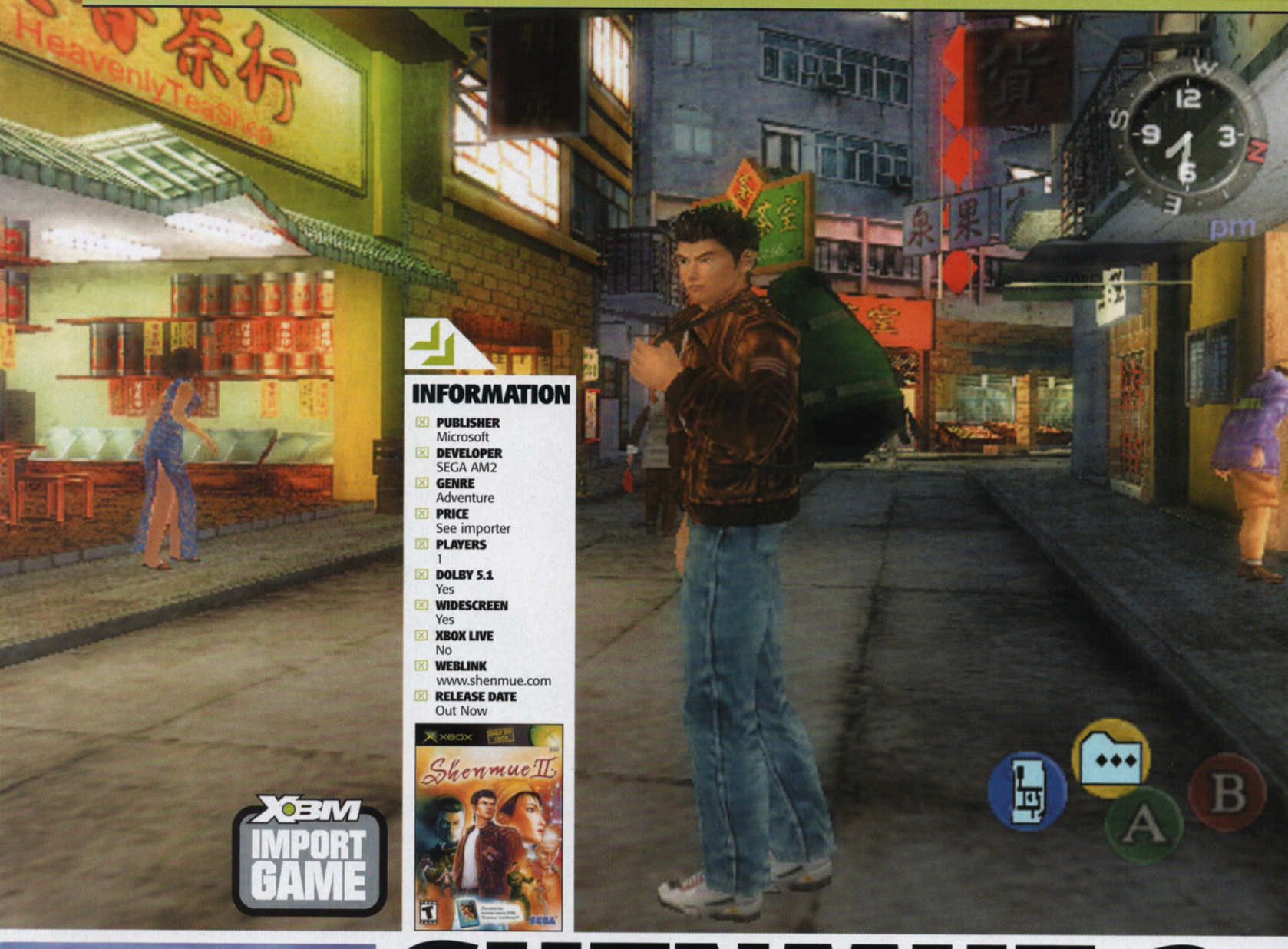
LONGTERM
Multiplayer and co-op modes add to the longevity whilst the instant gratification gameplay means you may dip in again from time to time.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ 36 levels	⊖ Repetitive gameplay
⊕ Eight players via link-up	⊖ Lack of enemy variety
⊕ Co-operative modes	⊖ Over familiar themes
⊕ Good multiplayer	⊖ No innovation whatsoever

Overall

Initially *Serious Sam* is a riotous and exceptionally fun blaster. Scratch the surface though and you'll find it quite shallow.

7 OUT OF TEN



INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** Microsoft
- **DEVELOPER** SEGA AM2
- **GENRE** Adventure
- **PRICE** See importer
- **PLAYERS** 1
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** Yes
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.shenmue.com
- **RELEASE DATE** Out Now

XBOX IMPORT GAME





SHENMUE 2

'FULL REACTIVE EYES ENTERTAINMENT' ON XBOX, FROM SEGA. EXCITED?

DEVELOPER HISTORY

Arguably the finest racing game ever. The original was just about perfect – and a perfect port of the full game is playable within *Shenmue 2*. The Best Freebie Ever™, surely.



OUT RUN

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

TOTAL GAMES.net XBM

- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
- WALLPAPER
- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

Picture the scene: You arrive in Hong Kong harbour with only a rucksack full of trinkets, an antique mirror, and the address of someone there who may or may not know the whereabouts of someone related to the guy who killed your father. This isn't like touching down in Spain with a suitcase full of summer clothes and Factor 20…

When *Shenmue* was released on SEGA's ill-fated Dreamcast system back in 1999, it was nothing short of phenomenal. It was an experience that was way ahead of its time, especially in technical terms. However, this didn't translate to huge commercial success. It was, in short, a flop. In 2001, the follow-up arrived on Dreamcast, picking up where *Chapter One* left off – with lead character Ryo Hazuki onboard a ferry headed for Hong Kong. Which is where Xbox gamers also pick up the story. Fortunately, a feature-length DVD entitled *Shenmue: The Movie*, covering in detail the main events from *Chapter One*, is included in order to initiate those as yet uninitiated.

Upon arriving in Hong Kong in early 1987, Ryo Hazuki, whom you control throughout Shenmue, has but one goal in mind: Ryo is out to avenge his father's murder. It's this strand that leads right through *Shenmue 2* and it's this same objective around which the game is based. But *Shenmue 2* isn't a

THIS IS THE DREAMCAST VERSION, BUT WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF SEVERAL MINOR FEATURES

ENJOY YOUR STAY

The enthralling story is one of the main selling points of Shenmue 2. Right from the moment you begin the game you get a feeling of depth...



1 You arrive in Hong Kong with nothing more than a photo, a mirror, lots of unanswered questions and a handful of cold hard currency. The latter of which is destined to perform a rather annoying vanishing trick!



2 Right off the boat you can start immersing yourself in everyday life as you walk into a small market area. It's here you can start to get to know the locals at the same time as asking for directions.



3 On the way out of the harbour you run into one of the main characters in the game known as Joy. Actually it's more like she runs into you – at high speed on a motorbike as well! This brief meeting is the start of a strong relationship.



4 After a day of adventuring you need to find a place to rest your head. There are quite a few hotels around and if you're crafty you can get away without paying!



THE X FACTOR

At night, Hong Kong lights up as it only can on Xbox. Check out those lighting effects.

XBM INFO

Shenmue Chapter One is available exclusively on SEGA's defunct Dreamcast console.

typical linear adventure. Unlike most other adventure games, which walk the player from start to finish, *Shenmue 2* merely hints at the direction which should be taken. And even then, that direction only need be followed immediately if you so desire – if you'd rather take some time out from the quest at hand, then there's nothing to stop you from doing so.

Soaking up the atmosphere and living the life of a stranger in Hong Kong, it's easy to lose yourself in the nonessential activities of *Shenmue 2*. Nonessential activities such as shopping; eating and drinking; working; playing and gambling. The great thing about all these seemingly trivial pursuits is that they each contribute something to the experience. Working – whether as a store attendant or a worker on the docks – is an engrossing and (when payday comes around) rewarding activity. Playing is even more enjoyable. *Shenmue 2*'s selection of mini-games includes complete and perfect ports of several arcade classics, specifically: *Out Run* (see Developer History), *Afterburner 2*, *Space Harrier* and *Hang On*. Even outside of Hong Kong's glittering game arcades, darts, arm wrestling, and other such wholesome pastimes can be engaged, plus pachinko-style games of chance can be played for currency. Excepting the epic quest that is resumed there, Ryo has much to see and do in Hong Kong and China...

Much time is to be spent exploring and engaging locals in conversation, as well as pursuing leads such as addresses and contacts. Each inhabitant of *Shenmue 2* is a unique being, a virtual



A BRIDGE TOO FAR: Your first port of call in the game is Wan Chai.



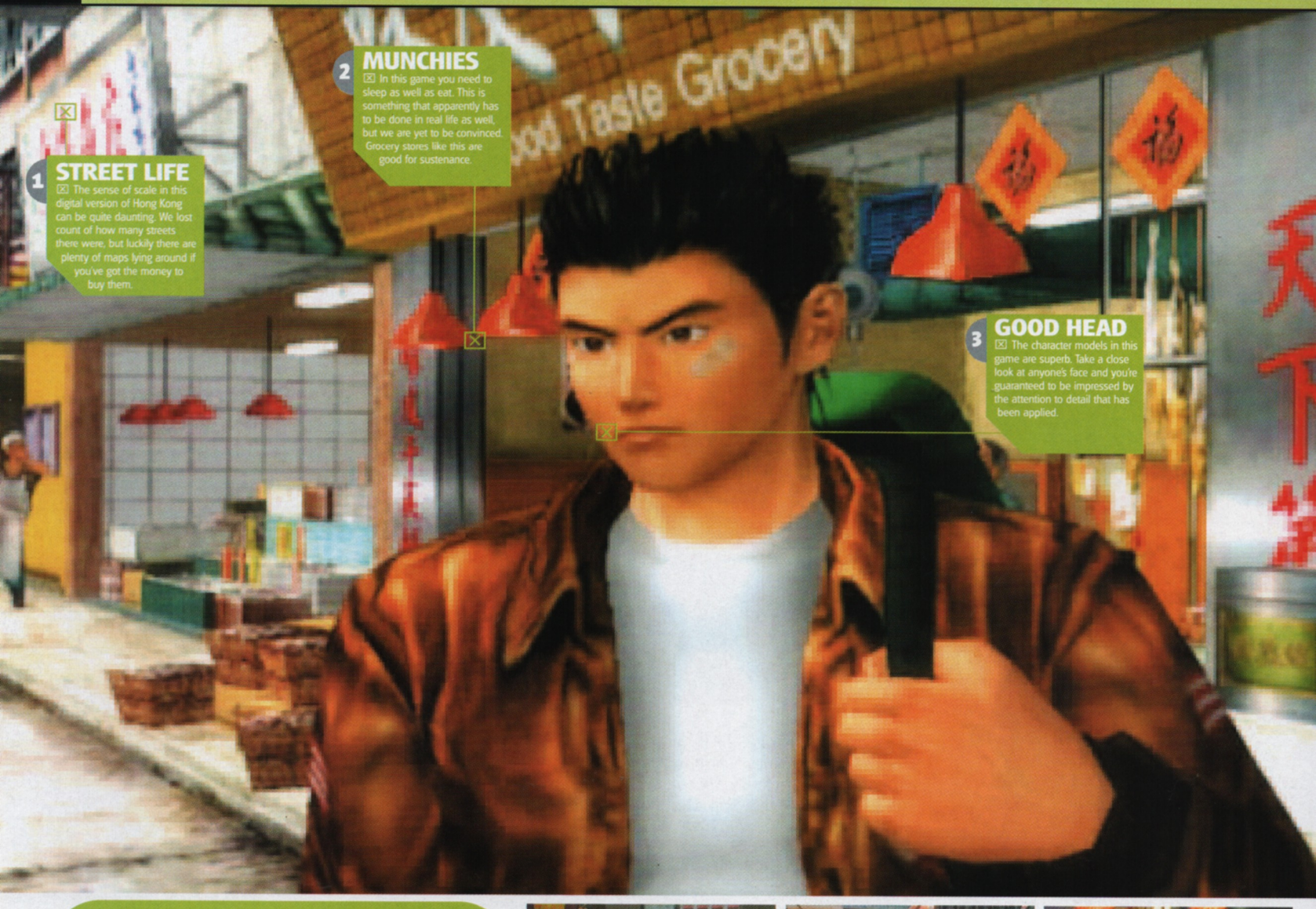
YOU TAKE VISA?: The city is huge. Most buildings and shops can be explored.

SOUNDS BAD

Why, oh why is Shenmue's audio so messed up?

Unless you resort to turning the speech off, which is an option that we are very grateful for, you'll have to endure American voice actors reading poorly from scripts that add nothing to the illusion of reality, and which in many ways are so bad as to detract from it. The Japanese versions of *Shenmue* and *Shenmue 2* feature voice actors who abound with enthusiasm. The Western releases are quite frankly well dodgy, dubbed versions. We feel like writing a letter to our local MP, but we're not sure it'd help much...

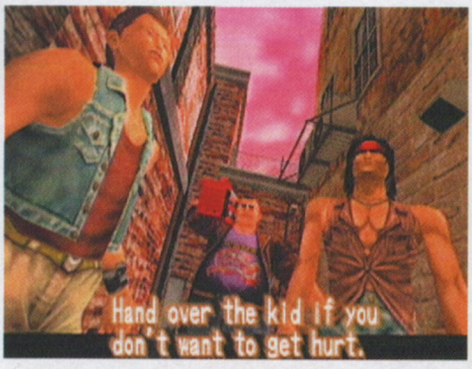




MUGGED BY A TODDLER

Ryo is outsmarted by an infant...

Early on in Ryo's quest, his bag (contents, wallet and all) is stolen from him after a little kid dupes him. The child claims that some thugs are after him, Ryo protects him, and, just at the right moment, the lad pinches Ryo's bag and legs it – with his accomplices, those same thugs. This leads into the first QTE and is a prime example of the surprises that *Shenmue 2* throws at you.









human who goes about his/her own life in a manner not dissimilar to that of Ryo himself. Of course, Ryo is (to the player's knowledge, at least) the only character to be entangled in a web of mystery and adventure. But still, the computer-controlled beings appear to have their own business to attend to, which gives *Shenmue 2*'s virtual Hong Kong the appearance of a living, breathing place. Throughout, *Shenmue 2* feels alive.

The main thrust of the adventure is nearly as varied as the mini-games and side-quests that branch off from it. Aside from the pedestrian side of things – the walking and the talking – there are at regular intervals action-heavy gameplay sequences. These take several forms. Firstly, there are so-called Quick Time Events. A QTE can occur without any prior notice, suddenly thrusting Ryo into a high-pace situation. Therein, joypad commands flash on-screen and you must respond appropriately and with sufficient speed in order to achieve a positive outcome for Ryo. Peppered as they are throughout Ryo's quest, Quick Time Events are welcome diversions from the walking pace at which much of the game moves. And then there are Free Battles. These are *Virtua Fighter*-style scraps that are usually fought against people who are, for whatever reason, opposed to your progress. Or against rowdy drunks. In all cases, Free Battles play like SEGA AM2's famous *Virtua Fighter* games – which is a good thing.

Superficially, *Shenmue 2* is a disappointment. The Dreamcast version squeezed every last drop out of the hardware, but this Xbox version doesn't come close to pushing Microsoft's

XBM INFO

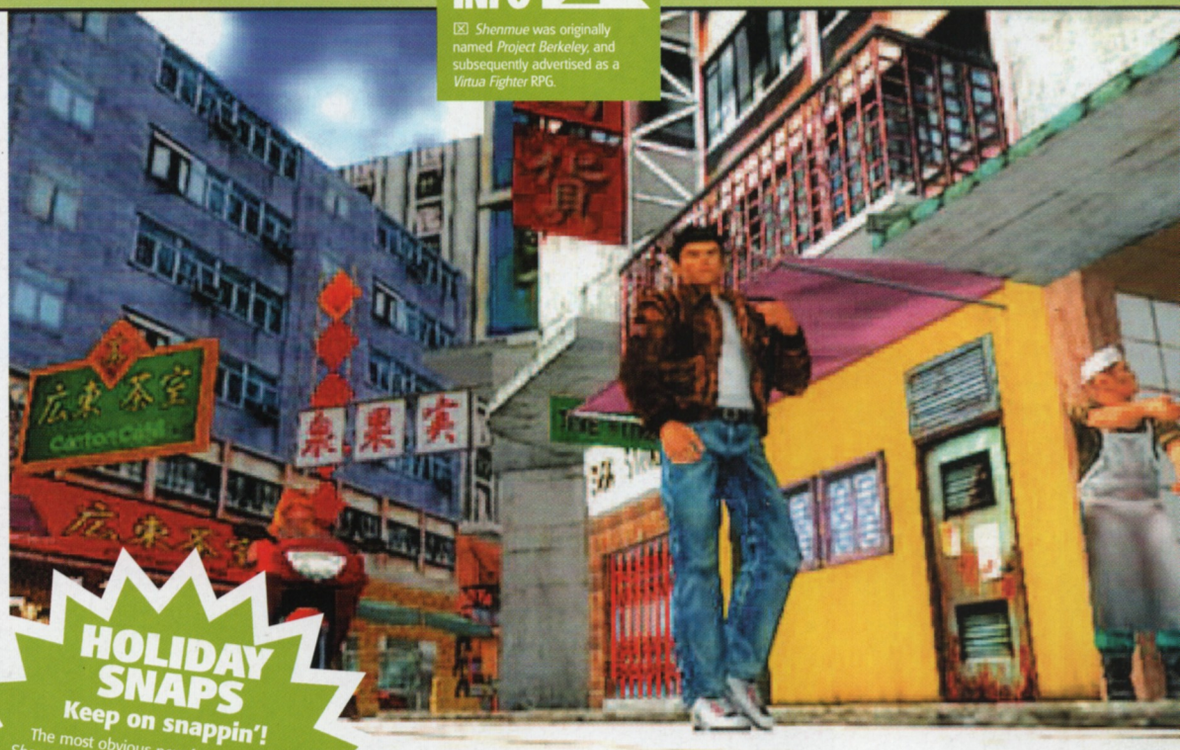
☒ *Shenmue* was originally named *Project Berkeley*, and subsequently advertised as a *Virtua Fighter* RPG.



YOU TALKIN' TO ME?: Unlike in the UK most are willing to help if you're in need.



BLIND DATE: Money is essential for survival but there are plenty of ways to obtain it.



HOLIDAY SNAPS

Keep on snappin'!

The most obvious new feature in Xbox *Shenmue 2* is Ryo's camera. With it you can take photos at any point in the game, of anything you see. What's more, it's equipped with four filters, enabling you to take some artsy shots if you are that way inclined. The snaps can be saved to the hard drive and viewed as and when you wish to peruse those happy memories of Hong Kong.







system. Basically, this is the Dreamcast version, but with the introduction of several minor features: night-time lighting effects similar to those seen in *Crazy Taxi 3*'s Las Vegas stage, Dolby 5.1 audio in cut-scenes, HDTV support, a camera with which Ryo can take holiday snapshots, and a generally improved frame rate. These are welcome additions, of course, but Xbox *Shenmue 2* is largely the same game as the *Shenmue 2* which Dreamcast owners will already have completed. And that's a shame, because if more effort had been expended so as to maximise this version's potential, we'd have a real stunner here. As it stands, we have merely a decent conversion of a great game.

There are some parts in *Shenmue 2* (and the original) which begin to grate soon after play commences. Every character Ryo meets can, and will, speak to him. Out loud. This is quite a feat, considering the number of people that populate the game and bearing in mind that they each have much to say. Sadly, though, the voice acting is of a very low standard. And the other major flaw, a cumbersome control system that makes it difficult even to walk around, hasn't been addressed in this conversion.

Weighing its imperfections against the strokes of genius evident in its design (which are plentiful), *Shenmue 2* comes out of the equation as a flawed masterpiece. As an adventure set in a realistic world, there are few games that come anywhere near to challenging *Shenmue 2*. Forgive it its quirks, take time to live the game, and you'll find that *Shenmue 2* is a rich, satisfying and memorable experience. **JONTI**

VERDICT

XBOX

SHENMUE 2

SECOND OPINION

☒ It's obvious from the outset that this is a good game. The depth of it all and the mysterious story practically screams 'play me'! And so play you do – which is when you realise what a complete and utter nightmare the control system is. There simply is no excuse for it being anywhere near as fiddly as it is. Few changes have been made since the original version but you'd think that the controls would've received some attention. Why SEGA, why? This is just lazy and ruins what would otherwise be a fantastic game.

MIKE

ALTERNATIVELY

SHENMUE
SEGA

☒ As the preceding chapter in what will become a saga, the Dreamcast original is well worth playing through.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Ported over from Dreamcast, and it shows. This is the pinnacle of DC software, just slightly improved with a smoother frame rate.

SOUNDS
The sweeping orchestral score is marred by some of the dodgiest dubbing this side of French *Columbo*.

GAMEPLAY
Awkward control whilst wandering but it compensates with sequences that blend fighting and action gameplay models to great effect.

LONG TERM
Like the original, this chapter absorbs the player. The adventure is huge; the potential for living within the game is even greater.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ A feast of gameplay styles	⊖ Muddy textures in places
⊕ A convincing virtual Hong Kong	⊖ Shockingly poor dubbing
⊕ A series unlike any other	⊖ Cumbersome control outside of action areas.
⊕ Sublime retro action included	

Overall

A slightly underwhelming port of what is undoubtedly a masterpiece.

8 OUT OF TEN



INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** SEGA
- **DEVELOPER** Wow Entertainment
- **GENRE** Shoot-'em up
- **PRICE** See importer
- **PLAYERS** 1–2
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** No
- **XBOX LIVE** No
- **WEBLINK** www.sega.com
- **RELEASE DATE** Out now (US)

THE HOUSE OF TH

SEGA CRASHES THROUGH YOUR SCREEN WITH A SHOOT-OUT EXTRAVAGANZA!

DEVELOPER HISTORY

Having already developed both of the previous *House Of The Dead* games, Wow Entertainment proved its gunmetal once again by bringing this fast paced vampire shooter to the PS2.



VAMPIRE NIGHT

The first ever light gun game on the Xbox is the third in SEGA's *The House Of The Dead* series, and even goes so far as to include *HOTD2* within it. You have to play all the way through Part 3 to open up Part 2, and when you do, you're eyes are opened to just how far graphics have come since the Dreamcast version was released in 2001. After the onslaught of putrefying, gormless corpses and fleet of foot electrical ninjas, the cumbersome, hollow-eyed and boxy undead who used to lumber towards you on the Dreamcast are horribly disappointing.

But before we look at the comparative crapness of the old game, shall we first revel in the high-speed, adrenalin and terror-fuelled excitement that is *The House Of The Dead 3*? Running at a rate which manages to put *Time Crisis* to shame, *HOTD3* is an accelerated, highly detailed, classic arcade shoot-'em-up which will keep you in a constant state of high alert, verging on panic, right through to the final frame.

Set in 2019, some 20 years since Agents Thomas Rogan and 'G' of the AMS organisation had to deal with the Curien Mansion Incident of the last game, *The House Of The Dead 3* is set in a vast factory/laboratory which is bursting at the seams with the flesh-eating undead. A team of former AMS agents, lead by Rogan, was sent in to deal with the situation, but have been lost for two weeks, leaving Rogan's daughter Lisa and his old partner 'G' to get into the facility and rescue him and his team.





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EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
WALLPAPER
INTERVIEW
MOVIES

XBM INFO

This instalment of the *The House Of The Dead* series is a huge step up from the last, processing at an astonishing 60 frames a second...

THE X FACTOR

PS2 owners will still be impressed by the state of the unlockable *HOTD2* graphics, but on Xbox only *HOTD3* looks fantastic.

RESCUE RANGER

Are you ready to be a hero?

When you play in two-player, there are certain points in the game where your partner, like the liability that they are, gets into a sticky situation and you have to bail them out. If you manage to shoot all the brain-eaters surrounding them, you get an extra life – but you'll need an aim like Clint Eastwood.



CLASSIC ARCADE SHOOT 'EM UP – KEEPS YOU IN A STATE OF HIGH ALERT VERGING ON PANIC



NOT SO PRETTY NOW: You can have the immense pleasure of shooting this fat zombie, nicknamed Charles, full of holes. With all that protective blubber, it takes a few shots to get rid of him.





RED TO GREEN: If you find the sight of gaping wounds spurting out sticky globs of thick red blood distasteful, you can turn it into infected rank green pus. It's your choice.

IE DEAD 3

After a brief intro shoot-out featuring Rogan and his partner, you're launched straight into an all-out explosion of gore in classic zombie shooter style: badly translated and implausible Japanese story lines add to the classic shoot-'em-up experience as you steam through the slugfest, pumping lead into everything that moves – even things that don't, which can earn you points and extra lives. You can choose your route through the floors and rooms of the facility, but it soon becomes clear that whichever way you go, you will encounter the same combatants – just in a different order.

The graphics and monsters are horrifically over the top and gory, with 19 different types of undead night crawlers coming for your brains, each with a different *modus operandi*: the lumberjacks come at you sharpening their blades on buzz saws, small, fast moving night creepers try to poke electrical currents into your skin, and hybrid plant/human zombies whip at you with extra long limbs. Although their attacking moves are different, your response is always: shoot the undead crap out of them and head for the exit.

Your shotgun is set on auto reload (which purists can turn off), and the two player is just about the most fun you can have with over the top pantomime horror since you got your girlfriend to dress up as Jill Valentine for a night. Alongside the all-out shoot out of the one or two player Story mode, there is a single-player Time Attack, which allows you to play through until your trigger finger isn't fast enough to keep within the time limit. Although it is fairly short and lacking somewhat in the way of secrets, *The House Of The Dead 3* is a riotous two-player romp through a festival of gore which fans of the genre would be fools to miss out on. **NERYS**

VERDICT

THE HOUSE OF THE DEAD 3

SECOND OPINION

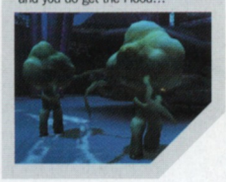
The only gripe that we'd have about *The House Of The Dead 3* is that it's all over too quick. It's a hugely enjoyable game either in one-player or to go through with a friend – the gameplay is, as you'd expect with SEGA, superb and visually it has come on in leaps and bounds. After unlocking *HOTD2* several members of the team found it hard to hide their disappointment at how dated it seemed in comparison to this crisp Xbox exclusive. This will entertain, but not for too long we're sorry to say.

DAN

ALTERNATIVELY

HALO
Microsoft

No light gun but plenty of gore and you do get the Flood...



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
This incredibly fast shoot-out is a delicious, squelching gore-fest, and the array of zombies is quite staggering.

SOUNDS
The shots and the groans of exploding zombies are great, although the script seems to have lost something in translation.

GAMEPLAY
Shoot! Just shoot as fast as you can! There are fewer secrets to unlock than previous outings though.

LONG TERM
Once you've defeated Curien, there isn't a huge amount to do, but the addictive adrenalin rush of playing will have you coming back for more.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Gore, guts and blood	⊖ *HOTD3* is over too soon
⊕ Frantically fast action	⊖ Difficulty settings samey
⊕ Great two-player mode	⊖ *HOTD2* looks very dated
⊕ The first light gun game	⊖ Not enough secrets

Overall

An exhilarating arcade shoot-'em up with classic action and wildly realistic graphics. The only letdown is that it's over too soon.

8 OUT OF TEN



INFORMATION

- **PUBLISHER** SEGA of America
- **DEVELOPER** ToeJam & Earl Productions
- **GENRE** Platformer
- **PRICE** See importer
- **PLAYERS** 1-2
- **DOLBY 5.1** Yes
- **WIDESCREEN** Yes
- **XBOX LIVE** Downloadable content
- **WEBLINK** www.tjande.com
- **RELEASE DATE** December

TEXTURES ARE CRISP AND THE FRAME RATE IS FLAWLESS

XBM IMPORT GAME





TOEJAM & EARL 3: MISSION TO EARTH

OLD SKOOL MEGADRIVE HIPSTERS ARE STAGING AN XBOX COMEBACK...

PUBLISHER HISTORY

A fun-but-limited adventure , with the inclusion of a two-player mode that split the screen when appropriate. One sequel came between the original and *Mission to Earth*. The original remains the most accomplished of all three.



TOE JAM & EARL

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- EXTRA SCREENSHOTS
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- INTERVIEW
- MOVIES

3D platformers, 3D platformers. So many 3D platformers. Well, here's another one to add to the pile. This one, though, is a little different – it has some heritage. Hip-hop heritage…

Out to 'funkify' planet Earth, the main characters in *ToeJam & Earl 3: Mission to Earth* – ToeJam, Earl and Latisha – are a funk-loving trio of adventurers intent on retrieving the 12 Sacred Albums of Funk. Once the vinyl hunt is established, it's off to Earth to take part in what is a fairly standard platform romp. Run around and collect items, battle bosses… you'll know what to expect right away. But does *Mission to Earth* have any tricks in store for platforming fans and ageing hipsters?

The most striking thing about the 16-bit original *ToeJam & Earl* game was its dynamic two-player mode. The same can be applied to *ToeJam & Earl 3*. Building on the two-player strengths of *ToeJam & Earl*, *Mission to Earth* incorporates the same screen-splitting system. Two can play simultaneously, but if they stray too far away from each other then what was a full screen will be halved horizontally to follow both characters. It works well and remains the distinguishing feature of a not particularly distinguished game.

Variety is not *ToeJam & Earl 3*'s forte. There are some 30 levels to explore, with boss battles staged regularly throughout the game. Furthermore, a

FUNK FU YOU

A brief cut-scene featuring the Soul Sisters introduces Mission to Earth's first level, Funk Fu You...



1 The 'To Do Checklist' shows what's required: simply convert all Earthlings and then make your way to the exit elevator.



2 Pick up everything you see. Cakes like these ones are particularly good for your character's chances of survival.



3 Converting these girls is a matter of hitting X in their direction. Disco balls appear above their heads and they are funked up.



4 These little rabbits are friendly folk, though there's little in the way of interaction to be had. They're just a pleasant part of the scenery.



4 Keys can be found all over and are essential to unlock more stages. There doesn't seem to be any pattern to their placement, however.

TWOS-UP

Double the fun (well, almost) by playing together!

With a second controller and a friend who enjoys average videogames, *ToeJam & Earl 3* becomes a slightly better game than it is by default. The screen splits when the distance between players makes a single-screen perspective impossible. And to avoid any arguments, the game distributes all items collected so that they are shared between you and your chum. The only downer is that the visuals, particularly the draw-distance, tend to suffer in split-screen.





THE X FACTOR

Talk with this dude to access freely downloadable levels and characters through Xbox Live.



random level generator becomes available later on, which serves up variations on the 30 main stages. There are even three new levels available for free download to Xbox Live players in the US. But this counts for nothing, really, since the core gameplay is simply dull. An occasional foray into the world of rhythm-action is about as innovative and exciting as it gets. There are plenty of power-ups, which of course count in *Mission to Earth*'s favour, but again, these don't affect the experience enough to make it top drawer entertainment. *ToeJam & Earl 3* is more of a punt down the Thames than a Jet Ski race in the Caribbean. It's really too tame to engender any enthusiasm in the player.

Mission to Earth is undoubtedly a good-looking game. Reflections seen in bodies of water are particularly impressive. Textures are crisp, the frame rate is flawless and there are some cool effects when power-ups are deployed. But while *ToeJam & Earl 3* looks good in all areas, it is astounding in none. Likewise, on the audio side of things, the music is indeed funky. Yet the tunes here aren't as catchy as the truly great platform music heard in *Super Mario 64*, for example. Speech within the game, though, is excellent – in three areas: what is said, how it is said, and the quality of the recording. Quite the opposite, then, of another high-profile SEGA release reviewed this issue. (See *Shenmue 2* review.)

The *ToeJam & Earl* series has always been about attitude and humour, ever since the duo began life on SEGA's MegaDrive console. *ToeJam & Earl 3* is no different. This time ToeJam and Earl (as well as new character Latisha, who



WET WET WET: The water effects and the reflections on the surface look superb.



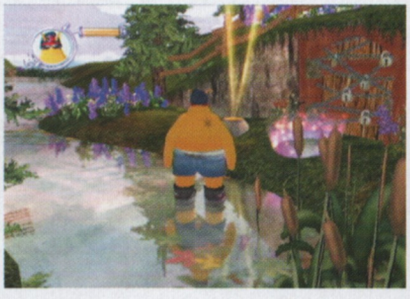
CHEER FOR THE LEADER: Never trust a smiling girl with pompoms.



MISSION TO MARS: The hapless trio travel around in this oversized ghetto blaster.



MESSAGE FROM GOD: Your task for each level is sung out buy these gospel divas.



ON THE LEVEL: Collect keys to open up new levels – how very original!



TRICK OR TREAT?

Threaten those Earthlings and you never know what you might receive...

Since TJ, E, and Latisha are from outer space, Earth's inhabitants apparently perceive you to be wearing fancy dress. Therefore, it's okay to knock and shout, "Trick or treat!" Depending on where you try this out, you could be given power-ups, food or dollars. Genius.



plays a 'cool sister' role that involves finger-wagging and aggravating side-to-side head movements) are given voiceovers and are rendered in impressive graphical detail. So thanks to the power of Xbox, the foundation has been laid so that the developer can put across what it always wanted to, but couldn't formerly because of hardware limitations. And that's exactly what ToeJam & Earl Productions has done. Largely through the use of cut-scenes and soundbites, *Mission to Earth* is a platform adventure that tries desperately to be funny. And to a certain extent it succeeds, raising a muted chuckle here and there. It is not laugh-out-loud funny, though, and there's no particularly intelligent humour. In fact, it's quite like a cartoon that might appear on MTV. Make of that what you will...

Ignoring the lame concept and patchy humour, and looking solely at the game that lies underneath, there's nothing particularly wrong with *ToeJam & Earl 3*. Okay, it's not groundbreaking. But then again, its gameplay is solid and the levels have been competently constructed. Ultimately, it's just stale. It will never send your pulse racing, and it's not clever enough to engage at a slow pace. Like the two previous games in the series, *Mission to Earth* is decidedly mediocre. Yawn, a'ight. **JONTI**

VERDICT

XBOX

TOEJAM & EARL 3: MISSION TO EARTH

SECOND OPINION

☒ From the outset *ToeJam and Earl* is a brilliant game to play. It looks nice enough, plays well, features some cool music and is guaranteed to make you smile once or twice. However, it is, at the end of the day, nothing more than an average platformer that soon gets a little bit repetitive. The inclusion of the split-screen two-player mode from the previous *ToeJam* games is the only reason you're likely to return to this after a few weeks of play. This is almost the perfect title to rent out for an evening or two if you can.

MIKE

ALTERNATIVELY

BLINX: THE TIME SWEEPER
Microsoft
☒ A flawed feline adventure that is nevertheless innovative and enjoyable.



XBM RATINGS

LOOKS
Crisp, detailed environments and smooth character animation. Nothing special, though.

SOUNDS
Surprisingly well-oiled voice acting, coupled with a consistently funky, if forgettable, soundtrack.

GAMEPLAY
Control is tight. The camera is easy to manage, which removes any potential frustration. But it's a bit of a tiresome plod ...

LONGTERM
An easy and short-lived game. Not even Xbox Live level downloads and randomised stages can save this tired release from the bargain bins.

Why we'd buy it	Why we'd leave it
⊕ Crisp visuals	⊖ Dull gameplay
⊕ Hip soundtrack	⊖ Generally unfunny humour
⊕ Fun in two-player	⊖ Short-lived experience
⊕ Tight control	⊖ Lack of imagination in design

Overall

ToeJam & Earl 3 is, for a short while, a fairly entertaining game. Yet it comprehensively fails to excite. Average stuff.

6 OUT OF TEN

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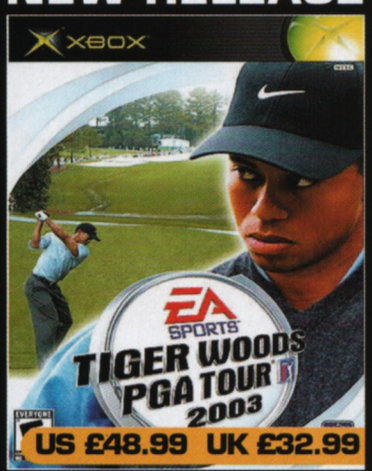
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NEW RELEASE



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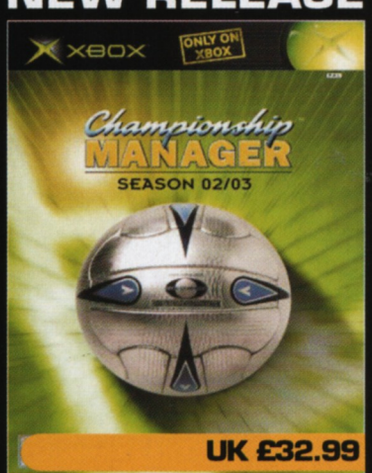
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THE UK'S PREMIER UNOFFICIAL MAGAZINE FOR XBOX GAMING

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BEST ADVENTURE

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

Fans of the series are not going to be disappointed by this release.



BEST SHOOT-'EM-UP

TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL

New standards in graphical excellence and brilliant stealthy gameplay.



BEST FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER

HALO: COMBAT EVOLVED

The first time we played this game we knew it was destined to be a classic.



A COMPLETE GUIDE TO ALL THE XBOX GAMES

GAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	WE SAID
007 Agent Under Fire	EA	7	5	"Whether you're a Bond fan or not you should stick with *Halo*."
2002 FIFA World Cup	EA	6	7	"A tidy enough package but has little to offer over the PS2 version."
Aggressive Inline	Acclaim	10	9	"Takes Tony Hawk outside and gives him ten of the best...trousers down."
All-Star Baseball 2003	Acclaim	7	6	"Slightly flawed but still fun for a niche market."
Amped: Freestyle Snowboarding	Microsoft	4	8	"Not just the best snowboarding game but a serious trendsetter."
Antz Racing	Empire Interactive	10	3	"There's no need to patronise the kids in this way!"
Arctic Thunder	Midway	5	4	"Flashy looking arcade blast ruined by lack of gameplay."
Azurik: Rise Of Perathia	Microsoft	6	3	"A bland, unimaginative and pointless game with no redeeming features."
Batman Vengeance	Ubi Soft	5	6	A decent, although linear, outing for the Caped Crusader."
Barbarian	Virgin	11	5	"Average graphics and repetitive gameplay will soon have you hacked off."
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance	Interplay	11	7	"Closer to an action game than an RPG, and it's quite enjoyable."
Big Mutha Truckers	Empire	13	8	"This attempts to do something different and succeeds! It's enjoyable, funny and a quirky treat."
BlackStone: Magic And Steel	Xicat	13	5	"We thought that this kind of game had died a long time ago. Apparently we were wrong."
Blade 2	Activision	12	5	"A game that gets very tiresome after just a few vampire executions."
Blinx The Timesweeper	Microsoft	13	7	"An innovative game which is detracted from by awkward camera angles and controls."
Blood Omen 2	Eidos	5	7	"Worth a play but certainly not a ground-breaking experience."
Blood Wake	Microsoft	4	4	"One of the poorer titles on the Xbox."
Bruce Lee	Vivendi	10	4	"A complete waste of a good license. A definite must-not-buy."
Buffy The Vampire Slayer	EA	9	9	"Bitten by the *Buffy* bug or not, Xbox owners should buy this."
Burnout	Acclaim	6	8	"Very short but oh so very sweet."
Cel Damage	EA Games	5	6	"There simply isn't enough to this to warrant a purchase."
Championship Manager	Eidos	4	9	"A totally absorbing, addictive, life-dominating game."
Chase	BAM! Entertainment	11	5	"A nice concept, let down by suspect visuals and unimaginative level design."
Circus Maximus	THQ	8	6	"A decent idea but this offers nothing new and is ultimately disappointing."
Colin McRae 3	Codemasters	13	9	"Without a doubt the finest racing game on the Xbox."
Commandos 2: Men Of Courage	Eidos	8	9	"Unbelievably hard-core and very addictive strategy game."
Conflict Desert Storm	SCi	10	8	"A stable enough game that is in need of a bit more polishing."
Crash	Rage	5	6	"Great arcade fun but it soon gets tiresome."
Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath Of Cortex	Universal	5	5	"Above average on the PS2 this doesn't offer new thrills on the Xbox."
Crazy Taxi 3	SEGA	10	7	"Fun to play but doesn't improve on the Dreamcast original."
Dark Summit	THQ	4	3	"To summit up – this is awful!"
Dave Mirra 2	Acclaim	5	8	"A quality extreme sports game gets the console it deserves."
David Beckham Soccer	Rage Software	7	5	"Simply put it's shockingly average."
Dead Or Alive 3	Microsoft	4	8	"Sits comfortably between *Tekken* and *Virtua Fighter*."
Deadly Skies	Konami	6	4	"A rather dull offering that will have you wanting to bail out."
Deathrow	Ubi Soft	12	3	"A valiant attempt' at introducing a new kind of sport."
Dynasty Warriors 3	THQ	13	4	"A no-brainer that does not appeal to the masses at all."
Eggo Mania	Kemco	12	4	"Decent idea, average execution. This is not a puzzle masterpiece."
Enclave	Swing!	9	8	"An absolute joy to both play and watch."
ESPN International Winter Sports	Konami	6	4	"Cash-grabbing version of a game that nobody was asking for."
Fellowship Of The Ring	Vivendi	13	5	"This disappointing effort is generally slow moving and dull with very little to recommend it."
F1 2002	EA	5	7	"Not without its flaws but this is a game that deserves pole position."
FILA World Tour Tennis	THQ	12	4	"Tennis is about skill and cunningly placed shots – not random play!"
Fuzion Frenzy	Microsoft	4	3	"Quantity doesn't always equal quality."
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy	Midway	7	2	"Avoid *Dark Legacy* at all costs. This is one of the laziest games on Xbox."
Genma Onimusha	Capcom	4	8	"Good but the Xbox really needs an original horror."
Gravity Games Bike: Street, Vert, Dirt	Midway	11	1	"We wouldn't wish this upon our worst enemy."
Gun Metal	Rage	7	8	"A fun game that is sure to please the no-brainer fans."
GunValkyrie	SEGA	6	7	"Warning this is for hard-core gamers only."
Halo: Combat Evolved	Microsoft	4	10	"Purchase of this game is obligatory – no questions asked!"
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Eidos	11	8	"If this game were a hit it would be a clean shot to the head."
Hunter: The Reckoning	Virgin Interactive	8	5	"Far too shallow to allow for any long-term replay value."
ISS2	Konami	6	8	"The best football game on Xbox until *Pro Evolution* arrives."
Jet Set Radio Future	Infogrames	4	9	"The instant pick up and play appeal that is expected from SEGA."
Kabuki Warriors	Crave	4	2	"Incredibly boring and utterly pointless."
Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer	Activision	11	7	"An enjoyable surfing game that fans of the sport are going to love."
Knockout Kings 2002	EA	5	7	"A decent boxing sim but it does lack any real punch."

GAME	PUBLISHER	ISSUE	SCORE	WE SAID
Legends Of Wrestling	Acclaim	8	3	"Someone put these wrinklies back before they keel over and die."
Loons: The Fight For Fame	Infogrames	11	5	"Loons is let down by a serious lack of depth. That's all folks!"
Lotus Challenge	Virgin	13	6	"An ambitious project and fans of driving games should a least give it a test run."
Mad Dash Racing	Eidos	4	4	"Average at best this really fails to thrill."
Madden 2003	EA	11	8	"Anyone who has played a Madden game before will know what to expect."
Marvel Vs Capcom 2	Capcom	13	6	"A great game but strictly only for the hard-core beat-'em-up fans."
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2	Activision	11	7	"If you're a casual extreme sports gamer then leave this one well alone."
Max Payne	Take2	4	8	"Too easy but a great story and well worth getting."
Medal Of Honor: Frontline	EA	13	7	"This was a great PS2 game. Now it's an above average Xbox game with a multiplayer added."
Metal Dungeon	Xicat	13	5	"Looks like there's more than a little rust in this *Metal Dungeon*."
Micro Machines	Infogrames	13	6	"Sadly nowhere near the addictive fun of the original game."
Mike Tyson Heavyweight Boxing	Codemasters	8	3	"A dire boxing simulation that packs almost no punch."
Moto GP: Ultimate Racing Technology	THQ	8	8	"The best bike racing game we've seen in a long time."
Myst III: Exile	Ubi Soft	12	7	"This game is the very definition of niche! Few gamers are likely to enjoy."
MX 2002	THQ	7	7	"A decent motorbike sim that lacks any real imagination."
NBA Inside Drive	Microsoft	6	7	"A decent enough sports sim that lacks any sparkle."
NBA Live 2002	EA	4	6	"The most sophisticated basketball game to date. Apparently!"
Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit 2	EA	12	4	"You'd have more fun trying to jumpstart that old Morris Minor in your parent's garage."
New Legends	THQ	7	6	"Average game that fails to offer any real thrills."
NFL Fever 2003	Microsoft	13	8	"Give yourself to it and *Fever 2003* will provide some class American Footy action."
NHL 2003	EA	11	7	"A stable game but nothing to offer those who already own *NHL 2002*."
NHL Hitz 20-02	Midway	4	8	"Obscenely violent and as cool as the ice you skate on!"
NHL Hitz 20-03	Midway	11	8	"A sports game update that is actually worth getting."
Nightcaster	Microsoft	5	6	"Good ideas swamped by bad execution leaves an average adventure."
Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee	Microsoft	4	8	"Unlike anything else. This is hilarious and fun to play."
Outlaw Golf	S&S	9	9	"A brilliant and addictive arcade golfing game."
Phantom Crash	Phantagram	13	8	"A fantastic mech shooter that has been overloaded with customisable options."
Prisoner Of War	Codemasters	9	7	"A good idea that doesn't gel together quite well enough."
Project Gotham Racing	Microsoft	4	9	"Makes other racing games look like a clapped out Skoda."
Quantum Redshift	Microsoft	12	7	"The kind of game that's great if your mate buys it."
RalliSport Challenge	Microsoft	4	8	"Can this be? A realistic racing game that's fun!"
Rally Fusion: Race Of Champions	Activision	13	7	"Far from inspiring but it does offer a decent blend of arcade control and realism."
RedCard Soccer	Midway	7	6	"A short-lived experience that will end up on your shelf after a week."
Robotech: Battlecry	TDK	13	7	"An attractive blaster that offers a thinner veil of gameplay than we'd have liked."
Rocky	Rage	12	8	"A license this big usually spells disaster but this game shows what is possible."
SEGA GT 2002	Infogrames	13	8	"A fun, detailed and somewhat romantic take on the career racer."
SEGA Soccer Slam	SEGA	12	8	"The hard-core footy fan may scowl but arcade fans will love it."
Shadow Of Memories	Konami	12	7	"A unique title worth checking out if you're after something different."
Shrek	TDK Interactive	5	5	"*Shrek* looks good but it's all on the surface – disappointing."
Silent Hill 2: Inner Fears	Konami	11	8	"A disturbing and eerie experience from beginning to end."
Simpsons Road Rage	EA	4	7	"A fun *Simpsons* game – for as long as it lasts."
Slam Tennis	Infogrames	9	6	"Flawed but still enjoyable tennis game."
Spider-Man	Activision	7	6	"Plenty of good ideas but feels unfinished."
Splashdown	Infogrames	10	8	"A great game ported across from PS2 with a few new bells and whistles"
Splinter Cell	Ubi Soft	13	10	"The cool factor goes way off the scale – James Bond never had it this good!"
SpyHunter	Midway	7	4	"A pointless release that makes the Xbox seem underpowered."
SSX Tricky	EA	7	7	"Fantastic PS2 snowboarding game that falls short on Xbox."
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2	Activision	13	6	"An invention free game with only the license to make it stand out from the likes of *Turok*."
Star Wars: Jedi Starfighter	Activision	8	6	"Too basic and unexciting to be any more than a five-minute wonder."
Star Wars: Obi-Wan	Activision	5	6	"Same story but a different *Star Wars* game – close but no cigar."
Star Wars: Starfighter	Activision	3	6	"An above average game with a great license."
Street Hoops	Activision	11	5	"Unsure of what it wants to be, all *Street Hoops* achieves is mediocrity."
Taz Wanted	Infogrames	11	5	"This isn't terrible but we expect more from a platform game given the competition."
Tennis Masters Series	Vivendi	13	5	"Slow, clumsy and unresponsive. Fans of the sport should look elsewhere."
Test Drive: Off Road Wide Open	Infogrames	5	6	"It may not be to everyone's taste but there's a lot to enjoy."
Test Drive: Overdrive	Atari	7	5	"Buy *Gotham*. Buy *Burnout*, Choose life."
Tetris Worlds	THQ	12	4	"This is a classic that has been done far too many times to make this more than pointless."
The Thing	Vivendi	11	7	"New twists on the survival horror genre but isn't exploited to its full potential."
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2003	EA	13	9	"It's as good as *Outlaw Golf* but with real courses and subtler gameplay. Brilliant."
TimeSplitters 2	Eidos	12	9	"A massive improvement over the original, *TS2* is a blast to play alone or with mates."
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2X	Activision	3	8	"Never to be released on these shores but no great shame."
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3	Activision	4	9	"Simply the greatest skating game ever made."
Tour de France	Konami	9	3	"A pointless and unimaginative game that makes housework seem appealing."
Toxic Grind	Microsoft	13	6	"We applaud the attempt to do something different, but the main game lacks thrills."
TransWorld Snowboarding	Atari	12	8	"A seriously intense arcade snowboarding experience that should not be missed."
TransWorld Surf	Atari	4	6	"The waves look cool but it doesn't inspire like it should."
Turok Evolution	Acclaim	11	5	"Eight-year-olds with dinosaur fixations may find something here."
Ty The Tasmanian Tiger	EA	13	5	"One of the most average, done-by-the-numbers platform games we've ever played."
UFC: Tapout	Ubi Soft	6	4	"Not bad but it's far too simple to hold any interest."
Wreckless	Activision	4	8	"Fantastic while it lasts but over far too quickly."
WTA Tennis	Konami	10	4	"A dire, drab and uninspired tennis title. Avoid at all costs."
WWE Raw	THQ	11	7	"Great fun, but lacking in many departments."

*GAMES REVIEWED THIS ISSUE DO NOT APPEAR IN THE DATABASE

BEST PLATFORMER

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BEST RACING

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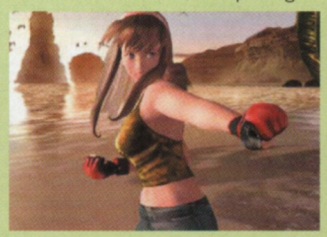
NEW



BEST BEAT-'EM-UP

DEAD OR ALIVE

The only proper beat-'em-up at the moment but we're not complaining.



BEST STRATEGY

COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE

If you're looking for a challenge then this is the game you need to buy.



BEST SPORTS

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003

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Alicia Keys - Fallin': 5730
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Anastacia - One Day In Your Life: 6400
Anastacia - Why'd You Lie To Me: 7689
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Korn - Thoughtless: 7548
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Kylie Minogue - Out Of My Head: 5379
Las Ketchup - Ketchup Song: 7799
Lasgo - Alone: 7525
Lasgo - Something: 6252
Leann Rimes - Life Goes On: 7796
Led Zeppelin - Stairway To Heaven: 1428
Libertines - Up The Bracket: 7797
Liberty X - Got To Have Love: 7686
Liberty X - Just A Little: 6588
Limp Bizkit - Rollin: 3670
Linkin Park - In The End: 5398
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LL Cool J - Luv U Better: 7804
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Marilyn Manson - Tainted Love: 6382
Mary J Blige - Family Affair: 5336
Mary J Blige - Rainy Dayz: 7526
Meatloaf - Bat Out Of Hell: 4521
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Metallica - Nothing Else Matters: 5141
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Pink - Get The Party Started: 6071
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Pink Floyd - Money: 4434
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Ronan Keating - When We Do: 7690
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Sean Paul - Gimme The Light: 7682
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Shakira - Whenever Wherever: 6251
Shy FX & T Power - Shake Ur Body: 6399
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So Solid Crew - 21 Seconds: 5077
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Sugababes - Round Round: 7530
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TV, MOVIE & OTHERS

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Airwolf: 4599
Angel: 4603
A-Team: 6454
Austin Powers: 1026
Bagpuss: 5847
Banana Splits: 5016
Bare Necessities: 4606
Beverly Hills Cop: 1432
Big Brother: 4613
Black Adder: 3586
Black Beauty: 5501
Bob The Builder: 3636
Bod: 5875
Bottom: 6449
Bright Side Of Life: 5753
Buffy: 1028
Captain Pugwash: 4620
Captain Scarlet: 6066
Cheers: 7535
Countdown: 6517
Dad's Army: 6518
Dambusters: 5788
Danger Mouse: 4625
Deliverance: 4457
Dirty Dancing: 1034
Domestos (Alex) Ad: 7800
Eastenders: 3632
Exorcist: 4460
Flintstones: 4628
Formula 1: 3592
Fraggle Rock: 3666
Friends: 4632
Godfather: 4461
Good, Bad & Ugly: 4465
Great Escape: 3594
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POLYPHONIC RINGTONES - NOKIA 3510 & 7210

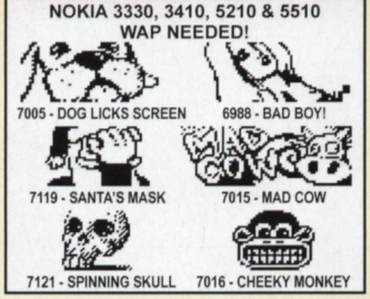
DJ Otzi - Hey Baby: 6973
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TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

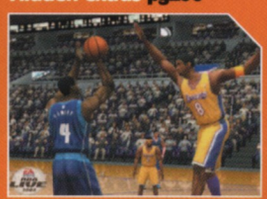
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CHEATS



SHENMUE 2
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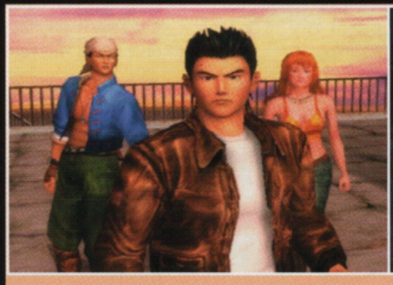
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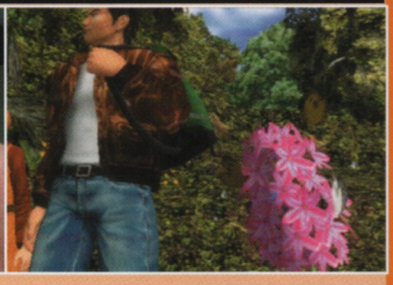
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SHENMUE 2



☒ **SHENMUE SIDE STORY**
Choose the Shots-viewer on the main screen. You'll now be able to arrange your photos by category, one of which is called 'Secret'. When you complete a page of this category, a comic book 'Shenmue Side Story' will then be unlocked. This becomes available by selecting the gift box in the corner.

☒ **SHENMUE ON SATURN VIDEO**
Beat the game and look at the Shenmue Collection's Arcade section. You can watch a short trailer showing *Shenmue* (and parts of *Shenmue II*) running on the SEGA Saturn before the game was moved to the Dreamcast.

☒ **THE BAD ENDING**
Just like *Shenmue*, *Shenmue 2* has a bad ending if you take too long to complete it. To get it in *Shenmue 2* you need to play until 31 June, 1987 in the game and then it will happen when Ryo goes to bed. The quickest way to do this is to play until the Zhangyu Barber's QTE and keep failing. Like this you can get to that particular date quickly.

☒ **FANGMEI'S BIRTHDAY EVENT**
One of the hidden events in *Shenmue 2* is a birthday celebration for Fangmei, the young girl at the Man Mo Temple:

1) First and foremost, talk to Fangmei every time you see her in Wise Men's Qr. Do this at every opportunity. When Xiuying is making you catch the leaves in order to get the Wulinshu book, stop and go to Pigeon Park to talk to Eileen, the martial artist who's training there.

2) When you're carrying the books to the temple library take them all before noon. You'll have to run to make it in time, and when you finish you should get a cut-scene with Fangmei bringing you some tea. For the next few days don't complete this book-carrying task or else you'll get the same scene again and it will mess up the sequence.

3) After you have the Wulinshu and have decoded the paper with Guixhang, wait until the next day and go to the Man Mo Bistro in Wise Men's Qr. You will see Eileen and Fangmei together, so go and talk to them. Now do the Chawan Sign at either the Man Mo Bistro or the Heavenly Tea House (Green Market Qr). You'll be instructed to go to the Come Over Guest House where you get a message to go to Man Mo Park (Wise Men's Qr). Go there – you will get into a battle and lose it. Another cut-scene with Fangmei will ensue.

4) After the scene that sees you meeting Zhang you will have a scene with Xiuying. The following day you'll have to take a detour through Lucky Charm Qr – go there and watch the cut-scene with Joy. Now return to the temple library for yet another scene. Proceed to the Man Mo Bistro and you'll have to do a couple of QTEs. The combination for the first one is ↓, ✕, and the second one is simply ▲.

5) Head to the antique shops by the gate between Wise Men's Qr and South Carmain Qr at about 2pm to find Eileen. She'll tell you about Fangmei's birthday. Make your way to the temple to find Fangmei and follow her to a shop in Lucky Charm Qr. After the scene talk to the shopkeeper.

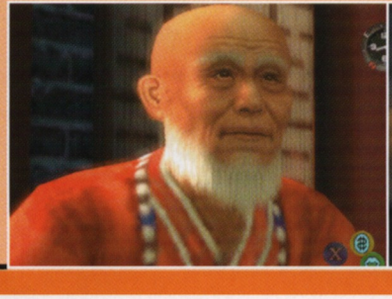
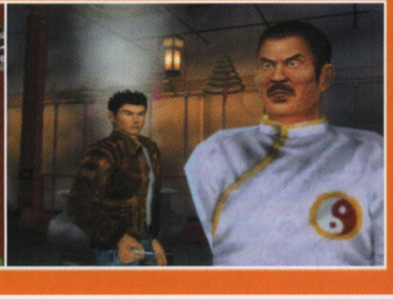
6) On 3 March go to Xiuying's apartment where another cut-scene will follow.

7) When you get to the time when you're about to leave Hong Kong and have to say goodbye to everyone, talk to Delin, Jianmin, Guixang, Master Zhoushan, and Zhangyu. Now head to Xuiying's apartment for a cut-scene. If you've done all this correctly you should see the birthday event when you leave Kowloon.

☒ **DUCK RACE EVENT**
1) As you're chasing Wong through the Lai Lai Eatery miss the QTE so you crash into the girl carrying the tray. When you have your bag and have been to the Come Over Guest House get some cash and go to the Lai Lai Eatery. Talk to the older lady owner, and then to the waitress whose tray you knocked over. Choose the option to compensate her and she'll give you the Bronze medal.

2) Go to the Pine Game Arcade in the Golden Qr and up on to the third floor. Beat Eileen in a fight and then Izumi. If you beat both of them you'll be awarded a Silver medal.

3) Head to the Tomato Mart in Golden Qr and talk to Izumi – she'll take you to a duck race. If you win go to the part where you catch the leaves with Xiuying. After a couple of leaves you should see a feather floating down – you need to catch it. When you've done this you'll get the option to catch a duck. Take it, head back to the Tomato Mart and enter the race. Keep racing it to improve its stats and when you win you'll get the Gold medal.





TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

☒ SECRET CREATED SKATERS

Enter the names below to create a pre-designed secret skater:

#$%@!
Aaron Skillman
Adam Lippman
Andrew Skates
Andy Marchal
Angus
Atiba Jefferson
Ben Scott Pye
Big Tex
Brian Jennings
Captain Liberty
Chauwa Steel
Chris Peacock
ConMan
Danaconda
Dave Stohl
DDT
DeadEndRoad
Fakes The Clown
Fritz
Gary Jesdanun
grjost
Henry Ji
Jason Uyeda
Jim Jagger
Joe Favazza
John Rosser
Jow
Kenzo
Kevin Mulhall
Kraken
Lindsey Hayes
Lisa G Davies
Little Man
Marilena Rixfor
Mat Hoffman
Matt Mcpherson
Maya's Daddy
Meek West
Mike Day
Mike Lashever
Mike Ward
Mr. Brad
Nolan Nelson
Parking Guy
Peasus
Pete Day
Pooper
Rick Thorne
Sik
Stacey D
Stacey Ytuarte
Stealing Is Bad
Team Chicken
Ted Barber
Todd Wahoske
Top Bloke
Wardcore
Zac ZiG Drake



NBA LIVE 2003

☒ PLAY AS BUSTA RHYMES

Go to the Create-a-player screen and enter **FLIPMODE** as a name. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear. Busta Rhymes will appear in the free agent pool. Select the 'Sign/Release Player' option to put him in your team.

☒ PLAY AS DJ CLUE

Go to the create-a-player screen and enter **MIXTAPES** as a name. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear. DJ Clue will appear in the Free Agent pool. Select the 'Sign/Release Player' option to put him in your team.

☒ PLAY AS GHETTO FABULOUS

Go to the create-a-player screen and enter **GHETTOFAB** as a name. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear. Ghetto Fabulous will appear in the Free Agent pool. Select the 'Sign/Release Player' option to put him in your team.

☒ PLAY AS HOT KARL

Go to the create-a-player screen and enter **CALIFORNIA** as a name. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear. Hot Karl will appear in the Free Agent pool. Select the 'Sign/Release Player' option to put him in your team.

☒ PLAY AS JUST BLAZE

Go to the create-a-player screen and enter **GOODBEATS** as a name. If you entered the code correctly, a message will appear. Just Blaze will appear in the Free Agent pool. Select the 'Sign/Release Player' option to put him in your team.

☒ EASY FOULS

When your opponent is backing you down, press Taking Charge to get the CPU to foul you.

☒ SLOWER SPEED

Change the game type to 'Arcade' and select the desired rules for the game. It has a much slower game speed and easier control.

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

☒ DODGE VIPER GTS

Get two million points to unlock the *NFS* edition of the Dodge Viper GTS.

☒ FERRARI F50

Lead a single race, full grid, advanced, for eight laps to unlock the *NFS* edition of the Ferrari F50.

☒ LAMBORGHINI DIABLO 6.0 VT

Get two and a half million points in order to unlock the *NFS* edition of the Lamborghini Diablo.

☒ LAMBORGHINI MURCIELAGO

Get three million points in order to unlock the *NFS* edition of the Lamborghini Murcielago.

☒ MCLAREN F1 LM

Win the World Championship in order to unlock the NFS edition of the McLaren F1 LM.

☒ EXTRA POINTS

If you see a police car, ram it to get him to chase you. If you manage to lose him you'll get extra points for a Hit-and-Run. Look out for dirt road shortcuts to lose the filth and also to get in front of other drivers.

If you choose to be the police in the Hot Pursuit mode you'll get 25,000 points each time you complete a mini-mission.




QUICK TIPS

CHECK OUT THESE HANDY HINTS...



☒ TY THE TASMANIAN TIGER

ENDING BONUS
Complete the game with all cogs, eggs, and opals collected for a 100 percent completion in order to unlock a bonus level and an extra FMV sequence after the ending credits.

ZOOMERANG
Collect ten golden cogs to unlock the Zoomerang.

MULTIRANG
Collect 20 golden cogs to unlock the Multirang.

INFRARANG
Collect 30 golden cogs to unlock the Infrarang.



☒ HOUSE OF THE DEAD 3

HOUSE OF THE DEAD 2
Beat Survival mode in order to unlock *The House Of The Dead 2*.



☒ NBA INSIDE DRIVE 2003

EASY THREE POINTERS
At the codes screen enter **THREE4ALL**

UNLIMITED CREATE A PLAYER POINTS
Go to the codes menu and enter **MOMONEY** (all caps). You'll be able to create a player and make him as good as you want.

INFORMATION

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

PUBLISHER	ACTIVISION
DEVELOPER	NEVERSOFT
GENRE	SPORTS
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	1-2

THERE IS A FINE LINE BETWEEN SKILL AND GREED. LEARN HOW TO REACH THE DIZZY HEIGHTS WITH OUR FULLY MAPPED GUIDE TO THE BEST SKATEBOARDING GAME EVER!

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4!

top tips

DON'T BE GREEDY



More often than not, you will only crash because you have tried to do too many tricks in one go. Aim for simple combos linked with manuals and also special moves linked with long grinds or flatland tricks. You will only need to bust huge scores on the later levels.

MANUALS ARE NECESSARY



If you want a huge score in *THPS4*, you must learn how to manual between ramps and rails. Press ↑ ↓ or ↓ ↑ to move into a manual, then use the balance meter to hold it to the next rail or ledge. Using this technique you'll soon build up a huge score.

SPECIAL MOVES



Each character has special moves to pull off once their meter has risen. New slots will be added for achieving certain goals and you can change the button combinations to suit your style. To make them easier assign combinations like ↑ ↓ or ← → then the trick button.

REVERT AND TRANSFER



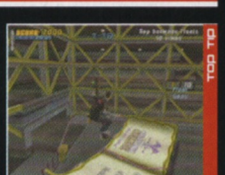
The R and L buttons are extremely useful in *THPS4* as it enables you to revert when landing tricks and also to spine transfer over gaps. This is a much more efficient technique than simply holding forwards and hoping that you clear the gap.

TRICK LINKS



Linking tricks is an easy way of building up huge combos without too much effort. Whilst grinding or manualling, try pressing Y, Y, X, X or B, B for extra tricks without having to jump and land safely. Keep an eye on your balance meter to ensure you don't crash.

ONE THING AT A TIME



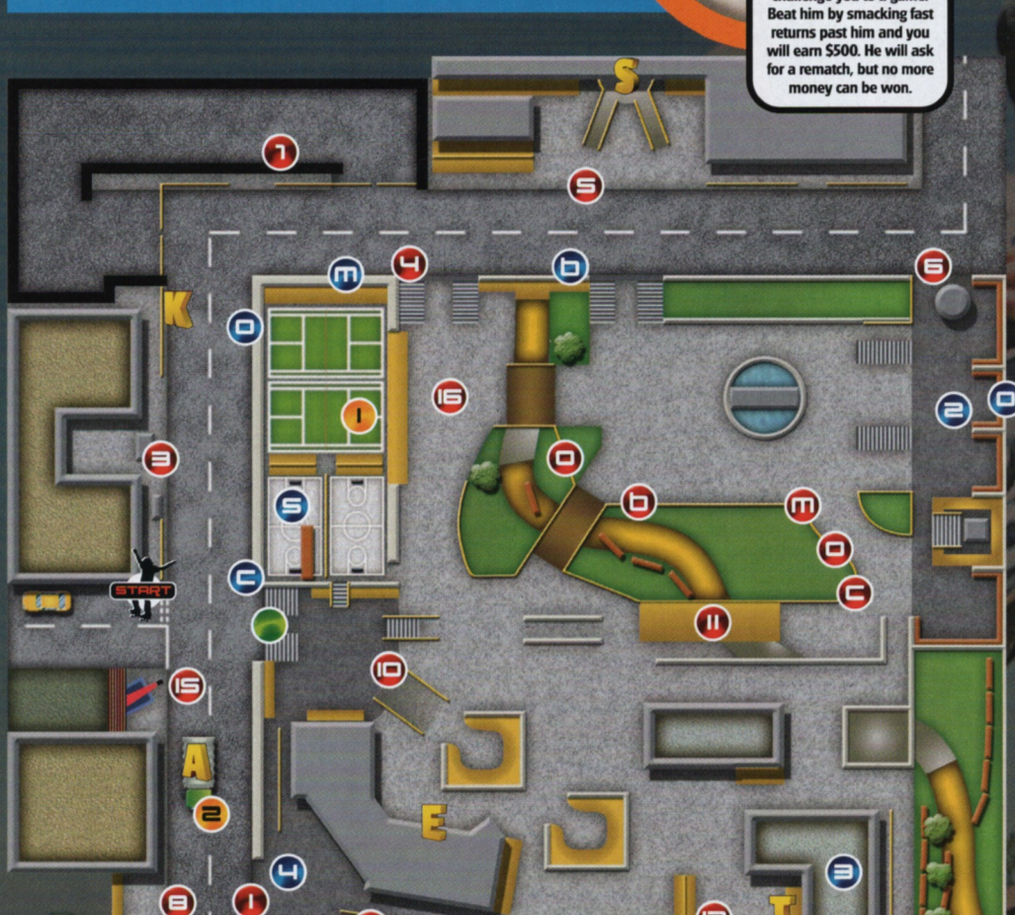
When aiming to complete the tasks, concentrate on one trick or goal at a time. Use small grinds to build up speed and then make sure you don't waste time by crashing all the time. Take it easy and you should find yourself cruising through the challenges.

college

Mini Games

1 ANYONE FOR TENNIS?

Speak to Bjorn on the tennis court and he will challenge you to a game. Beat him by smacking fast returns past him and you will earn $500. He will ask for a rematch, but no more money can be won.



PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

TONY HAWK

Once you have earned 90 Pro Points as any skater, you can return to this level and compete in the Pro Challenge. Tony Hawk has the record for clearing the largest transfer in skating history with a massive 18-foot gap. Complete the tricks across the gaps finishing with the tricky Indy 900 to earn a Tony Hawk video and unlock the Pro Challenges on every level.

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

JAMIE THOMAS

Jamie Thomas once managed to move between various locations and take ten photo shoots in 12 hours. For this challenge you must emulate this achievement by dashing around the level performing stunts on set ramps and rails. Complete all of the tricks as quickly as you can and you'll unlock a special Jamie Thomas video.

Mini Games

2 MONEY FOR TRASH

Jump into the back of the rubbish truck and you will start a special mini-game. Collect as much cash as possible by leaping in and out of the trailers until the time expires.

challenges

1 CITIZEN
You need to wallride to grind to knock down all of the banners.

2 BUDDY
Get the local frat boys. No tricks needed just knock into them!

3 SKATE RAT
Race Officer Tom against the clock to warn all of the skaters.

4 AYIBA JEFFERSON
Three simple spine transfer moves for the game's pro photo guy.

5 NEVERSOFT SKATER
Stay on the halfpipe and perform the tricks as they pop up.

6 PROFESSOR
Collect all of the SKATE letters. See the map if you're having trouble.

7 PROFESSOR
Test your balance and skitch the prof's car to stop the joyriders.

8 AYIBA JEFFERSON
Perform ten gap transfers over the floats in the parade.

9 BUDDY
Revert moves and rail balance is needed to knock down the jocks.

10 PRO SKATER
The very first high score to beat. An easy one at 40,000 points.

11 OLLIE THE BUM
Collect the COMBO letters by stringing a couple of grinds.

12 PRO SKATER
A bit tougher this time. Beat the pro score of 75,000 points.

13 INLINE SKATER
Test your luge skills and race between the posts to beat the time.

14 OLLIE THE BUM
Collect the scary pink elephants for Ollie in one long combo.

15 PRO SKATER
Score a medal in the competition. You only need to get third.

16 PRO SKATER
Build up your special bar and then show off the new special move.

1 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Get all four Lip Gaps

2 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Score 50,000 points on the benches, ledges and flagpole

3 PRO CHALLENGES
NEVERSOFT SKATER — Get Sick Score 250,000 on rooftop ramps

4 PRO CHALLENGES
OLLIE THE BUM — Collect COMBO letters in one move

5 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Beat three best combos

8 PRO POINTS REQUIRED TO UNLOCK

san francisco



PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

CHAD MUSKA



Music and skating are equally important to Chad Muska, and his challenge is to secure a recording contract. Skate around and land as many tricks to increase your beat meter and move up to the next level. When it is full you can secure a major deal and unlock a special Chad Muska Video.

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

KAREEM CAMPBELL

Kareem Campbell is known for his smooth skating style and was the first person ever to Kickflip the Gonz gap. In this challenge you must showcase these skills by performing flip tricks over the gaps. Complete all of the tricks as quickly as you can and you'll unlock a special Kareem Campbell Video.

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

ANDREW REYNOLDS

Andrew is the master of the gap and is constantly amazing his fellow professionals by clearing huge stairwells and pyramid ramps. Jump the gaps for the photo shoot and nail the tricks to complete your challenge. If you win you'll be rewarded with an Andrew Reynolds video.

challenges

1 PRO SKATER
Beat the three combos. If you mess up you have to start from scratch!

2 SKATER KID + STAT POINT
Collect the COMBO letters in one long combo string.

3 COMPETITION JUDGE
Get a medal in the local competition. Third or better needed.

4 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Perform flip tricks on the ledge as they appear on the screen.

5 BIKE MESSENGER + STAT POINT
Skate around to find the five missing packages for the messenger.

6 TOURIST + STAT POINT
Build up your special meter and perform a new special move.

7 PAINTERS
Save painter Bob from certain death by grinding the stone ball.

8 PRO SKATER
Beat the high score of 50,000 points using the entire level.

9 ATIBA JEFFERSON + STAT POINT
BS Boneless the three wooden signs around the pier waterfront.

10 DISTRESSED WIFE + STAT POINT
Distract the sea lions by grinding the tackle boxes and handrail.

11 ATIBA JEFFERSON
Race around the level to get the stolen camera and film for Atiba.

12 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Hold a manual over the entire length of the overhead walkway.

13 PAINTER BOB
Collect the letters SKATE. Check the map if you're having trouble.

14 BIKE MESSENGER
Change your stats for speed and race the bike messenger.

15 PRO SKATER
Beat the pro score by racking up 100,000 points in the time limit.

16 PRO SKATER
Manual the length of the coaster to prove your balancing skills.

1 PRO CHALLENGES
SKATER KID — Collect COMBO letters in one move

2 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Do the Spine Transfer

3 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Get sick score 300,000 points

4 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Manual the pad in both directions

5 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Grind the blockers off the ledges

16 PRO POINTS REQUIRED TO UNLOCK

alcatraz

Mini Games

1 STRIKE OUT

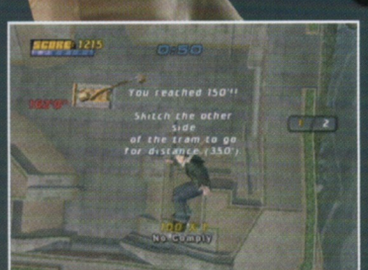
At the top of the island you will find a baseball diamond and hear some mysterious voices. Listen, and they'll challenge you to a game of baseball to earn some cash. Simply knock the balls over the wall ahead and you'll earn $25 for each home run strike up to a maximum of $500.

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

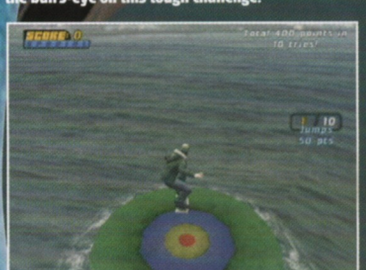
BAM MARGERA



Bam is a bit of a nutter when it comes to making movies and is well known for his appearances on *Jackass*. For this challenge you have to climb into a shopping trolley and then race down a course as fast as possible without crashing. Complete the three runs and pick up $1200 and unlock a special Bam Margera video.



Skitch a lift on the ranger's cart and you can get a huge air off these ramps in the competition area!



Timing your jump is important if you want to hit the bull's-eye on this tough challenge.

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

RUNE GLIFBERG



Rune developed his taste for skateboarding in the parks in Denmark. While most other skaters avoid riding pools, Rune seems to push them harder than anyone. Ride the pools and pull off the tricks as required and if you're lucky you can grab $1200 and unlock a Rune Glifberg video.

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

ELISSA STEAMER



Elissa is unsatisfied just being the greatest female skater in the world and is constantly looking to go one better than anybody else. Max your special bar and then grind down the stairs and up the ramp to the left of Atiba. Now leap over the wall to land on the planks and continue to pull off the moves as directed. Complete this tough challenge and you'll earn $1200 and unlock a special Elissa Steamer video.

challenges

1 RANGER RON + STAT POINT
Skitch onto the back of the ranger's cab to take the Alcatraz tour.

2 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Ride along by the rails near the start or grind them to dunk 30 tourists.

3 PRISONER + STAT POINT
Help the prisoner to escape by causing havoc to distract the guards.

4 THE WARDEN + STAT POINT
Collect all the COMBO letters in one move to beat this challenge.

5 ATIBA JEFFERSON + STAT POINT
Show off your revert tricks in the ruins. Three moves are needed.

6 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Get a high score of 55,000 points to beat this simple challenge.

7 PRO SKATER + NEW SPECIAL TRICK SLOT
Build up your special meter and pull a semi flip over the moving dozer.

8 THE WARDEN
Place third or better in the prison yard to get a medal in this competition.

9 RANGER RON
Follow Ron's instructions on-screen to complete the ramp challenge.

10 SECURITY GUARD
Collect all the keys to the cell block by grinding around the pool area.

11 PRO SKATER
Get your speed right to rack up 400 points on the bull's-eye out at sea.

12 PRO SKATER
This second score challenge requires you to get 100,000 points.

13 SECURITY GUARD
Once the cell block is open you can try this ghostly challenge.

14 TOURIST + STAT POINT
Collect all the SKATE letters. Check the map if you're getting lost.

15 PRO SKATER
A simple but stylish tech trick combo across a low roof gap.

16 PRISONER
Grind throughout the entire level to collect the supplies for the prisoner.

1 PRO CHALLENGES
ATIBA JEFFERSON — Perform six stunts for the camera

2 PRO CHALLENGES
THE WARDEN — Collect COMBO letters in one move

3 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Get Sick Score 400,000 points

4 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Manual the switchbacks

5 PRO CHALLENGES
SECURITY GUARD — Perform the mega-combo

kona

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

RODNEY MULLEN



Rodney Mullen is our favourite skater and he is well known for inventing a lot of the tricks that you can perform in the game. Complete all of the combo tricks in the street area of the park and grab $1200 plus a special Rodney Mullen video.

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

STEVE CABALLERO



Steve often tours with Pro BMX rider Rick Thorne and for this challenge you will have to perform a doubles routine with your buddy. Complete all of the tricks as quickly as you can either over or under your biking buddy and you'll pick up $1200 and unlock a special Steve Caballero video.

challenges

1 LOCAL SKATER + STAT POINT
Collect the letters SKATE scattered around the park.

2 MARTIN RAMOS + STAT POINT
Complete the tricky snake run slalom near the start three times.

3 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Beat the 60,000 point high score within the time limit.

4 RICK THOME + STAT POINT
Build up your special meter and transfer over the hut.

5 MRS RAMOS + STAT POINT
Collect the missing equipment. Check the map for the locations.

6 OLLIE THE MAGIC BUM
Impress the bums by making progressively harder combos.

7 LOCAL + STAT POINT
Collect all of the COMBO letters using linked moves.

8 PRO SKATER
Ollie over the magic bum five times. Check map for locations.

9 KONA BUM
Scare the birds off the high wire by holding a lip stall near them.

10 PRO SKATER
Beat the pro score 125,000 points within the time limit.

11 KONA WORKER + STAT POINT
Nail the tricks over the spine as they pop up on the screen.

12 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Get third or better in the street course competition.

13 KONA EMPLOYEE
Manual the full length of the tech box in the street three times.

14 PRO SKATER
After winning the street contest you can enter the vert contest.

15 MARTIN RAMOS
Score 50,000 points in one combo before the clock runs down.

16 MRS RAMOS
Follow the waivers around the park so that the kids can skate.

1 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — The king of Kona

2 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Rip the tombstone

3 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Get sick score 500,000 points

4 PRO CHALLENGES
LOCAL SKATER — Collect COMBO letters In one move

5 PRO CHALLENGES
MARTIN RAMOS — Hit all seven channel gaps

32 PRO POINTS REQUIRED TO UNLOCK

shipyard





PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

BUCKY LASEK



Bucky grew up near Baltimore and is known around the circuit for being fearless of any ramp, even if it is rusty or half broken. To complete this challenge you must nail some huge combos on a rusty old ramp. Land the big one and you'll collect $1200 and unlock a special Bucky Lasek video.

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

CUSTOM SKATER



Take the time to create yourself a skater, and you can take on this unique Pro Challenge. Hollywood is constantly on the look out for action performers and this could be your big break. Grind along the rails destroying all the green detonators and avoid the huge red bombs. Activate them all in one single combo and you'll pick up $1200 and unlock the Pro Bails video.



PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

ERIC KOSTON



Eric Koston is famous for inventing the Crooked Grind, but is still pushing in new directions grinding any rail or ledge. For this challenge you must grind along the high rails around the shipyard, maintaining your balance all the way to the end of each run. Complete the three runs and you'll be rewarded with $1200 and an Eric Koston video.



There is no mini-game as such on this level, but if you want some extra cash you'd better check inside all the bins. Someone has been dropping $100 bills into the rubbish and you can collect it by knocking all the bins over.

challenges

1 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Collect the red COMBO letters by linking one set of moves.

2 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Collect the blue COMBO letters by linking moves together.

3 SECURITY GUARD + STAT POINT
Outrun both the dogs and the clock to collect all of the bones.

4 DELIVERY GUY + STAT POINT
Perform one long grind to deliver lunch to all of the welding crew.

5 FOREMAN + STAT POINT
Mark all of the containers graffiti style by tricking on each one.

6 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Some massive spine transfers are required here to beat this task.

7 SECURITY GUARD + NEW SPECIAL TRICK SLOT
Collect all the SKATE letters. Check the map for locations.

8 SKATER KID
Beat the 65,000 point high score before the clock hits zero.

9 DOCKWORKER
Last minute adjustments are the key to cleaning the bell.

10 SKATER KID
Beat the pro score, which is a whopping 150,000 points

11 PRO SKATER
Varial kickflip the shack water gap to beat this challenge.

12 MECHANIC
Manual the full length of the train. Yes this includes the ramps!

13 FOREMAN
An epic grind combo is needed to collect all of the rivets.

14 DOCKWORKER + STAT POINT
Place third or better in this competition to win yourself a medal.

15 PRO SKATER
Build up your special and hold the lip trick between pools.

16 PRO SKATER
Perform tricks over the roof gap as they are called out.

1 PRO CHALLENGES — FOREMAN — Gap the suspended containers

2 PRO CHALLENGES — SKATER KID — Get sick score 600,000 points

3 PRO CHALLENGES — PRO SKATER — Collect COMBO letters in one move

4 PRO CHALLENGES — PRO SKATER — Rat race

5 PRO CHALLENGES — SKATER KID — Lip trick the crane

32 PRO POINTS REQUIRED TO UNLOCK

london

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

GEOFF ROWLEY



Geoff is well known for his Darkslide Grind and the fact that he is constantly leaping huge gaps before landing an awkward grind. For this challenge you must leap over the gaps and perform all the grinds, finishing with the famous Darkslide. Complete all the grinds and you can collect $1200 plus a special Geoff Rowley video.

Mini Games

PICK A SLAPPER

Under the bridge the local pimp is holding a bitch fight. Choose a slapper and if she wins, then you can grab $100 dollars as a prize. You can enter as many times as you like and win up to a maximum of $500.



challenges

1 AYIBA JEFFERSON
Bust a phatty over both of the fountains to show up the British.

2 BLOKE + STAT POINT
Collect all of the combo letters around the main central area.

3 LOCAL SKATER + STAT POINT
Land a cool 100,000 combo before the timer runs out.

4 HOOLIGAN
Race the coppers around the tricky street luge course. Twice!

5 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Tag five London buses by wallriding up the side of them.

6 COCKNEY + STAT POINT
Beat the simple high score of 75,000 points to impress the Cockney.

7 GINGER MAN + STAT POINT
Collect the letters SKATE. Check the map for locations.

8 COCKNEY
Beat the pro score of a whopping 175,000 points in the time.

9 LOCAL SKATER
Land the combo tricks as they pop up at the side of the screen.

10 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Learn the all important flatland skills by obeying instructions.

11 ELEPHANT LOVER
Do your bit for nature by destroying traps and saving an elephant.

12 COMPETITION JUDGE
Show off your newly learnt flatland skills by medalling this comp.

13 PRO SKATER
Learn some even more advanced snazzy flatland moves.

14 PRO SKATER + NEW SPECIAL TRICK SLOT
Get your special meter maxed and then ghetto tag the lights.

15 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Knock off all of the coppers' hats! Check the map for locations.

16 PRO SKATER
Skitch the cops and hold on as they cruise around London.

1 PRO CHALLENGES
HOOLIGAN — Get sick score 700,000 points

2 PRO CHALLENGES
PARKING ATTENDANT — Grind the American cars in one combo

3 PRO CHALLENGES
BLOKE — Collect COMBO letters in one move

4 PRO CHALLENGES
NEVERSOFT SKATER — Trick everything on the south bank

5 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Beat the six combo scores

48 PRO POINTS REQUIRED TO UNLOCK

ZOO

Mini Games

1 EGGS AWAY

Inside the aviary the birdman wants you to help him to collect the valuable eggs dropped by the birds on the perches. Quickly move left and right to catch all ten eggs and you can collect a $500 cash prize.





Mini Games

2 RHINO RUMBLE

Speak to the rhino keeper in the pen and he'll challenge you to make a wager. Choose which rhino will get knocked out in the battle and you can win $100 each time you guess correctly. Keep playing and you can win a maximum of $500.

PRO SPECIFIC CHALLENGE

BOB BURNQUIST



Bob Burnquist recently built a loop ramp in his backyard and then removed a section at the top leaving a gap in the middle. He skated this ramp several times making skateboarding history. For this challenge you must ride the loop performing the tricks as required, making sure you land safely on the other side of the loop. Nail all the stunts over the gap and you can grab $1200 and a special Bob Burnquist video.

challenges

1 DISGRUNTLED EMPLOYEE + STAT POINT
Scare the out of work actor in the koala suit by flipping over him.

2 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Beat the easy high score of just 80,000 points for an easy stat point.

3 ZOO WORKER + STAT POINT
Collect all of the SKATE letters in the time limit. Check the map.

4 PRO SKATER + STAT POINT
Make use of the ramps in the bird cage to hit all of these tricks.

5 HIPPO TRAINER + STAT POINT
Grind around the edge of the enclosure to feed the hungry hippos.

6 DISGRUNTLED EMPLOYEE
Skitch the elephant's tail and try not to be put off by the dung!

7 NEVERSOFT SKATER + STAT POINT
Beat all of the combos to prove your skills and win a stat point.

8 NEVERSOFT SKATER + NEW SPECIAL TRICK SLOT
Get your special meter full and then trick out of the lion cage.

9 LION TAMER + STAT POINT
Distract the lions by linking together plenty of revert tricks.

10 LION TAMER
Lure the lions back to their cage. Make sure your speed stat is high!

11 PRO SKATER
By now you shouldn't have too much trouble hitting 200,000 points.

12 ELEPHANT TRAINER
Search the aquarium area and outside to catch the penguins.

13 SMART KID + STAT POINT
Collect all of the COMBO letters in one move to beat this.

14 ZOO KEEPER + STAT POINT
Stop the monkey from escaping by warning both gatekeepers.

15 COMPETITION JUDGE
Place third or better in this competition to finish this challenge.

16 PRO SKATER
Transfer onto the roof to activate this banner grinding challenge.

1 PRO CHALLENGES
SMART KID — Collect COMBO letters in one move

2 PRO CHALLENGES
NEVERSOFT SKATER — Transfer over elephant rock

3 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Get sick score 800,000 points

4 PRO CHALLENGES
ZOO KEEPER — Capture Kong

5 PRO CHALLENGES
PRO SKATER — Scare the birds

INFORMATION

UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP

PUBLISHER	INFOGRAMES
DEVELOPER	EPIC GAMES
GENRE	FPS
PRICE	£44.99
PLAYERS:	1-4

XBOX.TOTALGAMES.NET

UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP

SPENDING MOST OF YOUR TIME AS A STAIN ON A WALL? KEEP GETTING LIQUIDISED BY SOMEONE'S FLAK CANNON? NEVER FEAR – THE XPERTS ARE HERE TO HELP...

LOCK AND LOAD

WEAPONS OF DESTRUCTION

There wouldn't be much point in a first-person shooter without weapons, and *Unreal Championship* doesn't disappoint. With this guide, you'll soon learn what they do and when best to use them.



SHIELD GUN

PRIMARY: MELEE ATTACK(CHARGE UP)
SECONDARY: FORWARD SHIELD

Probably most useful in team games such as Capture The Flag – use secondary fire to protect yourself while carrying the flag, or block enemy fire for the flag carrier. That said, its main mode of fire is incredibly powerful... but only if you can get close enough to touch your enemy.



ASSAULT RIFLE

PRIMARY: MACHINE GUN
SECONDARY: GRENADES – HOLD LONGER TO SHOOT FURTHER

The primary fire on this one is weak but its accurate and the grenades do a decent amount of damage if you can land yourself a direct hit. That's about it though, so change to a more powerful weapon as soon as you can.



SHOCK RIFLE

PRIMARY: SHOCK BOLT
SECONDARY: SLOW-MOVING SHOCK BALL

Fire a shock ball, then blow it up with a shock bolt to produce a devastating combo attack! The shock bolt on its own is pretty useful from long range because it's deadly accurate. Watch out for people using the Shield Gun though – it can reflect shots right back at you!



LINK GUN

PRIMARY: SLOW-MOVING ENERGY SPHERES
SECONDARY: BEAM ATTACK

A short to medium-range weapon – use primary fire to begin with, then switch to secondary as you close in. It comes into its own in team games, though: use your beam on a team-mate to power up his Link Gun and it'll cause double damage! Like the Shock Rifle, it can be reflected by the Shield Gun, so be careful...



TRANSLOCATOR

PRIMARY: FIRE RECEIVER / CAMERA / RETURN RECEIVER
SECONDARY: TELEPORT

Not really a weapon, though it can be used as one. Fire the Translocator at an enemy and teleport directly onto them to get a 'telefrag' – an instant kill. It's difficult to achieve this though and you should only use it as a last resort. This weapon's more useful for covering large distances quickly, but don't use it when carrying the flag – you'll end up dropping it. It's also best not to leave the Translocator module out too long before teleporting – if it's shot, you'll die when you teleport.



FLAK CANNON

PRIMARY: HAIL OF HEATED METAL CHUNKS
SECONDARY: A FRAG GRENADE THAT EXPLODES ON IMPACT

Mostly used in close combat, but secondary fire makes it decent at medium range. A hit at point-blank range will kill almost anything, as will frag grenades which arc downwards when fired. Its primary fire will bounce off up to two walls, making it useful for killing enemies around corners.



ROCKET LAUNCHER

PRIMARY: LAUNCHES A ROCKET
SECONDARY: HOLD DOWN TO LOAD AND FIRE UP TO THREE ROCKETS

This weapon is best at medium to close-range. If you hold the cursor over an enemy for a few seconds, you'll lock on and the next rocket will home in on the target. Shoot at enemies' feet for best results – if you don't land a direct hit, they'll still take damage. To combat the rocket launcher, jump like crazy – you'll be much harder to hit.



LIGHTNING GUN

PRIMARY: LIGHTNING BOLT
SECONDARY ZOOM

Unreal Championship's sniper rifle – it's best used at long range. Body shots cause high damage, but head shots kill most opponents instantly. It's best if you can find a safe spot to snipe from, rather than stand out in the open. This weapon can be used at close range, but it's best to switch to something else – missing just once could mean your death.



TAG RIFLE

PRIMARY: FIRE AN EXPLOSIVE BLAST FROM AN ORBITING SATELLITE
SECONDARY: ZOOM

Hold the beam over a wall or section of floor to fire a massive blast, killing everything in a wide area. If you see the TAG Rifle being fired anywhere near you, use your Translocator to get away as quickly as possible. This weapon is somewhat limited, in that it can only be used outside.



MINIGUN

PRIMARY: FAST-FIRING, BUT INACCURATE
SECONDARY: SLOWER FIRING, BUT ACCURATE

A decent gun to use in any situation, though it doesn't excel in any area. Secondary fire is surprisingly accurate and is more useful at long range. Switch to primary as you get closer, as the whole point of this weapon is to spray your enemy with bullets.



PLAY TO WIN!

SO GOOD, IT'S UNREAL

You'll soon be holding the Championship trophy aloft, with a pile of corpses at your feet...

DEATHMATCH / GENERAL TIPS

- ☒ Keep moving! If you stay in one place too long, you'll be a sitting duck. So if you want to snipe, make sure you're well protected first.
- ☒ Learn the maps. If you know where everything is, you'll find things a lot easier. Also, try and remember where the spawn points are – if you see someone appear, it should be an easy kill.
- ☒ Adrenaline moves are in there for a reason – use them! There's no point in letting a full adrenaline meter go to waste, as it could well help you rack up the kills.
- ☒ Use double-jumps and sideways dodges to dodge enemy fire. Vary what type of move you use as well, so as not to be predictable.

SURVIVAL MODE

- ☒ When playing on the Gael map, make sure to pick a character with a decent starting weapon – if you die, you won't have time to collect a new one before your opponent's on top of you.
- ☒ In larger levels, collect as many power-ups as you can, immediately after dying. Remember that your opponent will still have all of *his* ammo, so you'll need to catch up quickly.
- ☒ Learn where the best power-ups are and make sure you get to them first. You may also want to guard them from your opponent – he'll probably be after them too!

TEAM DEATHMATCH

- ☒ Try to stick together in pairs, or bigger groups depending on the size of the level.
- ☒ Don't stand *right* next to your team-mates, as all you're doing is making a bigger target for your opponents to aim at. Should you see someone doing this, let loose with a well-placed rocket.
- ☒ Identify your targets before opening fire – not only could you hurt them, you might distract them from any real danger around them.

CAPTURE THE FLAG

- ☒ Don't go after the flag alone – a solo effort is unlikely to succeed, as you'll have to take on most of the other team to get there. Working together is essential to win in this game mode.
- ☒ Assign attackers and defenders so that everyone knows what they're doing. Even on the biggest assault, someone should be held back to protect the flag.
- ☒ There's one exception to always having a defender: if the other team is winning and you're running out of time, pile everyone forwards to try and even the score. If it looks like you're going to lose anyway, you may as well go down fighting.
- ☒ Invisibility can be useful in getting to the enemy flag – if you take a back route to it, you may not be noticed...
- ☒ Being invisible can be equally useful when defending your base – position yourself so you can see your flag and are hidden from the entrance to the room. Train your rocket launcher on the flag and wait for anyone stupid enough to go after it...

BOMBING RUN

- ☒ Work as a team and *pass the ball*! On some of the more open maps, this is essential and can help you cover ground much more quickly than running with it.
- ☒ Unlike Capture The Flag, don't leave someone back to defend – doing that is like playing with nine men in a football match.
- ☒ If you see a gap open up behind the opposing team while you're in an open area and your team has the ball... head straight for it! Have your team-mate pass you the ball and you'll have half a chance at scoring.
- ☒ When carrying the ball, Agility is your friend. If it looks as though you might score, use it in order to put some distance between you and the opposing team.
- ☒ Support your team mates when they have the ball – your Shield Gun will help protect them from enemy fire.
- ☒ If you're alone when carrying the ball and run into trouble, get rid of it. Then at least you'll be able to fight back.
- ☒ Have at least one person in your team leave their Translocator in front of your goal, so they can get back if the other team's about to score.

DOUBLE DOMINATION

- ☒ Assign teams to taking each point. Try to split the team up evenly, so you have a decent chance of taking and holding both points at once.
- ☒ Once you've taken a point, stay with it! If there are no enemies around now, there soon will be.
- ☒ Use Regeneration when defending one of the points – the longer you stay alive, the longer you can protect it.

A SHOT IN THE HEART

ADRENALINE

Once your Adrenaline (in the top-right corner of the screen) reaches 100, you'll be able to pull off an Adrenaline Move. Don't use the analogue stick for this though – it's much easier with the D-pad.

BERSERK: ↑, ↑, ↑

Use this to increase the amount of damage you cause – it doubles your rate of fire and so is most useful in Deathmatch games. Keep an eye on your ammo, as you'll really chew through it when Berserk is active.

REGENERATION: ↓, ↓, ↓

If you're low on health and armour, this is the Adrenaline Move for you. Your armour and health will only regenerate slowly, so it's not much use if you've only got about a second to live. That said though, it's a great way to beef up your character when all the power-ups on the map have been taken.

AGILITY: ↓, ↓, ↑

This gives an extra boost of speed, making it easier to dodge gunfire. It's most useful when holding the flag or ball in Capture The Flag and Bombing Run – use it to outrun your opponents as you try to score.

INVISIBILITY: →, →, ←, ←

Useful in nearly all situations Your character appears as a barely visible shimmer. Use it to avoid fire in Deathmatches, or to sneak to the enemy base in Capture The Flag. However, the flag and ball-holder markings remain visible when this power-up is used, making it useless if you're carrying either of them!

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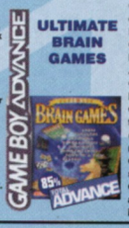
Wow! Only one day left until Christmas! Little children all over the world are anxiously awaiting Santa's visit. Meanwhile, very deep underground lives a wicked fairy, Nilam. She has a magic pot that allows her to see everywhere in the world. She looked into her pot and saw Santa and his helpers packing presents for all the children and became furious that so much existed in the world.

Nilam concocted a spell that enchanted Santa and locked him in her magic lands. You must help Santa escape the worlds controlled by Nilam, so that he can complete his Christmas Eve mission. Only a few hours remain, so get cracking

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INBOX

TELL US WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND AND GET IN TOUCH WITH XBM...

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Dear XBM,

There's no other mag for me and no other console for me (cheesy I know). But as usual I have a question to ask you: When we bought our PC a couple of years ago it came bundled with Westwood's fantastically amazing game *Blade Runner*, so is there any chance that Westwood could start developing games for the Xbox, and is there any chance that Westwood could make a sequel to *Blade Runner* for the Xbox? If not, why not? It would be much appreciated by millions of people. Blade Runner is one of the best games I've ever played and I'm sure a lot of people would agree with me.

One more thing, instead of Tecmo releasing a beach volleyball game, wouldn't it be better if it was an unlockable mode in *DOA4* to give it some depth?

Simon Marsh, Brighton

☒ **Agreed. *Blade Runner* is one of the best point and clicks ever – and one of our favourite films. But there are no plans to do a remake. God knows who owns the license.**

Dear XBM,

Let me say this is the best magazine I have ever read. I used to own a PlayStation (back in the old days) and buy their mag every month at a price of about £5. This was because it had a free demo disk every month – put it this way, it had to be there as they didn't look at or rate games like you do. Previews, reviews, features weren't that good at all.

So after reading about Xbox and what people were saying about it, I bought one and got slagged at work because we all had PlayStation2s on the Friday – by Saturday I had an Xbox and didn't see the guys until Monday. We started talking about computer games and I immediately said I had bought the next best thing to sliced bread. They all took the mickey but I handled it well and told

STAR LETTER

SPLITTING THE VOTE

XBM,

What the hell do you lot think you're playing at? I'm talking about the *TimeSplitters 2* review. How you can give it such a high score I do not know. The control system is absolute rubbish, total crap. Playing games is meant to be fun – can you honestly say that this game is enjoyable because I can't.

Compared to *Halo* this game is a complete and utter joke. The *Halo* level Assault On The Control Room is bigger than this whole game. Have they deliberately made the controls hard because of this? If the controls were as good as *Halo*'s it would take ten minutes to complete a level.

I bought this game after reading reviews in XBM, X-Gamer, Official Xbox Mag and Edge. You all gave it high marks. I've been conned out of hard-earned money because of you lot and I'm not amused. That game cost me a quarter of my weekly wage. Please don't say I must be a crap gamer if I can't get used to the controls – I've finished *Halo* twice on Legendary. Perhaps you should start a debate on this and see what other gamers think. I'll be thinking long and hard about buying the above mags in future and hope other readers write in to complain as well.

D Swan

PS I bet you don't print this letter because you just print letters from people who praise your mag and suck up to you.

☒ **We're going to let Mike personally answer this one.**
Mike: Yes we agree that the control system isn't the best. We even said in the review that this would annoy some! However, like we said you do get used to it after a short while and this is when you can really start to appreciate the game for what it is – rather than simply compare it to *Halo*. If we sat every first-person shooter next to the Bungie masterpiece we'd go for *Halo* every time but these are two different games.

Let's face it, it's not really fair to slate the game for size when *Halo* had a development time that was double that of *TimeSplitters 2*! Besides, as any girl will tell you, size is not that important. Especially when you've got loads of fun mini-games, challenge modes, leagues and multiplayer modes to mess around with beyond the main game. It was this that made us want to play *TimeSplitters 2* all the more and after a few solid hours the control system was no longer a major issue. We're sure if you'd been playing *TimeSplitters 2* for months on end before even touching Master Chief it would take you a while to get used to the controls in *Halo* as well.





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IT'S GOOD TO TEXT!

Here are the best texts we've had this month – and we've left them just as you typed them for authenticity!



DEAR XBM WHAT IS BETTER GAME CUBE XBOX OR PS2 FROM LUKE ANDERSON
You're asking an Xbox mag?

TO XBM. CAN YOU TELL ME ANYTHING ABOUT THE NEXT ODDWORLD GAME?
All we know is that it's going to be called *Squeak's Oddysee*. And *might* feature some kind of online play.

IS SHENMUE COMING OUT BEFORE CHRISTMAS?
6 December, apparently.

YES YES XBM. I WANT TO KNOW WHY THE HELL IS EVERYBODY SAYING YOU CAN'T PLAY HOTD3 WITH A GUN WHEN U CAN BY USING A X JOYBOX CONVERTER WITH A PS2 GUN. HASSAN RIKABY
Who's a clever clogs, then?

IS THERE EVER GOING TO B A GTA ON THE XBOX
No.

WILL THPSKATER 4 ALLOW US TO PLAY OUR OWN TRACKS MIXED WITH SOME FROM THE GAME ITSELF?
You can play your own music but you can't mix and match courses.

ARE THERE ANY PLANS TO RELEASE WWE SMACKDOWN ON XBOX?
No but this one is coming out: *WWE Raw 2 Ruthless Aggression*.

PLZ MORE INFO ON DOOM 3 AND WHY HAS EVERYONE KEPT QUIET ABOUT HOTD3. HAVE GOT ANY NEWS ON VIRTUAL TENNIS 3 AND GUNVALKYRIE2 ON XBOX. AND IS XBOXLIVE £30 A MONTH
Check this ish for more screens of *Doom 3* and check page 90 for our *HOTD3* review. But there's no news on *Virtua Tennis* or a sequel to *GunValkyrie*. Xbox Live will cost £40 for the first year. After that, we don't know...

AFTER OWNING A PSX I HAV SPENT 1/2 MA GAMIN LIFE PLAYIN DA FINAL FANTASY SERIES. CAN U TELL ME IF I'LL EVER B ABLE 2 BUY IT 4 MA XBOX.
Never. Ever.

HALO 2 SCREENSHOTS MORE STIMULATING THAN VIAGRA... CANT WAIT... SCOTT N.
Feeling a bit sticky ourselves...

CAN YOU PUBLISH MORE GAMES FOR GIRLS IN YOUR MAG. THERE ARE SO MANY GAMES FOR THE MEN AND HARDLY ANY FOR US GIRLS! THANX XBM (CLAIRE)
We cover all the games that are out there luv. But we agree: more games for girls would be good for Xbox.

THANKS FOR YOUR REVIEW OF TS2. I REALLY APPRECIATE WASTING £45. HOW CAN YOU JUSTIFY 9/10 TO A FPS THAT HAS SUCH A DREADFULL AIMING SYSTEM? NOT TO MENTION VANISHING CORPSES. DIDN'T YOU JUST SLATE TUROK FOR THIS? HOW CAN EIDOS PRODUCE SUCH A POLISHED GAME AS HITMAN 2 THEN SUCH A LAZY, THOUGHTLESS PIECE OF JUNK AS TS 2. WHAT MAKES IT SO ANNOYING IS WHAT A GOOD GAME IT COULD SO EASILY HAVE BEEN. OH WELL. BRING ON HALO 2! ROY
Correct, correct, correct. We may have been a little zealous with our score for *TimeSplitters 2*. You have to admit it's still fun, though...

MESSAGE TO RARE YOUR NOT WITH NINTENDO SO MAKE JOANNA DARK LOOK REAL AGAIN.
She looks real enough to us, sonny.

them what this thing could do. "Prove it!" they said, and prove it I did. I bought *Halo*, *Project Gotham* and *ISS* with it originally, invited the lads round and what do you know... They should have paid rent and power for the time they were playing it. After five days two had traded their PlayStations and got an Xbox and the other two are just stubborn, or they just aren't the brightest bulbs in the box.

I have been buying your mag since Issue 8 but one issue got me hooked and I am now a subscriber to your fine attention to detail, write-ups and release dates for the great games that are coming out on this great machine. Sony haven't got a chance.

Andy Stewart, Grangemouth

☒ **Thanks. We wish all gamers were as open-minded as you are. It seems that many are happy with the status quo – with their PS2s and the familiar name of Nintendo. But you're right – Xbox is the console where, over the next 12 months, we're going to see some truly groundbreaking new games. Keep 'em peeled.**

Dear XBM,

I have recently bought my Xbox and I am so glad at the bargain that I got for £290. I got an Xbox plus two controllers and *Dead Or Alive 3*, *Tony Hawk's 3*, *Max Payne*, *Agent Under Fire* and *Simpsons Road Rage*. I got this deal from my local games store and am worried that people are getting ripped off and not looking for the best deals.

I would also like to say that I think your magazine is top and is much better and cheaper than the Official Xbox Magazine.

Lastly a couple of questions:

1. When is there going to be a gun out on the Xbox?

2. Will there ever be a *Tomb Raider* game on the Xbox?

Danny Liggins, Thornton

☒ **The current official deal is pretty good – £160 for your Xbox and two games: *SEGA GT 2002* and *Jet Set Radio Future*. Answers: 1) yes, the Mad Catz Blaster is out to coincide with the release of *The House of the Dead 3*. 2) Not a chance matey.**

Hello XBM,

I hope people start to look at the Xbox because it is better than the PS2 and Nintendo GameCube. I might be getting an Xbox for my birthday. People think that the Xbox is crap because of the adverts. Could you consider changing the adverts?

James McReadie, Edinburgh

☒ **Er, okay. Except that the adverts are made by Microsoft and we're not.**

BRAINBOX

ALL THE ANSWERS CAN BE FOUND IN THE MAG

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF XBM #14 WITH OUR QUICK-FIRE QUIZ!

01 QUESTION

How many VR missions are there in *MGS2: Substance*?
a 200
b 300
c 100
d 50

02 QUESTION

Which of these games is not coming to Xbox Live next year?
A Fable
B Halo 2
C Project Gotham Racing 2
D Perfect Dark Zero

03 QUESTION

Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic is set how many years before *Episode 1*?
A 4000
B 3000
C 2000
D 1000

04 QUESTION

The new character in *Soul Calibur 2* is called?
A Raphael
B Elizabeth
C Montgomery
D Winston

05 QUESTION

Ghost Recon was written by who?
A Tom Clancy
B Wilbur Smith
C Irvine Welsh
D Enid Blyton

06 QUESTION

Who stars in *Reign of Fire* the movie?
A Christian Bale
B Christian Slater
C Mister Christian
D Christian Dior

07 QUESTION

Shenmue 2 is set where?
A Hong Kong
B Tokyo
C Beijing
D Chinatown

08 QUESTION

Which of these is a Terminator model number?
A T-800
B T-1234567890
C AT-ST
D T-4-2

09 QUESTION

Kakuto Chojin's developers also made which game?
A The Bouncer
B Tekken
C Virtua Fighter
D Mortal Kombat

10 QUESTION

Superman comes from which planet?
A Krypton
B The Pink Planet
C Planet of the Shapes
D Planet Pop

HOW DID YOU DO?

8 10 Top boy. Star pupil. Do you want a job? ..... **A**

6 7 Getting there. A decent effort, but a few lapses in concentration have cost you a top mark. ..... **B**

4 5 Decidedly average. Must pay more attention and try harder in class. ..... **C**

0 3 Abysmal. Have you read any of this issue? We suggest that read the whole of the mag from beginning to end. And then try again. ..... **F**

NOW CHECK YOUR ANSWERS ON PAGE 130!



We've been beavering away at our Web site since our launch issue last year, and have uploaded all kinds of goodies for you. Not only can you find every review, preview and feature that appears in XBM on the Web site once the magazine has gone off-sale, but you can also get extra screenshots, movies, wallpaper for your PC and full versions of interviews from the magazine! If you're online, point your browser at **xbox.totalgames.net** in order to complete your XBM experience!

DAILY UPDATED NEWS

■ News stories are posted to **xbox.totalgames.net** each day to ensure that our readers are the best informed of any Xbox magazine out there!

ARTICLES

■ All of the articles from our previous issues are now live online, so you are able to check out exactly what we think of all the Xbox releases.

GALLERY

■ When we've got more new Xbox screenshots than we can fit into the magazine we post a gallery online, so you can check them out for yourself.

DOWNLOADS

■ Here's where all the exciting downloads reside. Wallpaper, the occasional screensaver and – most importantly – movies of all the best Xbox games.

Time to find out what's been going on in the XBM Forum. You can join in the Xbox chat by getting yourself onto the Internet and visiting **xbox.totalgames.net**

TIP: If you put smiley faces into your messages, our system will automatically turn them into little icons like this...

AUTHOR	TOPIC: YOU CAN CALL ME AL
Number45	Posted 12 November 2002 02:40 PM K guys, post your gamertags here - just ignore the inevitable stream of insults!! I'll get the ball rolling (natch) and then we can all meet up online at some point in the future!! Number45, checking in!! IP: Logged
Beat_zero	posted 12 November 2002 04:06 PM my 1 is beat_zero IP: Logged
Numpty	posted 12 November 2002 04:06 PM Two innovative ones to start with then. IP: Logged
AlteredState	Posted 12 November 2002 04:11 PM Here's a third: mine's AlteredState! IP: Logged
Crim_Bow1	Posted 12 November 2002 04:13 PM Welshman here,look forward to racing and so on and on as x-box is here to stay. IP: Logged
Cream	Posted 12 November 2002 09:08 PM Mine is Lemming. I couldn't have cream already gone. This is my old online tag. IP: Logged
BLACK_MAGIC	Posted 12 November 2002 11:03 PM ok mines BLACKMAGIC after finally getting setup after i got my sodding delivery at 10pm tonight IP: Logged
kennethgibson	posted 13 November 2002 12:55 PM if it hasn't gone mine will be:- the man who you need to be running from a lot. lol no seriously joshy is always my (admittedly crap) online name. IP: Logged

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Serious Sam was released on 6 December and received a hearty 7 out of 10 in this issue of XBM – you can read the full review on page 84.

Right then, to the questions:

***1 Serious Sam* originally appeared on which platform?**
A PS2 B SNES C PC

***2* Where does *Serious Sam* take place?**
A India B Egypt C Clapham

***3* How many levels does *Serious Sam* feature?**
A 12 B 24 C 36

Here's a hint – all the answers can be found in the review this issue...



All you have to do to enter is log onto the TotalGames Web site at **www.totalgames.net** and follow the links to the competition... Good luck!

RULES

The editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. Employees of Paragon Publishing or any companies related to this competition may not enter. There is no cash alternative. The closing date for entries is 30 January 2003.

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RACING EVOLUZIONE pg125



ATV QUAD RACING 2 pg125





PUBLISHER: VARIOUS

XBOX 2003

EXACTLY WHICH GAME IS IT THAT'S GOING TO LAY WASTE TO ALL OF YOUR NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS?

Now that Xbox has developed a fantastic reputation amongst gamers it needs to show consistency to keep the faith. As the New Year approaches it seems there are more developers than ever eager to take up this challenge.

Oh yes, there is no doubt about it that next year is going to be gaming heaven for Xbox owners. Bridging the gap from other formats you've got titles like *Soldier of Fortune 2*, *State of Emergency*, *TOCA Pro Race Driver*, *Wolfenstein*, *Fatal Frame* and *Counter-Strike*. Then there are the all-new products like *Doom 3*, *Kameo*, *Dino Crisis 3*, *Fable*, *Soul Calibur 2*, *Perfect Dark Zero* and *Ninja Gaiden* that are eager to play with you.

And best of all, if that hasn't got you counting down the minutes to midnight, how about the return of some old friends? *Amped: Freestyle Snowboarding 2*, *Project Gotham Racing 2*... oh... and something called *Halo 2*. We bring you the latest on all of these games and uncover a few new surprises next issue!





"NEXT YEAR IS GOING TO BE GAMING HEAVEN FOR XBOX OWNERS"

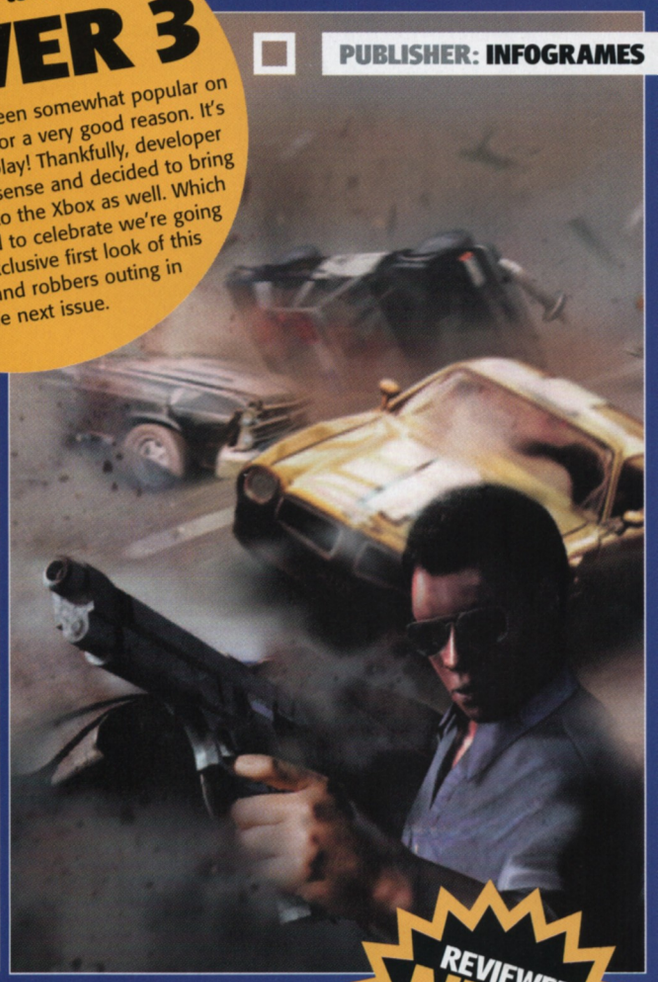


Ah Mr Pedal, please allow us to introduce you to Mr Metal!

DRIVER 3

The *Driver* series has been somewhat popular on the PlayStation2 and for a very good reason. It's bloody good fun to play! Thankfully, developer Reflections has seen sense and decided to bring the latest addition to the Xbox as well. Which is great news, and to celebrate we're going to bring the exclusive first look of this cool cops and robbers outing in the next issue.





PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

REVIEWED NEXT MONTH

PUBLISHER: **MICROSOFT**

KAKUTO CHOJIN

THE FIGHT IS ON FOR THE BEAT-'EM-UP CROWN...

If you are a massive fighting game fanatic then you may have been a little bit disappointed by the games offered up by various developers so far. There's no denying *Dead Or Alive 3* was a great game but it was a little bit shallow, and to be honest nothing has come out since take its place. All of this is about to change as *Tao Feng*, *Kakuto Chojin* and *Mortal Kombat* step up to try and take control of the beat-'em-up genre. The first one of these new contenders to be released is *Kakuto Chojin* from Microsoft. The game certainly has the looks but next issue we're going to tell you whether or not the game goes beyond just being a pretty face with a blood-filled review.









REVIEWED NEXT MONTH



PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES

FURIOUS KARTING

MOST F1 DRIVERS STARTED OUT IN KARTS DON'T YOU KNOW?

There have been plenty of kart racing games released in the past but few have lived up to the Nintendo classics like *Mario Kart* and *Diddy Kong Racing*. Realising this Infogrames has created a kart racing game that doesn't involve cutesy characters and cartoon environments. Instead it's a very fast and extremely enjoyable arcade racer with some particularly snazzy visuals.

"GREAT NEWS FOR PLATFORMING FANS."

PREVIEWED NEXT MONTH









PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT

RAYMAN 3 HOODLUM HAVOC

THE LIMBLESS WONDER CROSSES PLATFORMS...

Mascot to no system Rayman has been around the block more times than we care to remember and has visited pretty much every single console known to mankind! In this next outing, *Hoodlum Havoc*, the consistently loveable character is coming to the Xbox as well. This is great news for platforming fans as the *Rayman* games have always been worth playing and this next instalment looks even more accomplished than its predecessors.

PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

RACING EVOLUZIONE

EVER WANTED TO OWN A CAR COMPANY? NOW YOU CAN...

All car games seem to be hung up on showing off officially licensed vehicles. This game does exactly that but adds a new twist to the proceedings. You take control of your own car company and pit it against the real world big boys both on and off the track. An intriguing idea that plays well and offers car enthusiasts everywhere the chance to play out their dreams.

PREVIEWED NEXT MONTH



Just like bikes only with a couple more wheels...

ATV QUAD RACING 2

Not heard of the first one? Don't worry *ATV Quad Racing* isn't the kind of game that takes ages to get your head around. This is all about adrenaline fuelled fun over some insane off-road courses. The riders and bikes may be real but this is no hard-core simulation – seriously over the top stunts and arcade-like power slides are the order of the day.





PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**



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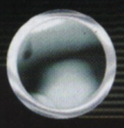
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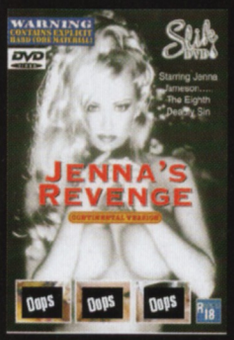
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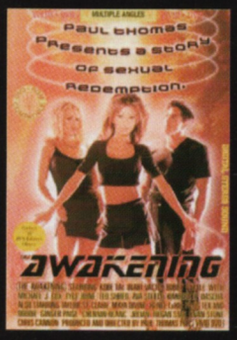
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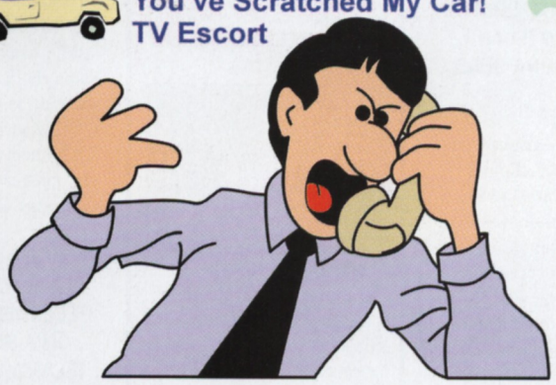
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