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Once upon a game...

There was a proud Lion, King of the UK games jungle. When the Lionhead spoke, it roared of a game that would be unlike any other, a game that would rip the expression Role-Playing Game into bloody shreds, stalk its own path on a new adventure through fabled lands and choose its own destiny, good or evil.

The other animals in the jungle laughed at the Lionhead and some even threw rotten fruit and other unmentionable projectiles from the treetops. "We can already fart to impress our friends," howled the monkeys. "What's funny about kicking chickens," hawked the Toucans? "And we don't like the idea of just anyone being able to grow horns," grumped the buffalo.

After much hooting, whooping and snarling, the animals decided that the Lionhead was just a puffed-up pussycat with pretensions of grandeur and went back to scratching various body parts and eating one another, or in some cases scratching one another and eating various body parts. Filthy monkeys. They had already decided that if the Lionhead ever finished his fabled odyssey there would be no game there. Whoever heard of such ridiculous freedom? It was better to sit safe up a tree or snug down a hole, playing out the roles they'd been given.

But if the Lionhead heard such discouraging words, he was too proud to let it distract his greater purpose. He would make his game, however long it took, and if they thought it was such a mythical venture he would call it *Fable*. And after years of toil, much whisker-stroking and mane-tearing, the Lionhead completed his *Fable* and a jungle that had long settled back into quiet routine began to rustle and whisper with trembling auspice.

One by one the animals crept to the mouth of the Lionhead's cave and, affecting ignorance of his audience's sneaking return, the Lionhead began his great story. Slowly and magically the story wound its powerful coils around every beast that lay spellbound in the shadows, yet every creature there heard a different, wondrous tale, a *Fable* that was theirs and theirs alone. And such was the power and success of the Lionhead's *Fable* that the animals of the jungle stopped eating each other for a time and ate words instead, returning every night to hear a new adventure from the same game. The Lionhead just grinned a big toothy grin and daydreamed of cavemen...

The End. (Until next month.)

STEVE BROWN
EDITOR, *OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE*



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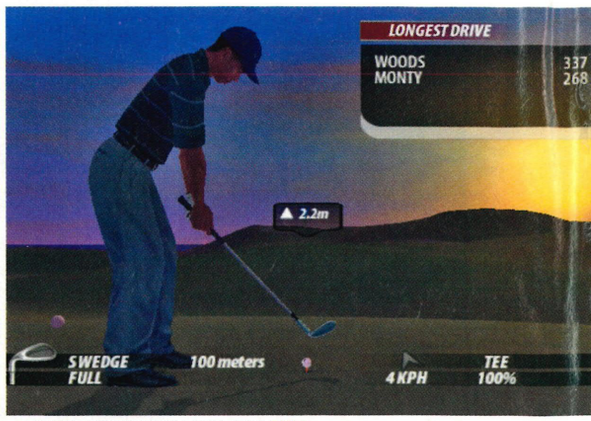
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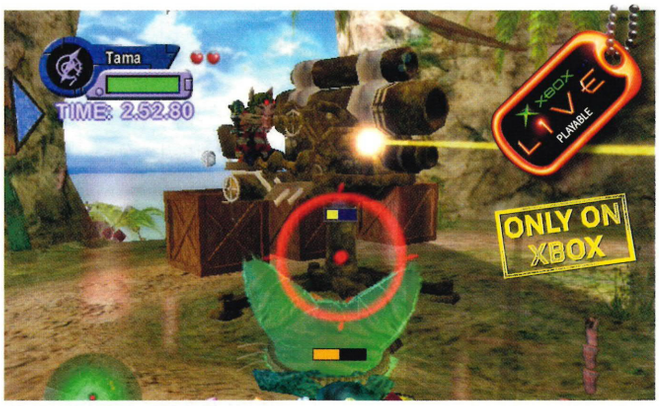


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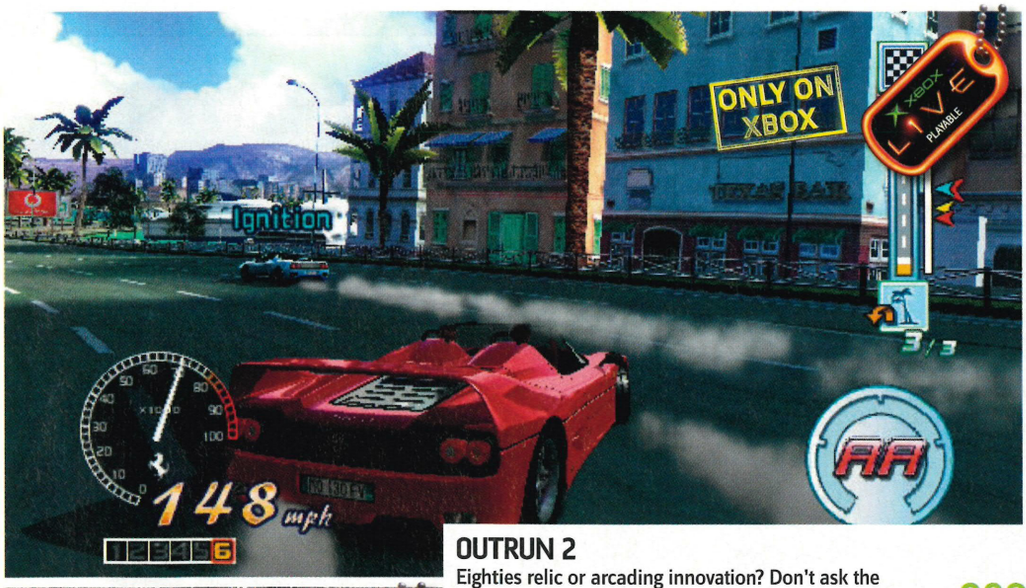
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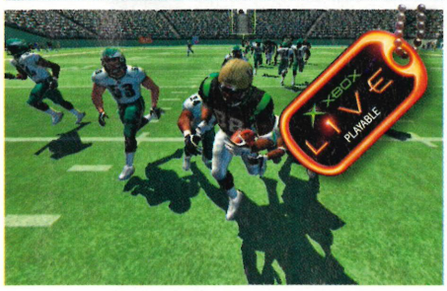
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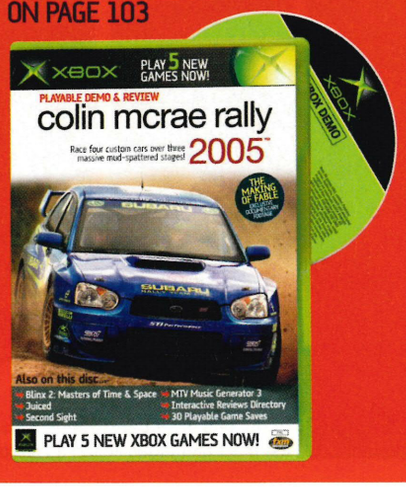
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TimeSplitters 2, THUG, Full Spectrum Warrior, MTV Music Generator 3, and more!

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THEY DON'T
WANT TO
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JUST MANKIND.

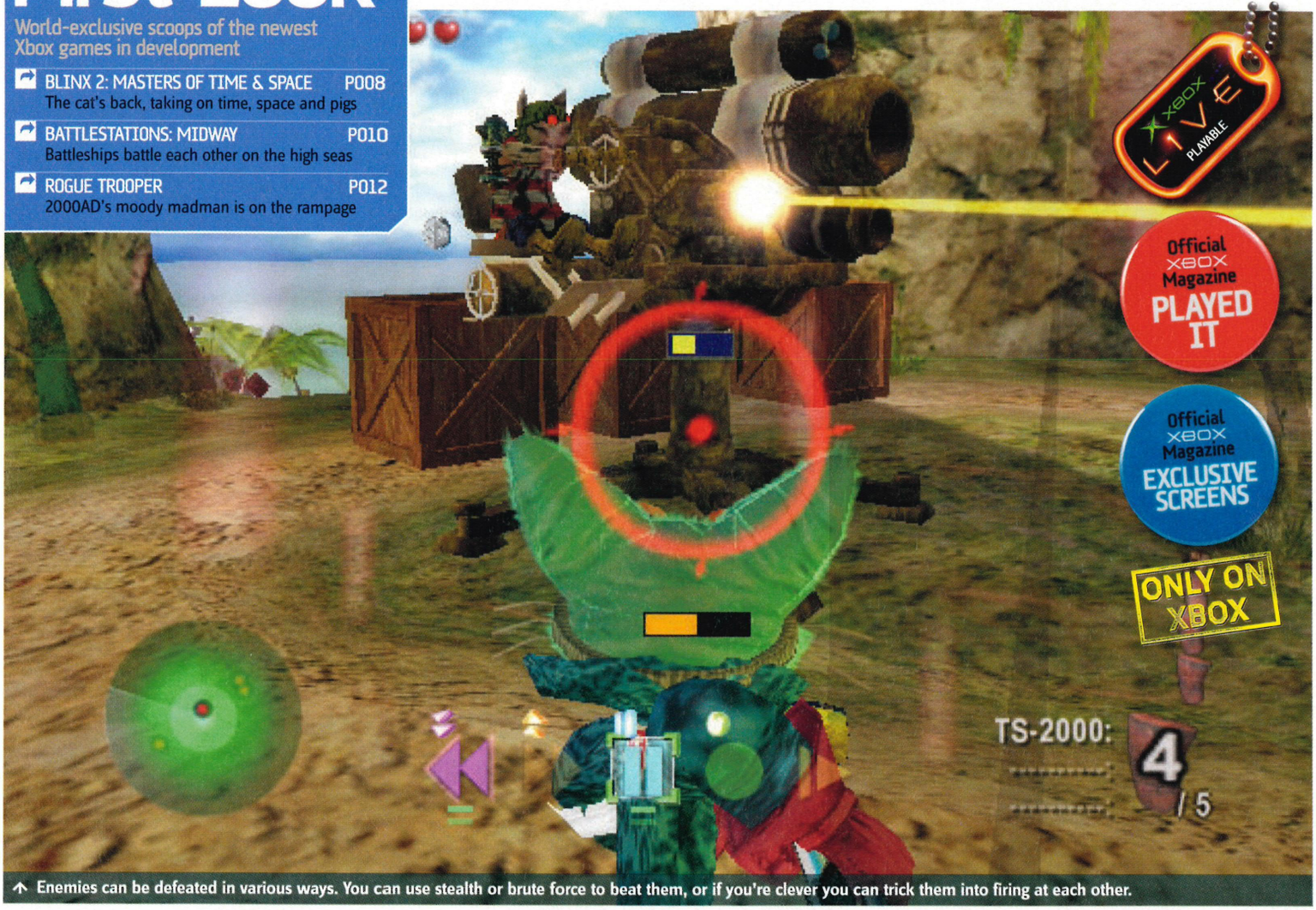
First Look

World-exclusive scoops of the newest Xbox games in development

BLINX 2: MASTERS OF TIME & SPACE P008
The cat's back, taking on time, space and pigs

BATTLESTATIONS: MIDWAY P010
Battleships battle each other on the high seas

ROGUE TROOPER P012
2000AD's moody madman is on the rampage



↑ Enemies can be defeated in various ways. You can use stealth or brute force to beat them, or if you're clever you can trick them into firing at each other.

Blinx 2: Masters of Time & Space

Vacuuming in the name of entertainment...

Dev: Artoon | Pub: Microsoft
Release: Xmas 2004 | Live: 2-4 players
Players: 1-2

"IT'S THE WORLD'S first 5D game!" boasts Artoon, which presumably means when you fire up your Xbox your body folds inside out and you age 100 years. We're not sure what the hell the fifth dimension actually is, but what we are sure about is *Blinx 2: Masters of Time & Space*. It's something of a departure from the original, with all the fun but none of the ironic time constraints. Yes!

The lack of time limits allows for a greater degree of both exploration and enjoyment, but the biggest new aspect is the introduction of the Tom-Tom Gang as playable characters. In the original they were the bad guys, all riding Harleys, eating out of troughs and whatnot. This time, though, they add a further depth to the game that, while not perhaps reaching the fifth dimension, certainly reaches the third and a half. The Tom-Tom gang will employ a completely different gameplay mechanic, acting much more like Sam Fisher than their feline foes.

Whereas the cats alter time, the pigs alter space (hence the title). As a Tom-Tom you'll be able to stealth your way through levels, actually creating alternate pockets of reality to hide in. You could be standing right next to a cat but, because you're in an alternate universe, he won't see you. Equally, you can dig wormholes through space, appearing out of nowhere behind an enemy. Or simply throw a black hole at the feet of a battalion of cats and have them all disappear down it like water down a drain.

Of course, Blinx will be able to counter these moves with the improved time manipulation. Naturally, he'll still be able to stop and rewind time, as well as pause, record, and slow everything to a crawl. One example we saw was a sudden ambush followed by a volley of lead. We had to make time to run, so we brought the time-space continuum to a crawl. Then, in a move the Wachowskis would be proud of, we 'did a Neo' and bent over to a spine-snapping right angle, allowing the bullets to whiz across our bow. Full implementation of this, and the Tom-Tom Gang's abilities, has yet to be seen, but in the taster we got it was evident they were more than gimmicks. Best swot up on something by Professor Hawkins if you're to get the most from *Blinx 2* - you're going to need every combination of time-twisting possible to traverse the 40 or so levels of fiendish magnitude.

Finally (or 'to begin with' if you're in the fifth dimension), the inclusion of multiplayer gets two trotters up from us. Every level has been designed to be played in co-op as well, adding another layer to the game. We stumbled across one puzzle very early on that could only be solved using a partner, which gives you a reason to replay it. Then, of course, there are the head-to-head brawls (Time Sweeper Vs Tom-Tom) that no self-respecting two-player game could do without. And all this comes with an exhaustive, comprehensive, full-blown, almost stupidly anal cat creator. It'll take you as much time to choose your cat as it did to complete the original game. Let's hope that fifth-dimension malarkey holds some weight, because the sooner December arrives the better.



↑ Don't worry if you get too close to the explosion - just rewind time!



↑ No, this giant rock beast does not want to be your friend.



↑ The Sweepers are deadly enemies, so get used to a lot of gruesome dying.



↑ You can use your sling to knock Sweepers unconscious, then raid their pockets!

Bonus info

TICK, TICK, BOOM!
During the game you'll be able to pick up various bombs to aid you on your quest. Don't get greedy though, because if you pick up too many you'll end up dropping them and exploding in a shower of fur and catnip.

MULTI-CAT
Every mission has several paths you can take. Some are easier than others but, as ever, we found the difficult routes to be the most rewarding.

PORK ATTACK
There will also be a Battle mode in *Blinx* where you have to lead an entire squad of Tom-Toms or Sweepers, much like the *Rainbow Six* games. The Battle mode will also be Xbox Live compatible, allowing you to take on a whole team of Live players.

Genetically Modified Cat Creating the perfect Time Sweepers team...



↑ STEP 1: The Xbox generates four random cats in random costumes. Pick one as a starting block to create your team's look.



↑ STEP 2: Alter everything you want, from shirt pattern to the length of his tail. There are around four million different cat combinations!



↑ STEP 3: Now choose the flag and team emblem. There's lots of choice here too – more than 65,000 different combinations in fact.



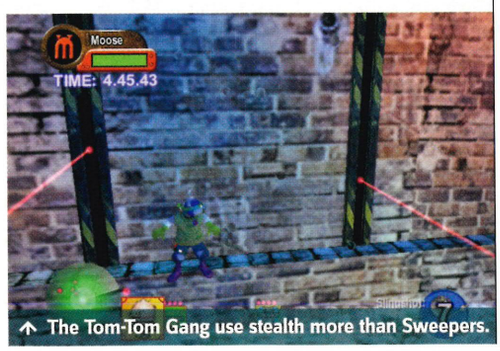
↑ STEP 4: Add your flag to your cats (too many combinations to count, but rest assured, it's a lot) and that's it, you're good to go.



↑ You'll need to master time to defeat this guy.



↑ You'll be able to design the look of every character.



↑ The Tom-Tom Gang use stealth more than Sweepers.

LAZY PIG: IF YOU CAN'T BE BOTHERED TO NAME YOURSELF, THE XBOX WILL CHOOSE A NAME FOR YOU. WE ENDED UP BEING CALLED TINKLES.

Official Xbox Magazine EXCLUSIVE SCREENS



↑ Having walloped a few torpedoes into the side of a battleship, you can turn the camera around and watch it bubble under. You can watch bogies on your tail at the same time.

Battlestations: Midway

All thinking, all shooting, all-out revenge, WWII style...

Dev: Mithis | Pub: SCi
Release: Summer 2005 | Live: 2-16 players
Players: 1 | Live: Content Download

DON'T, WHATEVER you do, compare this game to *Secret Weapons Over Normandy* (Issue 24, 8.0). We know screenshots can be deceptive, but as we found out recently at *Midway*'s unveiling, the game is so much more than dogfighting in two-winged antiques.

Midway is a sprawling, open-ended field of war that recreates the infamous days following Pearl Harbor. Opening with the brutal Japanese attack on the US port, the American forces fought back, and intercepted a radio communication between two Japanese commanders who planned a second attack on the US base known as Midway. Aware of the plan, the Americans outwitted their enemy and prevented a second blow to their naval forces. This in turn began a change in the tide for the Pacific struggle and helped the US claim victory. *Battlestations: Midway* is the recreation of that time. Between Pearl Harbor and the final, bloody battle at Midway, you'll have complete control over every military unit in the area. You'll be given objectives, but how you achieve them is entirely up to you.

Armed to the cigar-chomping teeth with every kind of vehicle you could hope for, *Midway* will allow complete freedom of movement. Through a series of simple commands you can easily skip between piloting a reconnaissance plane to deploying volleys of anti-aircraft from a carrier. Then of course, you can manoeuvre the carrier itself or, if you fancy, take control of entire fleets of dogfighters you launch from the ship. The battlefield is yours for the taking, and when you're not directly controlling either planes, subs, guns or ships, the AI will take the reins. Of course, you can give it orders too, so you're always in command of the actions your men take.

During one briny firefight we witnessed, an Ally battleship was sending torpedoes into its enemy's hull and keeping its attention firmly locked to the port side. Meanwhile, it had radioed to a squadron of low-flying torpedo planes that had approached from the other direction and were walloping the starboard with torps too.

Alternatively, we're told, a sub could have been deployed to target the ship's steering and run it into dry land. The decision is going to be entirely yours, just as long as you get the job done. Better still, every craft has dozens of damage parameters, allowing for greater tactical battles. Flying a plane that's about to go down? Why not direct it into the bridge of that enemy aircraft carrier over there, then? Might as well take 'em with you!

With 18 missions, nine of which form the Allies' battles and nine that see the war from the Japanese perspective, *Midway* is going to be a vast, multi-faceted firefight, laced with the kind of strategy you'd normally see in top-down PC games. It's safe to say those *SWON* comparisons will soon be dead in the water.



↑ Fly in low to avoid AA fire, then hit 'em where it hurts.



↑ During online play you'll have to defend and capture islands.



↑ It's not all strategy, you know. There are going to be dogfights aplenty.



↑ Play as the Yanks or play as the Japs - the battlefield is completely free-roaming.

Bonus info

SPY CAMERA

The camera system being implemented for *Midway* is so dynamic, you can watch everything going on even when flying. We saw a couple of torpedoes being fired off from a plane before it flew over the deck of its target. Rather than missing the explosion, the camera swivelled back on itself, allowing us to see the full impact of the hit.

SINKING FEELING

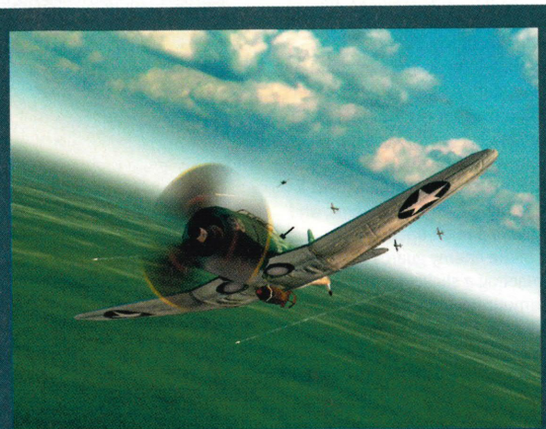
When commanding a ship you'll have to carefully keep an eye on damage. You'll need to assign men to repair detail, put out fires, bail out if you're sinking, or start manning the AA guns. It's fair to say you'll have your work cut out keeping afloat.



↑ If you're in a plane and you see your ships taking fire, quickly switch perspective to the AA gun and blast your aggressors out of the sky.

Flying Live

THE LIVE component of *Midway* is going to be huge. Creative director Zsolt Nyulazi told us that it's likely 16 players will be able to join in online. Eight versus eight means each side will have to work cohesively to defeat their enemy, with each member of a team controlling aspects of sea, air and land craft. The Pacific islands around Midway will also serve a strategic purpose, possibly acting as goals whereby you'll need to capture them to win missions. Billed as the first Live title where teamwork is vital (no gung-ho nonsense here), *Midway* could set Live alight. And that's without the wealth of downloadable content planned.

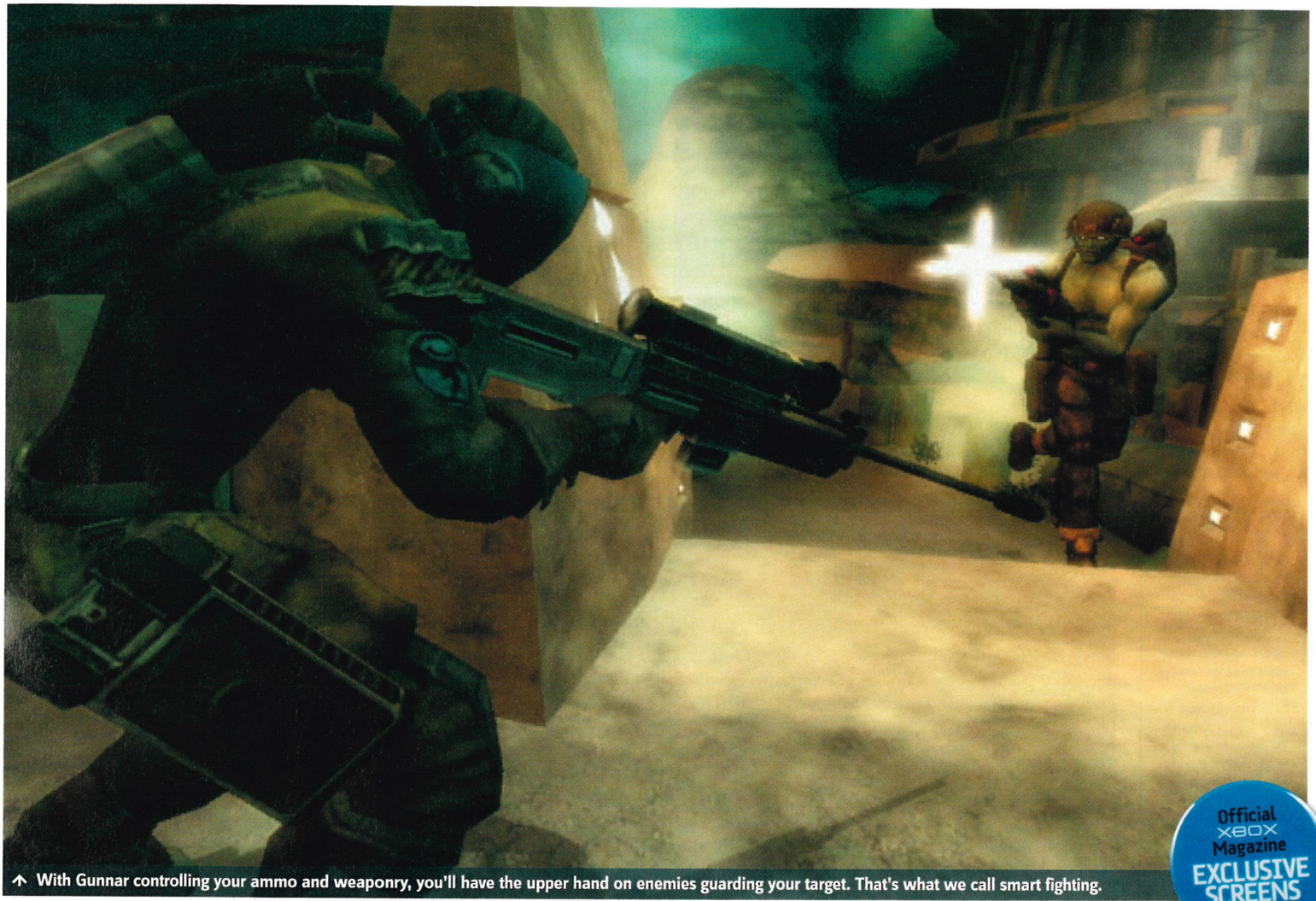


↑ Half your men will be able to take to the skies...



↑ ...while the other half keep them safe from the sea.

TOP GUN: WHEN HE WAS A KID, BEN L GOT THE CHANCE TO FIRE A DUMMY AA GUN AT AN AIR SHOW. HE WAS SO FEEBLE HE COULDN'T PULL THE TRIGGER AND ALL THE OTHER KIDS WATCHING LAUGHED AT HIM.



↑ With Gunnar controlling your ammo and weaponry, you'll have the upper hand on enemies guarding your target. That's what we call smart fighting.

Official Xbox Magazine EXCLUSIVE SCREENS

Rogue Trooper

He's mad, he's blue, and he's coming for you

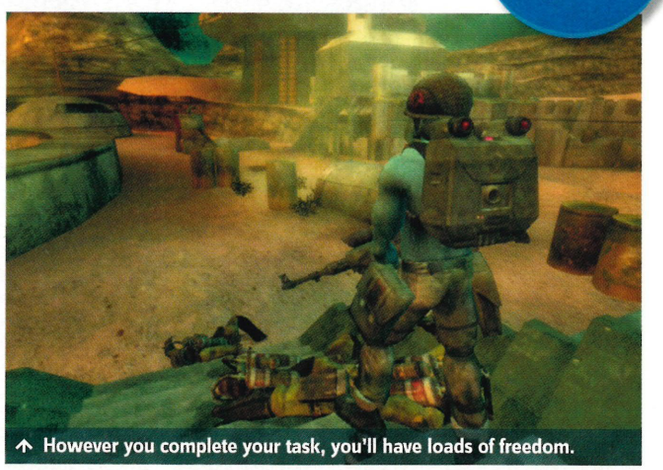
Dev: Rebellion
Pub: SCi
Release: TBA 2005
Players: 1

BEHIND JUDGE DREDD, one of *2000AD*'s most enduring characters despite looking in a perpetual state of seasickness, is Rogue Trooper. The last of the Genetic Infantry men on Nu-Earth, Rogue Trooper is a miserable swine. Modified to be impervious to the poisonous atmosphere (hence the blue skin, we guess), he's on a quest for revenge, seeking out those who betrayed his kind at the Quartz Zone Massacre which left him the last remaining GI. So far, so third-person action game. But, and here comes the natty part, being a GI means you're able to store your personality on a mod-chip lodged in your skull. If you get damaged you can transfer your identity to another GI or, in the case of three fallen friends of Rogue Trooper, into the very equipment he carries. There's Helm, the friend who lives in his helmet, Gunnar, a mate who's taken up residence in his gun, and Bagman... have a guess where he lives.

These three buddies will offer more than symptoms of serious schizophrenia though, effectively enabling you to let your equipment do some fighting for you. Helm is a master of computing and will hack into systems to open doors or crack mainframes. Gunnar will scan the battlefield and instinctively reload your weapon or switch ammo types as he sees fit. You will also be able to set Gunnar up as a diversion, allowing him to open fire on enemies that might not see him perched against a wall or in the shadows. You can signal him remotely too, just as you'll be able to signal the other two.

The third and final item/commrade is Bagman who'll effectively act as eyes in the back of your big blue head. He'll hand you items when you need them or, with the use of a mechanical grappling arm, toss grenades at enemies approaching from behind. Again, he'll also be remotely controlled, enabling you to leave him as a decoy, or even an RC bomb that you remote detonate when you're safely away from the blast zone.

All this could mean Rogue Trooper could run the risk of becoming nothing more than a set of legs for three immobilised grunts, but there's far more to him than that. Levels will have objectives, but Rogue Trooper will be athletic, able to spring over walls, garrotte unsuspecting guards, sneak through the most complex security systems, and accomplish his missions in an open-ended structure. As one of the enemy guards whispers to his mate before meeting a sticky death in the opening FMV, "Rumour has it that if Rogue Trooper sets his eyes on you, you're already dead." Expect a lot of stealth then, we reckon. In fact, expect genetically modified stealth, the kind of stealth that can hack computers, strangle enemies, lob grenades and reload your gun all at the same time. Should Sam Fisher watch his puny, human, non-GM back? More soon...



↑ However you complete your task, you'll have loads of freedom.

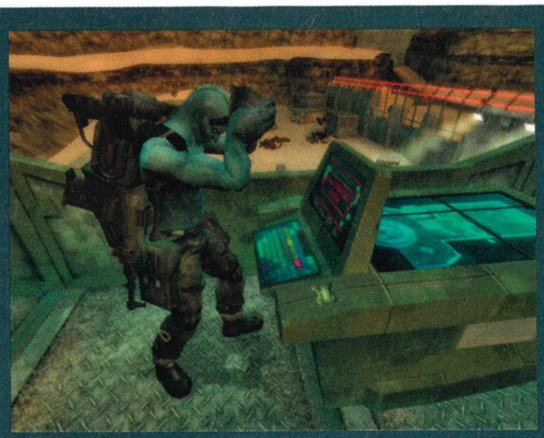


↑ You'll sneak up on enemies unawares and rip their throats out.

Smart Bombs

WE STILL haven't had word about how Rogue Trooper will cope without his equipment when it is required to work independently of him, but we reckon you'll have to use your wits.

Without Helm, you're leaving yourself open to a few pesky headshots, and without means of getting through other doors that you might need to open. And, if you choose to leave Gunnar as a decoy, what kind of attack will you fall back on? We guess this is where the hinted-at stealth elements come into play, plus those handy free-roaming elements. You're going to have to think *and* shoot, and that we like.



↑ Without Helm our man looks like a walking M&M.



↑ How will Rogue Trooper cope without trusty Gunnar?



↑ Be careful when approaching guards. You're smart, but there's more of them.



↑ Guards might be tough, but in the FMV we saw, Rogue Trooper can cut air pipes!

Bonus info

BE CYANING YOU

This isn't Rogue Trooper's first videogame outing. Way back in the cyan-soaked world of the Spectrum 128k, Rogue Trooper had his own game. It involved hiding from guards and collecting parts of a rocket that were scattered over Nu-Earth. We've a feeling this version will be a little better, though.

DEATH BECOMES HIM

Developer Rebellion is also responsible for the other *2000AD* game *Judge Dredd: Dredd Versus Death* (Issue 21, 6.6) and the forthcoming *Sniper Elite*. Hopefully, with the experience gained from both those brutal war-themed and futuristic beasts, *Rogue Trooper* will end up being a real doozy.



↑ If an enemy sees you then you'll have to think quick. The AI, as you can probably tell from this shot, will come down on you with a lot of force.

Incoming

All the essential news, exclusive previews and latest screenshots from the wonderful world of Xbox

P016 MONSTERS' BALL
New *Doom 3* screens and id Software update.

P016 MONKEY MAGIC
Super Monkey Ball is coming to Xbox!

P017 SKATE OR DIE
Hands-on playtest of Tony Hawk's latest adventure.

P017 BIZARRE
The Xbox Files! Weird stories from the world of Xbox.

P019 BOOTY CALL
Atari reveals *Sid Meier's Pirates!* is on course for Xbox.

P021 SKOOL DAZED
Think *you* had a hard time at school? Check out *Obscure*.

Xbox World Cup

FIFA creates brand new World Cup championship, exclusively for Xbox

AUGUST 19, 2004. We're sat in a behemoth of a conference centre in Leipzig, Germany. Before us are top representatives from Microsoft, *FIFA* and EA; behind them a giant video screen that's about to announce the biggest shake-up to virtual football gaming since the arrival of the fair (video)game itself.

After a wurlitzer of noise and flashing lights, the 'goaly' trinity of companies announce that, to coincide with *FIFA 2005*'s October launch, it'll be launching a brand new World Cup Championship - the Interactive World Cup (IWC). This isn't some flim-flam online competition, nor is it a one-off to promote *FIFA 2005* going Live - this is the bona fide, *FIFA*-authorised and organised World Cup. It just so happens you can be in it!

Running between October and December, the IWC will be an annual event, playing host to gamers from around the world, until finally the heat leaders are whittled down and the two finalists meet for a head-to-head in Zurich.

The prize is being kept under wraps, but it'll be "a prize everyone will want" according to EA representative Jan Bolz. And, with a few shiny silver cups just off stage with the Xbox symbol lovingly engraved on each, it doesn't take much imagination to guess what he's hinting at.

When it comes to the platforms supporting the IWC, we have to ask the question. Is it Xbox-exclusive? "Oh yes," says *FIFA*'s Jerome Valcke. "The Xbox Live community is the largest and most impressive in the world. Plus, we are pleased to announce, Xbox is the official sponsor of the FIFA World Cup 2006." At this point the screen blazes to life again with yet more dazzling news.

So, on the eve of the latest instalment of the world's best-selling football game franchise, a few months after Live subscriptions top the 1 million mark, and soon after the Xbox retail price has dropped to £99, we're given our own World Cup. Like we said, it's not a fleeting tournament. It is *FIFA*'s game, and we're all invited.

FIFA INTERACTIVE WORLD CUP
© 2004 FIFA
2004
PRESENTED BY
EA SPORTS AND XBOX

"The IWC is Xbox-exclusive. The Xbox Live community's the largest and most impressive in the world"



P023 PARIAH EXPLODES
New screens and info on the shooter from *Unreal*'s creator.

P024 STREETS OF RAGE
Capcom is releasing a special *Street Fighter* compilation.

P024 TWO HITS TO WHO?
Pool's heading to Xbox Live, and there's real cash to be won!

P026 TAKE THE BAIT
Shark's Tale and *Mercenaries* shots, hanging in our Gallery.

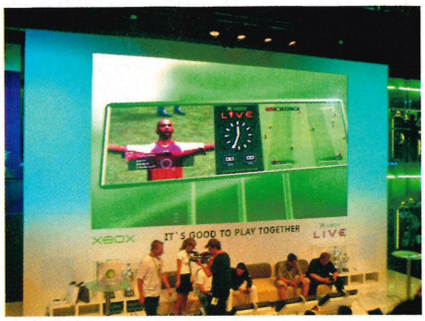
P027 SUPER TROOPERS
New *Star Wars: Republic Commando* shots just for you.

P028 SHHH!
The Mole has all the latest gossip you need to know.

P029 KNOW YOUR FOE
Halo 2 multiplayer icons, plus a solution for dull road trips.

P032 FIFA INTERVIEW
Why *FIFA 2005* is going to rock your world this autumn.

P036 DRIVE BY
Tweak tons of cars and race them in *Forza Motorsport*.



↑ Gamers get a hands-on with the new Live *FIFA*.



↑ Microsoft, *FIFA* and EA celebrate the launch.

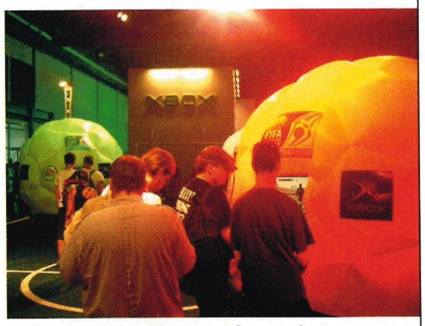


↑ The final will be held on screens like these!



↑ 7am and the announcement begins.


↑ Lothar Mattheus and Andreas Brehme.



↑ The *FIFA* World Cup is Xbox-exclusive.



THE INSIDE VIEW

MITCH KOCH
VP OF MICROSOFT'S WORLDWIDE SALES

FOOTBALL IS, for many, the most meaningful game in the world, so being able to create the same fever you'd associate with the real thing in the environment of your Xbox is incredible.

It will ultimately bring to light the greatest interactive footballer in the world. We're very excited, because following the debut tournament we will all know, for certain, who the greatest interactive player is. I suspect, in the realm of the Xbox, it will rival the real game for the feeling and passion it generates.

Everything about the IWC will capture the pizzazz of the real game and, while we're not having to concentrate on the infrastructure as much as the actual World Cup, we're giving it everything we have. It will be a spectacle.



THE EXPERT VIEW

JEROME VALCKE
EUROPEAN HEAD OF MARKETING AND TV FOR FIFA

WE'RE PROUD to welcome the IWC under the *FIFA* umbrella. We are aware of the great trust and faith people put into our brand, which is why we want to work with companies that will help to extend and strengthen it. In EA and Microsoft I believe we have found that.

The football federations of every country involved are behind it, but the IWC's definitely a *FIFA* event. It'll adhere to *FIFA* rules, and in the coming months we hope to see every *FIFA 2005* fan with Live participating to find our first champion. We may even extend the IWC to involve other World Cups in an interactive way. The Women's, Indoor, and Junior World Cups are all a possibility. I think it is going to be a huge success for both *FIFA* and Xbox.

OUR VIEW

OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE
TO CUT TO THE CHASE AND TELL IT LIKE IT IS

THIS BOLT from the blue has us buzzing, but there are a few issues we'd like to see sorted, especially as this is a 'World' cup. Portugal still don't have Xbox Live. Some Brazilians, meanwhile, *do* have a bootleg Live service, presumably via US servers and the inside of a pocket calculator, but the exclusion of premier footying nations from an interactive version of the world's premier footy event needs fixing.

Until then, it looks very much to be a European event (let's not even *think* about the first cup going to Yanks). The Xbox exclusivity, *FIFA*'s vision for accepting games as more than just a pastime, EA's Live commitment and Microsoft's online clout could make this the very best online tourney. Back of the net!

STOP PRESS
Xbox Now £99.99

MICROSOFT has slashed the price of Xbox so you can now pick one up for a cool £99.99. And at that price you should be buying them for fun or massive LAN parties! Hurry - go tell your friends and see page 046 for Church of Xbox.

THE SHAME: ALTHOUGH ANDREAS BREHME HELPED LAUNCH THE IWC, HE SAID HE WAS RUBBISH AT FIFA 2004. HIS KIDS ALWAYS BEAT HIM. AW, BLESS.

News Wire.....

Easily digestible nuggets of key Xbox information

Mega Sonic Action

Sega will release a *Sonic* bundle that pretty much features every *Sonic* game ever released. Dubbed *Sonic Mega Collection Plus*, the package will include seven *Sonic* games from the MegaDrive days, six Game Gear games and a *Sonic* museum filled with art, comics and more. It's shaping up to be a blue hedgehog's hibernation fantasy.

Brothers Delayed

Ubisoft's promising WWII tactical shooter *Brothers In Arms* isn't going to be storming any retail shops this year, we're sorry to report. At a recent showcase of the game in Paris, it was revealed that the game has now slipped into 2005. Hopefully we'll see it in the first few months, looking better than anyone could imagine thanks to the extra time.

KOTOR 3?

The mighty *Star Wars* developer and publisher LucasArts is going through a reshuffle at the moment, meaning the loss of a few positions. It's been reported that a small team working on an unannounced third *Knights of the Old Republic* title was part of the removed dead wood. Interestingly, coding honours on the upcoming *Episode III* game seem to have been farmed out to The Collective, who worked on the excellent *Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb* (Issue 14, 9.0).

MechAssaulted

Day 1 Studios is pushing hard to get the American version of *MechAssault 2: Lone Wolf* released before the end of the year. But while the developer is aiming for a late December launch across the pond, it looks like we may have to wait a few extra months. In the meantime, check out our Exclusive Access feature in Issue 27 to remind yourself just how good it's looking.



↑ You'll be barking at the moon if you play this in the dark.

Official Xbox Magazine PLAYED IT

ON THE DISC

ONLY ON XBOX

Fruit of the Doom

Teasing new screens from id's monster shooter

THE PC VERSION has finally launched to rave reviews, but when can we expect the beefed-up Xbox version? Well, getting an ETA is harder than getting *Halo 2* single-player details out of Bungie!

In a recent interview, id CEO Todd Hollenshead couldn't say for sure if it was coming out this year, as a lot of play balancing has to be done. "Done when it's done" still seems to be the official line.

Since the PC game's release, id has begun designing its next game but, interestingly, it'll have nothing to do with *Doom 3* (missions packs will be out-sourced), *Quake 4* (Raven Software's handling this) or *Return to Castle Wolfenstein* (a sequel's in development but not at id). Hollenshead let slip that it will fall in the horror/action pigeon hole and it will be a brand new franchise for the studio. Don't expect more details any time soon though; next-gen consoles are being tipped for this fledgling monster.



↑ Is that a mini-gun or are you pl... Oh, you've heard that one.

EA signs superstar DJ Paul Oakenfold to pump out banging tunes for GoldenEye: Rogue Agent

Kingdom on Fire

Is 2D the new 3D?

PROBABLY not, but that hasn't stopped SNK from announcing a *Kingdom Of Fighters 2000/2001* double pack for Xbox. The retro fighters have been squashed onto one disc for release this October at the cool price of £20. Look for a review next issue.



↑ Get your joystick dusted: 2D is back (kind of)!



↑ The apes have escaped Nintendo and are free to run wild on Xbox.

Bananarama

Super monkey brains

SO FAR SEGA'S comedy monkey puzzler has only seen release on GameCube, but Sega has confirmed to *Official Xbox Magazine* that the chimp's coming to Xbox in *Super Monkey Ball Deluxe*. The new title will feature 300 stages: 114 from *Super Monkey Ball*, 140 from *Super Monkey Ball 2* and 46 *Deluxe*-exclusive boards. That's a lot of bananas to collect.

But that's not all you get. *Deluxe* will also include a new Challenge mode, integrating varying skill settings (beginner, advance, expert) into one fluid learning curve rather than breaking them up into independent settings. You'll also get an enhanced story mode, featuring stages from the two GameCube games. All 12 party games from *Super Monkey Ball 1* and *2* will also be included. Amusement Vision, the team responsible for the original arcade releases, is supervising development and a release is penned in for early 2005.

Underground, Overground, Wheelin' free...

The Concrete king returns for more Thug lovin'

Official Xbox Magazine PLAYED IT

THUG (Issue 24, 8.6) refreshingly reinvented the *Pro Skater* series and, now into its sixth incarnation, Tony Hawk's tomfoolery title is back bigger and better than ever.

Keeping in line with last year's game, *THUG2* grinds the straight rail of a strong underlying story mode, featuring all your favourite rolling reprobates. After getting kidnapped by Hawk and cohort Bam Margera, your character is enlisted on their wild World Destruction Tour. Taking in various skate meccas around the world, the tour kicks off in Boston where your pubescent punk is presented with a series of skill-based/exploration tasks. Vital to progress the story, these range from wacky races and decapitating statues to character unique challenges from the Birdman himself via text message. There's a massive amount of freedom on offer (hop off your board whenever you like), and your character, board and skate parks are all completely customisable once again.

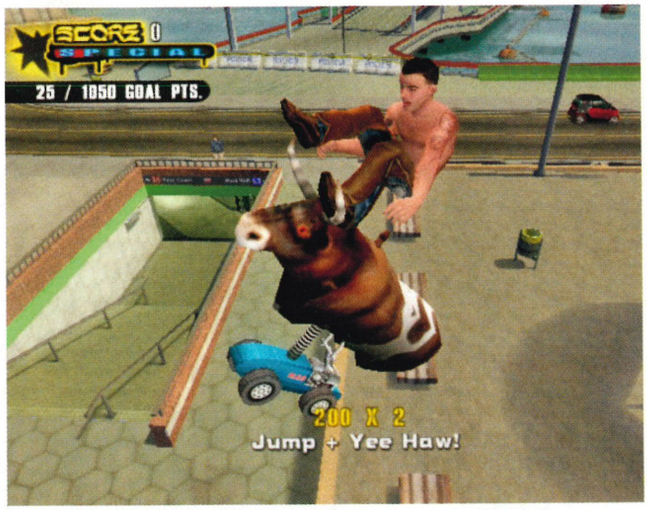
If the story all gets a bit much, the Classic mode revisits all the original locations from the *Pro Skater* series (plus obviously tons of new ones), so players can take new characters to new heights in games of S-K-A-T-E and Secret Tape. Grab your board and hit the streets because *THUG2* looks set again to push the innovation of extreme sports titles. Check out the full review when it grinds into next month's issue.



↑ The words 'over the top' have been given new meaning in *THUG2*.



↑ He had a board there when we took it!



↑ Bull-riding is the new skateboarding. We'd love to try this once.

NovaLogic's first-person shooter Black Hawk Down has been delayed until March 2005

BIZARRE Weird goings-on from the world of Xbox

Hear No Evil

Half-Life 2 developer Valve somehow managed to release the entire dialogue of its shooter (plot twists and all) to the web. The file was somehow buried deep within preview builds of *Counter-Strike: Source* for PC. That'll be red faces all round, then. But then, you have to ask yourself why someone looking forward to the release of the game would want to spoil it for themselves by listening to the dialogue from start to finish. You have to wonder about some people...





Rock Bottom

Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson of tight pants fame will not play the lead role in the upcoming *Doom* movie, but that doesn't mean you won't see him in the movie version of id's satanic shooter. Apparently he might pop up as a sergeant instead. We should know soon enough who *will* take the lead role of Doomguy, as a script is almost finished that id is happy with.

ON XBOX 2...

The web is running wild with Xbox 2 speculation

MICROSOFT hasn't officially announced one single thing about the next-generation Xbox, but that hasn't stopped the internet printing stories loosely based on inside leaks and rumours. Some are laughable while others may turn out to be true. But take everything you read about the next Xbox with a vat of salt until Microsoft officially unveils the console and begins to publicly talk specs and launch dates. Microsoft doesn't comment on rumours, so you'll usually see something like "Microsoft hasn't made any announcements regarding the next generation, so it's far too early to speculate about specifics." Fair enough - you don't hear Sony openly talking about its next system yet do you?

Microsoft's XO event was being touted as the place to see an announcement according to low-budget websites. We sat back and watched them all in a lather about it, knowing all along that there wasn't going to be an X04 event. If we didn't know any better we would have printed the rumour, like others out there. But we'd rather wait and talk about the next Xbox when there's actually something to talk about. The International Consumer Electronic Show in January 2005 is the next expo rumoured to see the console's unveiling and this one we can believe. Especially as this was where Gates debuted Xbox back in 2001.

Company CEOs constantly let slip that game 'X' will be remade for the next-gen. We know we'll see more of *Colin McRae Rally*, *Mortal Kombat*, almost every EA game and *Project Gotham Racing*, but the latest project tipped for Xbox 2 comes from American McGee and movie director George A Romero: *City of the Dead*.

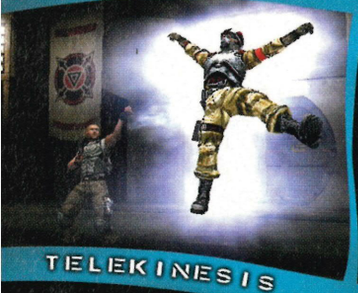


↓ A game by George A Romero? We can't wait!

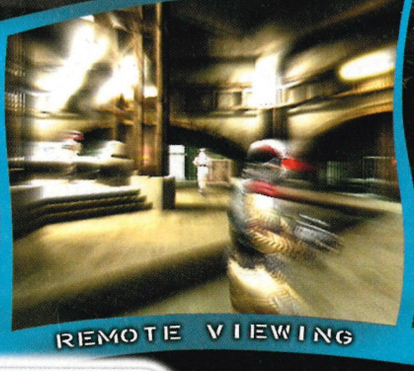
BLESS YOU: CHIMPANZEES, GORILLAS AND ORANG-UTANS ALL CATCH COLDS, BUT MONKEYS DON'T.

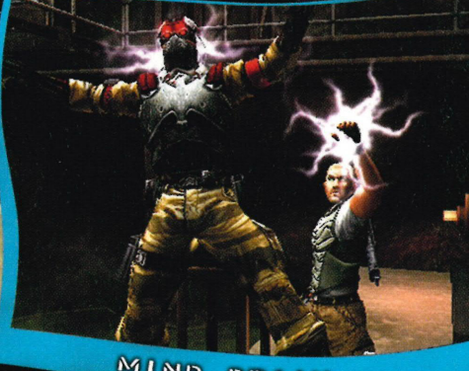
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XBOX

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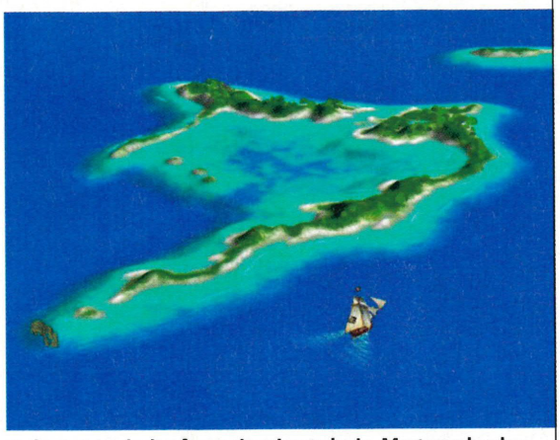
Psi-Ops: The Mindgate Conspiracy © 2003 Midway Amusement Games, LLC. All rights reserved. PSI-OPS, THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY, MIDWAY

Buried Treasure

An online pirate game worth its weight in booty

SID MEIER'S PIRATES! remake for Xbox was originally supposed to be unveiled at E3 this year (See Mole Issue 30), but the announcement sunk without a trace at the US videogame trade show. Atari waited a whole three months to officially let the cat out of the bag but we welcomed the news with a broadside salute. Why? Because Sid Meier is a gaming luminary along the lines of Peter Molyneux - he just doesn't talk it up as much. Meier has been responsible for classics such as *F-19 Stealth Fighter, Gunship* and *Civilisation* as well as the original *Pirates!* back in 1987.

As a pirate captain in the 17th-century Caribbean, you must gather enough fortune and fame to become the most feared pirate in history. The high seas are yours to explore and, as your reputation and skills grow, so will the size of your crew and your ability to take on larger ships. *Sid Meier's Pirates!* is currently slated to launch next spring. More soon.



↑ Lost at sea isn't a funny situation to be in. Must row harder.

"Sid Meier is a gaming luminary along the lines of Peter Molyneux"

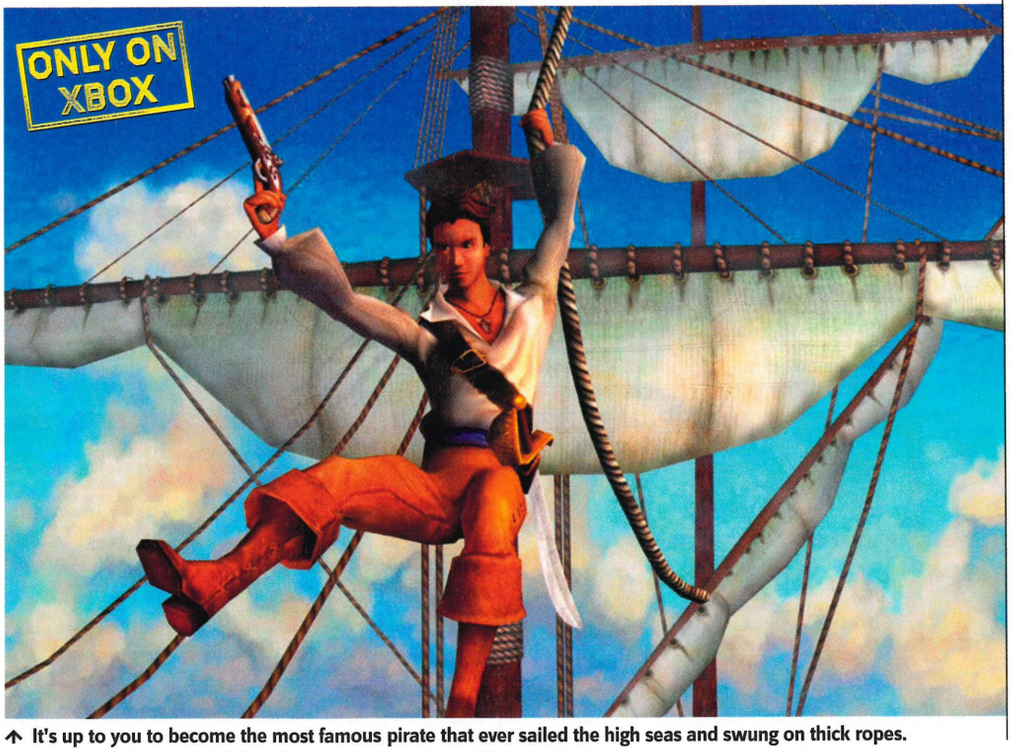


↑ Build the biggest battleship you can and crush the enemy.

Live The Dream

MULTIPLAYER options confirmed include a Vs mode, where you'll be able to take on Jolly Rogers head to head. The game will also "take advantage of many Xbox Live capabilities" says Atari. Hopefully we won't have to wait long to find out what they are.





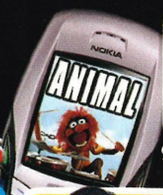
↑ It's up to you to become the most famous pirate that ever sailed the high seas and swung on thick ropes.

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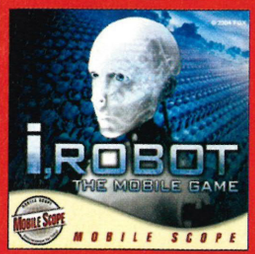


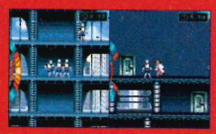
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In the role of Space Warrior 3167, your mission is to exterminate the evil invaders and bring peace back to the earth. Make good use of your laser gun to proceed in the different levels of adventures. You may also discover the secrets of Rosswell Incident and the Egyptian Pyramids. The mysterious space is waiting for your exploration!

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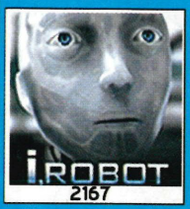


The exploration on Mars has triggered a war between the aliens and human beings! Kenji the Space Chivalry is determined to fight against these evil aliens. Absorbing storyline in colorful graphics offer you the most thrilling shooting excitement.

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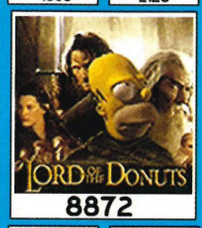

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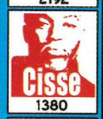

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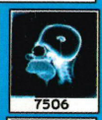

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8903



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1371


7506



2126


4222



9083


2366


6649



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2319 Britney Spears *Outrageous* ★
8954 Busted *Air Hostess*
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1732 Christina Milian *Whatever You..* ★
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0754 Darude *Sandstorm*
8568 Dido *White Flag*
2301 Dizzee Rascal *Stand Up Tall*
7582 Eamon *I Love Them Hoes*
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Official Xbox Magazine EXCLUSIVE SCREENS

Official Xbox Magazine PLAYED IT



↑ Influences of *Buffy, Evil Dead, Silent Hill* and *Scooby-Doo* appear in *Obscure*. And shotguns, don't forget shotguns.

Slaughter High

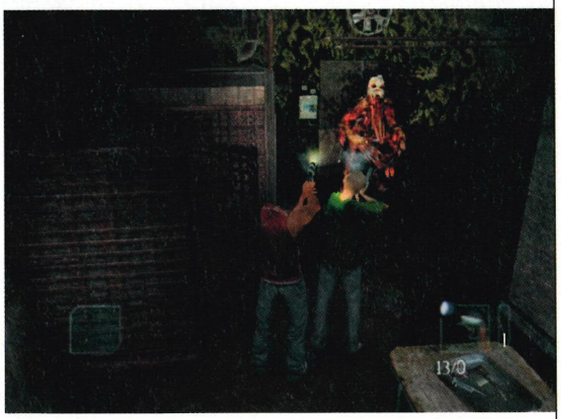
And you thought getting detention was bad...

THINK *BUFFY*, think *Scream*, think *Silent Hill* and think bucketfuls of intestines. Dress it all up in a school uniform from hell and that's *Obscure*.

The plot revolves around five students trying to undercover the strange goings-on at their school. We were immediately struck by the game's cinematic beauty (and copious amount of head bludgeoning). The characters move and act realistically, and at times there was a real blurring of the lines between watching a game and watching real actors.

The characters can work independently of each other, and you'll get to control each and utilise their skills (lockpicking, hacking, better strength etc), but you can also work in pairs. Either select the CPU to control one or plug in an extra pad and play with a mate. Together you'll be able to reach higher places, solve harder puzzles and fight stronger enemies. But if a character dies, they're gone for good and you'll be left a man down. It's up to you to not only solve the mystery, but judge who's best for each job.

The evil in the school thrives on darkness and you'll spend a lot of your time relying on your torch and wits just as much as you would your gun. And, with stunning directional lighting, genuine shocks and a plot to rival all but the most complex *Scooby-Doo* episodes, we could be looking at a potentially dazzling new entry into the survival horror genre. We'll have a full, blood-splattered review next issue.

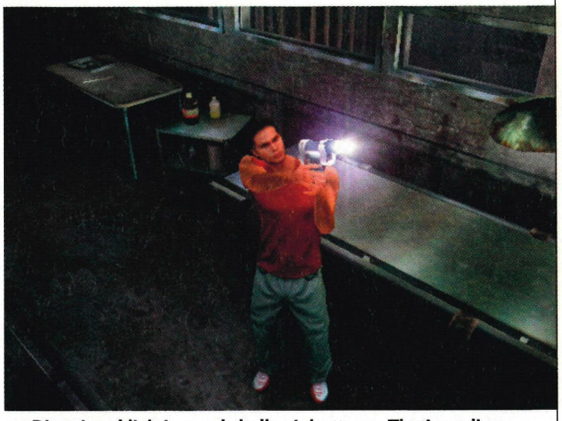


↑ We've no idea what it is but it appears near the beginning.

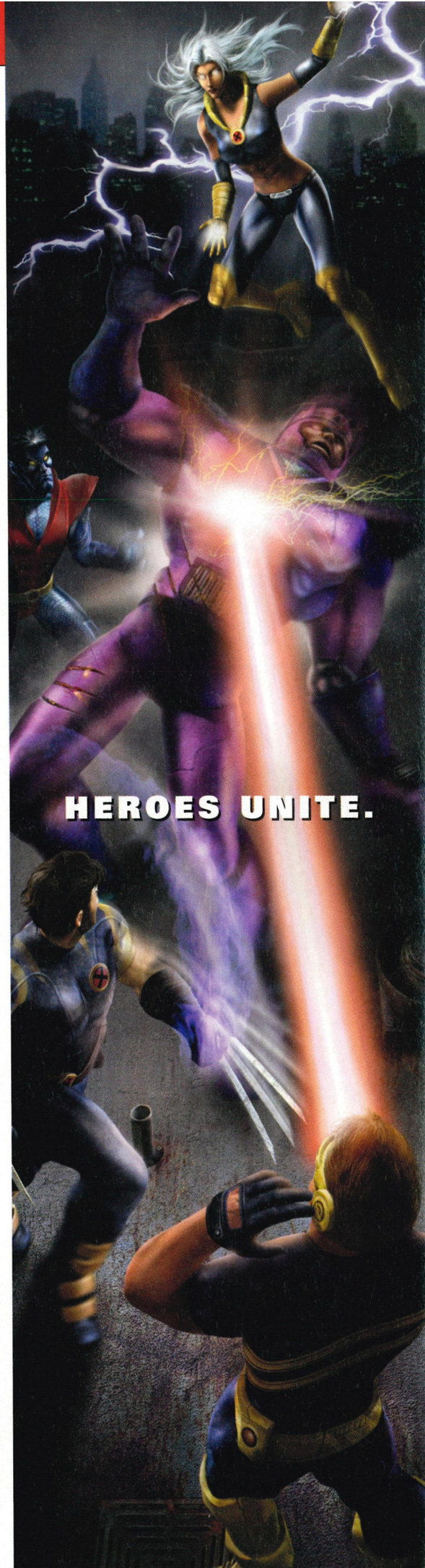
"If a character dies, they're gone for good. You'll be a man down"



↑ Kill monsters before they get too close, okay?



↑ Directional lighting and shell suit bottoms. That's realism.



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Time Bomb

In 16 hours the clock stops ticking...

THE CONCEPT OF *Pariah* is devastatingly simple. It's the future, you've crashlanded on Earth (now a toxic wasteland) with a fellow passenger who's infected with a highly contagious pathogen. The authorities know about the crash and outbreak, and in 16 hours' time an orbital platform will initiate a biohazard containment procedure – a 50-megaton yield, detonated above sea level, to cleanse the contamination. You've got to escape.

Just casting your eyes across the latest shots of *Pariah* is enough to give you goosebumps. From the makers of *Unreal Tournament*, this panic-soaked FPS will have you fighting against impossible odds for the ultimate prize of staying alive. The enemy AI is based upon a vastly improved *Unreal* AI system – not only will enemies communicate with each other regarding the best way to obliterate you, but they'll learn your tactics, allowing them to set up decoys, dummies, and lure you into false senses of security.

Pariah's tag line is 'How long will you survive?' and that's exactly what the aim of the game is. You can't go all gung-ho; you'll have to learn the art of survival, improvising weapons and outsmarting your enemies. You can even use the directional sound and lighting to track them down. Stealth will take just as much of a role as blasting holes in skulls.

Online the game promises even more, with uploadable custom weapons and custom-built vehicles all adding to the tension. And with that lovely Havok engine providing all the necessary exploding environments and flying body parts, this could provide some seriously compulsive gaming. The clock's ticking, the plague's spreading, and you have got a horde of enemies on your tail. Now run!

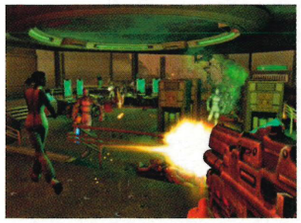
"The Havok engine provides all the necessary flying body parts"

Official Xbox Magazine EXCLUSIVE SCREENS

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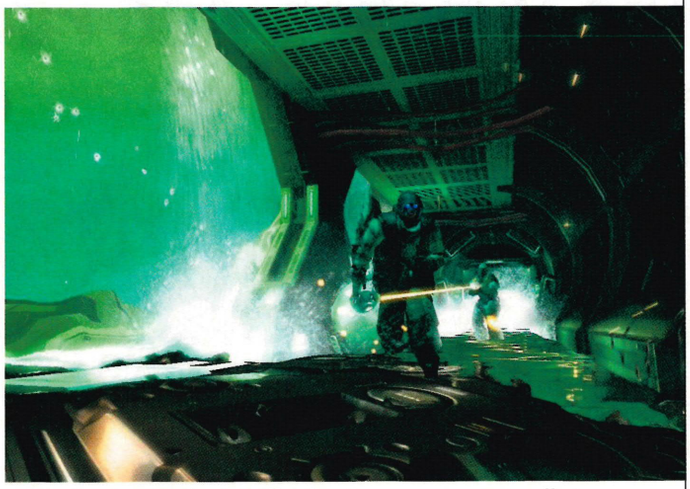
↑ Gaze in awe as those gruesome ragdoll physics kick in and send infected corpses flying everywhere.



↑ Don't shoot the pretty lady!



↑ Aim for his neck, his neck!



↑ The Havok engine lends itself well to those gorgeous water effects.



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News Wire.....

Easily digestible nuggets of key Xbox information

Outer Spaced

First-person shooter and alien-walloping gun-fest *Area 51* has been delayed. The game, published by Midway, is set deep under the fictional (or is it?) US alien research facility (or is it?) and sees you as the last survivor (or are you?) of an alien virus outbreak (or is it?). *Area 51* was due for release at the end of the year now looks set for an early 2005 release (or is it?).

Bigger Boat

A game based on Steven Spielberg's classic *Jaws* movie is in development by Appaloosa to coincide with the film's 30th anniversary next summer. But rather than seeing you chasing the Great White off the shores of Amity Island, you actually get to play as the infamous shark. Underwater oil miners are driving you up the coral wall and it's up to your big teeth to stop the environmental rot.

Hills Have Eyes

Silent Hill 4: The Room may only have just been completed (review, page 074) but the fifth instalment of the twisted series is already in the design phase. But don't worry, it's not turning into an EA Sports annual franchise. You won't see this title for a year or two at the earliest as it's being created from the ground up for next-generation consoles. Imagine the sickening visuals the next Xbox will be capable of. The mind boggles...

Hands-Free

Nyko Technologies has released a nifty little gadget called the SpeakerCom for Xbox Live. Basically it's a hands-free piece of kit that plugs into your Xbox controller and it doubles as both speaker and microphone leaving your head free to sweat. Look for a review in Hardware in a coming issue.



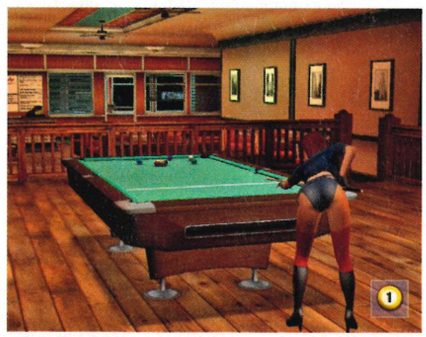
↑ "You see that shot, boy?" 'No, but I can see you've got a real ear wax problem."

The Hustler

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to the pool...

FRUSTRATED by the lack of competition with snooker and pool on Xbox? Want to hustle? You need *Pool Shark 2*. We could mention the long list of characters, or the way the baize responds to wear and tear, or the trick shots, or the fact you'll be able to win new balls, tables, cues and clothing to download... but we're really excited by the hustling.

Aware that gambling is one of the main hooks of pool, publisher Zoo Digital is offering £1000 to the best pool player online. Using fake cash, you'll have to hustle other players online and beat as many as you can. Whoever accrues the most virtual cash after a certain period of time will win the real cash. If you think you've got what it takes, put your pre-order in now and wait for the November release!



↑ Use underhand tactics to put other players off.

"Whoever accrues the most virtual cash will win the real £1000 cash!"

Even before its release, a sequel to BC is already in the pipeline. Microsoft clearly has confidence in the game, then!

Teenage Kicks (And Punches. And Fireballs)

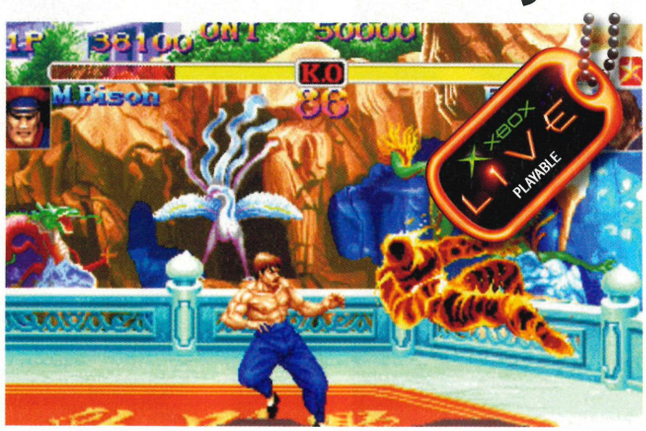
Everyone's favourite fighter turns stroppy teenager

IT'S WITH FOND affection we can look back at the days of mercilessly scrounging 10p pieces down the local arcades, because if ever there was an arcade machine to turn gamers into desperate kleptomaniacs, *Street Fighter II* was it.

Following on from the ace *Capcom vs SNK* (Issue 14, 7.7), and in celebration of the 15th birthday of the street scrapper (plus its countless variations), Capcom is releasing a special version of the game. *Street Fighter Anniversary Edition* is bursting at the seams with tons of juicy game modes, including Normal, Championship, World Championship, Hyper, Turbo and Super Turbo. Of course all of these are fully online-enabled with leaderboards for maximum bragging rights. Look out for the game tiger-punching its way into a review next issue.



↑ M Bison is still as tough as before.



↑ Fire attacks were born out of *SFII*'s legacy, so pay tribute to them online.



↑ Apollo's hair was way cooler back in the '70s, although it was a nightmare to dry after each fight.



↑ Everyone starts somewhere. Rocky rolls with the punches.



↑ "I'll give you 'Pick up the soap' fool!"

Boxing Clever

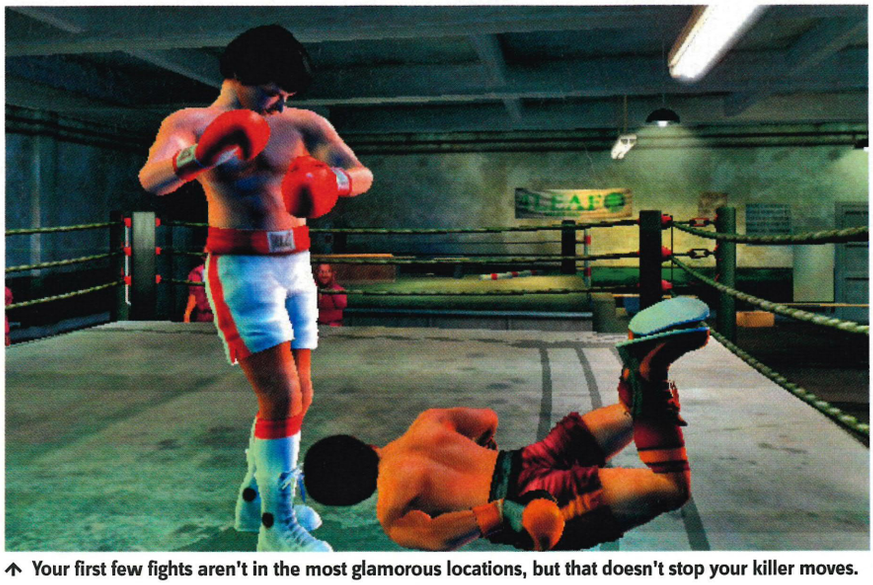
XBOX LIVE PLAYABLE

The king of the ring hooks in for round two

LET'S PULL NO PUNCHES: we can't wait for *Rocky Legends*. As soon as those familiar trumpets kick in, childhood memories of running up hills and chasing chickens come flooding back, along with the socking sentimentalities that accompanied the fantastic *Rocky* (Issue 09, 9.0). If you've spent as much time as we have whacking seven bells out of your mates, you'll appreciate it when we say *Legends* is shaping up to be, well, truly Legendary.

The holy grail of *Legends* is the all-new Career mode and, if you checked out our Exclusive Interview in Issue 31, you'll know players can now beat their way to the top as any of the four favourite characters from the films. Join Rock as he fights his way from the streets to sold-out stadiums, Apollo as a glitzy show fighter heading for the big time, Clubber Lang sneaking up the rankings from the inside (literally - he's doing bird), while Ivan Drago proves he rules the Red Army by flexing his military muscles. Who said the Cold War was pointless?

Obviously *Legends* features tons of other characters (40 in all, plus hidden unlockables - go Mickey!) and 20 plush venues. Multiplayer is back and better than ever via Exhibition, Tournament and two-player Vs Training modes and should boast the best buddy bashing around. Oh, and there's full Live play. Yes! Full review next issue.



↑ Your first few fights aren't in the most glamorous locations, but that doesn't stop your killer moves.

Feel the burn

There are tons of training regimes to build up your fighter's stats. Conquer these and you'll be beefier than Aberdeen Angus.



Tony Duke encourages the Red Star Drago to hop to it and skip.



Clubber pushes Drago to crunch harder with badass insults.



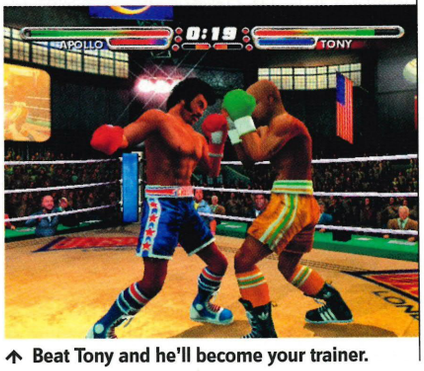
Mickey is master of the bag. Listen to him to learn combos.



↑ Sock it to him to build up your stats.



↑ Rocky goes for the easy sucker punch.



↑ Beat Tony and he'll become your trainer.

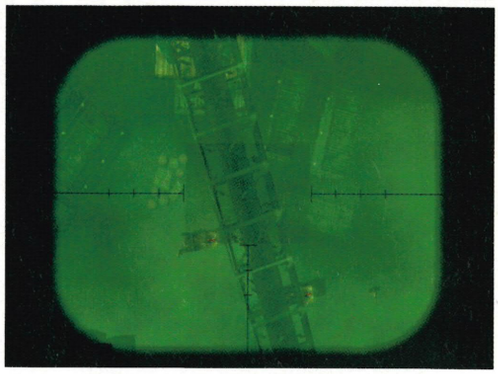
LOCATION LOCATION: OF ALL THE NEW RINGS ON OFFER, WE LOVE THE LV. CASINO MOST WHERE APOLLO CREED MADE HIS LAST STAND. NOT SO LUCKY FOR HIM, THOUGH.

Mercenaries

DEVELOPER: **PANDEMIC** PUBLISHER: **LUCASARTS** RELEASE DATE: **FEBRUARY 2005**



↑ British ExOps contractor Jennifer Mui surveys the objective. That pesky crane needs teaching a lesson or two.



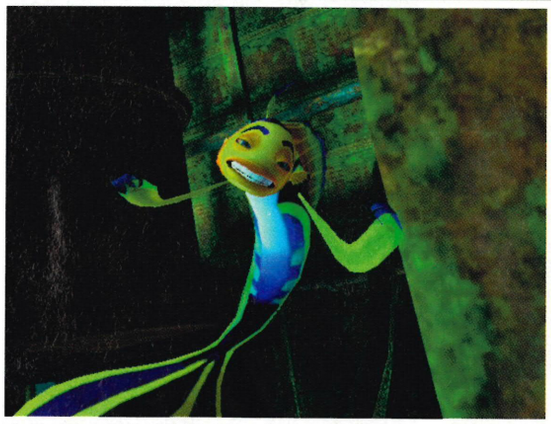
↑ The perspective switches to a live satellite feed so you can see where the airstrike you've ordered is going to hit.



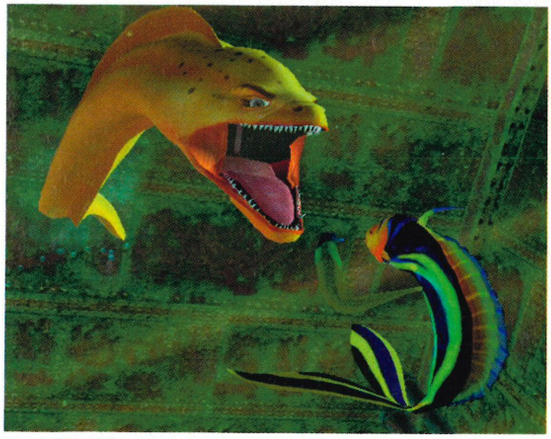
↑ No more crane, just lots of collateral damage and some pennies deposited in your Barclay's Junior Saver Account.

Shark's Tale

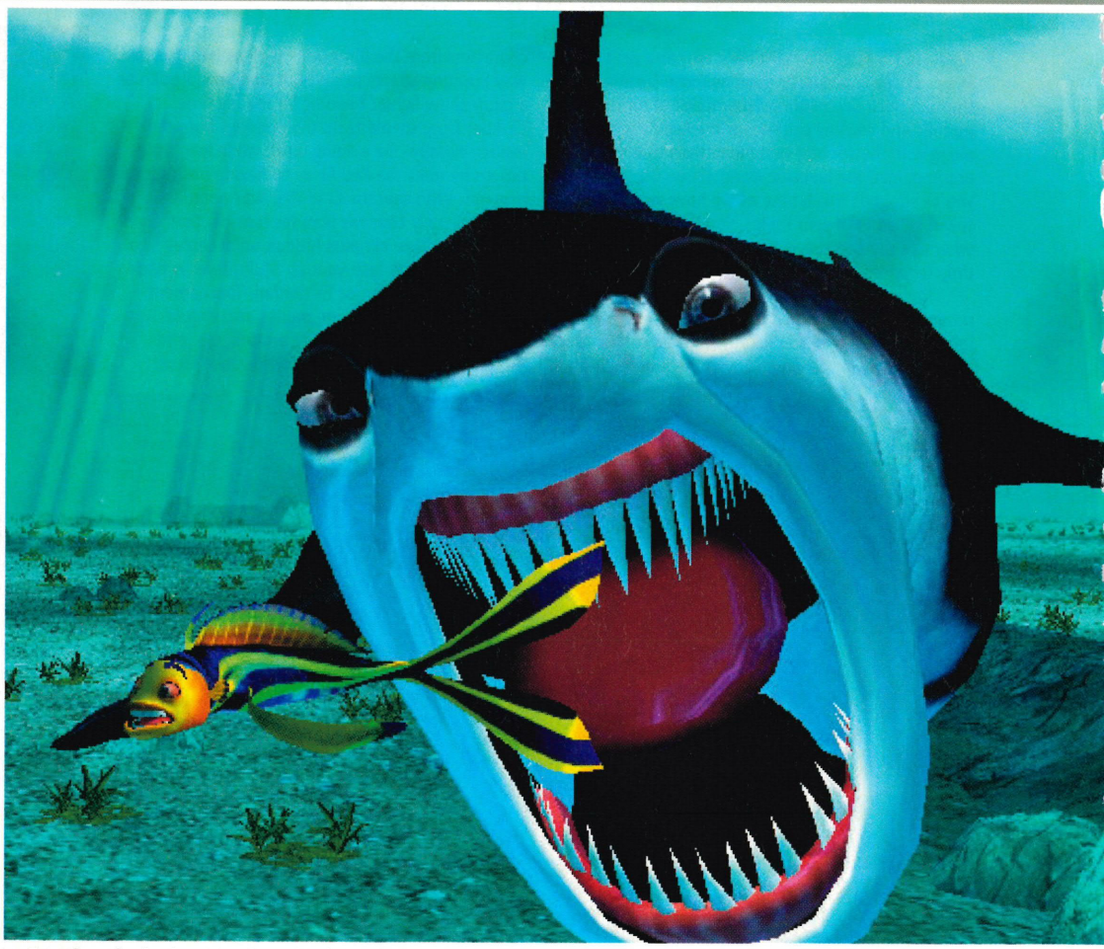
DEVELOPER: **EDGE OF REALITY** PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION** RELEASE DATE: **OCTOBER 2004**



↑ "In West Philadelphia I was born and raised, in the playground I spent most of my days, chillin' out, maxin', relaxin'..."



↑ Will Smith's character will meet all manner of fish eager to eat him. We hear he'll also have to dance to impress lady fish!



↑ Based on the forthcoming film, this fishy platformer sees *Finding Nemo* elements crossed with, of all things, *Dance:UK*.

Star Wars: Republic Commando

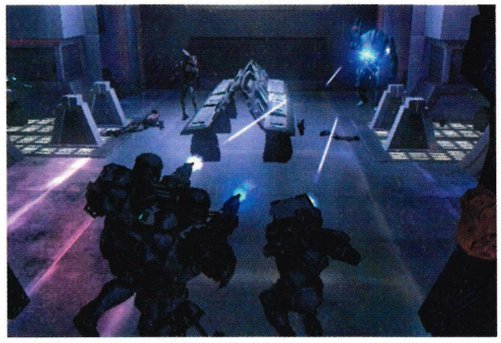
DEV: **LUCASARTS** PUB: **LUCASARTS** RELEASE: **FEBRUARY 2005**



↑ Control a squad of four commandos in LucasArts' stunning-looking tactical FPS. No Jedis – just strategy and shooting.



↑ Work as a unit to succeed in every mission, ranging from Genonosia to the forests of Wookie planet Kashyyyk.



↑ Before the clones turned into Stormtroopers they fought against the trade federation's massive droid army.

Forgotten Realms

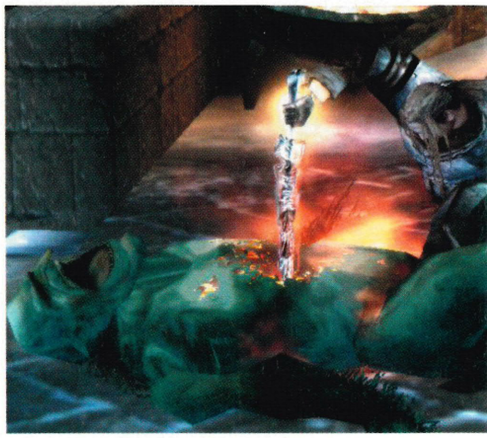
DEVELOPER: **STORMFRONT** PUBLISHER: **ATARI** RELEASE DATE: **AUTUMN 2004**



↑ *Forgotten Realms* will be a slash 'em up with guts. Discover your magic potential and fight awesome, terrifying enemies.



↑ He may look like Wolverine's pet moggy but chances are he won't want his belly tickled.



↑ A novel way of removing an appendix? No, just a spectacular death, and that we like.

THE MOLE

More Matrix and Batman games seem to be in the mix and there's an interesting twist for Tomb Raider

WANT MORE MATRIX?

After Atari launched *Enter The Matrix* (Issue 17, 8.5), it always said there'd be more *Matrix* games on the way. So far - nothing, but the hints do keep on coming. At a recent Atari press event in the US, a senior Atari rep was overheard saying to the US press, "We know the *Matrix* fans want more, we have a couple more *Matrix* stories in us." Do they?



↑ **Are two *Matrix* games better than one?**

Let's hope Pseudo Interactive manage to hit the spot with this one.

BATTY BOY

Electronic Arts loves its big movie licences and, following on from *Catwoman* (Issue 33, 7.8), comes rumours that the publishing giant is eyeing rights to make a game based on next summer's *Batman* film. No comment has come from the firm yet, but would it surprise you if another big-name movie was about to get the EA treatment? Didn't think so.

RIDGE REPLACER

Namco always has plans for just one more *Ridge Racer* title and the next game could be with us as soon as March 2005. But here's the twist: Namco won't actually be developing it. Word has it that the Canadian studio behind *Cel Damage* (Issue 2, 5.5) is taking over the reins under the guidance of the Japanese heavyweight developer instead.

TOMB GARDED

Toby Gard, the creator of Lara Croft, will work on the next *Tomb Raider* game with new developer Crystal Dynamics. So far Eidos is saying the game is PS2-only but, after the farce that was *Angel of Darkness*, anything can happen. Croft needs to make a major comeback and I think Xbox is the perfect place to do it.



← **We've yet to see a good *Batman* game!**



↓ **Lara Croft goes back to her roots.**

Dukes Of Hazzard: Return of the General Lee hits slight delay. Look out for the full review in next month's issue, on sale Thursday 07 October

Miami Vices

Vivendi snatches all the rights for a Scarface game

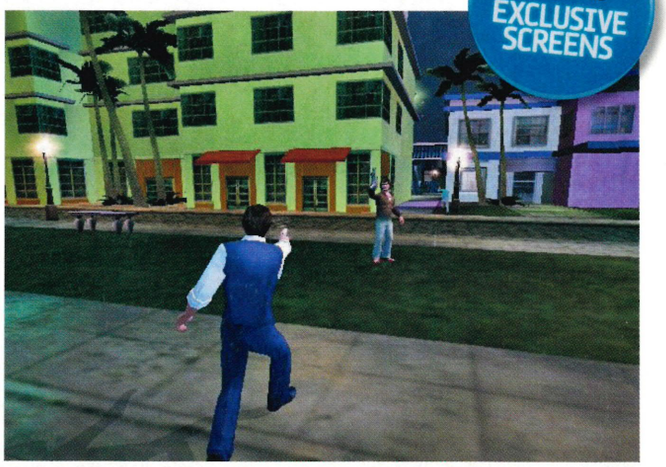
MIAMI'S UNDERWORLD is riddled with crime and it needs a boss. *Scarface* lets you step into the role of Tony Montana (played by Al Pacino in the movie) and flex your organised criminal muscles. We're not talking the freedom of *GTA* here but you will be able to curb crawl the likes of Miami, Florida Keys and the Bahamas in a similar third-person perspective.

Ask any crime boss about the things he does and he'll tell you it's only business. This will be reflected in the game, as you'll have to negotiate business deals or intimidate those who play hard to get. We like the sound of that.

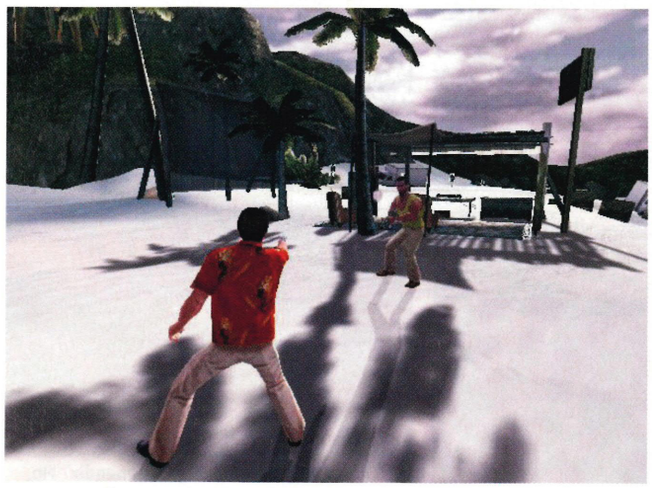
You'll also experience the explosive personality of Montana with something that's being called Blind Rage mode. Our favourite feature from the list has to be 'real time ocean wave simulation'. What on earth is all that about? *Scarface* is due for release next autumn and is being developed by Radical Games.

"Intimidate those who play hard to get"

Official XBOX Magazine EXCLUSIVE SCREENS



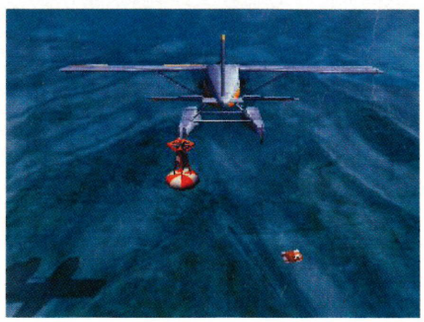
↑ **Shoot first, ask questions later. That's the way we do it in the office.**



↑ **It's not all sex on the beach. There's some killing to be done too.**



↑ **Look at that real-time wave simulation go!**



↑ **"Pull up! Pull up!"**

Hardware

If you can plug it into your Xbox, we'll feature it right here

The Ultimate Travel Pack

Company: Joytech | Cost: £39.99
Release: Out now | Tel: 01753 496707
www.joytech.co.uk

PICTURE THE SCENE. You're on a long haul drive to Skegness with the in-laws and your girlfriend's dad starts on about his allotment. Before you left you were in the middle of *Riddick*, just about to pluck Abbot's eyes from his skull, and you wish you could escape from all this horticulture. Well, now you can!

It's a little hefty (especially as a similar screen is available in the US that hooks over the passenger headrest), but on long journeys the Travel Pack is indispensable. Simply pop your Xbox on your lap (the carry case acts as a cushion for your legs), plug it into the cigarette lighter and you're laughing. The screen is sharp with a 160° viewing angle, so two people can play at once and both see the game.

The screen is fitted with integrated twin stereo speakers, plus handy four-way headphone sockets so everyone else doesn't have to hear you blasting aliens in the back seat. And if you fit your DVD playback kit to the front of your Xbox you'll be able to watch movies too! Some may argue that you could just as well buy a purpose-built portable games console, but they suck up batteries and can't play *Halo*. It may not be the most portable of peripherals, but bung it in your boot, whip it out on long journeys, and you'll never have to sit through tedious games of *I-spy* again.

SCORE 4/5





AND FINALLY...

Halo 2 Memory Test

Know your multiplayer icons before the competition

WE'RE GUESSING that, like us, you'll be spending a lot of time playing *Halo 2* multiplayer. So to give you a head start, here are the in-game icons that give you all the battlefield info you'll ever need. Dashboard icons are self-explanatory, while Friend Waypoints will appear over the heads of your team-mates. With these you'll always be able to see who's where and what situation they're in. Now turn to page 051 and let the *Halo 2* madness begin!

An exclusive heads-up on all *Halo 2* icons!

FRIEND WAYPOINTS

- Friend
- Friend Firing
- Friend Taking Fire
- Dead Friend

DASHBOARD

- Reload...
- Flag Away
- No Battery
- Low Ammo
- No Ammo
- No Grenades
- Low Battery
- Flag in Enemy Hands

CLAMMY HANDS: KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR NEXT MONTH'S HARDWARE SECTION, ESPECIALLY IF YOU SUFFER, LIKE GAV, FROM HAND JAM. WE RECKON WE'VE UNCOVERED THE PERFECT PLUG-IN SOLUTION!



PlayStation 2 XBOX NINTENDO PC CD-ROM GAME BOY ADVANCE



It's in the game.™

www.easports.co.uk/fifafootball

IT WASN'T MY FACE THAT MADE ME FAMOUS

Patrick Vieira



Out October





FLUID FOOTBALL

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↑ When everything goes to hell, the camera shifts in for an even juicier look at the action.



↑ Step-overs and drag backs are now the norm.



↑ Davids hasn't lost any of his flair after Euro 04.



↑ Vieira's still your rock in midfield.

Q&A FIFA 2005

Exclusive chit-chat with executive producer Bill Harrison

Dev: EA Canada	Pub: EA
Release: Oct 2004	Live: 2 players
Players: 1; 1-4	

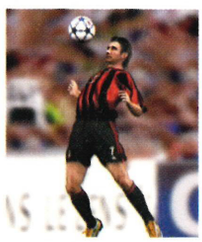
0 Percentage Complete 80 100

What can seasoned pros and *FIFA* fans expect?
To understand what *FIFA 2005* means this year, I think you have to understand what *FIFA 2005* stands for. We've got core values that we take very seriously, and it's important that the game is very approachable. It's intuitive and accessible but there needs to be depth too. There's a delicate balance there between allowing the player to play the game naturally and beautifully, and giving them the specific controls we want. Gameplay is our number one focus for *FIFA 2005*. Our inspiration this year has been in the realm of first touch.

Can you explain what first touch actually does?
It's simple: if the ball comes to you, just flick the Right thumbstick in the direction you wish the ball to travel, just as players do in reality. You can use it anywhere you want, and you will find it will reveal itself to you. There's no manual that will tell you how to use it, nor do you have to be a football expert.

It's also context-sensitive. You would look a right prat if you didn't turn into space when you've got two defenders on your back. So, in that case, you would try something a bit more inventive, which is directly related to the skill of your player.

Is it imperative that you use it, then? *FIFA* fans may find that a little strange if you do.
Not at all. You can play *FIFA* with two buttons if you like but you're bound to be beaten by somebody who knows the full repartee of moves. The beauty of first touch is that it takes minutes to learn but ages to master. You can use it in the very first match you play. It's right there as your side-kick. It's a mechanic - it's not necessary, but it's a lot of fun.



↑ The first touch feature is superb.

There are also many new management aspects in *FIFA 2005*'s career mode. Aren't you worried that this will detract from the chance to become champions on footballing merit alone?
No. There's a complete custom tournament editor. You can structure your own tournament like a season. You can decide the specifics of what abilities and constraints are placed on you, then play accordingly. You can mimic the premiership. Career mode gives you ability to look beyond just the Saturday afternoon match. You'll have to ask yourself what, as a manager, do I need to be doing on Tuesday to prepare for Saturday? It takes a step back and looks at football as a larger enterprise.

How many players will be able to play *FIFA Football 2005* online?
It's a one-on-one experience at the moment. We have experimented with four-a-side and up to 11-a-side; it's not that it's technologically challenging, it's just surprisingly difficult to play that way. Players would find it surprisingly difficult. It comes down to social triggers. If you and I were playing on a team against two other blokes, the co-ordination we need and how social the experience feels exposes itself to some of the 'not so nice' aspects of playing on Live. I could disconnect and leave you to take on two other guys. Similarly, if there's a network problem and one guy drops out, the game could be ruined.

Finally, is there anything you haven't told anyone yet about *FIFA 2005* that you can tell us?
The Xbox version is my personal favourite version. I've an engineering background and, with that in mind, as a piece of machinery, it is the best piece of hardware out there right now. I'm so appreciative of what it is Xbox can do. I'm proud of the quality of Xbox *FIFA* and I'm delighted that *FIFA 2005* is Live this year.



↑ The tactical element of free kicks returns.



↑ Dazzle online opponents with silky skills.

Unreal Championship 2: The Liandri Conflict

Midway scores a massive coup for first-person shooters

Dev: Epic Games	Pub: Midway
Release: Feb 2005	Live: 2-16 players
Players: 1; 2-4 Split	Players: 2-16 S.Link

0 Percentage Complete 60 100

IT'S A DEAL that's put Midway well and truly back on the map after the successful recent releases of both *The Suffering* (Issue 29, 8.0) and *Psi-Ops: The Mindgate Conspiracy* (Issue 33, 8.6). Thanks to a deal with *Unreal* creator Epic Games, Midway will publish the next three *Unreal* multiplayer-focused games, kicking off with *Unreal Championship 2: The Liandri Conflict* next February, which was originally Microsoft's. A further two games in the *Unreal Tournament* series are also covered by the deal.

"Midway gets it," says Mark Rein, vice president and co-founder, Epic Games. "It's hit right at the heart of gamers. Not only did it create many classics including *Defender* and *Mortal Kombat*, but it's making great new games. We think games like *Unreal Tournament* will fit in perfectly here. In our opinion Midway is doing the industry's best marketing and promotional campaigns and it will contribute strongly to the ongoing success of the *Unreal* franchise."

Midway will celebrate the deal by holding Gamer's Day in the US, which, naturally, we've already got our tickets for. In the next issue of *OXM* we'll bring you an exclusive interview with the Epic team as well as our hands-on impressions of the highly anticipated Xbox Live-enabled shooter, *Unreal Championship 2: The Liandri Conflict*. Don't miss it - *OXM* 35 is on sale 07 October.



↑ Brand new characters, weapons and Xbox Live options await you around every corner.

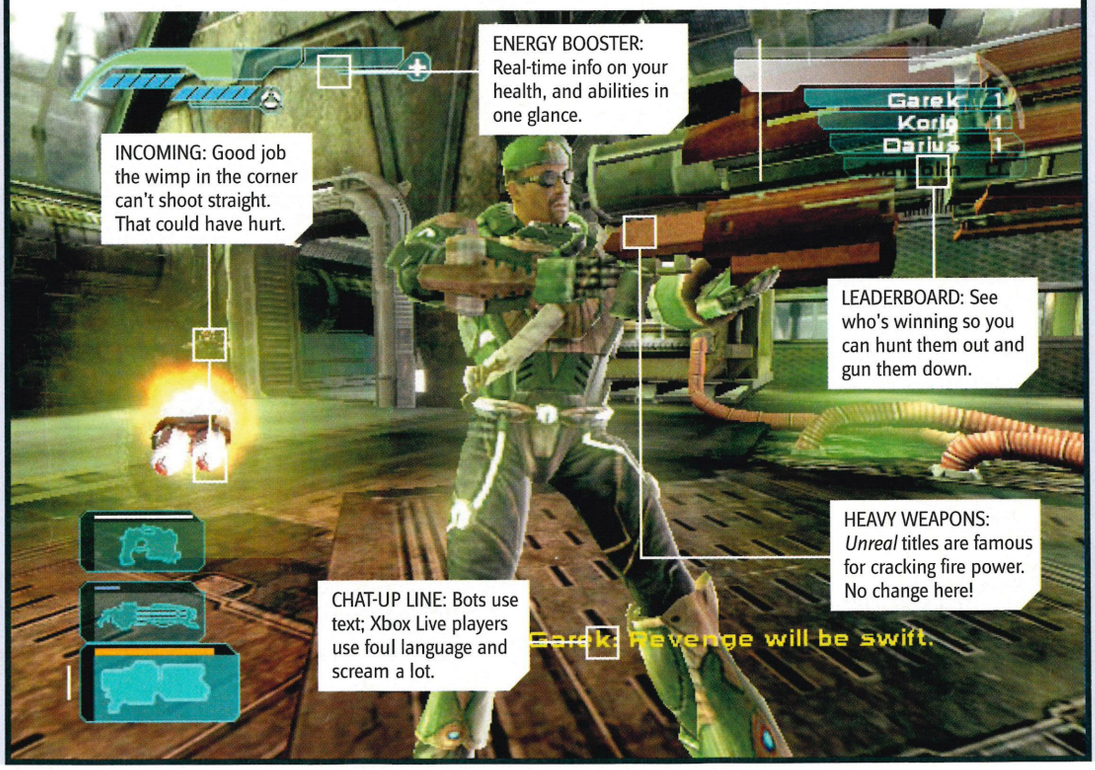
"Thanks to a deal with Epic, Midway will publish the next three Unreal multiplayer-focused titles"

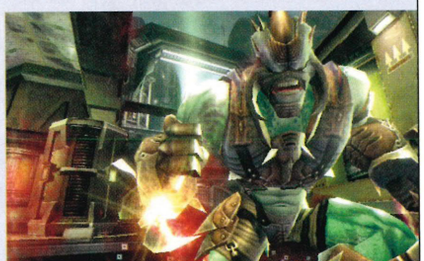


↑ Sing when you're winning!

WEAPONS OF MASS DISRUPTION

Take a breather and enjoy the surroundings whenever you can





↑ Nothing a shotgun to the face won't sort out.

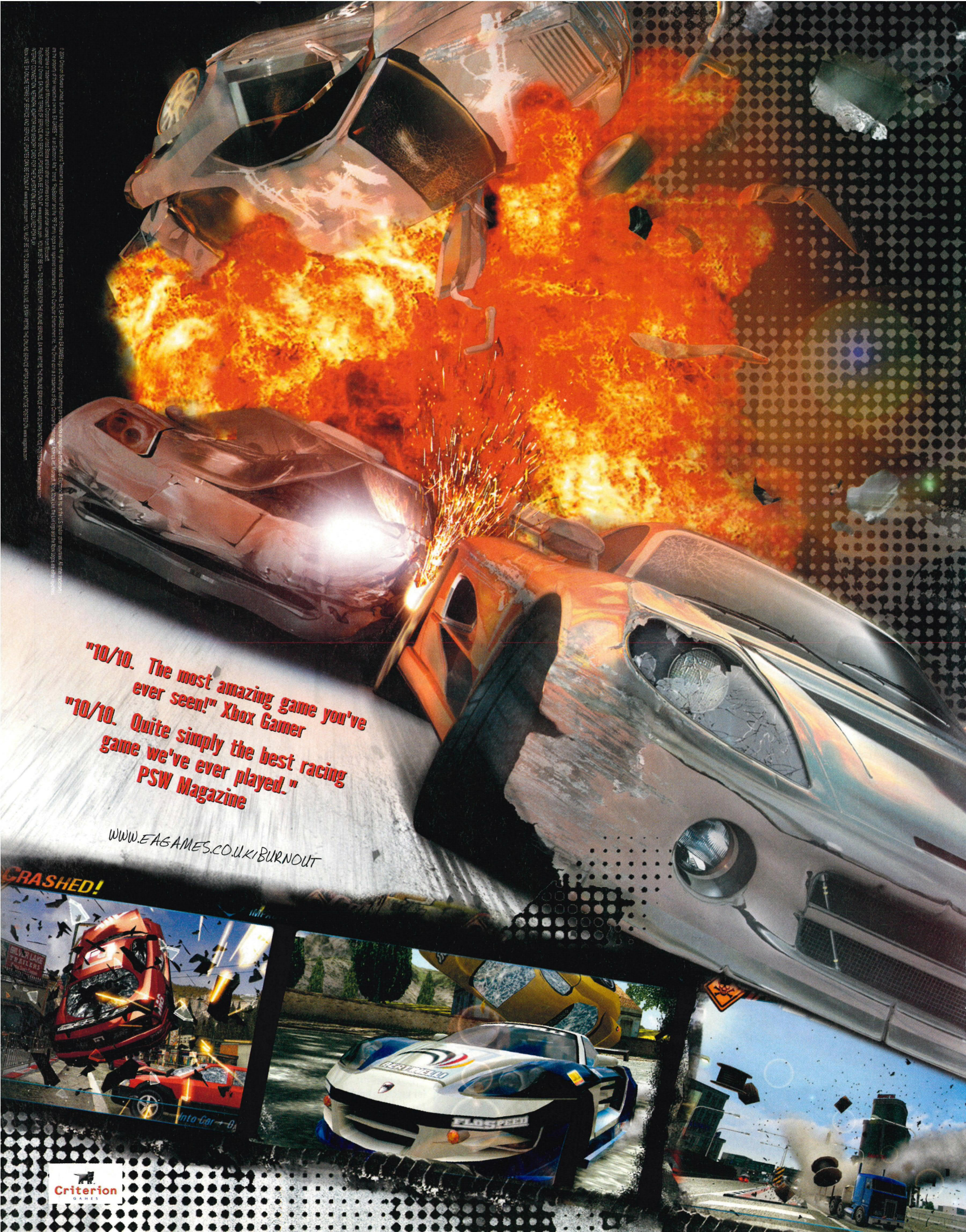


↑ Fire at Will, and anyone else you find alive.



↑ Check out the stunning new abilities.

NEED ANOTHER FIX? CHECK OUT UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2 ON THE WEB BY BANGING WWW.UNREALCHAMPIONSHIP2.COM INTO YOUR PC. MORE NEXT ISSUE.


"10/10. The most amazing game you've ever seen!" Xbox Gamer
"10/10. Quite simply the best racing game we've ever played." PSW Magazine
WWW.EAGAMES.CO.UK/BURNOUT
CRASHED!
FLOSPEED
Criterion
GAMES

MIRROR. SIGNAL. MAYHEM.

This is rock 'n' roll. Grab the wheel, max your speed, take insane risks and wreak havoc on the roads.

Rip up the racing rule book to takedown your mates, and create 6-player carnage on-line.

Burnout®3: Takedown™. Bring it on.



PlayStation.2 XBOX

BURNOUT 3 TAKEDOWN

EA GAMES
Challenge Everything

Quotes of the month...

"Xbox has been closely involved with my residency at 'We Love' in Ibiza and I'm pleased that *OXM* has made my two tracks their first-ever downloadable music tracks. No other games machine can handle music like Xbox can. It's great to be the first artist to have music published like this."

Superstar DJ Steve Lawler talks up this month's demo disc that features two of his exclusive tracks. Find out more on page 097.

"Eventually time and money and bad management came into play and it didn't work out. Disappointing on a number of levels for me, but that's the way it went."

Nine Inch Nails' frontman Trent Reznor explains why he didn't do the music for *Doom 3*.

"If Hiroshi Yamauchi calls, he'll get me on the line right away."

Bill Gates jokingly says that if Nintendo's CEO Hiroshi Yamauchi called him, he'd be willing to talk about the future of Nintendo. It was only a joke and not the 'hard news' that many websites published.

"I've always been interested in the whole idea of psionic powers that have been developed by the government, even though they've been very close-mouthed about admitting they conducted those kind of experiments."

***SpyHunter*'s movie producer Adrian Askarieh has also picked up the rights to make a film based on Midway's *Psi-Ops: The Mindgate Conspiracies*, which will follow the game to the letter.**

"It's probably not going to come out this year. Back in May, we were kind of hoping we'd have a holiday launch. I'm not sure we're going to get there."

We managed to sneak in this quote id CEO Todd Hollenshead gave Reuters at the last minute. It's not looking good for a *Doom 3* launch this side of Christmas.

"We've talked to a lot of publishers and it's really refreshing to talk to one that isn't mired in its own internal politics and indecision."

Double Fine Productions boss Tim Schafer finds publisher gold in a deal with Majesco to release the platformer *Psychonauts*.

Official Xbox Magazine PLAYED IT



↑ Start out with cars that could double as a mobile hairdresser's car and finish with one of these beasts.

Forza Motorsport

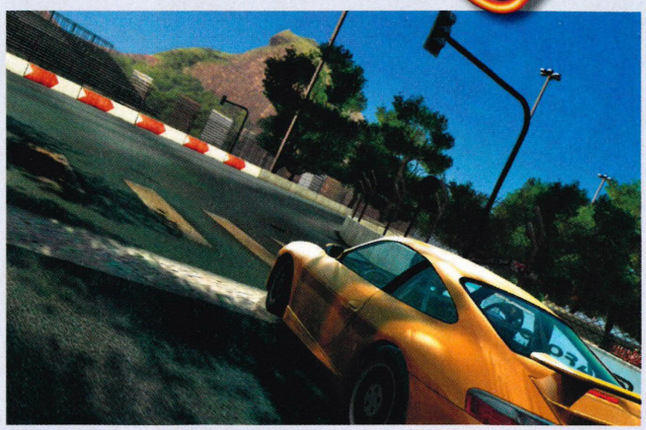
A car collector's wet dream

XBOX LIVE PLAYABLE

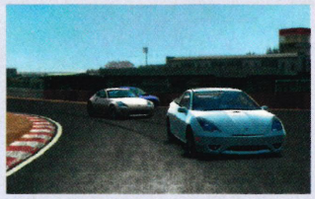
Dev: Microsoft	Pub: Microsoft
Release: Jan 2004	Live: 2-8 players
Players: 1; 2 Split	Players: 2-4 S.Link
0 Percentage Complete 100	

WHILE WE WERE at Microsoft's HQ in Redmond to check out *Halo 2* (see page 051), we thought it would be downright rude to not take a look at *Forza Motorsport*. And after a quick demo of all the engine bits you can tinker around with, we were let loose on System Link. The first thing we'll say is this: it's harder than passing an advanced driving test blindfolded! But that doesn't mean anything, as the build we got to play with was extremely early and all the balancing hadn't been completed yet.

You really will have to think about your driving line though, even more so than you did in *TOCA Race Driver 2: The Ultimate Racing Simulator* (Issue 29, 9.1). *Forza* is a motoring simulation of epic proportions - there's so much to see and do you won't know where to start. You begin the single-player game in slow cars that are tricky to handle. We'd rather start fast and go faster but this is a simulation rather than an arcade experience. The game has suffered a slight delay but it's shaping up to be the deepest racing experience yet on Xbox.



↑ The track will show damage as you crash into the barriers.



↑ Only brake in a straight line.



↑ Customise any car's paintjob.

Spot the Difference Photorealism done the Xbox way



← Start out by taking a picture of a lovely new Mitsubishi Evo at the car lot.



← Pick around 40 programmers with all the skills to pay the bills to recreate it.



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Official Xbox Magazine EXCLUSIVE SCREENS

Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon 2

Xbox LIVE PLAYABLE

It's rent-a-ghost time again folks (minus Mrs Popov)



↑ More facial detail, fewer Wookiee impressions, the Ghosts are back.

Dev: UbiSoft	Pub: UbiSoft
Release: Nov 2004	Live: 2-8 players
Players: 1-2	
0 Percentage Complete 80 100	

HAVING DONE away with Eastern European types and Cuba nutters, the Ghost team now turn their attention to North Korea. The world's scariest country, led by the world's scariest dictator comes under scrutiny and, without wanting to give the plot away, you'll once again be up to your eyeballs in all manner of dubious coups, nuclear warheads and territorial squabbling.

As well as the new environments (fully rendered East Asian maps and landscapes which are "stunning" in detail, according to Ubisoft), there is a completely new Ghost team. This time you'll be joined by a female operative whose speciality is advanced stealth, allowing her to act independently of your team and reach reconnaissance points directly under the nose of your enemy.

There will also be a new over-the-shoulder camera perspective allowing you to see your character and their weapon, but most importantly to see them react to sign language and secret hand signals given by their team-mates. Of course, this will also mean you can get in painfully close to a pesky Korean and order someone to snap his neck while you pursue other tasks, such as looting, pillaging, fraternising with the Korean ladies and getting drunk in seedy speak easys. Probably. More news on this very soon - watch this space.



↑ Notice the shells leaving your gun... now *that's* what you call detail.



↑ Improved weaponry makes for better kills.



↑ Okay, so there's camo but we'll live with it.

Cold War

It'll almost make you wish Maggie was back in power.

Dev: TBA	Pub: DreamCatcher
Release: Spring 2005	
Players: 1	
0 Percentage Complete 60 100	

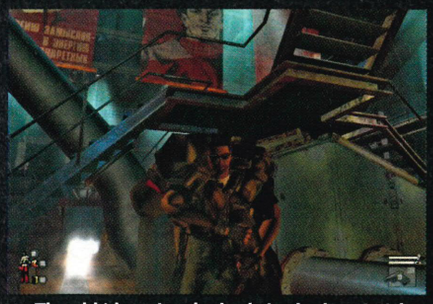
THE '80s weren't a pleasant time. If you weren't wearing drainpipes and listening to Frankie Goes To Hollywood, you were being advised to make shelters under the kitchen table in case a 50-megaton bomb went off in your yard.

In *Cold War* you're an entrenched journalist, deep behind Soviet lines, who's uncovered a conspiracy, and the biggest story of your life. With the authorities closing in you, you're soon captured, beaten unconscious and thrown into a prison. With only cunning, improvised gadgetry and weapons, you must break free, expose the conspiracy, and evade the entire KGB. No easy job when you're used to writing captions for Page 3...

Spanning bleak Commie locations such as Chernobyl, the Russian Mausoleum, Red Square and the notorious KGB prison Lubyanka, *Cold War* is, in layman's terms, a real-world *Splinter Cell*. You're an everyman Sam Fisher who'll have to create traps to eliminate your foes and snoop around the most infamous Russian landmarks on your quest for truth. The pen is apparently mightier than the silenced sniper rifle, and *Cold War* is going to prove it. Fair enough, but as long as we get to snap a few necks like Fisher aswell...



↑ Insert 'And Gav emptied the gents in one fell sweep' joke here.



↑ The old 'dumping the body in shadows' trick.



↑ Scientists: ace for iris scans and as hostages.



↑ Fisher might do it in style, but this guy gives killing that adrenal edge.



Official Xbox Magazine PLAYED IT

Official Xbox Magazine EXCLUSIVE SCREENS

↑ Slam your rivals into obstacles to litter the track with as much rubbish as possible!

Bully's Special Prize!

ONE BONUS mode we stumbled upon in addition to the racing seemed to be a kind of stunt challenge (think *Stuntman* but good), where the otherwise gimmicky flying cadaver trick is used to earn money. You'll be plonked in an arena and then forced to hurl yourself into a wall at the greatest speed you can muster. Hit the wall just right and your body will fly out at a target, dartboard or coconut shy. The more accurate your airborne corpse, the more money you earn.



↑ Score a bull's-eye and win a caravan!

FlatOut

XBOX LIVE PLAYABLE

Deliverance goes to the Derby. Don't forget your banjo...

Dev: Bugbear Ent.	Pub: Empire Interactive
Release: Oct 2004	Live: 2-8 players
Players: 1; 2 split-screen	

0 Percentage Complete 80 100

IF *PROJECT Gotham Racing 2* is a Robert Palmer backing singer, all sultry, red-lipped, and swaying at the hips, *FlatOut* is Anna Nicole Smith. It's violent, rednecked and would smash your face in for a pie. Hell, it'd fry itself a squirrel sandwich given the chance, but gosh Cletus, ain't it just a purdy one? If you're longing for a racer that concentrates more on the psychotic than it does the paintwork, then cast your eyes over *FlatOut* when it's released. This is *Burnout 3*'s hillbilly cousin with an overbite. And we think we're going to love it.

We were privy to a few hours of gameplay, and were struck by the delicate balance between all-out destruction and your desire to deliver your wreck over the finish line with a full quota of body parts (yours and the car's, but we'll go there later).

Tracks come in the form of wild forest paths, quarries, backwater shanty towns, custom-built figure-of-eight stock-car tracks and stunt arenas (see Bully's Special Prize!, top), and you're encouraged to destroy the environment to make gains during the race. We found that by just nudging the side of scaffolding or a stack of felled logs, it would tumble onto the track and cause a stinking pileup behind us. And Bugbear has been smart enough to ensure that debris remains on the tracks: drop scaffolding behind you and you'll encounter it on your next lap.

The handling of the cars is coming along well, which is great considering the god-awful mess you'll make over the course of a race. They're responding nicely, if a little buoyantly at the moment, so making split-second decisions or nudging a rival into a wall seems to be no problem at all. Fail to make the grade though, and you'll be catapulted through your windscreen onto the road where you'll either be squashed under thundering wheels, or you'll snap your neck upon impact with the first immovable object. It's as disturbing as it is entertaining, but we suspect the generic ragdoll physics that accompany your death won't be changed in time for shipping.



↑ Fight the pack, don't just race them.

Although the career mode wasn't available to play at the time of writing, *FlatOut* promises a huge championship mode, mini-games, battle modes, dozens of arenas, 16 upgradeable cars, eight-player online racing and hopefully downloadable content.

While we're doing numbers, Bugbear Entertainment is working on in excess of 3000 smashable items for each track. Some will be used to put off rivals, others will damage and affect your car, but some will need smashing away in order to open up shortcuts and secret tracks. With 45 tracks in total, that's a lot of smashing and secret finding.

"We're excited by the level of technology we've managed to create," Janne Alanenpaa, Bugbear's MD and lead designer, told us. "We hope we've made *FlatOut* a truly stunning and unique driving title." For those of us who are jaded by the steady flow of slick, city-based racers, this could be the perfect, filthy alternative. Full review next issue.



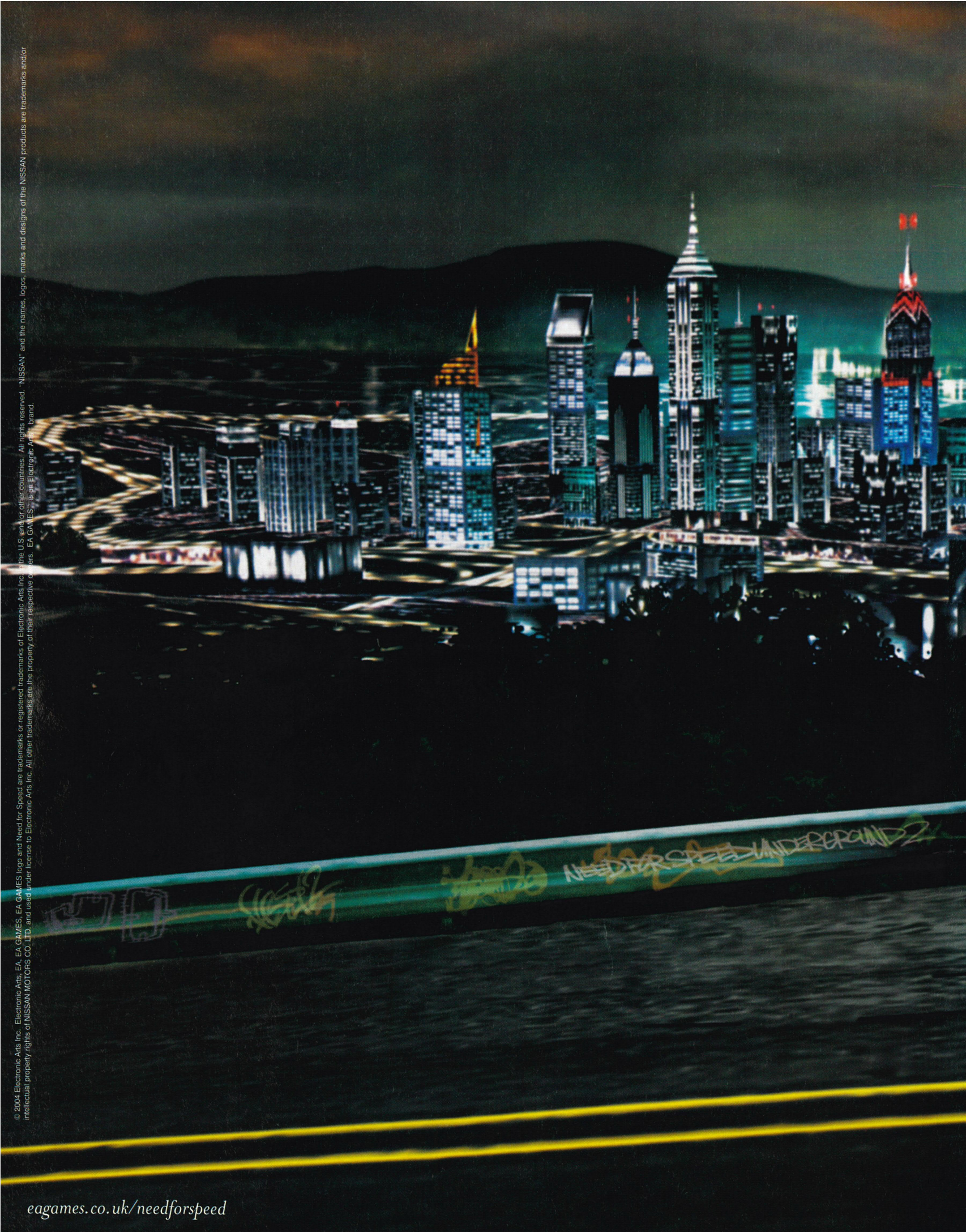
↑ Leap over vehicles and cause as much damage as you can to the track.



↑ The handy reverse cam allows you to see exactly where your rivals are.

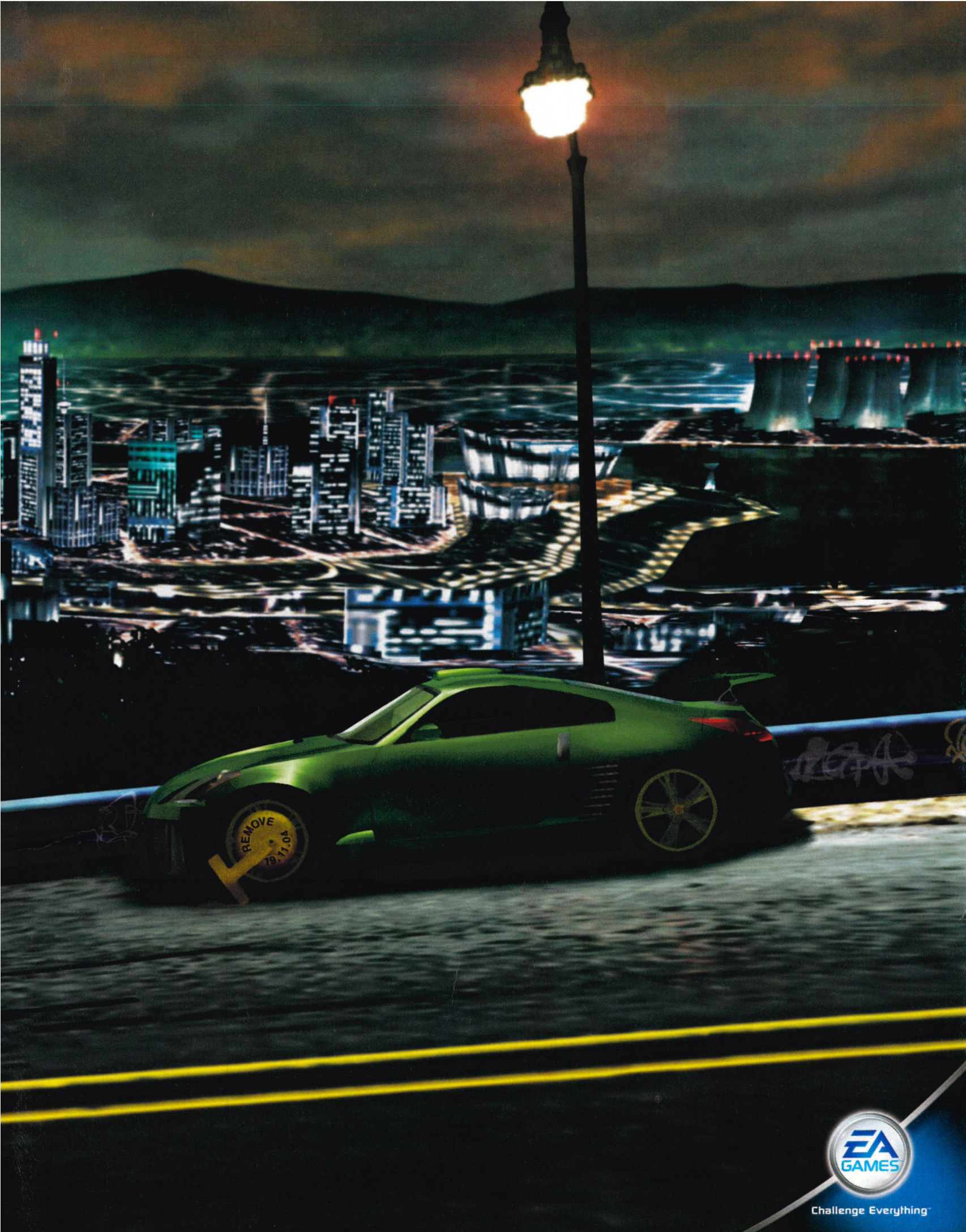
"You will be catapulted through your windscreen and squashed under thundering wheels"

BANGERS AND MASH: NOT ONLY WILL YOU HAVE TO AIM YOUR CORPSE AT A DARTBOARD, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO FIRE IT INTO OTHER CARS TO PUT THEM OFF TOO.



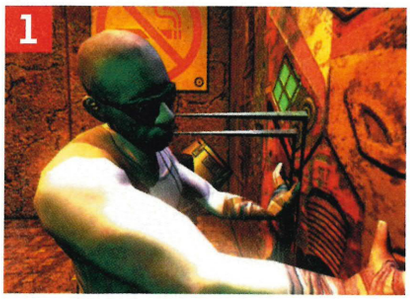
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REMOVE
79.11.04
EA GAMES
Challenge Everything

Charts

The ten best-selling games in the UK



1 THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK: EFBB
DEV: **Starbreeze Studios** PUB: **Vivendi Universal**
Rock hard Riddick thumps his way straight to the top of the charts thanks to stunning visuals and gripping gameplay.



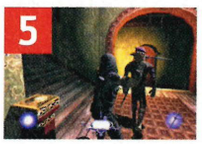
2 SPIDER-MAN 2
DEVELOPER: **Treyarch** PUBLISHER: **Activision**
He did whatever it is a spider does but Spidey's run at the top has finally come to an end. Will he be able to crawl back up?



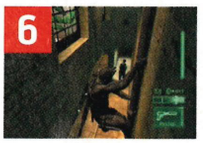
3 FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR
DEVELOPER: **Pandemic Stud.** PUBLISHER: **THQ**
Holds on to third place proving that this incredible military sim has found a place in the heart of the Xbox audience.



4 DRIV3R
DEVELOPER: **Reflections** PUBLISHER: **Atari**
Tanner's latest outing isn't as good as it should have been, but that hasn't stopped him putting in a quality chart performance.



5 THIEF: DEADLY SHADOWS
DEVELOPER: **Ion Storm** PUBLISHER: **Eidos**
The tea-leaf has crept up a few places since last month's chart. Must have been when no one was looking. Could this be Garrett's second wind?



6 SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOM.
DEVELOPER: **Ubisoft** PUBLISHER: **Ubisoft**
After re-entering the charts, the reigning king of the shadows loses his grip a little and falls a few places. What's going on, Sam?



7 SHREK 2
DEVELOPER: **Luxoflux** PUBLISHER: **Activision**
Riding on the back of the hilarious movie, the big fat green ogre refuses to go away. He looks like he's in this for the long haul.



8 SONIC HEROES
DEVELOPER: **Sonic Team** PUBLISHER: **Sega**
Just when you thought it was safe to cross a busy road, along comes a blue hedgehog at the speed of light. Time for revenge!



9 GTA: DOUBLE PACK
DEVELOPER: **Rockstar** PUBLISHER: **Rockstar**
It's got loads of guns, plenty of girls, dozens of stolen cars and more organised crime than a DVD boxset of *The Sopranos*.

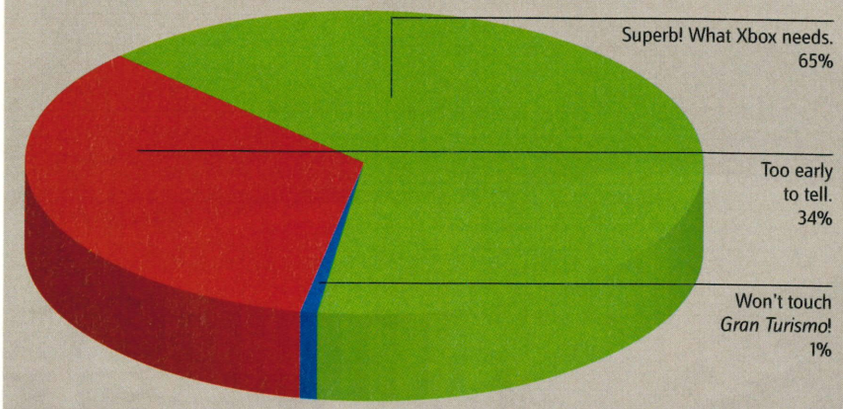


10 FIGHT NIGHT 2004
DEVELOPER: **EA Sports** PUBLISHER: **EA Sports**
Big men knocking seven bells out of each other is obviously a very good thing because this excellent fighter is back for more.

Virgin megastores Virgin Megastores sponsors the charts.

The hot topic You answer the burning question...

What are your thought on *Forza Motorsport*?

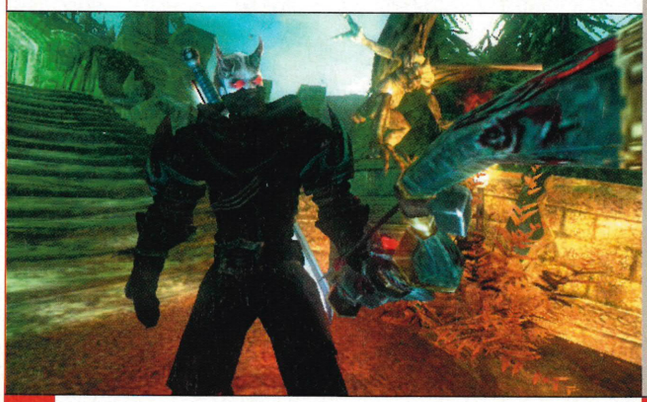


FORZA MOTORSPORT is Microsoft's first-party entry into the driving simulation genre that it hopes to own. It's a massive game that allows you to tweak and upgrade an enormous number of cars that range from high-street honeys such as the Peugeot 206 right up to prototype models that shatter the speed of sound. Find more on page 036.

TO VOTE ON the hot topic, visit the *OXM* forum at www.officialxboxmagazine.co.uk and post in the 'Hot Topic' polls you'll find in the threads there.

Your most wanted

THIS CHART IS composed entirely from the entries you send in and shows the upcoming games you're most excited by. We can then fill the mag with the news, previews and features you most want to see!



↑ TO VOTE FOR your favourite upcoming game, text 'MW: Game Name' to 07781482669 (standard network rates apply), email us at staff@fxmi.com with subject line 'MW', or fill in and post us the coupon from page 107.

← After five years in development, Big Blue Box's hugely ambitious action-adventure is almost upon us. Check out the world-exclusive review on page 060.

1. **FABLE**
Dev: Big Blue Box **Pub:** Microsoft **Release:** October 2
2. **HALO 2**
Dev: Bungie **Pub:** Microsoft **Release:** November 11
3. **DOOM 3**
Dev: Vicarious Visions/id **Pub:** Activision **Release:** TBA 2004/2005
4. **PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 4**
Dev: id Software **Pub:** Activision **Release:** October 2004
5. **SPLINTER CELL: CHAOS THEORY**
Dev: Ubisoft Montreal **Pub:** Ubisoft **Release:** November 2004
6. **BROTHERS IN ARMS**
Dev: Gearbox Software **Pub:** Ubisoft **Release:** March 2005
7. **STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT**
Dev: Pandemic **Pub:** Activision **Release:** October 2004
8. **FORZA MOTORSPORT**
Dev: Microsoft **Pub:** Microsoft **Release:** March 2005
9. **HALF-LIFE 2**
Dev: Valve Software **Pub:** Vivendi Universal **Release:** TBA 2004/2005
10. **STAR WARS KOTOR: THE SITH LORDS**
Dev: Obsidian Entertainment **Pub:** LucasArts **Release:** December 2004

OUR SHOUT



With the impending release of the original Star Wars trilogy on DVD, we're all ready and waiting to shoot the Ewoks in Pandemic's awesome looking multiplayer-focused online blaster. This is going to be good.

Xbox Game Releases

The forthcoming games you need to know about

DATE	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	ISSUE
Mid 04	Advent Rising	Majesco	Vivendi Univ.	20
	Drake	Majesco	Vivendi Univ.	N/A
	FX Racing	Milestone	TBA	23
	kameo: EOP	Rare	Microsoft	33
	kill.switch	Namco	TBA	18
	Korea: Forgotten Conflict	Plastic Reality	Cenega	16
	Masters of the Universe	Savage	TDK	N/A
	Metal Slug 3	SNK Playmore	ignition	33
	Neverend	Mayhem	TBA	N/A
	Obscure	Hydravision	Ubisoft	N/A
	Op. Flashpoint: Cold War Crisis	Codemasters	Codemasters	30
	Pilot Down	Wide Games	Wanadoo	N/A
	Pure Pinball	Iridon	Iridon	33
	SNK Vs. Capcom Chaos	SNK Playmore	SNK Playmore	N/A
	The Fast and the Furious	Genki	Vivendi Univ.	N/A
	The Red Star	Chris. Gossetti	Acclaim	32
	Trivial Pursuit: Unhinged	Artech	Atari	25
late 04	100 Bullets	Acclaim	Acclaim	32
	A Sound of Thunder	Computer Art.	Bam!	13
	America's 10 most wanted	Studio 3	Play It	n/a
	Area 51	Midway	Midway	29
	Armada 2	TBA	Metro	4
	Backyard Wrestling 2	Paradox	Eidos	N/A
	Ballers	Midway	Midway	4
	BC	Intrepid Ent.	Microsoft	31
	Black 9	Majesco	Vivendi Univ.	20
	Blinx 2: Masters Of Time & Space	Artoon	Microsoft	32
	Bloodrayne 2	Majesco	TBA	N/A
	Bloody Waters	Pineapple Int.	TBA	32
	Breed	Brat Designs	CDV	N/A
	Call of Cthulhu	TBA	Headfirst	32
	Call of Duty: finest hour	Spark	Activision	31
	Chronos	Saber 3D	TBA	N/A
	Club Football 2005	Codemasters	Codemasters	N/A
	Cold Winter	Swordfish Stu.	Vivendi Univ.	N/A
	Comanche	N2ovalogic	Novalogic	4
	Cops	Fox	Vivendi Univ.	4
	Crash and Burn	Climax	Eidos	N/A
	Crash Bandicoot: Unlimited	Trav's Tales	Vivendi	29
	Dancing Stage Unleashed 2	Konami	Konami	N/A
	Darkwatch: Curse of the West	Sammy	Sammy	N/A
	Dead or Alive Ultimate	Tecmo	Microsoft	31
	Def Jam Vendetta: Fight for New York	EA	EA	29
	Delta Force: Black Hawk Down	tba	Novalogic	30
	Destroy All Humans	Pandemic	THQ	33
	Doom 3	id Software	Activision	30
	Duality	Trilobyte Gr.	Phantagram	4
	Dukes of Hazzard: ROTGL	UbiSoft	UbiSoft	N/A
	Fahrenheit	Quantic Dream	Vivendi Univ.	18
	Fatal Frame 2	Tecmo	Tecmo	N/A
	FIFA Football 2005	EA	EA	30
	FlatOut	Bugbear Ent.	Empire	28
	Ford Racing 3	Empire	Empire	N/A
	Forgotten Realms: Demon Stone	Stormfront	Atari	34
	Forza Motorsport	Microsoft	Microsoft	31
	Freedom Fighters 2	IO Interactive	EA	N/A
	Freekstyle	EA Big	EA	4
	Frogger Classic	Konami	Konami	N/A
	Get On Da Mic	Eidos	Eidos	N/A
	Ghost Master	Sick Puppies	Empire	26
	Ghost Recon 2	Ubisoft	Ubisoft	29
	Goblin Commander 2	Jaleco	Jaleco	N/A
	Godzilla: Save the Earth	Pipeworks	Atari	33
	GoldenEye 2	EA	EA	32
	Guilty Gear XX	Capcom	Capcom	N/A
	Gungriffon	Kama	Tecmo	N/A
	Half-Life 2	Valve	Vivendi Univ.	32
	Halo 2	Bungie	Microsoft	31
	Haven: Call of the King	Trav. Tales	Midway	9
	Inside Pitch 2003	Microsoft	Microsoft	16
	Iron Phoenix	Sammy	Sammy	N/A
	Justice League	Trav. Tales	Midway	N/A
	King Arthur	Konami	Konami	N/A
	Leisure Suit Larry: Magna Cum Laude	High Voltage Soft.	Vivendi Univ.	30
	Lemony Snicket	Activision	Activision	n/a
	Loose Cannon	Digital Anvil	Ubisoft	4
	Magatama	Microsoft	Microsoft	23
	MechAssault 2	Day 1	Microsoft	27
	Memorick the Apprentice Knight	Microids	TBA	16
	Men of Valor: The Vietnam war	2015 inc	Vivendi Univ.	20

THE WISH LIST

DESPITE US providing the most comprehensive release schedule aound, we all know game release dates change quicker than Andy's hairstyle. Tell us what you're really waiting for - send your top five to staff@fxmi.com.



ONE TITLE you may not have seen much of, but is certainly lighting our fire, is *Mercenaries*. You'll be doing whatever it takes to get the cash together to snap up LucasArts' shooter when it hits stores in February.



AGAIN, YOU peeps may be pleasantly surprised with the ace-looking *Close Combat: First To Fight*. Incorporating all the fun FPS elements and squad-based tactics of *Rainbow Six 3*, mixed with the technical tenacity and stunning realism of *Full Spectrum Warrior*, this thinking man's shooter could be one of the surprise hits of 2005.

DATE	GAME	DEVELOPER	PUBLISHER	ISSUE
	Miami Vice	Davilex games	TBA	N/A
	Midnight Club 3: Dub Edition	Take-two	Take-two	N/A
	Midway Arcade Treasures Vol. 2	Midway	Midway	33
	Mortal Kombat: Deception	Midway	Midway	28
	NARC	Midway	Midway	28
	NBA Live 2005	EA	EA	n/a
	Need For Speed Underground 2	EA	EA	32
	NHL 2005	EA	EA	N/A
	Nightmare Creatures 3	UbiSoft	Ubisoft	N/A
	Notorious: Die to Drive	Ubisoft	Ubisoft	N/A
	Outlaw Golf 2	Hypnotix	Take-Two	N/A
	Painkiller	Dreamcatcher	Mindscape	N/A
	Phantom Dust	Microsoft	Microsoft	23
	Pillage	Bits Studios	TBA	20
	Playboy: The Mansion	Arush	Ubisoft	33
	Pool Shark 2	Balde Interactive	Zoo Digital	34
	Predator: Concrete Jungle	Eurocom	Vivendi Univ.	32
	Prince of Persia 2	Ubisoft	Ubisoft	31
	Pro Evolution Soccer 4	Konami	Konami	33
	Psychonauts	Double Fine	Microsoft	6
	Red Ninja: End of Honour	Tranji	Vivendi Univ.	33
	Rocky Legends	Venom Games	Ubisoft	30
	Scrapland	Mercury Stream	Enlight	N/A
	Sniper Elite	Rebellion	Wanadoo	12
	Snowblind	Crystal Dyn.	Eidos	31
	Sole Predator	Apaloosa	TBA	N/A
	Speedball 3	Bitmap Bros.	TBA	N/A
	Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory	Ubisoft	Ubisoft	32
	Spy vs Spy	TDK Mediactive	TDK Mediactive	10
	Star Wars Battlefront	Pandemic	Lucasarts	32
	Star Wars KOTOR: The Sith Lords	Obsidian	Activision	30
	Starcraft: Ghost	Blizzard	Vivendi Univ.	23
	Starsky & Hutch 2	Empire	Empire	N/A
	Street Fighter Anniversary Collection	Capcom	Capcom	34
	Street Racing Syndicate	Eutechnyx	Namco	N/A
	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2	Konami	Konami	31
	The Bard's Tale	InXile	Acclaim	23
	The Lord of the Rings: Third Age	EA	EA	33
	The Movies	Lionhead	Activision	16
	The Punisher	Volition	THQ	32
	The Roots	Cenega	Cenega	29
	THUG 2	Neversoft	Activision	31
	TimeSplitters Future Perfect	Free Radical	EA	33
	Tork	Tiwak	Ubisoft	4
	Tron 2.0: Killer App	Climax LA	Disney	31
	Worms Forts Under Siege	Team 17	Sega	32
	X-Men: Legends	Raven	Activision	N/A
2005	25 to Life	Avalanche	Eidos	N/A
	American McGee's Oz	Carbon6	TBA	27
	ATV Quad Power Racing 3	Climax	Acclaim	N/A
	Battlefield: Modern Conflict	EA	EA	N/A
	Battlestations: Midway	Mithis	SCi	34
	Big Mutha Truckers 2	Empire	Empire	N/A
	Close Combat: First to Fight	Destineer	Take-Two	31
	Conker: Live & Reloaded	Rare	Microsoft	31
	CT Special Forces: Fire For Effect	Light & Shadow Pr.	Hip Interactive	N/A
	Dead or Alive 4: Code Cronus	Tecmo	Microsoft	N/A
	Emergency Mayhem	Acclaim	Acclaim	30
	Johnny Whatever	Warthog	TBA	N/A
	Jade Empire	BioWare	Microsoft	31
	Mercenaries	Pandemic	LucasArts	28
	MotoGP 3	Climax	THQ	32
	Oddworld: Stranger	Oddworld In.	EA	32
	Otogi 2	From Soft.	Sega	N/A
	Pariah	Digital Ext.	Hip Interactive	34
	Perfect Dark Zero	Rare	Microsoft	10
	Quake IV	Raven Soft.	Activision	N/A
	Rogue Trooper	SCi	SCi	34
	Scarface	Radical Games	Vivendi Univ.	34
	Serious Sam 2	Croteam	Take-Two	21
	Sid Meier's Pirates!	Furaxis	Atari	34
	Spikeout: Battle Street	Sega	Sega	N/A
	Spyro: A Hero's Tale	Eurocom	Vivendi Univ.	N/A
	Star Wars: Republic Commando	LucasArts	Activision	34
	Starship Troopers	Empire	Empire	27
	Sticky Balls	Warthog	TBA	N/A
	Super Monkey Ball Deluxe	Sega	Sega	34
	The Last Job	Acclaim	Acclaim	N/A
	True Crime 2	Luxoflux	Activision	N/A
	Urbz: Sims in the City	Maxis	EA	N/A

XBOX CLASSICS

Get more for your money with the top five value range games out now!



The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King
Issue 23
score 8.5



Need for Speed: Underground
Issue 24
score 7.0



The Simpsons: Hit & Run
Issue 23
score 8.0



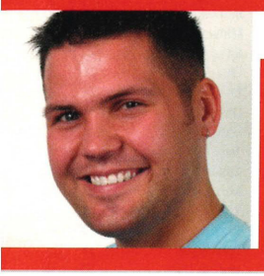
Star Wars: Knight of the Old Republic
Issue 20
score 9.5



Tony Hawk's Underground
Issue 24
score 8.6

RIDING HIGH: DOOM 3 IS THE FIRST PC GAME TO REACH NUMBER ONE IN THE CHARTS IN NEARLY FIVE YEARS. CAN'T WAIT FOR THE XBOX VERSION!

Inbox



Letters 34 Editor

BEN LAWRENCE
GAME OF CHOICE: THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK

Rain, sun, rain... what a mixed bag this summer is throwing up. Talking of mixed bags and throwing up, check out this jamboree of rants, opinions and random pen-to-paper nonsense. Keep 'em coming!

TEXT US questions and comments on 0778 148 2669 (standard network rates)

WRITE TO US at *Official Xbox Magazine*, 99 Baker Street, London W1U 6FP

POST ON THE FORUM at www.officialxboxmagazine.co.uk or email us at staff@fxmi.com

YOUR OPINIONS COUNT! Your input here has a direct effect on the content of your *Official Xbox Magazine*, so let us know which games you like or don't like, what you want to see more of or less of in the mag, or just rant by text, mail, forum or email!



↑ *FIFA Football 2005*: just another sequel or another rung up the ladder marked 'innovation'?

SUMMER LOVIN'

Checking through my Amazon orders, I noticed the date that I pre-ordered *Halo 2*: 01 October 2002. This means by the time the game is released in the UK I will have had it on pre-order for two years, one month and ten days, which works out at 772 days, or 18,528 hours, or 1,111,680 minutes, or 66,700,800 seconds.

This must qualify as one of the longest pre-orders of any game ever. It's even changed price twice while I've had it on order. Surely this should qualify me for some kind of recognition from Microsoft or Bungie like a prototype Xbox (even if it's only the case), a free upgrade to the Limited Edition *Halo 2*, or even just a mention in a certain *Official Xbox Magazine*?

Barrie Tingle, via email

↓ *Halo 2*: well worth waiting for.



A smudge over two years waiting for *Halo 2* is valiant Barrie, especially as this was before you knew there was the spangly metal-boxed edition... but we can't help shaking our heads in shame. How can we reward you for your mutt-like patience when you send us proof of your purchase and we notice you've ordered *Grease* at the same time? Your Xbox could have been infected with John Travolta strutting his stuff in those nasty leather pants. Imagine placing the glistening *Halo 2* disc in the same DVD drawer that could have once seen all that *Summer Lovin'*, Rydell High, *Born To Hand-Jive* nonsense. No, sorry, but it just won't do. If you'd pre-ordered *The Sound Of Music* it would have been a completely different story...

SEQUELS: THE REVENGE

I wonder what the team at *OXM* make of the seemingly scandalous array of sequels that are being released. I'm thinking of such brands as the *FIFA Football* series and *Colin McRae Rally* games. Having purchased the offending titles myself, I was disappointed to see how little the games had changed. Do they really warrant the £40 price tag, when in most circumstances only a few tweaks are made to the overall gameplay? The few developers that actually go the extra mile and develop sequels that differ significantly (*Halo 2*, *Half-Life 2*, *Doom 3*) deserve both our admiration and our money, but surely these other developers that contribute nothing more than an annual extra digit after the game title must be held accountable in some way. Although the end decision will always lay with the consumer, the industry as a whole would benefit from some real commitment on the behalf of these so-called developers to pushing the game industry further and further, and not patronising us loyal and avid game-players that demand better every time.

Harj Thandi, via email

The question of sequels does, ultimately, come down to how willing we all are to pay for those extra goodies every time an update comes out. Those of us who are avid fans of *FIFA* are willing to pay for the privilege of seeing Beckham in his Real shirt rather than the Man Utd strip. You've

☆STAR LETTER☆

↓ The writer of the star letter wins HMV vouchers worth £50.



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SOUND AND VISION

I'm joint leader of a Live clan called Die As One and two very important clan members are deaf. On Live they often get kicked out of games because people think they have no mic or are being rude. This can be disheartening and puts them off joining in with games on Live.

A clan member, Gee2909, suggests Microsoft and games companies have the option of selecting an icon to replace the microphone option on screen with a symbol to indicate that the person was deaf. Our clan wouldn't be the same without them and I want the Live community to take notice of this idea.

Crafty Nigel, via email



↑ Maybe Microsoft will pick up on the logo for deaf gamers?

You've got a point, especially when the Live community is one where the only real language should be that of gaming. Surely your gaming ability should make you stand out online rather than a disability, and for people to discriminate against you is pretty weak-minded.

By highlighting your friends' deafness with an icon you could run the risk of making that an issue to less-tolerant gamers, but if your thumb can do the talking by blowing the competition out of the water, all the better for you. We've given your letter to Microsoft and we'll let you know what it says. We've also mocked up an icon we think would work well with the current Live icons, so hopefully that'll encourage the Xbox bods to use your idea.

Until then, steer clear of ignorant gamers who discriminate and go spend the £50 on a game your whole clan get get stuck into.



↑ *ShellShock: Nam '67*: better in first-person?

also got to remember that the games that get updated yearly often reflect sports where transfers and allegiances change on an annual basis too - it's the nature of the beast. The games reflect the ever-changing world of sports, and ultimately it's up to you whether you buy the update. If you are a besotted fan, then fine, go splash out £40, but if you're happy with *Colin McRae 04*, for example, don't sweat it when number five comes out. That said, you might want to try *Colin 2005* on this month's demo disc to make up your own mind.

SHELL SICKNESS

In your *ShellShock* review you said it was crying out to be an FPS. I disagree - I, like many others, can't play FPSs due to motion sickness (yes, I know I sound like a wimp). I miss out on great games, such as *Halo* and *TimeSplitters*. I have tried them all but just can't play for more than a couple of minutes. What I would like to see is developers doing the same as driving games, where you can have more than one perspective, then myself and many others would get to play these great games.

Andrew Smyth, Lincoln

Lawks! Andrew, don't let the uncontrollable urge to spew over yourself dissuade you from the likes of *Halo*. Wading through a sea of Covenant corpses dripping with regurgitated Pot Noodle can only add to the atmosphere. Those moments when you begin to panic and sweat as the icy, irrational grip of sickness wells in your stomach is exactly what those poor Marines would have felt when they came under attack. Embrace the vomit: hurl chunks and be happy. Or try Sturgeon 15 travel sickness pills - £2.79 a pack from Boots.

BLACK IS THE NEW BLACK

Me and my friends were wondering about something on the Xbox. One friend said that if you put the Xbox under natural light (sunlight), it's green. Some people say yes, while others say no and that it is just plain black. Since you are the one and only official Xbox mag, would you be able to settle this dispute?

Steven Bell, Milton Keynes

The things we do for you lot. Nobody quite knows black on *OXM* like our resident goth and pagan seductress Vanessa. We ventured into her blasphemous crypt to pose your question to the wizened mistress of darkness, and while Ben L suggested to her the Xbox took a 'very deep olive green tint' in daylight, she-who-must-be-obeyed categorically stated the Xbox was black... with a hint of charcoal, but "definitely black". So, there you go, argument over. Now, hand over your mortal soul as penance.

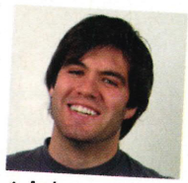
DISASTER CHIEF

I drew this picture for Ben to congratulate him on finally cutting his girly hair. My friends think he should have gone for an Agent 47 slaphead look, but I personally think he'd suit a Pat Sharp mullet, perhaps with a handlebar moustache to complement his monobrow, but I guess doing so would make him look like one of the Chuckle Brothers. Keep up the good work everyone!

Ather Mubarik, Oldham

Box Office

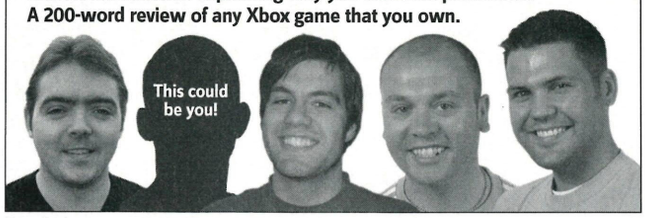
Work a week at OXM and see yourself in print!



↑ Andy was a workie. He just forgot to leave.

Have you got what it takes to survive our office for a whole week, playing and writing about Xbox games? We're offering a placement - you must be 17 or older and available 20-24 October 2004 to work 09.30 to 18.00 at 99 Baker Street, London. You will be required to provide your own transport, food and lodgings. We will provide the games! The closing date for applications is 10 October. Write to us at Box Office, *OXM*, 99 Baker Street, London W1U 6FP and please include:

Your name and age on 20 October 2004.
Your current or desired career.
A short introduction explaining why you want the placement.
A 200-word review of any Xbox game that you own.





↑ Our man Talbot in his dapper *Halo* PJs.

Ather, we salute you. Not only have you managed to capture Ben's essence in a single drawing (O'dour poultry, surrounded by reluctant 'pay for play' women), but you've recreated his new hairstyle perfectly too. Anyone would have thought you'd been following him home every night. Top marks, mate!

SCARY MOVIE

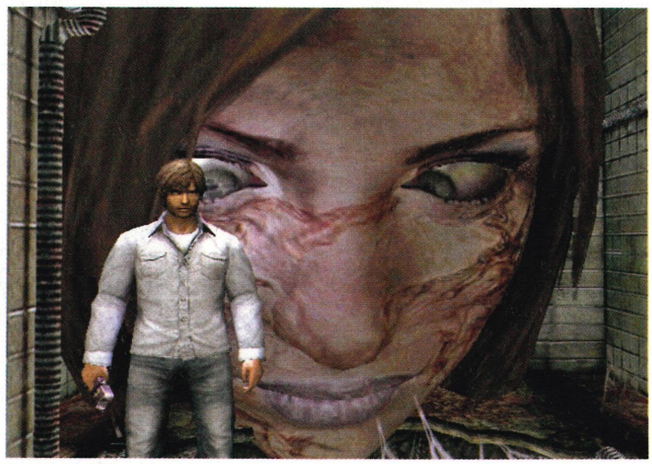
While watching the demo disc that came with Issue 32, I stumbled across the *Silent Hill 4* movie. I'm not that easily scared, but that forced the excrement out of me! Thanks to that movie, I daren't put the disc back in my Xbox because I know I'll watch it again. And that disc had *Halo 2* on it! I want to watch it again and again but this movie is scaring me away. What do you suggest? My love for *Halo 2* beats anything but for some reason I can't bring myself to put the disc in. Help - I'm starting to develop withdrawal symptoms. My eyes have even started twitching.

Ollie, via email

Try sitting opposite Gavin eight hours a day, five days a week, then you'll know the true meaning of fear. The man can crack mirrors with his reflection and spends his day emitting noxious sounds and smells. He's a walking canker. Now, put on a brave face, watch the disc again, and count yourself lucky.

FOLLOWER OF FASHION

I read Rob Timmis's question in last month's edition of your magazine (Issue 32) about skins for your Xbox, and I was very interested. It sounded »



↑ *Silent Hill 4*: enough to put you off *Halo 2* apparently. Yeah, as if...

The OXM team

What we've been up to this month



STEVE BROWN // EDITOR

HE'S moved house, but Steve and his missus are at loggerheads. He wants a plasma TV for the Xbox, she wants a sofa. Hasn't she ever heard of beanbags?

NOW PLAYING: *Men of Valor, Doom 3, Riddick*
FAVE OLYMPIC EVENT: Women's synch. swim



OWEN NORRIS // ART EDITOR

LOCKED in the *OXM* tower like a grouchy Rapunzel, Owen's been slaving away on the redesign. He had to have a hol in Mexico to recover. Diddums.

NOW PLAYING: *Halo, Mashed, Rainbow Six 3*
FAVE OLYMPIC EVENT: 100 metres sprint



GAVIN OGDEN // DEPUTY EDITOR

WHILE spending a day with Colin McRae, Gav bombed around a test track, oblivious to the fact a photographer was in the way. So far no one has sued.

NOW PLAYING: *Halo, Riddick, RalliSport 2*
FAVE OLYMPIC EVENT: Sprint. The rest is dull



BEN LAWRENCE // SENIOR STAFF WRITER

IN his quest to convert Gav to the dark side, Ben racked up a £65 phone bill sending a torrent of dubious text-pest picture messages to him. Oops.

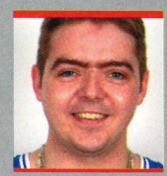
NOW PLAYING: *Halo, Riddick, Burnout 3*
FAVE OLYMPIC EVENT: Judo. Nice and sweaty!



VANESSA HARDS // OPERATIONS EDITOR

VANESSA is sporting a lacerated throat. She says it's from her new kitten. Nothing to do with her weird goth lifestyle then, oh no.

NOW PLAYING: *Psi-Ops, Spidey 2, Sudeki*
FAVE OLYMPIC EVENT: Vaulting. Especially when they fall off



BEN TALBOT // PRODUCER

BEN spent four hours having a dance-off with a rival alpha male at *Dance:UK*. Ben won after his foe refused to jig to Ben's favourite, Sophie Ellis-Bextor.

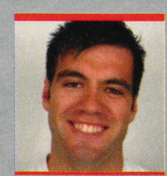
NOW PLAYING: *Fable, Riddick, Chaos Theory*
FAVE OLYMPIC EVENT: Women's curling



PHIL MADGE // DEPUTY ART EDITOR

PHIL drove American tourists to tears in a theme pub. Beside a wax model of JFK, he re-enacted *that* day in Dallas. Adda' boy!

NOW PLAYING: *Psi-Ops, Riddick, Mashed*
FAVE OLYMPIC EVENT: Wrestling. The real man's sport



ANDY IRVING // STAFF WRITER

THE recently single Andy has been dating as many girls as he can, got wolf-whistled at, auditioned for six boy bands and stunt doubled for Texas Pete.

NOW PLAYING: *Rocky Legends, Halo, Fable*
FAVE OLYMPIC EVENT: Women's volleyball

PHOTOS: KATHERINE LAWSHAW-SIMS

WORKIE REQUIREMENTS: IF YOU WANT TO WORK FOR US, YOU MUST BE ABLE TO GO TO THE QUICKIE-MART AT 4PM EVERY DAY TO BUY COOKIES AND YOU MUST NEVER MIX UP THE TEA AND COFFEE ORDER IN THE MORNING. IF YOU CAN HANDLE THAT, THEN WELCOME ABOARD!

Shorts

sms TEXT US questions and comment on 0778 148 2669 (standard network rates)

WRITE TO US at Official Xbox Magazine, 99 Baker Street, London W1U 6FP

WWW POST ON THE FORUM at www.officialxboxmagazine.co.uk or email us at staff@fxmi.com



Thought you'd appreciate this picture of me and my baby brother and as we're playing Daddy's games all the time, wondered if you could spare a demo disc for all of us.

Matthew and Nicholas (aged 4 and 1), Bucks

Vanessa is broody so we'll allow this hideously blatant attempt at getting your kids into the mag, but we're not going to send you any free games. Still, it's great to see kids sat in front of the TV at such a young age... just where they belong.

Snooker 2004's wicked eh? It makes me want to punch Virgo in the chops.

Ryan, via email

Better than wanting to stick a cue up his...

sms Oddword! Wot r u thinking working with ea? The next game will be rubbish and it will be all your fault! In the name of microsoft i curse u all! Jack oxford

Trust us Jack, it's in very good hands with EA and plays brilliantly. Have faith!

sms Do you believe we will ever see a mmorpg for Xbox or Xbox2 now that true fantasy live's been cancled thanks lee

Keep 'em crossed for *Star Wars Galaxies*, possibly heading our way one day!

WWW Mashed is amazing! I'd get it myself but I don't always have 2 other players at all times. Single player is a bit poo, and while 2-player is good, you don't get the airstrikes now do you?

DreweBoy

Buy the full game, try it with four players, and choose the pink car (it's lucky) and you'll never look back. Yep, it's amazing.

sms Ive been reading the latest issue of Oxm and im fed up with hearing these Wimps Dissing Ninja Gaiden because it is too hard for them! Anon.

If it's too hard and upsetting, that's what we're here for. Come, tell us your woes, then go away feeling better about life.



Ben! What the hell have you done to your hair? I think I spotted you recently but with your lack of hair it must just have been some other crazy long-haired freak. He even had the nose and the monobrow just like yours.

Kevin Collins, via email

Do you look like our resident wolfboy? Are you tempted to chop your locks for the sake of less ribbing from your mates? Ben Talbot look-a-likes, contact us now!

WWW My main complaint about Xbox is Yager. All my games are lined up with the names running down the side, but Yager has to be different and print its name upside down. I may have to get the Stanley knife out and turn it the right way up.

Snecklifter

Too much time on your hands, we think.

sms why do you all make fun of vanessa? just because she likes good music doesnt mean you can take the mickey. oh, and oxm ROCKS! from the maggot man

But she's the only girl, it's our duty as lager-swilling men to be nasty to her!

WWW If doom3 looks better than Riddick on Xbox then we are in for a real treat! It looks and plays like a dream. Has to be the best looking game on Xbox to date. Awesome stuff Vivendi!

Kaksi5

You're telling us. There isn't one member of *OXM* that hasn't been glued to it.

sms Must say I am playing american version of ninja gaidan makin those head roll is very satisfying.Must detract from the game play in the pal version!

No, we're not listening. We're sticking our fingers in our ears. La, la, la....

sms DrIVer, driVer, drVIer, DR7VER, driv8r, D9iver, DX. Mark, tunbridge wells.

Clever.



↑ **Like a lime pimp-daddy with three ho's. Nice.**

» cool so I went on the website you suggested (www.gameworx.net) and purchased a skin for my Crystal Xbox. Look at it now! I'd like to thank you for telling me about the site and helping me make my Xbox look so amazingly cool and unique.

Shane Patel, London

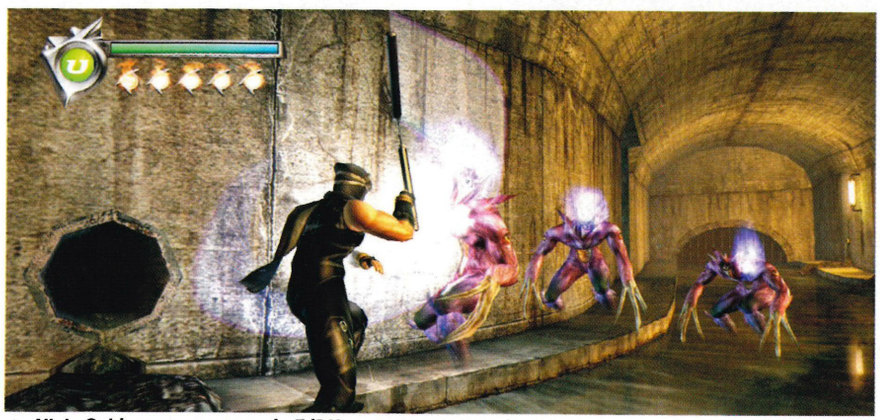
No problem, glad we've given your beloved Xbox a zesty new look, especially since it's one of those lickable crystal Xboxes. Ours just have to make do with peeling stickers, names written in Tippex to stop the cleaners pilfering them, and the remnants of our cheese and pickle sandwiches from lunch. Still, as least they're loved...

SPLINTER HELL

After reading your review of *Pandora Tomorrow*, I rushed out to get a copy but it only took me about ten hours to complete, whereas the original *Splinter Cell* took me months to crack. I'm tired of games that are far too easy. Ubisoft should have made *Pandora* much harder considering there are only two difficulty settings. I think you should include difficulty ratings in all your reviews so players can choose a game that suits them. I only hope *Splinter Cell 3* will be more challenging and creative. After I completed the original *Splinter Cell* I kept playing it for ages, but I hardly ever play its sequel anymore. *Pandora Tomorrow* was a real disappointment!

Edward Foster, via email

Two words, Ed: *Ninja* and *Gaiden*. If you want an Xbox title to keep you challenged you need look no further - you'll be chewing your knuckles to the bone in frustration. And don't fret about *Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory* either; *Pandora Tomorrow* was nothing more than a stop-gap between the two titles.



↑ ***Ninja Gaiden*: you want tough, Ed? You want TOUGH?! Then clamp your teeth around this brute!**

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The Church of Xbox

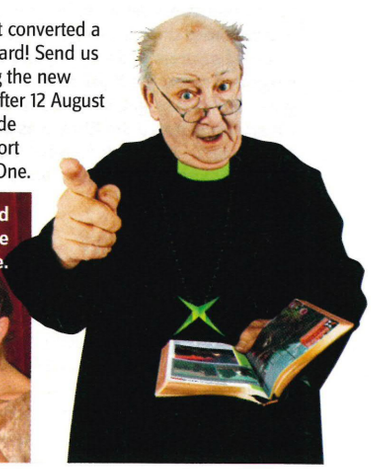
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IF YOU'RE a new convert to Xbox, or just converted a friend, Reverend Green has a divine reward! Send us a pic of you or your convert worshipping the new Xbox, plus a copy of the receipt (dated after 12 August 2004), and you could win a game. Include your name, age, Earthly abode and a short prayer to help Rev Green find a Chosen One.



↓ **Jess and Damian nurture their new one.**

↓ **Benedictus qui venit in nomine Xbox!**

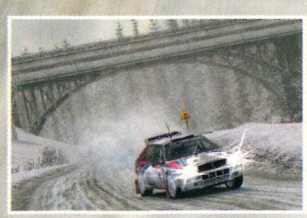


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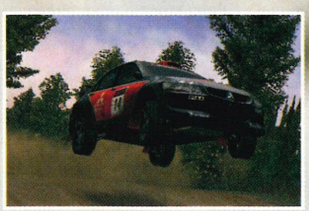
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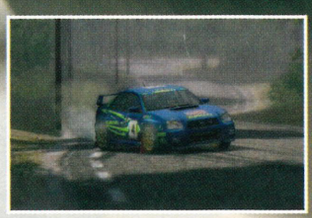
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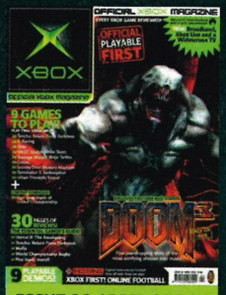
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Demos: Tenchu: Return From Darkness; Alias; SWAT: Global Strike Team; T3: Redemption; Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles; Scooby Doo! Mystery Mayhem; Conan; Urban Freestyle Soccer; R:Racing
Content Download: Unreal Championship: four new levels



ISSUE 29 MAY 2004

Demos: TOCA Race Driver 2: TURS; Drake of the 99 Dragons
Content Download: Rainbow Six 3: Garage level; Splinter Cell missions: Kola Cell, Vselka Infiltration, Vselka Submarine
Game Saves: Rainbow Six 3; Soul Calibur II; TimeSplitters 2



ISSUE 30 JUNE 2004

Demos: Breakdown; Shadow Ops: Red Mercury; Amped 2; World Championship Rugby; Rainbow Six 3: 16-player Xbox Live-enabled demo
Movies: Half-Life 2; RalliSport Challenge 2; Area 51; Mortal Kombat: Deception; Men of Valor; Making of Galleon...



ISSUE 31 JULY 2004

Demos: Ninja Gaiden; Van Helsing; Galleon: Islands of Mystery; Crimson Skies: 8-player Xbox Live-enabled demo
Content Download: Rainbow Six 3: Carnival level
Movies: The Chronicles of Riddick: EFBB; Driv3r; Mashed; Serious Sam 2; Making of Sudeki...



ISSUE 32 AUGUST 2004

Demos: Sudeki; RalliSport Challenge 2; Psi-Ops: The Mindgate Con.; Hitman: Contracts
Content Download: Rainbow Six 3: Meat Factory level
Movies: Halo 2; Half-Life 2; The Chronicles of Riddick; Silent Hill 4: The Room; Brothers In Arms; Ghost Recon 2



ISSUE 33 SEPT 2004

Demos: The Chronicles of Riddick; Mashed; Full Spectrum Warrior; The Red Star; Thief; Psi-Ops
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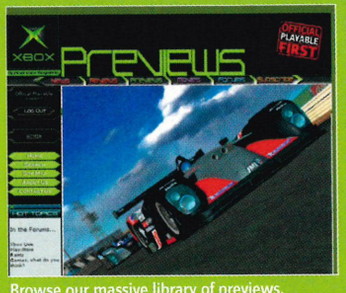
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Earth will never be the same...

Exclusive words with the man in charge of the biggest Xbox game ever!

Words: Gavin Ogden

HERE'S PROOF that we don't play games every hour of every day. There came a point in our day of *Halo 2* madness where we had to down pad and grab a few words with Bungie's studio manager and executive producer on the game, Pete Parsons. Considering he's at the helm of the most anticipated games in years, Parsons came across as a genuinely nice guy who had his dream job. But wouldn't we all if we were working on *Halo 2*?

It was amazing, considering there are only few months left in the development cycle, just how calm Parsons came across. Not a stress line on his forehead or a bloodshot eye in sight. Either the man has some secret relaxation technique up his »

» sleeve or he's got full faith in his team: we imagine it's the latter.

"I think we're all excited and working hard; tired, but everybody knows that the job they have to do is really important to the overall project," he says in front of the building that houses Bungie. "We have a good plan to take us through to the finishing of the game. Things like the beta and internal testing have been great for us because it's allowed us to go out into the real world and test how this thing works."

Parsons is the studio manager and executive producer, "which pretty much means I'm the expensive overhead" he laughs, adding, "my job really is simply making sure that everybody on the team is working like mad and that nothing stands in the way of them doing what they do best." With only a few months to go before submission, Parsons will steer the Bungie ship in the direction of home, cutting off any distractions that may take the team's mind off the extremely important job in hand.

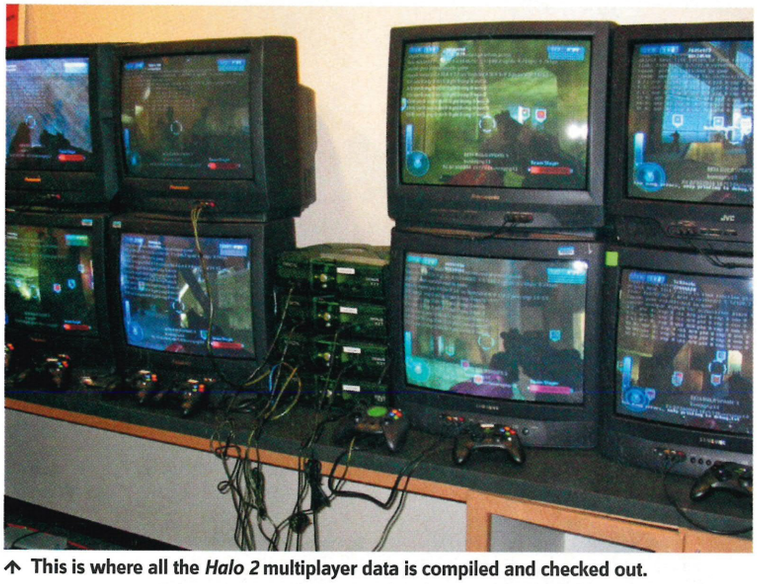
So the beta has been in testing 24/7 for the last two months. But what surprises and reactions did this produce? "The biggest surprise we've found so far is that it's working a whole lot better than we ever thought it would at this early stage in the code," explains Parsons. "The entire team was surprised by just how huge the original *Halo* multiplayer game was and it's so cool to see people still playing the original game in multiplayer. Part of what the beta's been about is recreating it with people around the world rather than people on your couch."

Since we got to play the incredible Zanzibar level at the videogame expo E3 back in May (see Issue 31), *Halo* multiplayer has also been privy to a bit of a resurrection here at the *OXM* tower. It's like we never stopped playing it at lunch and after-hours. But after spending a full day in the company of *Halo 2*, we've become hungrier than ever for the sequel to the best game ever™.

But there's also a side to *Halo 2* that's been overlooked, though not through want of trying on our behalf: the single-player game. So why are Parsons and co being so damn secretive about the Covenant's Earth invasion plan? It's killing us! "The vast majority of everything we try to do is to try and tell a great story," he states. "I think when you have a great story that has a plot, many different characters, twists, turns and surprises, the last thing you want to do is give those away." »



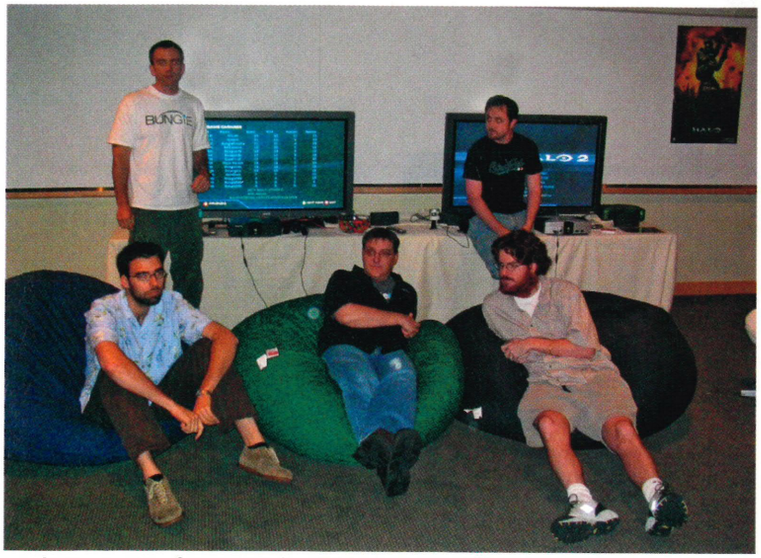
↑ We sat and played *Halo 2* for an entire day. We only stopped to interview Parsons.



↑ This is where all the *Halo 2* multiplayer data is compiled and checked out.

"I enjoy the Waterworks map because of the stalactites. It's the last thing you expect when you're crushed by a stalactite!"





↑ The team arrives for an open-floor Q&A: no mention of the single-player game though.

» Okay, so we do see his point. But surely giving away ten screenshots of the single-player game or letting us run around random sections of various levels would not give the game away? Far from it in fact, but Parsons wouldn't budge. "We're excited about saving it all right up until the very end and we'll expose the whole thing when people get it. I know this isn't going to make you feel any better but I can tell you that we're playing it every single day and we're having a lot of fun with it." Thanks for that!

Thankfully though, the multiplayer beta test did include a few new weapons that up to this point have been unseen. "The one a lot of people have spent some time with is the Energy Sword, which is really cool," Parsons continues. "People have also been using the Covenant Carbean quite a lot. We even have the Brute Shot in the levels you're playing today, and that's the Brutes' favourite weapon. Not all the weapons are going to be in the beta but we have a pretty good selection for you to try."

No doubt you all have your favourite maps from the original *Halo* - ours are Hang 'Em High, Chillout, Prisoner and, of course, the massive Blood Gulch. These are the maps that we play on religiously. We soon warmed to the selection of maps we played in the *Halo 2* beta, but what are Parsons' favourites? "I love Lockout, which was one of the first maps we had in our alpha version of the multiplayer. Zanzibar is a great map but I really enjoy, with big teams, Waterworks, mainly because of the flying vehicles and stalactites on the ceilings that can be shot down. It's the last thing you're expecting when you get crushed by a stalactite! They are all fun in their own unique way, Team Slayer on Ivory Tower is carnage. Before you all arrived here we were playing Plasma Swords only with no radar - you've got to try it." We did and Bungie succumbed to the domination of *OXM* on more than one occasion. That'll teach you for keeping the single-player game top secret! Notice how Parsons only talked about the maps we'd »



↓ Screens like this one make us wish it was 11 November already...

"When you have a great story with twists and surprises, you don't want to give those away"

» played? He didn't mention one map that hadn't already been revealed...

Our fingers and toes are crossed that we'll see some of our favourite maps in an updated form or expansion. Imagine a Bloodier Gulch or a Hang 'Em Higher! So, any chance? Parsons is typically evasive. "Lockout was really designed for a one-on-one in a similar way to Chillout, but you're going to see maps designed for all types of games and number of players," he says, but goes on to reveal that "maybe one of the old ones might make it through". Now *that's* what we're talking about!

Last but not least, we asked Parsons if the game was nearly finished. "No, not at all!" he exclaims. "We have a lot of work left to do but it's all starting to come together. We're at that point in time where we're finding out that all the plans we put together are finally working out how we anticipated when the game was on the drawing board. It's really exciting to see the different parts of the game come together and work beautifully." With that we let Parsons get back to hammering the multiplayer beta of *Halo 2*, which of course meant that we could do the same. *Halo 2* will be huge but, thanks to Xbox Live, it'll become the biggest online Xbox game we're likely to see this year and next. Be there to defend Earth from invasion on 11 November.



↑ Bungie studio manager Pete Parsons lines up next to a huge model of Master Chief.



Official Xbox Magazine PLAYED IT

↑ The Energy Sword is one of the most powerful weapons in the game.

We take on Bungie at the official multiplayer beta test of Halo 2 and win!

Halo 2

ONLY ON XBOX

XBOX LIVE PLAYABLE

Words: Gavin Ogden

Dev: Bungie Studios	Pub: Microsoft
Players: 1; 2-4 Split	Live: 2-16 players
Players: 2-16 S.Link	Release: 11 Nov
www.bungie.net	

AFTER GETTING a taster of multiplayer things to come at E3 back in May (see Issue 31), it felt so good to be playing *Halo 2* again, this time at Bungie's HQ in Redmond, Seattle. For the first time ever, Bungie allowed us to take on Microsoft employees from around the world over Xbox Live and it's every bit as good as you'd expect.

"About three and a half weeks ago, the sun began to never set on *Halo 2* as we deployed our beta," explains executive producer Pete Parsons. "About 8,000 Microsoft people signed up to participate in the beta worldwide. It's a pretty incredible number: about 15 per cent of the entire company wanted to play *Halo 2* as soon as they could. So we're still testing it and this has been yet another step in making sure that we launch the game on 09 November, or 11 if you're in Europe."

During the journey to Seattle that lasted around 30 hours, we could only think of one thing: beating Bungie at its own game and especially whipping ex-executive editor of the *Official US Xbox Magazine*, Frank O'Connor, who recently joined the Bungie team. We even took it easy the night before to make sure we were on top form.

Our day at Bungie mainly involved going hands-on with the beta test that included four brand new multiplayer maps: Lockout, Zanzibar, Ivory Tower and Waterworks. Each map varied in size from the claustrophobic staircases of Ivory Tower to the huge, open Waterworks complete with flying vehicles. There were also a couple of different game types to try out. »



↑ Say hello to the rather large multiplayer map, Waterworks.

FOREVER FRIENDS

Press Y and get your friends reunited

HALO 2 WILL LAUNCH with all the latest Xbox Live features that'll make finding games and friends easier than blowing up a warthog. At any time during a game, hit the Y button to bring up your Friends list. You can send whoever you want a voice message by recording it in real time through the headset. Then send if off and wait for the player to join. Bungie demoed this brand new feature to us and it was so simple that even your mum could do it. If you're playing the single-player game, you can still receive messages and invites if you're signed in to Xbox Live. You can also spam all your friends at the same time to come and join you. Playing with each other has never been so easy and *Halo 2* sessions will last all day long!



↑ The online options for your Friends list are amazing. You'll never lose a mate on Xbox Live again.

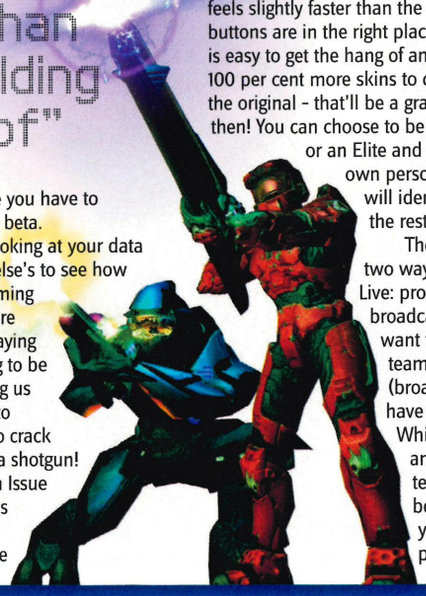


↑ This time round you'll be able to jump into flying vehicles for multiplayer mayhem.



↑ The Brute Shot in all its glory looks lethal.

"It feels slightly faster than the original, and dual-wielding is easy to get the hang of"



»» These mainly included Team Slayer or Slayer-type games with all weapons as well as modes of play that only featured rocket launchers and plasma swords. We were even given the freedom to set up our own games with any weapons settings we liked.

"This day is all about you playing the *Halo 2* beta: the first time anybody outside of Microsoft has played it on Xbox Live," says Parsons, giving us a quick rundown of what to expect. "We're not doing anything special for you guys - you are playing the beta and it's not been made for PR or marketing purposes. You'll be playing Microsoft people from around the world. You will hopefully have a great time doing it, but at the same time you have to remember that it is the beta.

"In fact we'll be looking at your data along with everybody else's to see how the gameplay is performing over Xbox Live. So you're not only going to be playing it, but you're also going to be playing a role in helping us make the game." And to think we just wanted to crack heads with the butt of a shotgun!

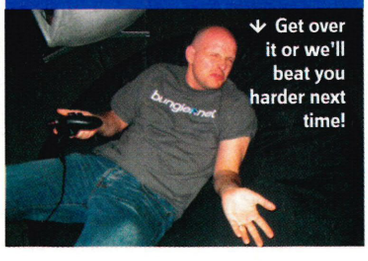
As we said back in Issue 31, the gameplay itself is very similar to *Halo* (Issue 01, 9.7). The game feels slightly faster than the original, all the buttons are in the right places, dual-wielding is easy to get the hang of and there are now 100 per cent more skins to choose from than the original - that'll be a grand total of two, then! You can choose to be either a Spartan or an Elite and customise your own personal emblem that will identify you from the rest online.

The voice works in two ways over Xbox Live: proximity voice and broadcast voice. If you want to talk to your team-mates (broadcast), you'll have to press the White button first and only your team-mates will be able to hear you. With proximity voice, »»

WHERE IS HE NOW?

Look who we found...

REMEMBER Frank O'Connor from the *Official US Xbox Magazine* who used to write our US column? He left the mag and now manages bungie.net and does all the weekly updates of *Halo 2*. We took great pleasure in beating him on more than one occasion. If you see him, laugh at his feeble *Halo* skills.



↓ Get over it or we'll beat you harder next time!

» anybody within earshot distance will hear you: friend or foe. We liked getting right up behind an enemy and shouting at them using the melee attack. Class.

If you play a lot of Live games, you'll have found it hard to stay with your friends when jumping in and out of matches. But in *Halo 2* you'll be able to create a party of friends that will stay together once the game has finished. After every game you and your mates come out of the game and go back to the lobby where you can discuss what type of game you're going to play next. It's all at the touch of a button and works a treat.

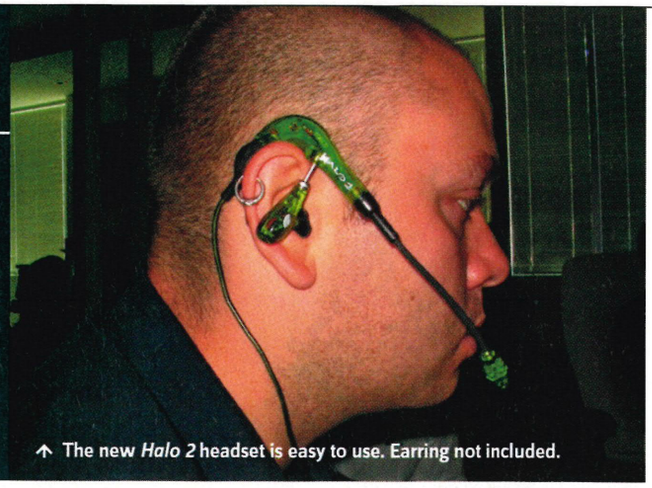
Behind the scenes at Bungie are testers pulling down insane amounts of data on the game every day thanks to some cutting-edge data-tracking techniques. More than 20 million records are pooled into a database and through that the team can make tweaks based on what it sees. "Keep in mind that because this is the beta there are many things that are broken or not working," continues Parsons. "There's a lot to come from the final game but we still think this is fun. Every time you see a glitch, or you can't connect or don't hear a voice in the way you expect, just realise that we already know all of those things."

Before we were let loose on the beta, we were given a quick explanation of how the day would work. There was no discussion of the controls or how to play the game: Bungie (rightly) assumed that we were familiar with the original. Just a bit!

Considering this was the beta and things wouldn't always work as we expected them to, we had no trouble connecting to games or starting our own. A new feature that's been implemented is a matchmaking system that connects you to a game based on your own connection speed. We were playing *Halo 2* again in no time and the new maps took only a few goes at before we knew where the goodies were waiting. We quickly began to rise to the top of the leaderboard. There's also a system in place that, as you play and win, your player profile will automatically level up. The whole point of this is to be able to find someone who is of a similar skill level to you. »

OUT WITH THE OLD
Halo 2 headsets are go!

UNVEILED TO US On the day was a new *Halo 2*-branded headset that incorporates a tremendous amount of technology. Basically it's a high-end headset that's more commonly used in call centres and it's been designed to be very comfortable and worn all day long. It's got noise cancelling technology built in for a better playing experience and it simply clips on, so you can wear it on your left or right ear. Bungie expressed an interest in the headset being available as a possible bundle with the game or Xbox Live Starter Kit. Whatever happens, it will be out in time for the game and you'll love it – we didn't even realise it was there half the time.

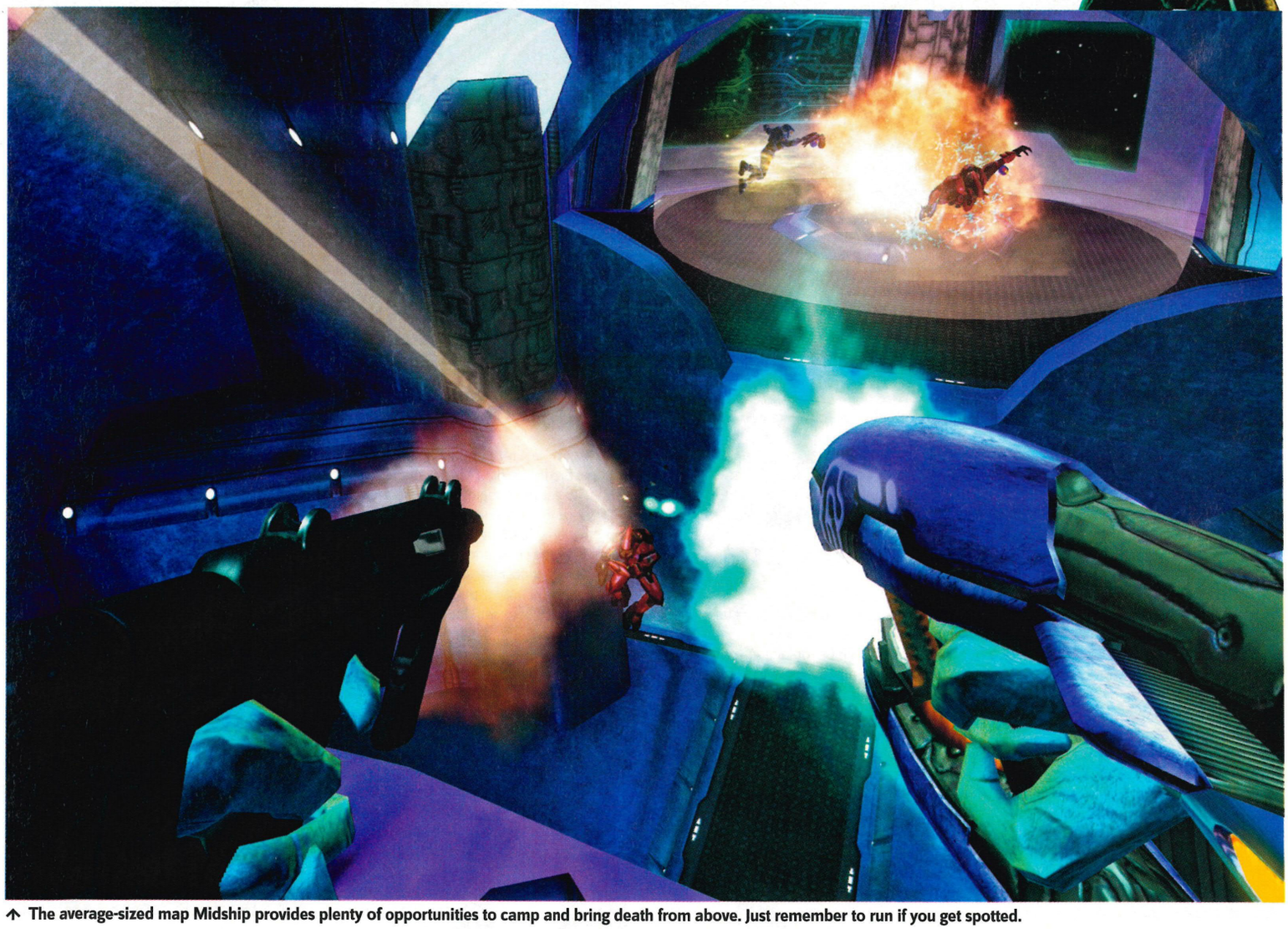


↑ The new *Halo 2* headset is easy to use. Earring not included.

"We liked getting right up behind an enemy and shouting at them using the melee attack. Class"

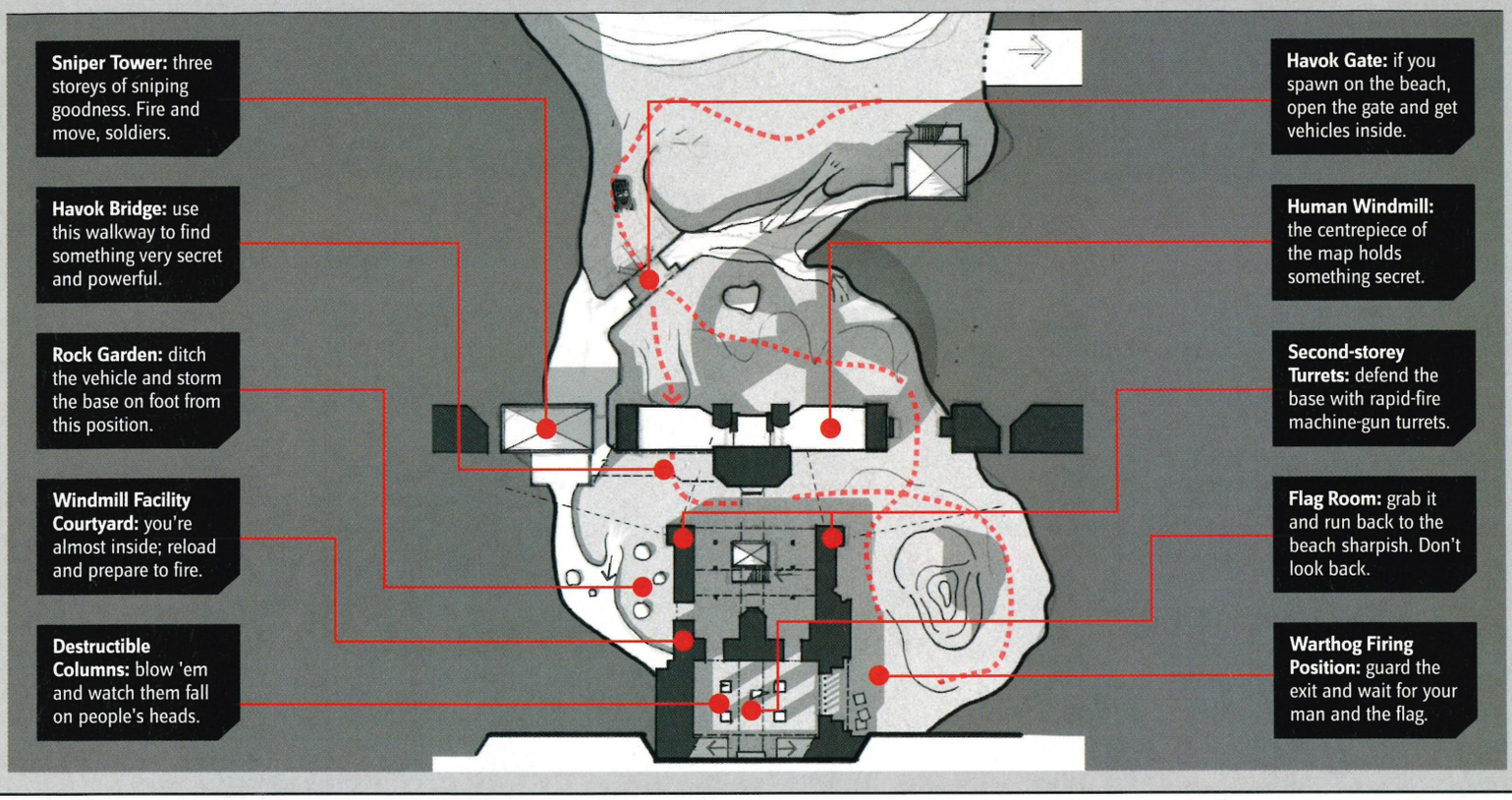


↑ Dual-wielding is clearly the way forward for Master Chief.



↑ The average-sized map Midship provides plenty of opportunities to camp and bring death from above. Just remember to run if you get spotted.

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF ZANZIBAR Prepare yourself for a fight to the death!





↓ Can you feel the Elite inside of you?

"New maps vary in size from the claustrophobic Ivory Tower to the huge open Waterworks with flying vehicles"

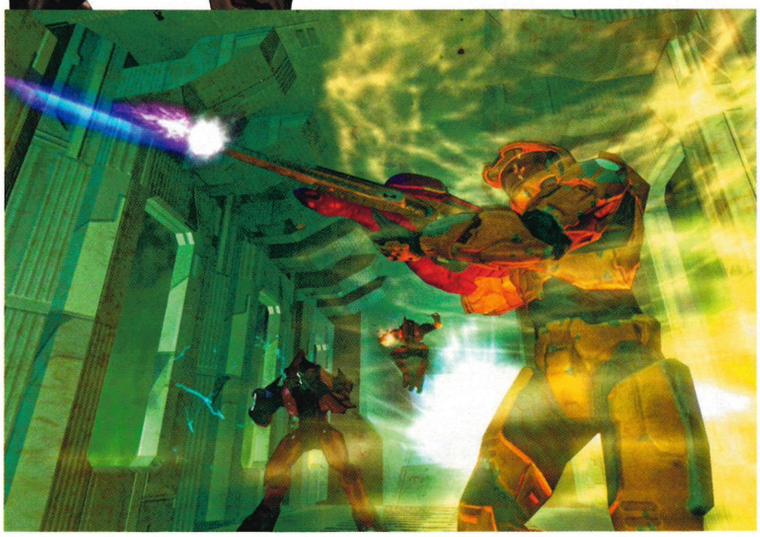
» The OptiMatch option now works a little differently compared to other Xbox Live games, as Parsons explains: "We're basically breaking up the OptiMatch experience into what we call 'matchmaking playlists'. Today we only have two playlists but once we go Live we could have as many as 15, and change them as frequently as we want to based on feedback."

Clicking on OptiMatch we saw Free For All and Small Team games, which are both self-explanatory. You can't control which one you get into but you'll be thrown into any one of these types of games. You might get Slayer on Lockout or Rockets on Zanzibar. It's pure potluck but always fun whatever game mode you choose, but you'll soon find your favourites.

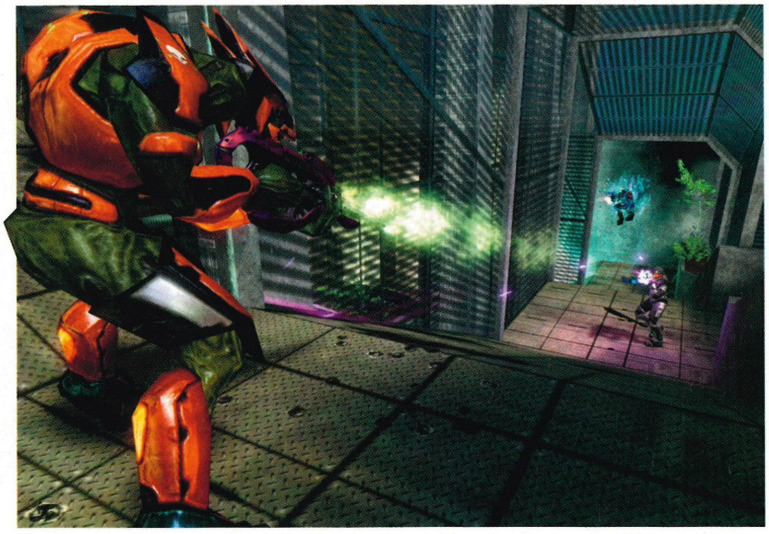
Unfortunately there was nothing to be seen of the single-player game. We caught glimpses of it as we took a brisk tour round Bungie's offices but that was all. Chances are we won't be seeing it before review either. This one's a tough nut to crack but you know it'll be worth the wait.



↑ Tanks return to pack a serious punch!



↑ This yellow glow means someone's just spawned or recharged their shield.

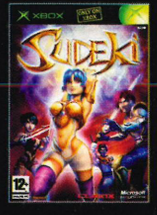


↑ It's even got shadows and lighting Sam Fisher would be ultra-proud of.

Pray for a full frontal assault.



Microsoft game studios CLIMAX



You're going to love her killer moves. When her world is threatened by the awakening of ancient evil, Ailish and three other great heroes must unite to defeat it. Now this enchanting princess, a brave warrior, a high-flying gunslinger, and a dark huntress will battle through the Realm of Shadows on a quest to reclaim their world. Rotate between each character and use all their powers to prevail in one of the most intense action RPGs. Sudeki will leave you breathless.

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Reviews

Written by gamers who live and love games. We pride ourselves on bringing you the very best reviews possible



Andy Says...

THEY SAY walk a mile in a man's shoes and you'll really know him. Well, after an entire lifetime you'd be pretty intimate, and that's exactly what the fantastic *Fable* lets you do. Make sure you read our world-exclusive review.

Three new racers zoom onto Live this month; *Colin McRae* upshifts to his third Xbox outing, and the revamped *OutRun 2* powerdrifts into our lives. *Burnout 3* is the first EA title to support Live play, and it rocks.

If the brutal *Conflict: Vietnam* and *Vietcong* don't make you soil your Calvins, the terrifying *Silent Hill 4* will. Elsewhere, our first real RTS stampedes onto Xbox with *Kingdom Under Fire* and Tiger Woods sinks another ace golfing sim. Enjoy.

Score Key

8.5-10.0
THE XBOX ELITE - ONE OF THE VERY BEST AVAILABLE

7.5-8.4
A TOP-QUALITY RELEASE THAT'S WELL WORTH HAVING

6.5-7.4
STILL WELL WORTH CONSIDERING, BUT HAS SOME FLAWS

5.0-6.4
AN AVERAGE TITLE WITH NOTHING OUTSTANDING TO OFFER

2.5-4.9
A BAD GAME, AND ONE YOU SHOULDN'T BOTHER WITH

0.0-2.4
CALLING SUCH A RANCID STINKER A 'GAME' IS LIBELLOUS

Our Badges explained

XBOX ELITE
Any game scoring a whopping 8.5 or more.

GAME OF THE MONTH
Our favourite of the Elite games reviewed this month.

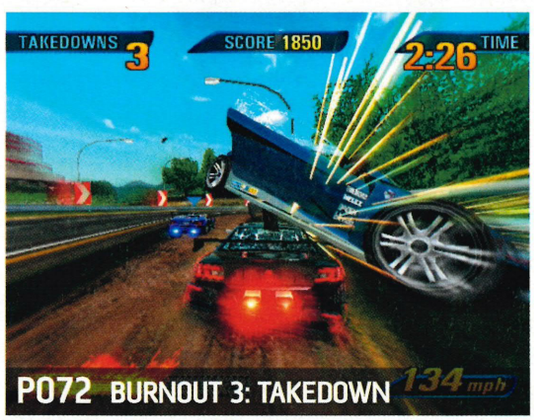
XBOX LIVE
Downloadable content, online play, or both.

ONLY ON XBOX
An Xbox-exclusive game for at least three months.

ON THE DISC
A playable trial or movie of the game is on our disc.



P060 FABLE Aesop would be stunned at Peter Molyneux's technically brilliant, utterly absorbing adventure. You should be too!



P072 BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN



P090 CONFLICT: VIETNAM

P066 Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005
Loads of new features means there's more than enough room to swing this cat for all its worth.

P068 Colin McRae Rally 2005
The king of cornering takes an easy left, hard right back onto Xbox for the fifth in the hugely successful rally series.

P074 Silent Hill 4: The Room
The darkest, most disturbing title ever seen drags its bloody corpse into our lives. We want our mums. Seriously...

P078 Kingdom Under Fire: The Crusaders
A superb blend of thoughtful RTS and up close and personal, visceral combat stampedes straight to the top of the strategy pile.

P080 OutRun 2
Fantastic revamp of the arcade classic, with superb Xbox Live features. Why aren't all driving games this much fun?

P084 Madden 2005
The Grid Iron god is back for his yearly update. The name may have aged well, but this NFL sim goes from strength to strength.

P085 Headhunter: Redemption
The moody biker returns to dish out more justice, but is he more headless chicken than headhunter now?

P087 Samurai Warriors
Picking up where *Dynasty Warriors* left off, Koei brings us another button-bashing bonanza of epic proportions.

P088 Vietcong: Purple Haze
No, not a giant Asian ape, but a respectable FPS that boasts some impressive online multiplayer capabilities.

P093 Wings of War
"I say, why don't we give Jerry what for and be back in time for tea?" "Good show old chap, let's go to page 093 and do just that."

WE'RE SURROUNDED: AS IF TWO VIETNAM GAMES WEREN'T ENOUGH THIS MONTH, CHECK OUT NEXT MONTH'S MAG FOR A REVIEW OF MEN OF VALOR: THE VIETNAM WAR.

Official Xbox Magazine ELITE

Official Xbox Magazine GAME OF THE MONTH

ON THE DISC

Fable

Live your own fantasy, not someone else's

ONLY ON XBOX

Words: Ben Talbot

- Dev: Lionhead
- Pub: Microsoft
- Players: 1
- Live: Aware
- Release: 02 Oct
- www.fablegame.com





↑ You could say that this arena boss is 'rock' hard. Ho ho! There are two of them to fight. Attack them from behind to avoid being crushed underfoot.



↑ Four decapitations with one axe swing!



↑ Some of the high-contrast lighting is gorgeous.



↑ Flip a finger to anyone who laughs at your fat belly.

"IT'S BEEN TWO weeks since I wed, but the wife still refuses to consummate our marriage... apparently I don't spend enough time spoiling her with gifts and way too much time outdoors kicking chickens."

Explaining this to Peter Molyneux (Lionhead's MD) while still preserving my dignity is tough. He seems uneasy with my personal crusade against poultry, and with good reason. Sigmund Freud would have a blowout - not just with me, but also with *Fable* in general. It's psychoanalysis made fun! More importantly, *Fable* is a gamers' fantasy made flesh. Rarely does an RPG appeal beyond a niche audience, but this action adventure oozes fun and accessibility from every pore. It's obvious Lionhead enjoyed making *Fable* as much as you'll enjoy making it your own unique experience.

No two people will ever complete *Fable* in the same way. It's a tribute to the depth and diversity on offer. But one thing's certain: the first time you play through the adventure, you'll start to see a mirror held up to the kind of person you really are.

Obviously, the best way to begin your life story is as a small child, and this is how you play through the first two hours. Good or evil beckon almost immediately as you perform tasks for the people of Oakvale. Will you take a bribe to protect a cheating husband or grass him up to his missus? You could even do both if you're a double-dealing kind of guy.

Temptation's everywhere. Unguarded valuables lie around invitingly, while certain NPCs act as provocateurs to evil deeds. The principle of character development is the same as *KOTOR*'s (Issue 20, 9.5): a benevolent act shifts your alignment to good; a moral lapse makes your hero more evil. However, the extent to which your alignment changes the nature of the game is far, far deeper. It's no longer a matter of influencing the story (actually the overall plot is mostly unaffected), but instead evolving your appearance and altering the way NPCs react to you.

After basic training at the Heroes' Guild, time jumps forward about ten years. Unleashed on the world as an adult amateur hero, the objective is to increase your fame or notoriety and discover who was responsible for your family's murder. Patience is very important because it'll take considerable time before you notice even the subtlest developments in your character's look. The passage of time only advances when you perform tasks, so leaving your Xbox switched on overnight won't do the job! »»

"This action adventure oozes fun and accessibility from every pore"

Bonus info

ANTI-SOCIAL

You can kill the entire population of towns that allow the carrying of weapons, and they will start to repopulate again after a short time. Many villages have laws against carrying weapons but you can still smash windows and break down doors.

FOWL PLAY: WE RECOMMEND KICKING A CHICKEN IN FABLE, THEN USING THE SLOW TIME SPELL SO YOU CAN BOOT IT AGAIN BEFORE IT LANDS. CHICKEN KEEP-UPS!

Bonus info

FAN CLUB
If you're famous and good-looking enough, you can encourage villagers to follow you on an adventure. They won't join the fight but will clap and cheer when you showboat or kill a monster. If they get bored, they'll walk home. Evil players can use them as human shields or abandon them in the wilderness.



WHO ATE ALL THE PIES?
All food carries a nutritional value and certain food also has good/evil qualities. Tofu makes you a better person, while eating crunchy chicks (it's the bones that make them crunchy) makes you evil. Eating loads of pies and red meat makes your belly grow and slows you down.



↑ At the start of each mission, villagers gather outside the Heroes' Guild to see you off. This is the time to boast and earn extra renown.

TWO HEARTS A man is incomplete until he's married. After that he's finished

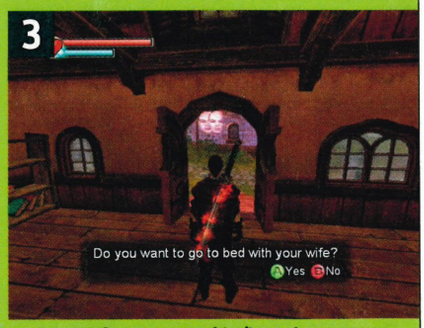
THE marriage element is a bit like *The Sims*. Premarital sex isn't allowed, so first buy a house. Lavishing gifts upon your love leads to the giving of a ring - a cheap one will fool daft ladies. Spruce up your home with new furniture before going for 'fourth'. You can wed almost anyone, from the old lady at Rose Cottage to male sailors at the docks.



↑ Here I'm going for the barmaid at Bowestone Tavern. Handing over Milk Tray works better than giving her loads of ale. A heart indicates success.



↑ I did so well that she proposed to me and I didn't even have to use the wedding ring I bought. That goes back to the shop tomorrow!



↑ Press A for some nookie (I got there eventually!). You don't see anything graphic - just a few comedy sound effects.

»» However seemingly inconsequential, every action has a positive or negative alignment and will modify your renown. This is astonishing when you realise how many things you can do. During my first seven hours of play, I robbed someone's house, slew a troll in my underpants, got wed, kicked a chicken 3.5654 metres into the air, caught a fish, drank beer until I puked and lost 3,000 gold at cards. Phew!

With so many diversions, it's easy to forget there are actual quests to complete. Thankfully, the mission structure is very flexible. Just like the *GTA* games (Issue 25, 8.9), you can choose from a variety of trials, some of which offer wealth and fame and other key quests that advance the story.

Reaching the age of 40 is not the time for a mid-life crisis in *Fable*; it's when the action really kicks off. Having spent enough time messing about in the sandbox-style playground of Albion, you'll have moved onto completing quests and realised that this is the way to really advance your character.

For the first time, changes in appearance become more noticeable. Evil-doers' skin starts to turn pale and desiccated while your hair turns black as night. Another ten years and another 30 murders and you might even start to sprout devil horns. On the other hand, saintly heroes can expect Gandalf-style bristles and even a halo (unsurprisingly, not many of Lionhead's games testers have these).

Spending power also influences the way you look. In real life, I've tried to abandon my shabby dress sense (from the mean streets of Cardiff) and take on an '80s yuppie chic, so my hero has the most expensive clothes in Albion and an audacious moustache. It's almost reminiscent of *DOA Xtreme Beach Volleyball*'s (Issue 14, 8.0) outrageously self-indulgent dressing-up simulator. Although there aren't any bouncing fake breasts, you can still drag it up in a lovely blouse if that floats your boat.

Appearance is more than polygon skin-deep; it changes the way NPCs react to you. Wearing a »»



↑ Flourish attacks are unblockable. Summon magic swords to help.

FACE VALUE
A mug that people won't be able to forget

AFTER ABOUT ten hours of play, your hero starts to become noticeably different from the generic character you start out with. New haircuts and beards have to be purchased from wandering traders, as do wondrous and terrifying tattoos. Special cards containing instructions for rare haircuts and tattoos can be discovered all around Albion.



↑ Young and fresh-faced, I purchase my first tattoo at the age of 25. This costume is the Dark Will User's shirt.



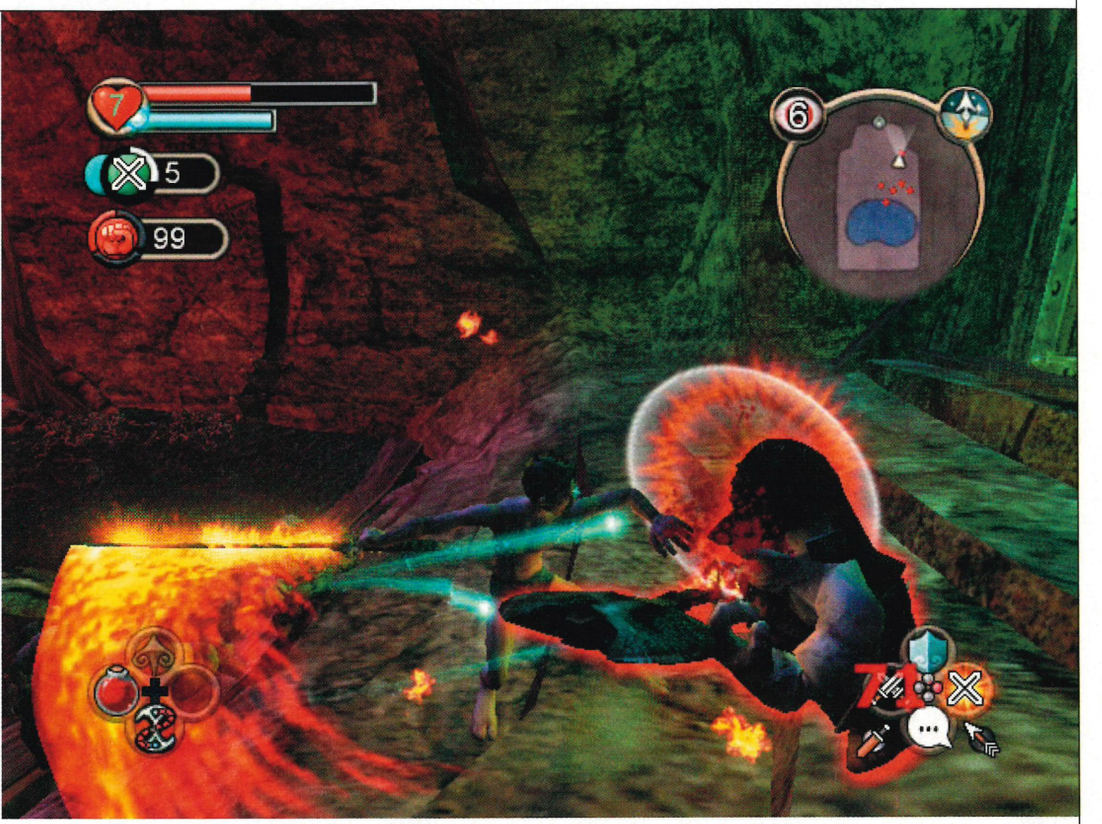
↑ Notice how much more sinister I become having donned the bandit bandana and cultivated a massive moustache?



↑ Heading into my mid-30s, I've now acquired a very expensive plate helmet and magical katana. Impressive, huh?



↑ Old age carries many indignities. Having cast off my armour, I now run around in a pair of pants just to show off my battle scars.



↑ One of my boasts was to complete the Hobbes Cave in my pants. Big mistake: this is one of the toughest dungeons in *Fable*.



↑ The Frying Pan is a surprisingly powerful weapon. It's also non-stick – great for a fry-up!

Bonus info



EXPRESS YOURSELF
At the start of the game, your hero only has four basic expressions: fart, laugh, command to follow, and command to stop following. As soon as you come of age, you'll receive the manly arm pump and sexy hero pose to impress NPCs with. Later on, you'll even be able to thrust your hips in old ladies' faces and then swear at them.

» dress will make you an icon of mockery, whereas sporting flash threads will make ladies swoon and easier to seduce. Everyone in the real world knows that beards and tattoos are scary (apologies to the Carter Bros), and Albion's NPCs know it too.

Combat also affects your hero's appearance. Battle scars are carried for life, while heavy weapon-wielders' arms grow to resemble tree trunks – the real-time combat system brilliantly acknowledges individual playing styles. It also rewards you for specialising in a discipline: magic, melee or archery. An expert archer will eventually be able to kill enemies with one hit using auto-aim or even take their heads off with the precise first-person targeting.

However, spending all your EXP points on magic means you'll rarely have to raise a crossbow or wield a sword. There are 17 varied spells in total and you can set your favourite four to default and activate them using the face buttons.

"Just about everything you need to make a fantasy world jump off the screen"

But cleverest of all is the hack 'n' slash melee combat. While similar to *Sudeki*'s (Issue 32, 8.7), the addition of a lock-on button makes focusing on a single foe far more deliberate. An equally valuable feature is the combo multiplier. Keeping a long combo going like in *Ninja Gaiden* (Issue 29, 9.2) results in greater damage and bonus EXP points.

But *Fable* understands that everyone has their own way of doing things. Instead of specialising, it's just as much fun to mix crossbow, magic and swordplay, and just as intuitive. Considering the »

HEADS UP: PLAYING FOOTBALL WITH AN OPPONENT'S BLOODY HEAD IS A GREAT WAY TO BOOST YOUR STATUS AS A FEARSOME TYRANT, ESPECIALLY IF THERE ARE LOTS OF NPCS AROUND TO SEE IT.



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Bonus info



MINDER
One of the funniest moments we came across was most unexpected. If you hire a good bodyguard from the Temple of Avo and an evil bodyguard from Twinblade's bandit fort, they'll have arguments with each other!

FIVE-FINGER DISCOUNT
Spending EXP points on the stealth skill means you'll be able to burgle peoples' homes more easily. You'll also be able to pinch items that traders have left out on display. Because all the NPCs in Albion have routines, you'll be able to work out when their houses are empty.



TROPHY HUNTER
One way to raise your renown is to show your trophies to as many people as possible. We collected a giant wasp's head, a white balverine pelt and a golden trout that we caught in Fisher's creek.

SAFE AND SOUND
Like *Sudeki*, *Fable*'s NPCs have regional accents. However, the voiceovers and dialogue in *Fable* are funnier and obviously inspired by the books of Terry Pratchett. Composer Danny *Beetlejuice* Elfman created the main musical theme but the other in-game music is just as good.

LAGER LATHER "He was a wise man who invented beer" [Plato]

ONE OF THE STATS that *Fable* keeps account of is how much alcohol you drink. Drinking too many pints of ale makes the screen go blurry for a limited time and you'll eventually vomit. This isn't a great way to improve your renown. One of the benefits of old age is that you can drink a lot more before you put on the beer goggles. Always remember that the consumption of alcohol may lead you to believe that people are laughing *with* you.



↑ With an advanced hero like this, you usually have to drink about 15 pints before you see any effect.



↑ Keep drinking once the screen has gone blurry and things will go from bad to worse. A killer hangover awaits.



↑ All the NPCs around you will show disgust when you vomit. Your reputation as a drinker will be forever tarnished.



↑ The map indicator is very useful. It shows where monsters are and how many of them can see you.

» quantity of actions available, the control system is incredibly intuitive and extremely satisfying to master. We can't emphasise enough how important this is, because the enemy AI is fairly tough and you are sometimes faced with 20 enemies at once. The battle arena (one of the highlights) is comparable to some of *TLOTR: The Return of the King*'s (Issue 23, 8.5) largest mash-ups and it's just as exciting.

Perhaps the only downside with *Fable* is that you're forced to return to the Heroes' Guild in order to spend your EXP points. There was nothing more pleasing in *KOTOR* than winning a battle and being able to level up right away. That instant hit of rewarding satisfaction seems undeniably absent here. Nevertheless, returning to the Guild isn't too much of a chore thanks to a teleport crystal that lets you instantly jump to any point in Albion.

While the framerate stutters fractionally during the more intense battles, *Fable*'s graphics are so awe-striking that you won't be distracted. Monsters, in particular the earth and rock trolls, are vividly realised and animated; simply exploding and fizzing with personality. Albion's NPCs are equally lifelike. Offer a villager a few pints and you'll see just how far the animation goes. But most impressive are the bewilderingly realistic environments. There's variety, there's atmosphere, there's incredible detail; all enhanced by mesmerising sound and music. There's just about everything you need to make a fantasy world spring to life and jump off the screen.

But for all this, the most striking thing about *Fable* is just how user-friendly it is. Far from the friction of having a virtual spouse who won't sleep with you, *Fable* sweetly encourages some give-and-take hanky-panky with the gamer. You have to put lots of time in – more than 30 hours just to finish it once – and you have to be patient and not expect your hero to evolve instantaneously. In return, you'll be rewarded with a unique sandbox-style world, graphics and audio polished beyond belief, and a hero that you're genuinely proud of. Who cares that your wife won't sleep with you when there's so much high adventure to be had! *Fable* won't just take over your life; *Fable* will *become* it.

The Summary

FABLE THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. Makes you think about the kind of person you are in real life. Character development is unequalled in any Xbox RPG.
2. Albion is a sandbox-style playground where you'll probably spend more time doing stupid stuff than completing the quests. Brilliant.
3. The combat system reflects the freedom you have elsewhere in the game. Intuitive controls make mixing melee, archery and magic easy.
4. Monsters are intelligent and look superb. The same goes for Albion's gorgeous, varied environments.
5. Aside from the virtual hanky-panky, it's the most fun you can have with NPCs in any game ever.

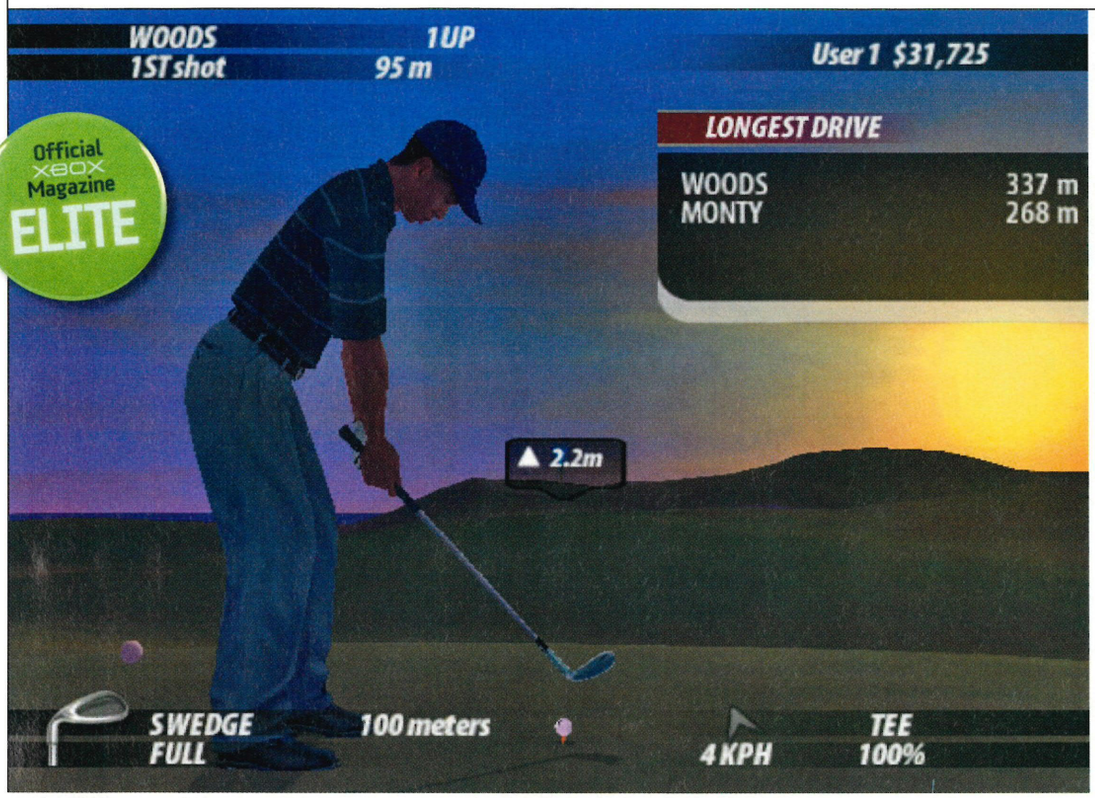
The Verdict

Unique in the world of videogames. Confident, flashy and polished beyond belief, there's no way you won't love it.

9.4//10

PREVIOUSLY: Exclusive Access – Issue 12, News – Issues 17, 23, 31 & 33
COMING SOON: Hints – Issue 35

DUNGEON MASTER: FANTASY AUTHOR TERRY PRATCHETT ONCE SAID: "FANTASY IS AN EXERCISE BICYCLE FOR THE MIND. IT MIGHT NOT TAKE YOU ANYWHERE BUT IT TONES UP THE MUSCLES THAT CAN."



Official Xbox Magazine ELITE

↑ Now golfers can play any course at any time of the day or night, which seriously affects ball physics.

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005

The King of Swing chips in for another round

Words: Andy Irving

Dev: EA Redwood	Pub: EA
Players: 1-4	
Release: 24 Sept	
www.easports.com	

IT'D BE FAIR to say EA's come under some flak for its long-running sports franchises, with critics bemoaning that each successive release seems to be merely an uninspired update of the previous one. With the Tiger's latest outing however, its Redwood studio has put things to rights, incorporating some all-new game features.

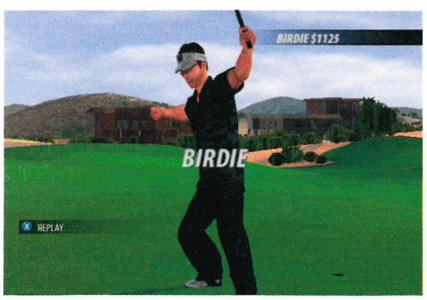
Of course, all the familiar options are still available, like PGA Tour (Career mode), strokeplay, skins etc, and the fun practice courses. Once you've created your on-screen abomination (as all of ours seemed to be), enter My Legend and work your way up from Putting Prodigy to Swinging Superstar. No, not a nocturnal suburban legend, but one out on the course who, after defeating established Pros on the way up, gets the chance to take on one of the game's greats. Jack Niklaus, Arnold Palmer, Seve B and more all feature, and success in Legend mode results in you amassing Legend coins, which allows you to modify any course and paves the way for another innovative feature: Tiger Proofing.

This brilliantly lets players alter the fairway width, bunker size (who'd make them bigger?) and undulation. Course upkeep can be altered from pristine to poor, as can the weather and time of day. These all have a massive impact on your ball's physics and behaviour (i.e. an immaculate hole on a hot day will see your dimpled device bounce higher than Ram Man on a Smarties overdose). This obviously has a major effect on gameplay, and significantly enhances the lifespan of the title once career mode has been clocked.

Once again, all manner of accessories are available in the Pro Shop so you can be just like Tiger, if you want. More than 1500 new items join the already-countless numbers of shades, apparel, headwear and shoes. You can now buy a defaulted swing for your character from one of the featured Pros or, for that personal touch, customise your own. Adjust your swing length, knee flex, followthrough (never a pretty sight) and hand position to tailor your own golfing style.

To add a bit of a strategy, we now have Tiger Vision - an invaluable putting aid from the big guy himself. Sparingly allocated to several uses per round, you can tap the White button on a tricky putt for a yellow dot to appear on the green. Align the cursor dead centre in the time limit and you'll sink the shot every time. This adds massively to the gameplay experience, especially in multiplayer.

Factor in these new features and couple them with the tweaked graphical polish, fantastic swing system and added original and authentic courses, and *Tiger Woods 2005* is the most comprehensive golf game ever made. The only complaint we have is the lack of (previously promised) Xbox Live play in Europe, which would have driven this straight into the multiplayer hall of legends. However, it's still much more than just an update, and EA will have to go some to outdo itself again next year. Might we suggest Live play?

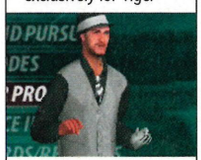


↑ A good hole, and your guy dances a jig of joy.

Bonus info

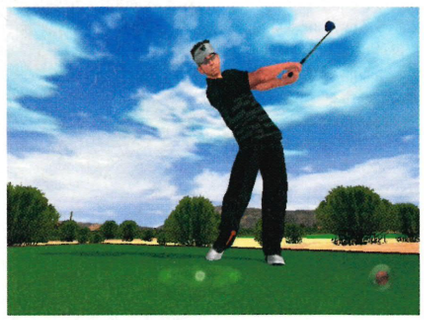
CRY ME A WATER HAZARD

Superstar hip swiveller and all-round heartthrob Justin Timberlake has designed a special playable character exclusively for *Tiger Woods 2005*. A massive golf and videogame fan, the trousersnake designed 'The Hustler', right down to sketching his tattoos and motion-capturing his swing.

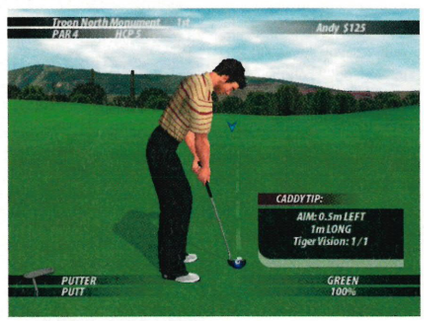




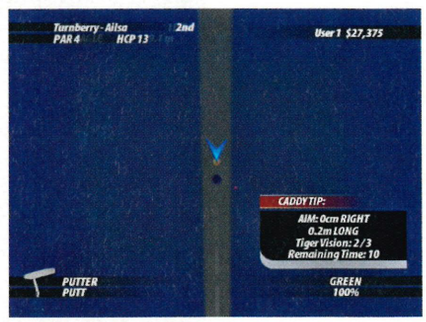
↑ "What's on your heel? Oooh, hello sailor!"



↑ Buy a perfect swing and put it into practice.



↑ Listen to the caddie. He's always right.



↑ Use the all-new Tiger Vision to nail putts.

The Summary

OXM

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005 THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. The fantastic swing system remains the core of *Tiger*'s gameplay, and continues to make it the most accurate and accessible golf sim.
2. New Tiger Proofing mode allows players to completely customise any aspect of the game, providing massive amounts of replayability.
3. Remapping of all existing courses with improved motion capture and character animations; this is as real a golfing experience as you'll get.
4. The GameFace II feature allows unprecedented accuracy in creating your very own custom player.
5. Multiplayer is just as fun as ever, though criminally, Xbox Live play is not available in Europe, only in the US. It's not fair, dammit!

The Verdict

Massively deep; drives the perfect line between simulation and arcade action. Features and options aplenty.

8.7//10

PREVIOUSLY: News - Issue 32
COMING SOON: Hints - Issue 35

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↑ Full Xbox Live play and a massive career mode are *McRae*'s latest features.

Colin McRae Rally 2005

McRae bounces back with full online play

Words: Gavin Ogden

- Dev: Codemasters
- Pub: Codemasters
- Players: 1; 2-4 Split
- Live: 2-8 players
- Players: 2-8 S.Link
- Release: 24 Sept
- www.codemasters.com/colinmcrae2005

COMPETITION IN the rally genre is at an all-time high this year, due to two rival rally titles trying to knock *McRae* off the podium. This year saw the launch of the excellent *RalliSport Challenge 2* (Issue 30, 9.0) and the frustratingly difficult *Richard Burns Rally* (Issue 32, 6.9). And let's not forget 2003's stunning *Colin McRae Rally 04* (Issue 21, 9.1) either – it still stands up against today's breed. You've come to the right console if you want to rally with the best of 'em.

After two successful outings on Xbox, what can the third game in as many years bring to the series that we haven't seen or played before? Sure, the visuals look a bit prettier than *04* and the handling has been tinkered around with as you'd expect, but what's going to make you buy this game if you own last year's demon racer? The answer is Xbox Live!

For the first time the muddy gameplay can be savoured online in groups of up to eight. You can also download ghost cars of the fastest racers and upload your own. If you've not yet signed up to Live, the same modes can be played across System Link (again, up to eight players). But as in *RalliSport 2*, you'll race each other in ghost form, as the tracks are not wide enough to accommodate all the madness.

The handling of the cars has changed a little since *04*. We were big fans of the handling system last year, and this year Codies has tinkered around with the chase cam to give the player a better sense of speed. In third-person view, the camera detaches itself when you fly round bends at top speeds. We have to say we preferred *04*'s handling, though the feeling of throwing the cars around is great fun.

There's also been a major overhaul of the single-player game. The two main modes of play »»

Bonus info



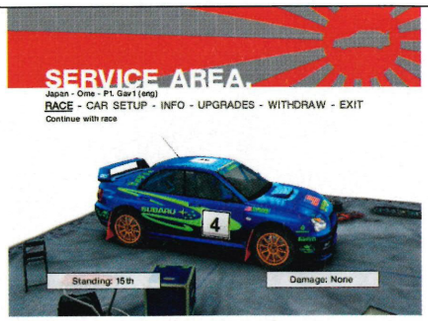
BEER FESTIVAL
The latest country to get the McRae treatment is the land of beer and fat sausages, Germany. You'll get to race in mud as you leather it through tiny villages and a lot of rain.



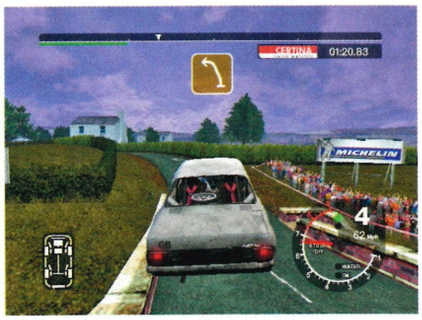
↑ Hit too many trees and your car will fall apart.



↑ First-person racing is a must for ultra-realistic thrills and spills.



↑ Make sure your wheels are up to the race.



↑ The classic Escort stands the test of time.

GHOST RACING

No collisions in multiplayer: it's all about ghost cars



↑ Gav1 is leading. Where's the competition?



↑ Every ghost for himself in multiplayer races.



↑ Even a few crashes couldn't slow us down.



↑ Listen out for the crowd cheering you along as you fly by. It's a pity they don't run for cover in situations like this, though.

Bonus info

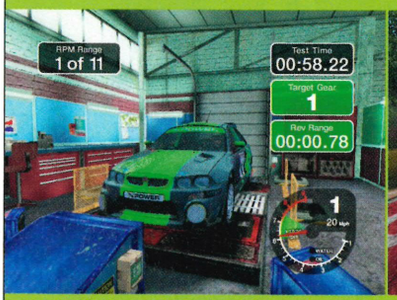


NEXT-GEN MCRAE

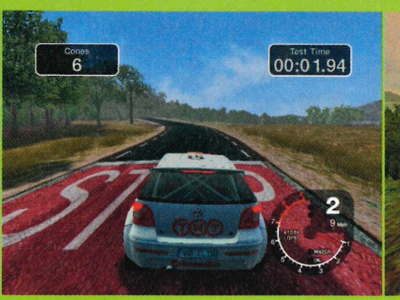
Colin McRae Rally 2005 will be the series' last outing on this generation of Xbox. But what a great run he's had, especially as he doesn't even rally anymore! While we were at the developer's headquarters in Warwick, we were told that the team fully intends to take things even higher with the next Xbox.

TESTING, TESTING Past the test to score an upgrade

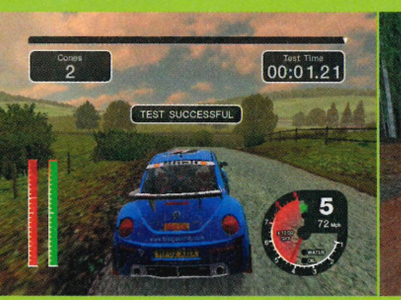
AT VARIOUS POINTS IN a rally you'll be given the opportunity to upgrade your car by successfully completing driving tests. These tests cover the main areas of a car's performance.



↑ GEARBOX TEST: Throttle control tested if you want to upgrade your ratio. You'll need total control of the accelerator.



↑ CERAMIC BRAKES: Floor it and go as fast as you can, then slam on the anchors and stop in the zone. Miss it - miss out.



↑ EXHAUST TEST: This one's easy, just go flat out and watch the temperature of your exhaust rise. Just mind the cones.



↑ DAMPERS TEST: Make your car bounce better by giving the suspension the workout of its life in the allocated time.

"It's a great rally game. It's every bit as good as 04 with the added extra of full online play"

» this time round are Championship and Career. There are also modes that allow you to race time trials, rallies and stages, as well as multiplayer options for up to four people, racing alternately. The Championship and Career modes are both massive and will really test your sliding skills to the limit. Championship throws you into a pre-selected car, pats you on the back and sees you off like a good little boy: throwing you into various global stages in a league setup. The rallying here is relentless, as are the enhanced weather effects: heavy rain really does mean heavy rain and the same goes for snow. When you're racing an evening or overcast stage, it's almost impossible to see where the hell you're going thanks to the torrential rain. You practically have to use the Force.

The Career mode, on the other hand, offers an immense challenge along the lines of what we saw in *RalliSport Challenge 2*. There are around 23 events to plough through and, as you win the cups and shields, you unlock new cars and pick up driver points that allow you to progress. Each event dishes up different challenges by placing you in a wide variety of rally cars and demanding you finish on the podium before you receive rewards. You might be racing the classic Mk 1 Escort one minute and then a Group B monster the next that almost takes off on the straights. Even McRae's Paris Dakar drive, the Nissan Pickup-Dakar 2004, has made the impressive list of over 30 heavyweight models.

There's no denying *Colin McRae Rally 2005* is a great rally game - it's every bit as good as *04* with the added extra of full online play. If you're seriously into the rally scene, you won't go wrong with the stable's latest offering. *Colin McRae Rally* is still the king of the rallying castle.

The Summary

COLIN McRAE RALLY 2005 THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. The massive Career mode will keep you in mud for months. This is one challenge you will not want to put down.
2. Looks great! It's not quite got the visual splendour of *RalliSport 2* but it's not far off it with some cool new effects.
3. Feels faster than the previous two *McRae* games we've seen on Xbox. Makes the gameplay more exciting for everyone.
4. Finally *McRae* makes the leap to Xbox Live. You can go head to head with up to eight other players.
5. If you hammered *04* and still don't have Xbox Live, you're pretty much buying the same again.

The Verdict

Codies has done it again: *2005* perfectly blends arcade and simulation to suit everyone's tastes/abilities. And it's Live!

8.5//10

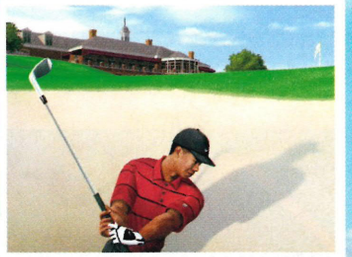
PREVIOUSLY: First Look - Issue 30, Preview - Issue 33
COMING SOON: Hints - Issue 35

CV: MCRAE HAS ALREADY SIGNED UP WITH NISSAN FOR NEXT YEAR'S PARIS-DAKAR RALLY RACING MARATHON. COULD WE SEE A SIMILAR RACE IN THE NEXT-GEN MCRAE GAME? WE'LL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE.

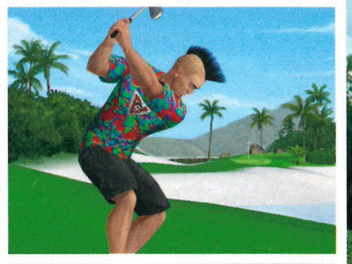


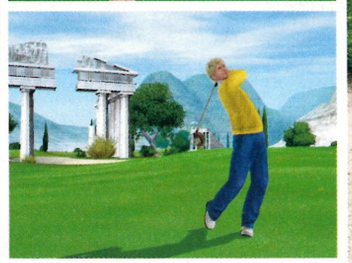
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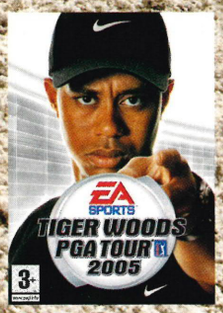








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↑ Smash a rival into a wall and they'll shatter into pieces. You'll then be rewarded with a glorious piece of slo-mo to highlight just how great you are.

Burnout 3: Takedown

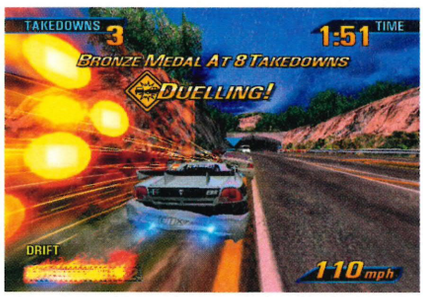
Buckle up and prepare for the bruising of your life

Words: Ben Lawrence

Dev: Criterion	Pub: EA
Players 1; 1-2 Split	Live: 2-8 players
Release: 19 Sept	
www.ea.com	

WITHOUT A SWEDISH man called Nils Bohlin who died in 2002, there is very little chance we'd ever have got to play *Burnout 3: Takedown*. He was a man of many talents, but nothing he did was as vital to the art of smashing your car to smithereens and surviving than his invention of the humble seat belt. Mr Bohlin kindly invented it so we could abuse it. And boy oh boy, if you're looking for seat belt abuse, *Burnout 3* is a cane-waving headmaster with a nasty glint in his eye.

Burnout 3, for starters, is four times bigger than *Burnout 2* (Issue 17, 9.0). If you consider nothing else but that, the third instalment is already leaps ahead of version two, a game we hold in high regard anyway. We would have been happy with that; we would have been lured in by the promise of four times the action alone, but *Burnout 3* is so, so much more than just a pumped-up sequel. It doesn't take too much effort to see that, visually, *Takedown* has undergone a little under-the-bonnet nip and tuck. Environments are hugely detailed, subtle lighting effects are dazzling, and the range and spectacle of collisions make *Burnout 2*'s pileups look like a couple of matchbox cars being bumped together. But not only has the initial awe factor been cranked up a notch, the game model is sublime. *Burnout 3* is the closest thing you'll find to pure gameplay.



↑ Look at that lighting. Just look at it!

The emphasis on destroying your opponents has been increased (after all, that's what we all loved about *Burnout 2*), so new race modes actually encourage violence. The Road Rage mode demands that you knock out a certain number of rivals before you become a wreck yourself or the time runs out. The standard race modes also encourage it. If you're shunted you can chase your enemy off the track and have their final, mangled moment captured in slo-mo. If they do they same to you (the AI is blistering so you'll be in for a fight), you too will be sent into a slo-mo whirling dervish of metal and glass.

Even during these smashes while old Bohlin's invention is cutting into your chest, you can exact revenge. By pressing A you fire up the Impact mode, allowing you to steer your wreck into the path of oncoming rivals. Take a few out with this aftertouch and the cash comes rolling in. Earn enough cash by proving your mettle and you'll then be invited to



↑ **Do well in the Global tournament to be rewarded with F1 cars. These beauties fly around the course.**

different events spanning the globe, where the game simply gets bigger, better, faster and more brutal. You'll unlock special Crash events where, like Evel Knievel's less fortuitous backwater cousin, you'll have to pile into streams of traffic to cause as much mayhem as you can. The greater the blackened pile of scrap when you're done, the greater the reward. And boy, are there rewards aplenty.

There are seemingly endless combinations of cars to be won, some of which come after you've attained a certain goal such as gold medals or a cash limit, while others are yours following the most taxing of missions. The fire engine, for example, is only available when you've made ten newspaper »»

Bonus info

HOT WHEELS
Every time you're nearing the end of a certain task you'll have to go head to head with the leader of that section. If you beat him, you'll win his car and add it to your own garage. You can usually tell who the leader is because his car is often sprayed black with a flaming front-end and matching wings.



KABOOM!
During the Crash mode, if you manage to earn enough kills, a counter will tick down. When it reaches zero your car becomes an armed bomb. You can detonate it in the middle of the road and cause yet more damage to oncoming traffic.

TOKENS O'DOOM
Look out for pick-ups during your race. Some will give you boost, while others will cause you to lose your cash or to explode on impact. Choose what you pick up wisely!

All in the handling

Mastering the art of Impact mode...



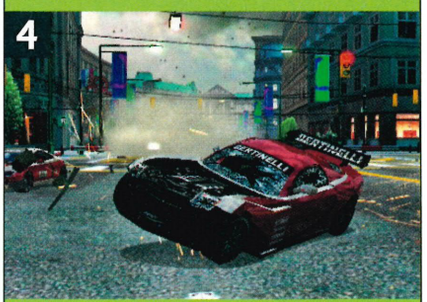
↑ You've rammed into the back of a car, but it's not over yet – there are rivals behind you that need dealing with.



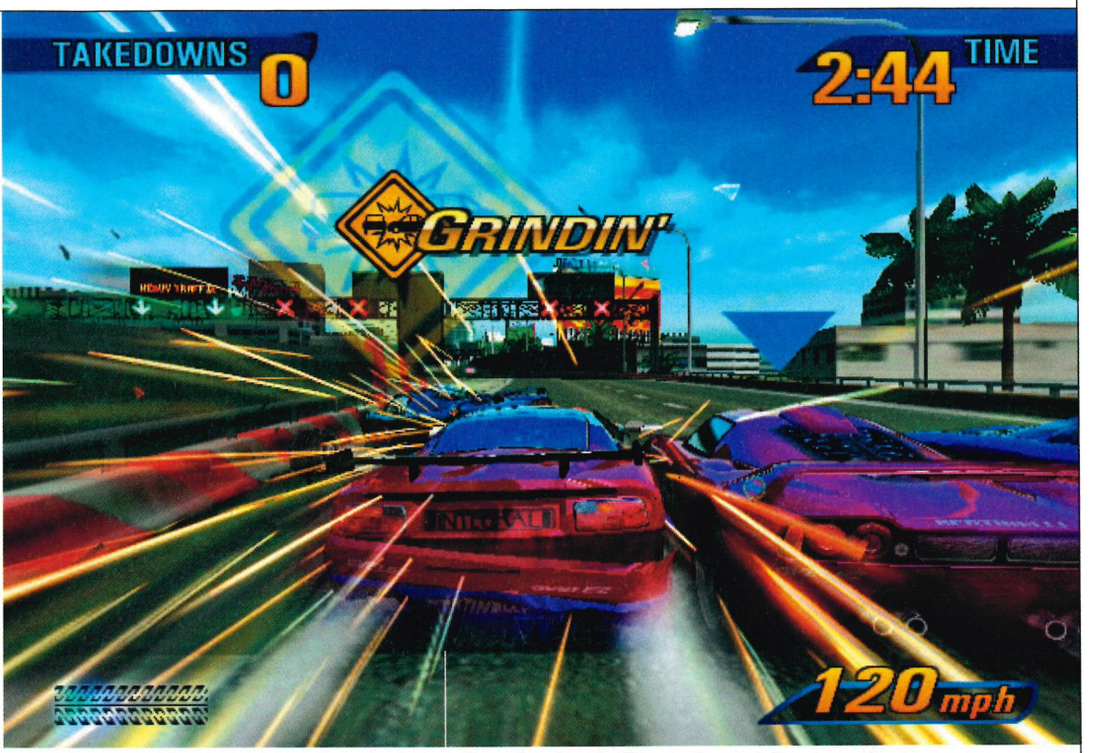
↑ It looks nasty, being in the air an' all, but this is where Impact time comes in. Steer your car a little to the left...



↑ See him trying to sneak past you on the outside? It's not going to happen, because you've placed your car in his way.



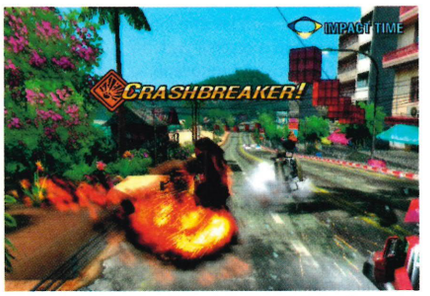
↑ You've scored an Aftertouch Takedown just by scraping his side. He's shunted into the side of the track, trapping another rival behind him.



↑ Come up against an enemy who won't go quietly and you'll end up duelling on the road. Best man wins, remember.



↑ You'll even be rewarded for not crashing!



↑ The elusive Crashbreaker. You'll love these.



↑ You don't just earn third place – you have to fight for every position.

"The greater the pile of scrap when you're done, the greater the reward"

Bonus info

BIG RIG SPENDER

When you complete your Crash task (there are 45 in total), you'll be given an overview of the damage you've caused, allowing you to see where you need to improve next time.



»» headlines in Crash mode. To make each headline you've got to earn close to the $1 million mark, and the average earning during Crash mode is $190k. There are also 4x4 trucks, F1 cars, classic *Burnout* vehicles, sports cars, custom cars, prototypes and dragsters to be earned, plus locked race modes, galleries and a few shiny trophies to boot. We played this for two days solid and only ever reached the bronze cup, such is the scope and opened-ended spectacle under the hood.

The cars' handling is gorgeously responsive and they react to your touch exactly as you'd hope. You can still veer through lanes of oncoming traffic, and weave through them with almost balletic grace. The physics are second to none, and while this doesn't mean it's gone all *PGR2* (Issue 23, 9.3) on us, *Burnout 3* handles as if it were constructed from nothing more than pure essence of fun.

As if this weren't enough, the Live compatibility is just as explosive as the offline game. Up to eight players can take part in Race mode, and you can duel head to head on the Crash modes, tallying up the destruction to become king of the *Burnout 3* leaderboards. You will never – and we'll repeat that for effect – *never* tire of it. That's a promise.

It feels as you always hoped a racing arcade game would feel. It has the breadth and depth you always hoped an arcade racer would have. It looks as sumptuous and candy-coloured as you ever hoped an arcade racer would, and it rewards you bountifully for doing the one thing that you're encouraged to do: have fun. *Burnout 3* is, without doubt, one of the finest, most enjoyable and crazy games to exist on Xbox; a barrage of twisted metal, laced with the kind of speed, handling and gameplay few other racers could ever hope to achieve. Nils Bohlin would be proud.

The Summary

BURNOUT 3: TAKEDOWN THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. Amazing emphasis on collision means that every bone-snapping crash will be felt in all its brutal glory.
2. Looks astounding. Everything from the lighting effects and lens flare to the car damage and scenery are utterly breathtaking.
3. Cars handle exactly as you'd hope and when you kick in the Impact mode they'll soar through the air like flying metal deathtraps.
4. Oodles of extra features and bonuses, plus an insane Live option mean *Burnout 3* is more than just four times bigger than before.
5. Bigger, better, faster and more dazzling than both *Burnout*s before it, this is the finest arcade racer you'll come across on Xbox.

The Verdict

An essential arcade racer, brimming with every kind of invention and deliciousness. It positively beats you into having fun.

9.4//10

PREVIOUSLY: Preview – Issue 30, News – Issue 33
COMING SOON: Hints – Issue 35, Live review – Issue 35

SHOW-OFF: DURING A SESSION WITH THE DEVELOPER OF BURNOUT 3, BEN L ACTUALLY BEAT THE HIGHEST SCORE ON A CRASH SECTION OF THE GAME ON HIS FIRST ATTEMPT. HE SAYS IT WAS SKILL, WE SAY IT WAS BEGINNER'S LUCK.



↑ You encounter these abominations in Silent Hill's Water Prison. Kidnapped orphans were once held there by an insane cult.

Silent Hill 4: The Room

Put the kettle on and bolt the door. You're in for a long stay

Words: Ben Talbot

Dev: Konami	Pub: Konami
Players: 1	Live: None
Release: 24 Sept	
www.konami-europe.com	

WHEN YOU COME to *Silent Hill*, you expect to be surprised. Where else can you experience strange locals, exciting fairground rides, mysterious fog and monsters made from sausage meat, all in one visit?

At least during the first five minutes of *The Room*, you'll be very surprised. Not just because the game doesn't actually take place in the lakeside resort, but for the first time in the series, you're seeing the action from the first-person perspective.

For the past five days, Henry Townshend has been trapped in Room 302 of the South Ashfield apartment building. It's drab and gloomy, with chains blocking the door, a broken radio (typical!) and a miserable view onto Ashfield's main street. Exploring the room in first-person introduces a genuine sense of claustrophobia, especially as there's so little to do or interact with. Henry's only source of entertainment is a peephole through to the room of his sexy neighbour, Eileen Galvin.

You'll occasionally get a cryptic message stuck under your door, but it's not too long before you're yearning for adventure. Fortunately, the hole in your bathroom wall isn't a result of shoddy DIY, but a portal to a sinister parallel dimension. Entering the hole puts you hot on the trail of Silent Hill's most notorious serial killer, Walter Sullivan, and the game returns to the familiar third-person perspective.

"It all feels a bit empty compared with SH2 & 3"

Over-familiarity can be a real tension killer though, and soon the 'seen it all before' feeling oozes through like the damp in the corner of your room. It's the same old formula of solving some brilliantly realised puzzles and intermittently beating up writhing kebab monsters with an steel pipe.

But there are some innovations. Instead of the usual save points, holes in each level allow you to return home to save and rearrange your inventory. In an unnecessary twist of *Resi Evil*-style artificial difficulty, you can only carry a limited number of weapons and must return home to store items. More positively, some of the best puzzles require you to find an item in the other dimension and teleport back to the room to interact with it using real-world devices like the phone or tape recorder.

Although the new locations are suitably surreal – a sinister orphanage, a cylindrical prison and a creepy forest – there aren't as many cool things to look at or hidden documents to read, making it all feel a bit empty compared with *SH2* & *3*. Tragically, the second half makes you replay the locations but with the added burden of protecting a partially crippled Ms Galvin. Unlike Maria from *SH2*, Eileen fights for herself, but dodgy AI means she attacks the monsters with a vengeance when you just want to escape. Watching her attack monsters with a handbag provides much-needed light relief though.

Sadly, it's during combat that the series' dated gameplay really begins to crack. The only tweaks are a quick weapon select menu and a power bar that lets you charge melee attacks. Like the previous games, what really holds *Silent Hill 4* together is the story. It's fantastically disturbing and the monsters are *much* sicker. Best of all though, is the ambient audio, which can rip out your spine and play it like a xylophone. Sadly, it's not enough to plaster over the dated graphics and gameplay, making this the weakest in the series. It looks like we're going to go back to our rooms and lock the doors, waiting for a true next-generation sequel to materialise.

Bonus info



YOU'RE THE VICTIM!
Throughout the game, Henry and Eileen are pursued by ghostly 'victims'. Like Nemesis from *Resi 3*, they're indestructible and can only be slowed down using power-ups like the saint medallion.

THE KILLING JOKE
There are loads of in-jokes and very tight continuity. You can find Lisa Garland's nurse's uniform (*SH1*), a replica of Heather's flame thrower (*SH3*) and your landlord is related to James Sunderland (*SH2*). A pink bunny, Lakeside Amusement Park's mascot, Robby-Chan, shows up too.



↑ No *SH* would be complete without a hospital.



↑ Don't worry, Eileen isn't always this big.



↑ The room is soon possessed by demons.



↑ Weapons now break after a number of uses.

The Summary

OXM

SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1	A deliciously chilling audio experience. Ambient sounds create pure tension while the monster noises are absolutely surreal.
2	Monsters in this one are far more hideous than ever before. The baby-headed monsters and the floating victims are terrifying.
3	Puzzles are extremely original and challenging. Combat is far weaker because the controls and character movement are dated and clunky.
4	Being forced to replay the same locations twice over seems very lazy. It means there are few surprises during the second half of the game.
5	Too much artificial difficulty, from protecting Eileen to a restrictive inventory. Weapons that break are another unnecessary burden.

The Verdict

Good puzzles and great monsters save SH4 from the depths of despair. Lacks the variety and emotional intrigue of *SH2* & *3*.

7.0//10

PREVIOUSLY: News – Issue 26, Interview – Issue 31, Gallery – Issue 33
COMING SOON: Hints – Issue 35


JOHN VATTIC
BETRAYED?
TRAPPED?
DEFENCELESS?...



SECOND SIGHT™



"AN INSTANT HIT... BRILLIANT STUFF"
Official Xbox Magazine

NINTENDO GAMECUBE. XBOX PC CD PlayStation.2

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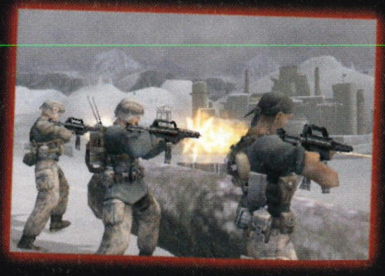
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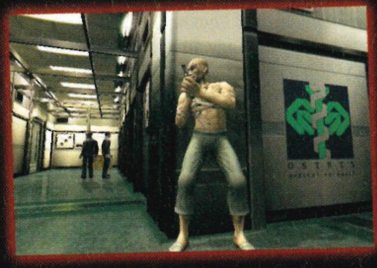
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XBOXWORLD GAME OF THE MONTH 9/10

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↑ Evil she might be, but she knows how to handle a couple of swords.

Kingdom Under Fire: The Crusaders

Love is a battlefield, and so is this. And a bloody great big one at that

Words: Rhianna Pratchett

- Dev: Phantagram
- Pub: Microsoft
- Players: 1
- Live: Content Download
- Release: Autumn 04
- Live: 2-4 players
- www.kuftc.com

LET'S FACE IT, strategy games have yet to find a natural home on consoles, especially Xbox, and recently it's felt that all we were worthy of was PC rip-offs. But thanks to Phantagram, the developer behind *Shining Lore*, 21st-century strategy gaming has truly arrived on Xbox with *Kingdom Under Fire: The Crusaders*.

The game, which has a few similarities with *Dynasty Warriors 4* (Issue 23, 6.5), sees you taking on the role of one of four commanders from the dark and light forces that inhabit a typical sword and sorcery realm. You're then given units of troops to command that include cavalry, spearmen and archers, which you move through the different missions, upgrading and equipping them as you go.

There are storylines for each commander, with objectives spread out over the missions. These include setting up ambushes and traps, chasing down the enemy and engaging in adrenaline-filled up-close-and-personal battles, where you fight alongside your men in hack 'n' slash brawls and put your own special moves and combos to good use. It's great fun watching your little minions dishing out death and destruction on an epic scale.

The game has quite a short, sharp learning curve and, although it feels like you've been thrown in at the deep end, it's nice not to be treated like an imbecile. The controls take a bit of getting used to and your troops can seem to have a life of their own, especially when they occasionally get stuck going around in a circle like a load of hyperactive kids who've just drunk a barrel of Sunny Delight.



↑ Killing the leader will end the battle quickly.

The Crusaders has lots of great little realistic details in both the environment and in the strategic gameplay. Archers can't shoot well with the sun in their eyes, for example, and the air around you distorts when you're near flames. The sound's pretty good too; battles actually 'feel' bloody and sweat-filled, and when you come out of them, ideally alive, it really makes you feel like you've done some hard work! Xbox Live makes an appearance in the form of downloadable content (missions, weapons etc) and full Live play is the icing on the cake.

As the first 'proper' RTS on Xbox, this bodes extremely well for all the beard-scratching armchair generals out there, and the exhilarating combat should introduce a whole new legion of fans to the genre. Royally great!

Bonus info

SAPPER HAPPY

Sappers are incredibly useful units to have around, as they can not



only do things like set and locate traps, and open gates, but they will actually heal other troops. In addition to this, their fire-making ability makes them handy to have when you need to flush troops out of a forest, or burn them alive!



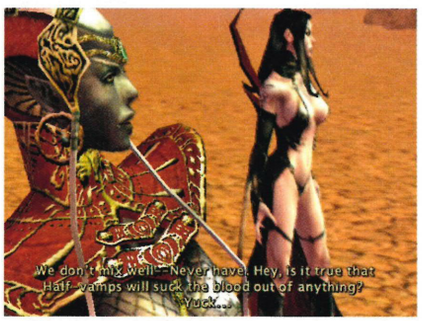
↑ Cavalry charges can be devastating.



↑ Such anger! Thong too tight, big boy?



↑ Flaming arrows can reduce a forest to ash.



↑ Just another Friday night down Slimelight...

The Summary

OXM

KINGDOM UNDER FIRE: THE CRUSADERS THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. Great realistic atmosphere through both the in-game sound and weather effects such as rain and snow.
2. Genuinely strategic and challenging in the way you have to utilise the skills of your troops and the environment.
3. Frantic battles against hundreds of enemy troops and deadly combo moves for your commander to perform on the battlefield.
4. Controls take a little while to get the hang of and there are occasional troop movement glitches, but nothing too detrimental.
5. Decent voice acting for most of the characters, but bad lip synching that just makes the characters look like they're chewing gum.

The Verdict

As a strategy game and a beat 'em up it works very well, with a superb sense of atmosphere. Bloody and beautiful!

8.9//10

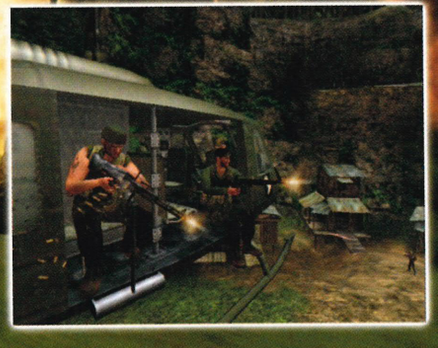
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↑ **Fast women like even faster cornering in *OutRun 2*, so get the back right out and keep your foot to the floor.**

OutRun 2

Sega's arcade-perfect conversion performs superbly on Xbox!

Words: Andy Irving

Dev: Sumo Digital	Pub: Sega
Players: 1-4; 2-4 S.Link	Live: 2-8 players
Release: Oct 04	
www.sega-am2.co.jp/outrun2	

SEGA IS VERY much into revitalising classic franchises, with *Headhunter: Redemption* (page 085) hot on the heels of the massive *Sonic Heroes* (Issue 27, 7.7). *OutRun* has a well deserved place in every single gamer's heart (well, those over 25 at least), and *OutRun 2* delivers in every way that other retro throwbacks can only wish their primitive little pixellated personas could.

Once your 10p pieces are safely in the slot and the characteristic Sega "ching" reverberates around the room, the mental motoring memories come flooding back. Except now we don't need to wade through a carpet of cigarette butts to grip a sweat-soaked steering wheel to experience these outlandish *OutRun*ning adventures.

Everything is just as arcade aficionados will remember... everything, apart from the spanking new sumptuous visuals. Pop on your shades because you'll be blinded by the light of the wicked sun glare, but when it looks this good, we don't mind one bit. Winding tracks bob and weave their way through the absolutely gorgeous landscapes, seamlessly flicking between beachside paradises and dusty deserts.

Another quality carried over from the arcade version is the immense sense of speed conveyed to players. Often criminally overlooked in racing games, *OutRun 2* gets the thrill of tearing along at nearly 200mph, as far as we could imagine, absolutely spot on. You'll need nerves of steel and a stomach to match to safely navigate a congested highway (especially during the nail-biting Convoy game modes, see Lady Lovin', opposite).

Car handling is refreshingly simple; with just two controls (accelerate and brake, L and R triggers), the game parks itself squarely in the pure arcade gameplay garage. But this simplicity works in *OutRun 2*'s favour, and paves the way for a truly exhilarating experience. If the breakneck pace doesn't get you soiling your leather upholstery, then the massive drifting manoeuvres will certainly have you leaving skidmarks all over the place.



↑ **In Segaland, the council spared no expense on its new lawnmowers.**



↑ **Girls love massive skidmarks. No, seriously.**

But enough of the aesthetics and top-notch handling; we can all see *OutRun 2* looks sweeter than a sugar-coated schoolgirl running riot in a candy store. What really matters is what's under the pulsating red bonnet of pretty gameplay. Well, at first glance, there's not a great deal to be honest. Present and correct is the original Arcade mode, where players simply tear through several different environments attempting to reach the next check-point before the ever-diminishing timer expires.

Most women we know are happy with the prospect of a bag of chips after being ragged round a city centre in a souped-up Nova (we're classy like that, see), yet the lovely lasses of *OutRun 2* demand a bit more than your average Essex girl. Impressing your lady friend is a big part of the game, and these chicks like nothing more than living life on the edge. The way to a girl's heart is apparently through more hearts, totals of which are amassed by »»

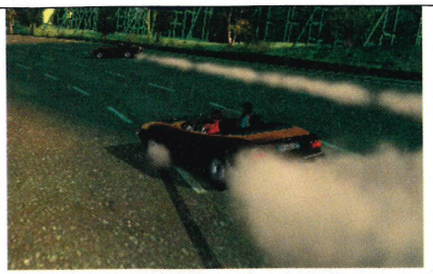
Bonus info

DRIFTING AWAY
It's actually quite simple to get to grips with the art of Drifting, but it takes much longer to perfect. Simply hammer it along a straight, then ease off the accelerator and slam on the brake. Turn one way then



back the other, and whack the gas back up. You'll now be able to steer one way or the other while side-sliding along, amassing hearts (and kudos with your girl) as you go. Did you get all that?

MMM, NICE WHEELS
There's a whole host of tasty motors to get to grips with in the game, all courtesy of the Italian Stallion Enzo Ferrari. Check out the sleek F50, 360 Spider, the classic Testarossa and of course, the bad boy itself, the Enzo.



↑ Donuts look cool but won't win races.



↑ In-car views are frighteningly fast.



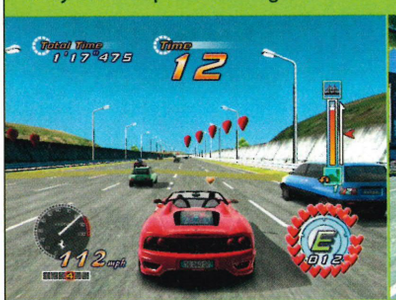
↑ Swear at coachloads of foreigners.



↑ Stay in the green and out of the red, you don't get anything for two in a bed. *BullsEye* was never this exciting...

LADY LOVIN' It's hard to satisfy your woman out on the open road...

YOUR LADY FRIEND in the passenger seat likes the odd cheap thrill or two, so to keep her firmly in your passenger seat and no one else's, make sure she's impressed by collecting as many hearts as possible throughout the multitude of different challenges.



↑ Break the lasers between opponents' cars to steal the hearts.



↑ She'll go wild in Crazy Convoy. Squeeze your beast between the tightest gaps.



↑ Hit blue cones to amass hearts; avoid the yellow ones or the single life awaits.

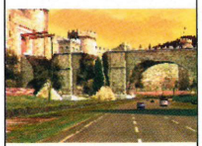


↑ Drift at the critical moment to align your camera sights. Snap to score max points.

Bonus info

FOR KING & COUNTRY

Ye Olde England is one of the locations. Players must race through an extensive landscape resembling Windsor Castle (but about 50



times the size), before navigating narrow country lanes under an imposing ceiling of low, drizzly cloud. We're not *too* stereotyped then...

"Party mode is good but what really lights our sparkplugs are the brilliant System Link and Xbox Live modes"

»» successfully completing each of the 101 challenges on offer, unlocking further tracks, cars and mission cards.

But hang on a minute... doesn't all that sound a bit similar? Well, actually, yes it does. Although every challenge is different, they can all get rather repetitive. And if the single-player Arcade mode is relatively easy to clock, then what else has *OutRun 2* got going for it? Thankfully, the fantastic multiplayer modes. Up to four players can take part in Party mode, taking turns to beat each other at various challenges. All well and good, but what really lights our sparkplugs are the brilliant System Link and Xbox Live modes. Up to eight players can tussle it out online on all the tracks from the single-player game in LiveRun, or players can attempt to beat downloaded Ghost Cars in Trial for Live. And at breathtaking speeds like these, this really is a heart-stopping hilarity.

It's always a risky business trying to breathe new life into classic franchises, but luckily Sega has come up trumps with *OutRun 2*. Although not as deep as other driving titles out there, the flawless presentation and an overriding immense sense of fun revs this retro racer right up there with the best of them. So forget your technical cornering and braking in a straight line. This is an amazing drive showing how racing games used to be made. You won't go wrong with *OutRun 2* - especially in multiplayer and over Xbox Live.

The Summary

OUTRUN 2 FIVE POINTS TO REMEMBER BEFORE BUYING THIS GAME...

1. Varied environments look stunning (helped by the sweeping camera) but you'll barely notice them thanks to the blisteringly fast pace.
2. Driving is immediately accessible, though long, stylish drifts will take a while to completely master.
3. A huge number of challenges, game modes and mission cards to complete, unlocking some very tasty motors along the way.
4. Xbox Live play propels this from the '80s straight into the noughties, and eight-way multiplayer is an absolute riot.
5. Not a massively long single-player Arcade mode, and after a while a lot of the challenges become very similar.

The Verdict

Top-notch presentation and brilliantly accessible controls. A fast, furious racer that'll please old fans and new ones alike.

8.5//10

PREVIOUSLY: Exclusive Interview - Issue 33
COMING SOON: Hints - Issue 35

IN-CAR STEREO: THE ACCOMPANYING OUTRUN 2 SOUNDTRACK IS YOUR TYPICALLY JAPANESE TECHNO-DANCE MADNESS, BUT FOR REAL FANS, A REMIX CD IS ALSO AVAILABLE THAT FEATURES THE ORIGINAL OUTRUN MUSIC.

eagames.co.uk/defjam

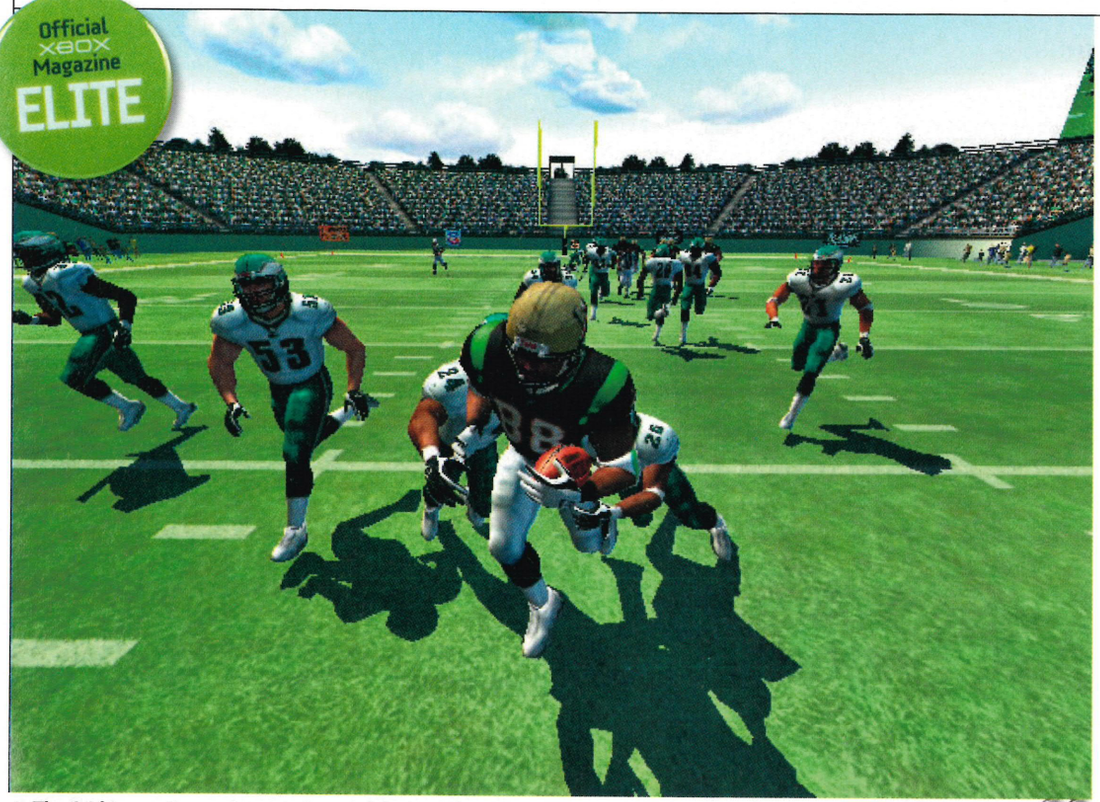


PlayStation.2 XBOX NINTENDO GAMECUBE.

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Def Jam FIGHT FOR NY
CALL OUT OVER 40 HIP-HOP STARS
AND TAKE THEM ON IN OVER 90 STREETFIGHTS.
BRAWL WITH 5 DIFFERENT FIGHTING STYLES
IN OVER 20 ANYTHING-GOES BATTLEGROUNDS.
WILL YOU BE THE ONE LEFT STANDING?
BONECRUSHER BUBBA SPARXXX
BUSTA RHYMES
CAPONE CARMEN ELECTRA
COMP CRAZY LEGS
DANNY TREJO DAVID BANNER
DJ ENUFF DJ FELLI FEL
ELEPHANT MAN
ERICK SERMON FAM-LAY
FAT JOE FLAVA FLAV
FREEWAY GHOSTFACE KILLAH
HAVOC HENRY ROLLINS
ICE-T JOE BUDDEN
KIMORA LEE LIL' FLIP LIL' KIM
LUDACRIS
MACK 10 MEMPHIS BLEEK
METHOD MAN
N.O.R.E OMAR EPPS
PRODIGY REDMAN
SCARFACE
SEAN PAUL
SHAWNNA SLICK RICK
SNOOP DOGG
STICKY FINGAZ WARREN G
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Challenge Everything

Official Xbox Magazine ELITE



↑ The Grid Iron action makes a welcome debut on Xbox Live.

Madden 2005

Madden makes his debut on Xbox Live and not before time

XBOX LIVE PLAYABLE

Bonus info



CREATE-A-FAN
Make your stadium look like home by creating the look of your die-hard fans. You can make them look stereotypical or unique or insane – it's completely up to you. Choose from all kinds of comedy extras like foam fingers, starry glasses and face paint to make your audience look the part.

Words: Gavin Ogden

Dev: EA Sports	Pub: EA Sports
Players: 1-2	Live: 2-4 players
Release: 17 Sept	
www.easports.com/games/madden2005/	

MADDEN 2005 is the Don of the *Madden* family. It's got all the bells and whistles a hardcore fan (or American) has come to expect from a game that captures every single aspect of American Football. This time round there's even an option to create a fan! *Madden 2005* leaves no stone unturned...

As with most American sports games, the Franchise mode is the serious area of the game. This mode allows you to create a team from scratch and make it stronger over many seasons as you try and reach ultimate fame and fortune in the Super Bowl. You can tinker around with player salaries, personalities, stadium entry prices, tactics and formations. There's that much depth, it'll make you queasy if you bite off too much too soon – especially if you're a casual fan of the sport. The Quick Match option, however, allows you to jump right into the action with all your favourite teams available from the word go.

As the series has progressed over 15 years, so have the visuals. We'll never tire of looking at the game's incredible animation: every player looks and moves extremely realistically but the closer up you go the more frightening it gets. This level of animation makes *Madden* a pleasure to watch and really brings the stadium to life. Add in the excellent rolling commentary (way better than any other sports game) and crowd interaction and you'll be forgiven for thinking you're watching the real thing. The atmosphere is awesome, especially if you're playing through a wicked surround sound set-up.

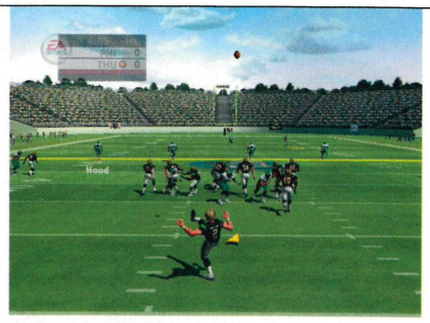
"Take it as seriously or as casually as you like"

This annual update has brought with it a few new gameplay tweaks too. The biggest is the Hit Stick function. By using the Right thumbstick it's possible to unleash an almighty hit at your nearest opponent. The bigger the better and this seriously ups your chances of making the opposition fumble the ball. Of course there are numerous new options to change plays at the last minute and keep your enemy guessing. But the great thing is you can take it as seriously or as casually as you like. You don't have to be an ex-NFL player to understand it all, newcomers are catered for perfectly with a vast array of training and practice options.

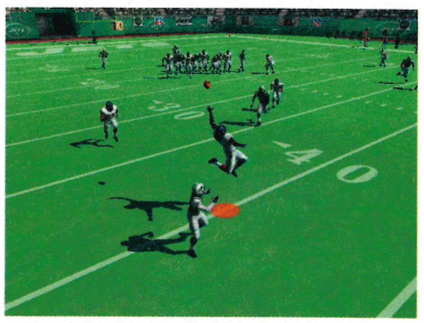
Madden 2005 has taken the US by storm, even more so than usual. This has got to be down to the inclusion of Xbox Live play. Online it's possible to take part in quick tournaments and compete for trophies and medals. This gives the whole game an extra lift and it's something we've been waiting for since *Madden* hopped onto Xbox back in 2002. US retailers have even begun taking pre-orders for *Madden 2006*!



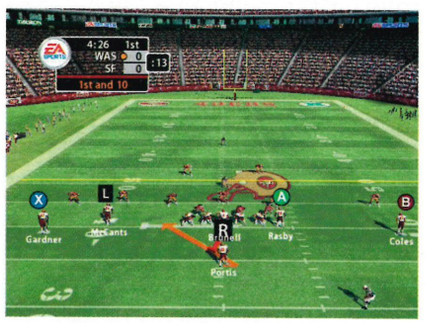
↑ Practice all your plays before the real thing.



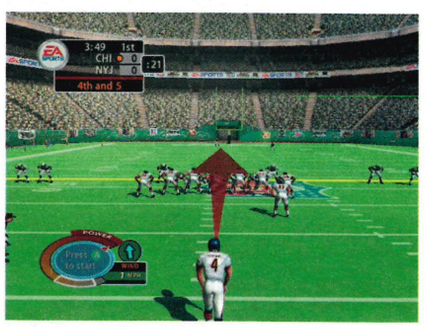
↑ Can you kick it?



↑ Reach for the stars and bat the ball down.



↑ You've got options but not much time.



↑ Kick the ball as far away as possible.

The Summary

OXM

MADDEN 2005 THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. Captures the razzmatazz of each game perfectly. TV companies could learn a thing or two about Madden's presentation.
2. It's a massive game but if you're new to the sport, don't let its depth and detail put you off. Beginner options included.
3. Thanks to EA fully embracing Xbox Live, the experience will only get better as you take on the Yanks at their own sport.
4. Visuals are incredible. The players look and move like they would in real life. This is enhanced by great commentary.
5. The franchise mode will keep you busy for months. It adds a great deal of strategy to the game.

The Verdict

It's better than watching American football on Five in the middle of the night. Live play is the icing on the cake.

8.5//10

PREVIOUSLY: News – Issue 30
COMING SOON: Live review – Issue 35



↑ The auto-aim function in *Headhunter: Redemption* is frustratingly tricky to master, especially when dodging enemy fire.

Headhunter: Redemption

The sequel to the Dreamcast title sneaks onto Xbox. But will it blend in?

Words: Andy Irving

Dev: Amuze	Pub: Sega
Players: 1	
Release: Out now	
www.sega-europe.com	

Bonus info



OOOOH, HOW CONVENIENT...
The Headhunters have use of the IRIS visual aids, which allows players to scan the environment and identify potential puzzle-solving possibilities, like weak chains holding conveniently placed cargo boxes over suspiciously weak-looking boarded-up areas. Hmm...

WHY IS THE FUTURE never optimistic? Games, movies, books... they're all the same. If it's not totalitarian dictators oppressing the people, it's some apocalyptic vision or other decimating humanity. *Headhunter: Redemption* is no different.

A classically scored, noirish intro brings us up to speed on the dark goings-on of the near-future. After an apocalyptic virus, the world is now split between Above (affluent inhabitants, sleek buildings) and Below (crime-ridden all-round nasty place). Keeping the peace for the elevated populace are Headhunters, super-cops who, typically, are of the jaded/hard-bitten/washed out nature. King of the cliché is Jack Wade, the best of the best with several bags of McCain's on his shoulder.

If you remember the original Dreamcast *Headhunter* game, you'll be pleased to know the recipe of the first game still forms the meat and two veg of *Headhunter: Redemption.* Relatively simple third-person action, mixed with a healthy dose of stealthing and garnished with an intriguing script is the dish of the day. Unfortunately, this may not be to everyone's tastes, because although this sneaky smorgasbord was sufficiently nutritious four years ago, times have moved on and us critical kids demand much more from a game than merely run-of-the-mill action.

"Redemption loses its head before it really gets going"

Although solid, the graphics are hardly the cleanest or sharpest we've ever seen on Xbox, and the two characters (streetwise rude girl Leeza X and the aforementioned Jack Wade) feel rather clumsy to control. Interaction with the (rather bland) environment, like picking up objects and flicking switches, is painfully slow. Intrusive cutscenes often punctuate the (sporadic) action, and though not quite on a *Metal Gear Solid* scale, quickly start to grate.

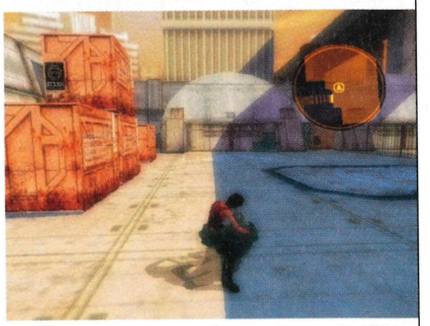
Auto-aim works very well in games when it's executed correctly, but *Headhunter: Redemption*'s offering unfortunately proves a hindrance more than a help in a lot of cases. The floaty nature of the crosshair does encourage careful aiming and limits players' Rambo tendencies of carelessly blazing through levels. But once the bullets start raining down, try quickly targeting a foe and the flawed lock-on function proves its uselessness. Players must be facing the exact direction of an enemy for it to really work. Try strafing or switching direction quickly and the crosshair will randomly jump to a nondescript barrel in the distance, rather than the bad guy five feet in front of you pumping you full of lead.

But that's not to say the game is merely a tiresome toil through the uninteresting underbelly of society, because *Headhunter* does offer some entertaining moments. Mission objectives progressively appear throughout levels, and involve a fair bit of sleuthing, item-collecting and puzzle-solving. Characters' weapons attributes are upgradeable, as is their ability to decode, through simple logic puzzles, locked security doors.

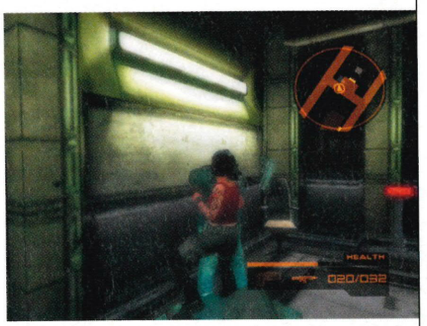
However, factor in the poor presentation and camera issues inherent throughout the game, and unfortunately *Redemption* loses its head before it really gets going. The odd bike chase succeeds in breaking up the on-foot action but, at the end of the day, still can't bring *Headhunter* the *Redemption* its title promises.



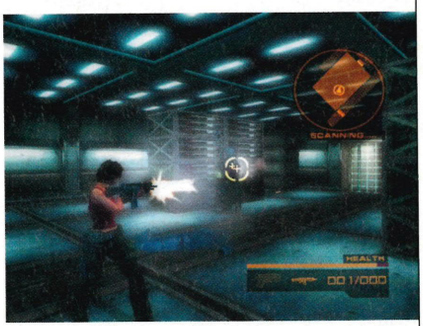
↑ Leeza had an annoying crab problem.



↑ Creep up on enemies for sneaky stealth kills.



↑ If ammo runs low, get up close and personal.



↑ Dodge this guy's homing rockets.

The Summary

HEADHUNTER: REDEMPTION THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. The majority of mission objectives pose interesting puzzles and challenges for players; rather more taxing than the average actioner.
2. A large inventory of cool weapons and gadgets, coupled with the customisable nature of your abilities keeps players interested.
3. Frequent and frankly overlong cutscenes annoyingly interrupt the pace of the game. They can't be skipped either. Grrr!
4. Lacklustre, last-gen graphics aren't helped by unimaginative, distinctly bland level design and repetitive environments.
5. The twitchy camera and awkward auto-aiming frequently frustrate, and often amount to an untimely death during firefights.

The Verdict

A disappointing return. The third-person action genre has come a long way in four years - pity this series hasn't.

5.8//10

PREVIOUSLY: Preview - Issue 19
COMING SOON: Hints - Issue 35

CHILD'S PLAY: USING YOUR DECODER ABILITY, DOORS CAN BE UNLOCKED BY SOLVING SIMPLE LOGIC SEQUENCE PUZZLES. THESE AREN'T TAXING AT ALL, AND IN FACT RESEMBLE THOSE FOUND ON 11+ PAPERS.



Buckle up. Danger just jumped in.

"RalliSport Challenge 2 is bigger and better than any other rally game"
9/10 XBM



Take racing to the extreme as you spin out, fishtail, hydroplane, and skid your way through every environment you've always wanted to drive in. Choose from 91 tracks and over 40 powerful vehicles, including every famous rally car since 1979. Race in 5 different rally sports, like the Crossover Duel and Ice Racing. Take on the best in XSN Sports leagues and tournaments via Xbox Live. And anyone else who tries to steal your track space.

RALLISPORT 2 CHALLENGE

XBOX LIVE

XBOX

it's good to play together

xbox.com/rallisport2

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↑ Sorry Shergar, but devastating Special attacks mean curtains for everyone. Or dogfood, as the case may be...

Samurai Warriors

The Dynasty saga continues, without a single feuding oil baron in sight

Words: Andy Irving

Dev: Omega Force	Pub: Koei
Players: 1-2	
Release: 24 Sept	
www.koei.com/samuraiwarriors	

AS FANS of the *Dynasty Warriors* games will know, bigger means better. And we're not just talking about the length of your sword either; we mean the colossal collective of enemies that players can hack, slash and blast their way through. *Samurai Warriors* transports the epic action from feudal China to Japan, but all the familiar game modes are on offer.

Story mode, unsurprisingly, gives players the chance to work through a multitude of armies as one of five specific characters, all with various weapons and outlandish special attacks. Depending on which character you choose, you'll encounter each of the other four's armies in your struggle through each six-battle saga. Successful fights naturally result in your character earning Experience points to upgrade their attributes after each battle.

Less is definitely not more here, as wave after wave of soldiers ripe for the slaughter charge at you, providing plenty of fast-paced, sweat-inducing gameplay. It's fantastic fun slashing your way through an entire army (it's common for the number of enemies killed on one level to run into the thousands), and knocking out tens of opponents in one go should prompt a glowing satisfaction in even the most ardent pacifist.

Unfortunately, this can bring on monotonous button-bashing gameplay too, because melee attacks are limited to the X button and magic attacks to A, with range attacks (Y) mostly ineffective against smaller foes. Spectacular combos are dependent on how many enemies surround you, rather than player skill, and there's not a massive variation of bad guys either. That said, the engine runs smoothly enough, and there's not the slightest hint of slowdown during the frantic action.



↑ A vindaloo a day keeps the bad guys away.

Although not as visually stunning or vibrant as their *Dynasty Warriors* Chinese brethren, the dark and gritty environments of *Samurai Warriors* do invoke the misty-eyed mysticism of medieval Japan. But at the end of the day, these too become very similar, only punctuated by the odd castle or two.

The several additional game modes (Free, Survival, Challenge etc) should offer a bit more sundry swordplay, but the time challenges only thinly veil the same core gameplay of the single-player campaign. Two sprouting samurai can take on the hordes co-operatively in the passable multiplayer, though during a particularly intense battle the action gets a tad confusing, so it's probably best to shun your sword-swinging mate and go this one alone.

It's not the most original or groundbreaking of Xbox games, but *Samurai Warriors* knows exactly what it wants to be and, being a devout samurai, makes no pretensions of swaying from the hack/slash/hack/hack/slash gameplay mantra. It can occasionally be more hard work than fun, but if you want ferocious fighting on an epic scale, tune in for the latest *Dynasty* episode.

Bonus info

CHOP IDOL
The New Officer mode allows players to pick a nondescript character and undertake a series of challenges to earn experience points and turn them into a fearsome fighter.



GIDDY UP
Samurai Warriors features tough horse-mounted foes. You can either displace them with a jump attack or hop atop your own trusty steed and trample your way straight to them.



↑ Time to put a stop to that!



↑ Lots of enemies = big combos.



↑ Use your lengthy spear to poke people.



↑ Training modes are tough timed challenges.

The Summary

SAMURAI WARRIORS THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. Vast numbers of enemies on screen mean this is gameplay at its most entertaining.
2. No slowdown whatsoever and unrelenting, frantic action makes for devastating special attacks.
3. Melee combat is limited, with sword attacks restricted to just one button, and combo totals are determined by surrounding numbers.
4. Not a great amount of variation in type of enemies, level design and game modes. Action can quickly become monotonous.
5. Characters look detailed enough, but the rather bland environments don't boast huge draw distances. Not the best-looking Xbox title ever.

The Verdict

Ambitious, epic hack 'n' slash that suffers from a lack of any real variation and could do with more spit and polish.

7.0//10

PREVIOUSLY: Preview – Issue 33
COMING SOON: Hints – Issue 35

YOU AND WHOSE ARMY? THE GAME ALSO FEATURES A TWO-PLAYER VERSUS MODE, THOUGH UNFORTUNATELY THIS DOESN'T INVOLVE A STRAIGHT BEAT 'EM UP. INSTEAD, PLAYERS CONTROL AN ARMY EACH AND MUST ACHIEVE SUPERIORITY ACROSS THE ENTIRE MAP.



↑ You should endeavour to protect your team-mates, not lead them blindly into an ambush!

Vietcong: Purple Haze

Grab some buddies and take a trip back to the good ol' days of 'Nam

Words: Andy Irving

Dev: Gathering	Pub: Take-Two
Players: 1	Live: 2-16 players
Release: Oct 2004	
www.vietcong-game.com	

CRUISING UP THE Da Nang river on a tide of Vietnam shooters, *Vietcong* got called up for the draft on PC last year. Just when it thought its tour of duty was over, it got recalled and shipped over to Xbox, but we're not complaining.

It's 1967, and *Vietcong* obviously paid attention in military college (rather than getting distracted by the copious amounts of drugs and promiscuous sex that were all the rage), because careful tactics are the order of the day to complete the standard objectives of rescuing pilots, reaching Landing Zones etc. Simply blazing through a level will see you dead quicker than a baby fox during hunting season.

Although not as complex as other squad-based shooters, simple orders can be issued to your team, like disperse, follow etc, and individual members can be asked to carry out unique functions. Moving from cover point to cover point slowly and surely is, well, the way forward.

Each level and multiplayer map is a fair old size, which, when playing online, is a godsend. When working through Campaign mode though, the maps sometimes suffer from a very stop/start turn of pace. Your squad will often creep for a few minutes without spotting an enemy (though mindful of booby traps), engage in a fierce firefight, creep for a few more minutes, have another brief firefight etc. It never becomes a major problem, but a more continuous pace would have been appreciated.

But that's not to say the stages aren't challenging. Top-notch enemy AI (way smarter than your Yank counterparts, who often need prompting to continue following you) ensures players can't simply sit tight and mow down approaching opponents. Nope, these VC will actively seek better cover, try to outflank you and get the hell out of the kitchen to alert others if the heat gets too much.



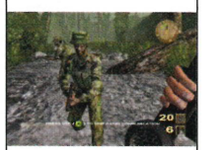
↑ "That's it boys, I'll just wait back here..."

This is soon put to rights through the brilliant multiplayer. You can play co-operatively over Link or Live on any map against hordes of tough-as-nails VC. It's great fun working through these maps with a bunch of mates, although Deathmatch comes mighty close. Up to 16 soldiers can fight it out over the expansive maps on offer, as VC vs US Army. There's no real difference between teams (save for starting weapons), and although the character animation isn't the smoothest ever, it all runs at a cracking pace, and picking up weapons is quick and easy - exactly the way multiplayer games should be.

Even coming down from this multiplayer trip, *Vietcong* remains an entertaining and absorbing shooter in single-player. More than just a straight PC port, it provides no-frills solo action mixed up with fantastic multiplayer options. Although you could overdose on Campaign mode, true hallucinogenic happiness lies in teaming up with a bunch of buddies for a real jungle boogie.

Bonus info

JOBS FOR THE BOYS
Each member of your squad has their specific



uses, but Crocker your Medic and your native guide (Point Man) are by far the most useful, so keep them alive at all costs.



↑ Ever seen *Platoon*? "Dance, I said, dance!"



↑ Marking an LZ soon draws the VC's attention.



↑ If they're foolish enough to turn their backs...



↑ Multiplayer's so hectic, friendly fire's common.

The Summary

OXM

VIETCONG: PURPLE HAZE THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. Great enemy AI makes fairly rudimentary mission objectives a real challenge, and calls for careful planning and intelligent use of cover.
2. Not the best-looking game on Xbox, but the environments do boast gorgeously textured vegetation that reacts to gunfire and explosions.
3. Brilliantly atmospheric, a top-notch soundtrack perfectly captures the mood of 1967, accompanied by a great *Wonder Years*-style narrative.
4. Intuitive controls make issuing (rudimentary) squad commands easy. Beefy authentic weapons and top dialogue add to the experience.
5. Absolutely superb multiplayer, with a wealth of game modes available over the relatively bland, yet brilliantly designed maps.

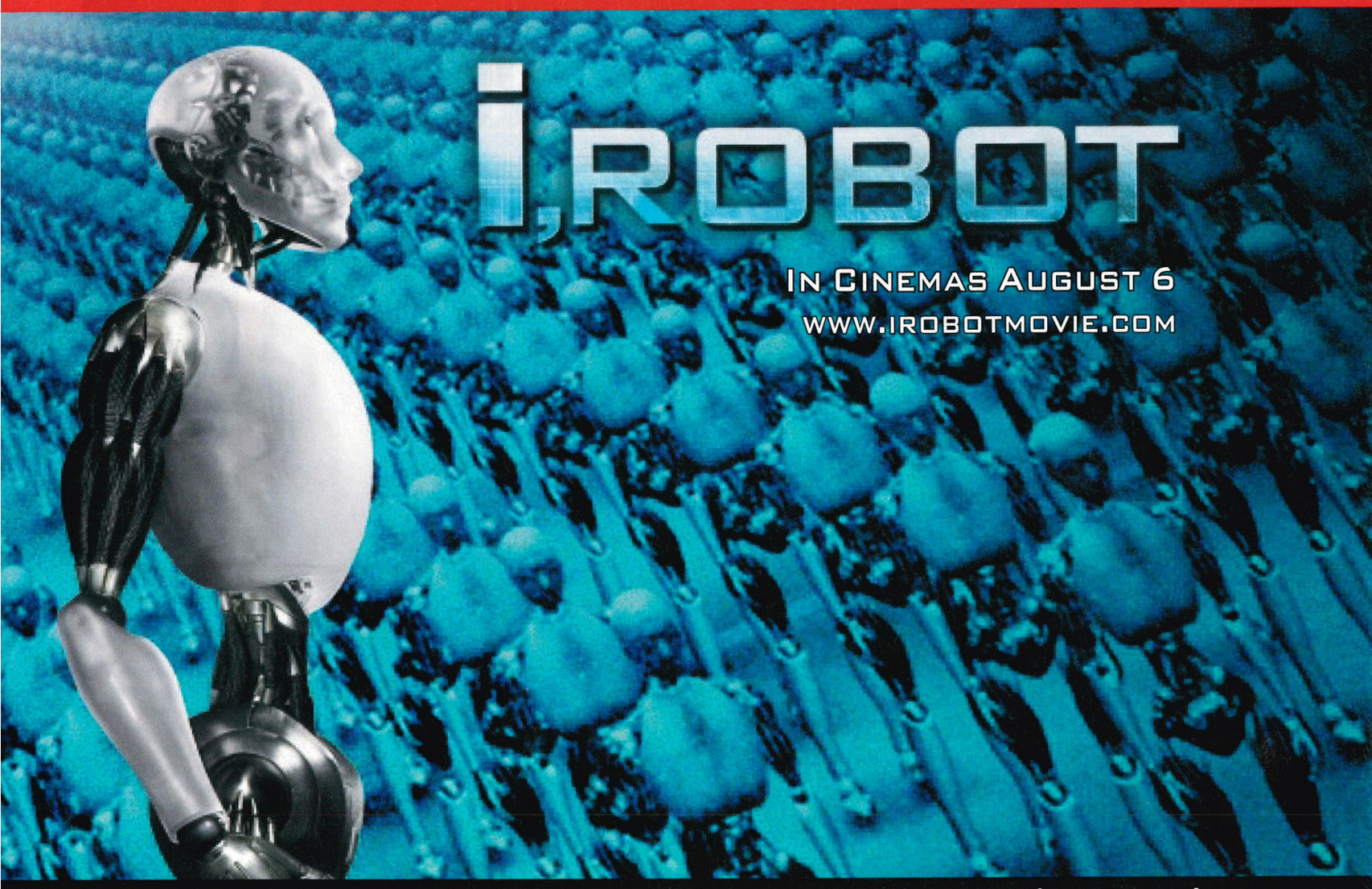
The Verdict

Rugged and robust FPS that sometimes suffers from a stuttering pace but comes into its own with fantastic multiplayer.

7.7//10

PREVIOUSLY: First Look - Issue 32
COMING SOON: Hints - Issue 35

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↑ The action never lets up in *Vietnam*, especially when the gunships start screaming in. Stick some Wagner on the stereo for the full effect.

Conflict: Vietnam

Gulf War a bit close for comfort? Take a trip back to purple-hazed hostility

Words: Andy Irving

Dev: Pivotal Games	Pub: SCi
Players: 1; 2-4 Split	Live: Content Download
Release: Oct 2004	
www.conflict.com	

EVER SEEN *PLATOON*? How about *The Deer Hunter*? Well we have, and we didn't like the look of Vietnam one bit. As fans of the long-since-departed TV miniseries *Tour Of Duty* would attest, the best thing about 'Nam was definitely the soundtrack of the era. But as grim as the reality must have been, the game is great fun.

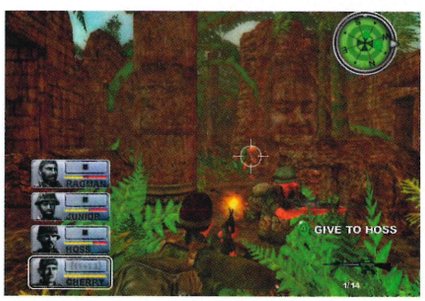
Taking the same tack as the previous two *Conflict* titles (*Desert Storms I* and *II*), *Conflict: Vietnam* incorporates real-life events (like the Tet Offensive) and develops from them a series of hellish scenarios for our fictional foursome of typically gung-ho GIs. Cut off from fellow soldiers and supplies, they must make their way back through inhospitable jungle to, hopefully, the comforting arms of their colleagues.

Whereas the Gulf was dustier than Ghandi's flip-flop, Vietnam was a wretched waterfall of wetness. The lush jungle environment is brimming with vibrant colour and texture, and the dense vegetation actively reacts to wind, gunfire and explosions. Raindrops will keep falling on your head, but you don't mind one bit when, as in *Conflict: Vietnam*, they look better than any Vietnamese ladyboy we've ever seen. When coupled with fantastic thunder and lightning effects they create a brilliantly moody atmosphere, and it really is terrifying to see a group of Vietcong charging towards your squad out of the mist.

Each of the 14 missions involves challenging objectives (see All In A Day's Work, opposite), the most important being getting your squad out alive. The combat is pleasingly fast and frantic, with an endless stream of Vietcong to lay waste to. It's brilliant fun blasting through hordes of enemies, although the auto-aim function does sometimes go a bit askew and you will find yourself targeting a tree in the distance, while a VC soldier five feet in front of you pumps you full of lead. Speaking of which, *Conflict: Vietnam* punishes players for recklessness; several direct hits and you're going home in a body bag.

Your squad is once again indispensable to your efforts; it's not just a case of Rambo-ing through the jungle alone, and patience and careful planning are essential. The intuitive controls make issuing commands a cinch, so players can easily move their fellow fighters around the environment either individually or en masse, as well as perform more complex commands like disarming booby traps or shielding a wounded colleague from enemy gunfire.

Bereft of your own supplies, players must make do with what they can find, namely assorted weapons from fallen Vietcong. Yet here's where your team-mates' AI is called into inconsistent question. As far as following orders is concerned, they're bang on the money, moving to your position and assuming intelligent firing positions. However, when it comes to thinking for themselves, these guys have 'boot camp reject' stamped all over them. If they run out of ammo, they'll intelligently switch to »»



↑ Sacred temples won't deter the marauding VC.

↓ Once the US Air Force starts napalming your position, best get the hell out of Dodge.



Bonus info

SHARE THE WEALTH
Make sure you distribute ammo, grenades and health packs evenly amongst your squad, so everybody has a fair chance if they get hit or isolated. No shame in borrowing medikits from a fallen colleague to heal him, you know.



POTTY MOUTHS
Being battle-hardened vets, your squad aren't shy of the odd profanity. The air will usually turn blue when under fire or if a group of enemies is taken down.

SAVE THE DAY
You only get two saves per level, so make sure you use them wisely.

PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC, WHITE BOY
No 'Nam title is complete without a funkadelic soundtrack. Check out The Rolling Stones, Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, Jefferson Airplane and Canned Heat during your R&R time.

All In A Day's Work Try claiming hazard pay for this job

DURING *Conflict: Vietnam*, additional objectives will frequently pop up halfway through a mission. There's no time for whinging, your boys have to get their heads down and get on with it. Here, during an early level, we're tucked up nicely at base camp when all hell breaks loose.



↑ There are VC on the wire so hop behind one of the bunker-mounted machine-guns.



↑ VC are overrunning the base! Fall back to the inner compound and make a stand.



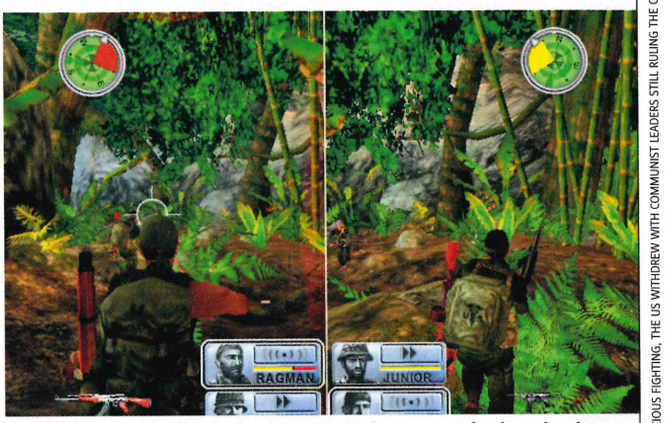
↑ Need airstrikes! Mark the four targets for hovering gunships with smoke grenades.



↑ The choppers swoop in and annihilate all the VC. The base is safe – for now.



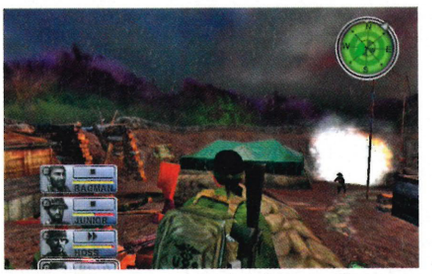
↑ Commandeer enemy mortar positions and use them against the advancing VC.



↑ Multiplayer co-op is an absolute riot. Make sure you back each other up.



↑ That Patrol Boat's your ticket out. Get going!



↑ Raid VC compounds to knock out artillery.



↑ Grenades are devastatingly powerful. Check out the ace ragdoll physics.

Bonus info

TAKE IT LYING DOWN
If your squad are under fire and they're lying prone, they'll remain in their position and take the safest route to you.



LIVE ANOTHER DAY
Although there's no Live play, further levels and missions will be available to download.

"Using skill points to beef up various attributes adds tons of replayability"

their secondary weapon. Yet when this is dry, what do they do? Pick up replacement ammo? Grab a different gun? No. They'll simply stand there, pointing an empty gun in the vague direction of the enemy, hoping the VC will be scared off by macho posing and foul language.

Although it can be a bit infuriating during intense firefights, on the flipside this does encourage active interaction with all four squad members on an equal level. You won't have a favourite in this litter as, after each successful mission, an overall skill rating (enemies killed, shots fired etc) results in skill points allocated to each team member. You can use these to beef up your bad boys' various attributes, and it adds tons of replayability. However, jacks of all trades are definitely masters of guns, so make sure everyone is au fait with pistols, grenades and, most importantly, medikits. If your star shooter or chief quack cops it during a firefight, you're screwed.

We're pleased to say, however, that the *Conflict* series looks to be steadily improving. Sure, the odd object collision issue still rears its head (as you must to make that headshot register), but the option to mount assorted heavy weapons, mortars and vehicles, along with the slick overall presentation makes up for this. Admittedly the environments aren't hugely varied, but the dark and gritty jungle makes for a claustrophobic experience.

Multiplayer is as fun as ever, and the four-way split-screen provides some cool co-op capabilities, although we'd love to see some System Linkage next time round. But don't worry about that too much. Instead just sit back and thoroughly enjoy beating Charlie on his own turf. Something the Americans could never do...

The Summary

CONFLICT: VIETNAM THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

1. Fast, frantic and action-packed – once it starts going off *Conflict: Vietnam* doesn't let up. Not for the faint-hearted.
2. The jungle environments look lush and richly textured and, although very similar, provide a dark and gritty playing arena.
3. 14 comprehensive, very challenging missions (with more on their way via Live) ensure a respectable lifespan. This is one long tour of duty.
4. Multiplayer is back, and four-player split-screen is immense fun. However, System Link would've made us love this that little bit longer.
5. Enemy AI is very smart. It's frustrating to survive a huge battle only for one sneaky VC to creep up behind you and frag the whole squad.

The Verdict

Bigger and tougher than its *Desert Storm* siblings, *Vietnam* sucks you in and leaves you loving it long time.

8.5//10

PREVIOUSLY: Preview – Issue 33
COMING SOON: Hints – Issue 35

WAS IT WORTH IT? CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATES RECKON THAT US SOLDIERS FIRED 100,000 BULLETS FOR EVERY VIETCONG FIGHTER KILLED IN VIETNAM. AND AFTER 60,000 CASUALTIES AND TEN YEARS OF FEROCIOUS FIGHTING, THE US WITHDREW WITH COMMUNIST LEADERS STILL RULING THE COUNTRY.

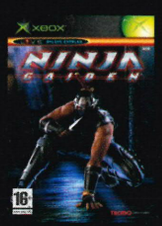
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NINJA GAIDEN | XBOX

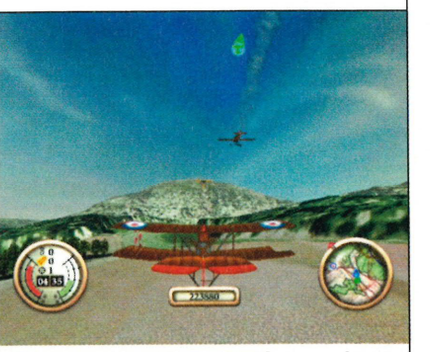
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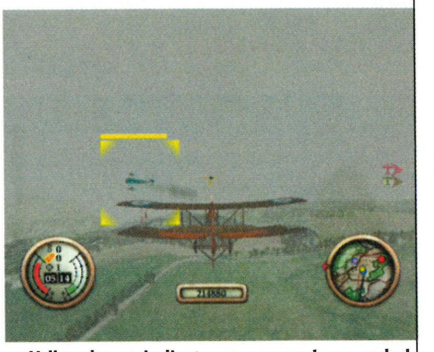
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↑ Dogfights are a real test of piloting skill.



↑ Shoot your foes' planes into the ground.



↑ Yellow boxes indicate your enemy's wounded.

Wings of War

Take to the skies and blast merry hell out of everything

Words: Audley Jarvis

Dev: Silver Wish Games	Pub: Gathering/Take-Two
Players: 1	Live: None
Release: Out now	
www.take2games.com	

AT THE OUTSET of World War I, aircraft development was still very much in its infancy. Barely ten years had passed since the Wright brothers' inaugural flight and so even high-tech military planes were, for the most part, constructed primarily from wood and canvas. So it comes as something of a shock to discover that the rickety, wooden bi-plane you're saddled with at the outset of *Wings of War* is able to carry up to 50 rockets and bombs at once. Historical accuracy clearly isn't part of the game's remit. Nope, this is knockabout arcade flying where the ammo's unlimited and upgrades and power packs can be claimed by simply blowing stuff up. Before long you'll be flying the fastest and most heavily armed bi-plane never to have graced the skies during WWI.

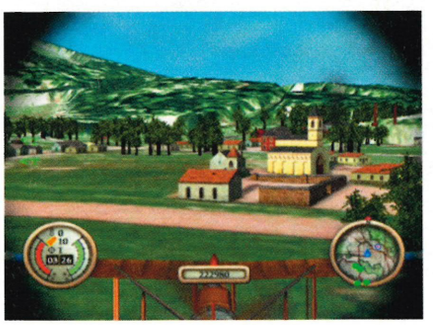
Never mind, because *Wings of War* is all good fun. For at least the first 20 minutes anyway, until the missions start to feel repetitive and the grainy terrain below begins to grate on the eye. There's no System Link/split-screen multiplayer or Xbox Live support either, so you're limited to battling AI foe in single-player. Still, it is only 20 quid, so you can't really complain too vehemently if it's a little unglamorous or rough around the edges, can you?

There are two main gameplay modes on offer: Campaign and Instant Action, which are both exactly that. Campaign mode is how the best planes and weapons for Instant Action are unlocked, so it makes sense to give this option a fair go before launching into the one-against-all or team dogfights of Instant Action.

There are 70 missions in total that take place over the course of 13 sorties in different locations. These missions are packed full of exactly what you might expect; shooting down planes, bombing installations and taking pictures of enemies from above. It's action-packed all the way, with swarms of enemy planes to engage, as well as land- or water-based targets to bomb. The difficulty level can be set at the beginning and auto-saves along the way save any lengthy back-tracking.

Flight controls are simple and intuitive enough; the Left thumbstick controls the plane's pitch and roll, the Right acts as your eyes within the plane to give you a 360° view of the skies. The triggers control acceleration and brake, while the buttons zoom gun sights, fire the machine-guns and drop bombs or rockets. For precision bombing and aerial reconnaissance missions it's possible to call up a magnified under-sight. Dive-bombing is obviously loads more fun though.

There's a narration to the Campaign mode featuring a typically stiff upper-lipped RAF commander, but it's hardly Oscar-winning material. This is very much a budget game: not particularly beautiful (but not wholesale ugly either), and not particularly engaging for long periods of time, but satisfying arcade fun nonetheless.



↑ Zoom in your gun sights for a better view.



↑ Dive bombing is a risky but satisfying strategy.

"There are swarms of enemy planes to engage"

Bonus info

FLY LIKE THE RED BARON

To perform special moves, press the White button and move the Left thumbstick. Push Up for a reversed loop, or try pulling one of the triggers for a barrel roll in that direction.

The Summary

OXM

WINGS OF WAR THE FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW!

1. Arcade handling with a few fancy moves. Power-ups make things infinitely faster. Otherwise, they're easy to stall and prone to clipping.
2. Enjoyable combat: machine-guns rule and ammo is unlimited. Expect things to get hectic in the air - Germans like a fight.
3. It isn't going to win many prizes in the graphical stakes. The maps are large enough, but the plane animation doesn't really impress.
4. Repetitive: destroy the enemy planes; bomb the storage facility; destroy the enemy planes; scupper the U-boats; destroy the enemy...
5. Entertaining single-player campaign, but it could have seriously benefited from additional multiplayer options.

The Verdict

Fun in small doses, but *Secret Weapons Over Normandy* and *Crimson Skies* are better bets for prolonged aerial action.

6.2//10

PREVIOUSLY: Came down out of the 12 o'clock sun and took us on the hop.
COMING SOON: Hints - Issue 35

DUEL TO THE DEATH: IT'S POSSIBLE TO CHALLENGE JERRY ACES TO DOGFIGHTING DUELS BY SIMPLY PRESSING THE LEFT THUMBSTICK DURING MISSIONS.

Official Xbox Magazine ELITE Elite Directory

The best of Xbox games that scored 8.5 and more!



AMPED 2
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: Extreme sports
"Stunning graphics. Dead easy to pick up and play but furiously addictive"
SCORE 8.9 XBL: ★★★★



BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE
REVIEWED: Issue 08
TYPE: Action RPG
"Absorbing RPG with a healthy dose of hack 'n' slashing"
SCORE 8.5



BEYOND GOOD & EVIL
REVIEWED: Issue 26
TYPE: Adventure
"Diverse and delicious. This isn't about violence, but about story, subterfuge and character"
SCORE 8.9



BLINX: THE TIME SWEEPER
REVIEWED: Issue 09
TYPE: Platformer
"Takes platform gaming into uncharted territory. Essential"
SCORE 9.3



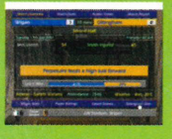
BROKEN SWORD: THE SLEEPING DRAGON
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: Adventure
"A detective game that will stick with you after you've finished"
SCORE 9.0



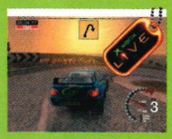
BRUTE FORCE
REVIEWED: Issue 18
TYPE: Squad-based shooter
"Multiplayer elevates *Brute Force* from a good to a potentially great game"
SCORE 8.5



BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT
REVIEWED: Issue 17
TYPE: Driving
"A classic arcade racer that makes you sweat and grin"
SCORE 9.0



CHAMP MANAGER: SEASON 01/02
REVIEWED: Issue 02
TYPE: Sports
"Easily the best game of its kind... indefinite lifespan"
SCORE 8.8



COLIN McRAE RALLY 04
REVIEWED: Issue 21
TYPE: Driving
"Rallying at its grandest, prettiest and most absorbing. The best rally game ever made"
SCORE 9.1



CRIMSON SKIES
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: Action
"A great package that's been playtested to death - and it looks gorgeous"
SCORE 8.9 XBL: ★★★★★



DEAD OR ALIVE 3
REVIEWED: Issue 01
TYPE: Beat 'em up
"Accessible, slick and as satisfying as any beat 'em up. This is a visual benchmark"
SCORE 8.5



DEUS EX: INVISIBLE WAR
REVIEWED: Issue 26
TYPE: First-person shooter
"Mind-blowing, expertly crafted experience. Don't miss it"
SCORE 9.0



ENTER THE MATRIX
REVIEWED: Issue 17
TYPE: Action
"A slick action romp that genuinely adds something new to the licence"
SCORE 8.5



FIFA FOOTBALL 2004
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: Sports
"Incredible player models, fluid animation, ridiculously pretty. The best Xbox footy title"
SCORE 8.7



FIGHT NIGHT 2004
REVIEWED: Issue 29
TYPE: Sports
"Absorbing, sweat-drenched title. Dazzling graphics and a groundbreaking control system"
SCORE 8.5



FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR
REVIEWED: ISSUE 30
TYPE: Strategy
"Fantastic strategy. Captures the visceral atmosphere of war"
SCORE 9.2 XBL: ★★★★



GRABBED BY THE GHOULIES
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: Action adventure
"Very polished. Top animation. A sure-fire crowd-pleaser"
SCORE 8.9



GRAND THEFT AUTO DOUBLE PACK
REVIEWED: Issue 25
TYPE: Driving
"PS2 port, but a benchmark of crime titles yet to be beaten"
SCORE 8.9



HALO
REVIEWED: Issue 01
TYPE: FPS
"Quite simply, a masterpiece and without question one of the best games ever made"
SCORE 9.7



INDIANA JONES AND THE EMPEROR'S TOMB
REVIEWED: Issue 14
TYPE: Action adventure
"One of the best single-player adventures on Xbox. Brilliant"
SCORE 9.0



INDYCAR SERIES
REVIEWED: Issue 18
TYPE: Driving
"You won't find a better racing sim on Xbox. Very technically demanding"
SCORE 8.6



JET SET RADIO FUTURE
REVIEWED: Issue 02
TYPE: Platformer/Extreme sports
"Supremely playable and very stylish. Huge, intricate levels"
SCORE 8.9



KUNG FU CHAOS
REVIEWED: Issue 15
TYPE: Party/Beat 'em up
"Highly playable. Very funny and looks great. Very intuitive with excellent multiplayer too"
SCORE 8.6



MADDEN NFL 2004
REVIEWED: Issue 21
TYPE: US sports
"Stunning rendition no Gridiron fan should underestimate. Looks and sounds real"
SCORE 8.5



MASHED
REVIEWED: Issue 31
TYPE: Racing
"Without doubt one of the finest multiplayer games ever, but single-player is a bit weak"
SCORE 8.6



MAX PAYNE 2: THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE
REVIEWED: Issue 25
TYPE: Action/Shooter
"Definitive blockbuster action title bursting with new ideas"
SCORE 9.2



METAL ARMS: GLITCH IN THE SYSTEM
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: Action/Shooter
"Gorgeous graphics, engaging characters, stacks of variety"
SCORE 9.0



MOTOGP 2: URT
REVIEWED: Issue 17
TYPE: Bike racing
"Stupendous visuals. Brilliant bike customisation. So thrilling it'll make your knees bleed"
SCORE 9.4 XBL: ★★★★★



MTV MUSIC GEN. 3
REVIEWED: Issue 30
TYPE: Music
"Essential for anyone with aspirations of headlining at Ministry. Playable and friendly"
SCORE 8.5



NFL FEVER 2004
REVIEWED: Issue 22
TYPE: US sports
"Easy to get into, with an emphasis on action rather than stats. Xbox Live play too!"
SCORE 8.7



NINJA GAIDEN
REVIEWED: Issue 29
TYPE: Action
"Groundbreaking beat 'em up of the highest calibre. A must for anyone who can hold a pad"
SCORE 9.2



PANZER DRAGOON ORTA
REVIEWED: Issue 15
TYPE: Action/Shooter
"Cutting-edge looks and classic blasting. Gorgeous"
SCORE 8.8



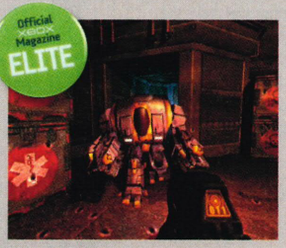
PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EP. I & II
REVIEWED: Issue 17
TYPE: MMORPG
"This should be the most addictive online game ever"
SCORE N/A XBL: ★★★★★

OXM TOP 5... First-person Shooters

If you want games with guns, then look to these OXM Elite shooters first - a tough squad from diverse backgrounds that are guaranteed to get the job done with no questions asked!



HALO It's still the *OXM* office favourite for lunchtime deathmatch, despite the fact we've been playing it for more than two years! The awesome landscapes, innovative combat and vehicles still rock alien worlds.
Issue 01, SCORE 9.7



THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK A recent addition to the FPS school, the graphics engine is an absolute stunner and we're unlikely to see it matched until the mighty *Doom 3* arrives to possess our souls.
Issue 33, SCORE 9.0



TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3
Although you lead a squad, this is still an action rather than tactical shooter, with a simple but effective command system and brilliant Xbox Live options and play.
Issue 23, SCORE 9.4, XBL: ★★★★★



RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN Fight the occult powers awakened by Nazi scientists in the scariest WWII shooter ever made. A great single-player plot and top teamplay on Xbox Live.
Issue 16, SCORE 9.2, XBL: ★★★★★



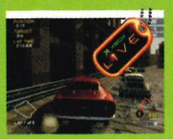
UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP An early taste of Xbox Live deathmatch, the colourful weapons, blistering pace and high-adrenaline fun of this sci-fi masterpiece can only be beaten by its own upcoming sequel.
Issue 10, SCORE 9.2, XBL: ★★★★★



PHANTOM CRASH
REVIEWED: Issue 10
TYPE: Mech shooter
"Extremely enjoyable. Frantic action backed up with an impressive career mode"
SCORE 8.5



PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE SANDS OF TIME
REVIEWED: Issue 26
TYPE: Adventure
"The Prince is the new King of platformers. Truly outstanding"
SCORE 9.0



PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: Driving
"Gorgeous and ace to play. The definitive driving experience"
SCORE 9.3 XBL: ★★★★★



PSI-OPS
REVIEWED: Issue 33
TYPE: Third-person shooter
"Inventive powers offer hours of fun. Outstanding AI compensates for poor story"
SCORE 8.6



RALLISPORT CHALL. 2
REVIEWED: Issue 30
TYPE: Driving
"Edge-of-your-seat racer. Looks and plays great, with brilliant Xbox Live multiplayer"
SCORE 9.0 XBL: ★★★★



RED DEAD REVOLVER
REVIEWED: Issue 30
TYPE: First-person shooter
"Frantic, fun and reasonably demanding. Highly polished arcade entertainment"
SCORE 8.5



RED FACTION II
REVIEWED: Issue 18
TYPE: First-person shooter
"Plenty of missions and a ludicrous 60 multiplayer maps. Excellent fun"
SCORE 8.6



RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN
REVIEWED: Issue 16
TYPE: First-person shooter
"Superb single-player; outstanding on Xbox Live"
SCORE 9.2 XBL: ★★★★★



ROCKY
REVIEWED: Issue 09
TYPE: Sports
"Brilliantly evocative, this is dramatic multiplayer scrapping at its finest"
SCORE 9.0



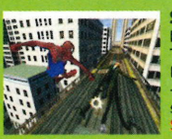
SEGA GT 2002
REVIEWED: Issue 10
TYPE: Driving
"An incredibly comprehensive and polished game very much in the style of *Gran Turismo*"
SCORE 8.5



SEGA GT ONLINE
REVIEWED: Issue 24
TYPE: Driving
"Live-enabled update. Huge single-player career mode and virtually limitless on Live"
SCORE 8.7 XBL: ★★★



SOUL CALIBUR II
REVIEWED: Issue 21
TYPE: Beat 'em up
"The most fluid fighter ever. Easy to pick up, tough to master, graphically superb"
SCORE 9.1



SPIDER-MAN 2
REVIEWED: Issue 32
TYPE: Action
Huge environment to explore - you'll be smashing and swinging in no time"
SCORE 8.6



SPLINTER CELL: PANDORA TOMORROW
REVIEWED: Issue 27
TYPE: Action adventure
"Enhances everything that was good about the original"
SCORE 9.3



STAR WARS: KNIGHTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC
REVIEWED: Issue 20
TYPE: RPG
"One of the most compelling games on any console ever"
SCORE 9.5



STEEL BATTALION: LINE OF CONTACT
REVIEWED: Issue 29
TYPE: Mech action
"The best robot game ever. Evil learning curve but worth it"
SCORE 9.0



SUDEKI
REVIEWED: Issue 32
TYPE: RPG
"One of the best-looking games on Xbox. A brilliant, vibrant adventure romp with great AI"
SCORE 8.7



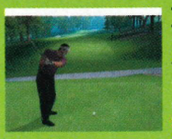
THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK: EFBB
REVIEWED: Issue 33
TYPE: First-person shooter
"Intuitive controls. Stylish, atmospheric and violent"
SCORE 9.0



TLOTR: THE RETURN OF THE KING
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: Action
"Recreates the film beautifully. A blockbuster action game"
SCORE 8.5



THIEF: DEADLY SHADOWS
REVIEWED: Issue 31
TYPE: Stealth
"Captivating, atmospheric, with massive replayability"
SCORE 8.9



TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003
REVIEWED: Issue 11
TYPE: Sports
"Great swing system. Loads of modes. Fantastic courses"
SCORE 8.5



TIMESPLITTERS 2
REVIEWED: Issue 09
TYPE: First-person shooter
"The most complete FPS package on Xbox. Rife with features. Just buy it"
SCORE 9.3



TOCA RACE DRIVER 2
REVIEWED: Issue 29
TYPE: Racing
"The most realistic, detailed racer ever. Gorgeous graphics, incredible variety and handling"
SCORE 9.1 XBL: ★★★★



TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON
REVIEWED: Issue 11
TYPE: Squad-based shooter
"Confident and addictive. The strategy/action benchmark"
SCORE 8.9 XBL: ★★★★



TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: ISLAND THUNDER
REVIEWED: Issue 21
TYPE: Squad-based shooter
"Atmospheric with online play"
SCORE 8.5 XBL: ★★★★



TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: First-person shooter
"The ultimate package for fans of realism-based FPSs"
SCORE 9.4 XBL: ★★★★★



TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3: BLACK ARROW
REVIEWED: Issue 33
TYPE: First-person shooter
"Looks ace and only £20!"
SCORE 9.0



TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND
REVIEWED: Issue 24
TYPE: Extreme sports
"Refreshingly different and diverse. Hop off and explore!"
SCORE 8.6



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4
REVIEWED: Issue 11
TYPE: Extreme sports
"Silky trick system. Absolutely tons to do, and then some"
SCORE 8.6



TOP SPIN
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: Sports
"Incredible detail. Hands down this is the best tennis game in the world"
SCORE 9.0 XBL: ★★★★



UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP
REVIEWED: Issue 10
TYPE: First-person shooter
"This sets a new standard for multiplayer shooters"
SCORE 9.2 XBL: ★★★★



WAKEBOARDING UNLEASHED FEAT. SHAUN MURRAY
REVIEWED: Issue 17
TYPE: Extreme sports
"Outrageous arcade action"
SCORE 8.6



WORLD CHAMP. SNOOKER 2004
REVIEWED: Issue 31
TYPE: Sports
"Tension-filled fun for anyone remotely interested in snooker"
SCORE 8.8 XBL: ★★★



XIII
REVIEWED: Issue 23
TYPE: First-person shooter
"Unique, stylish and captivating. You can't afford to miss this superb FPS"
SCORE 9.0 XBL: ★★★

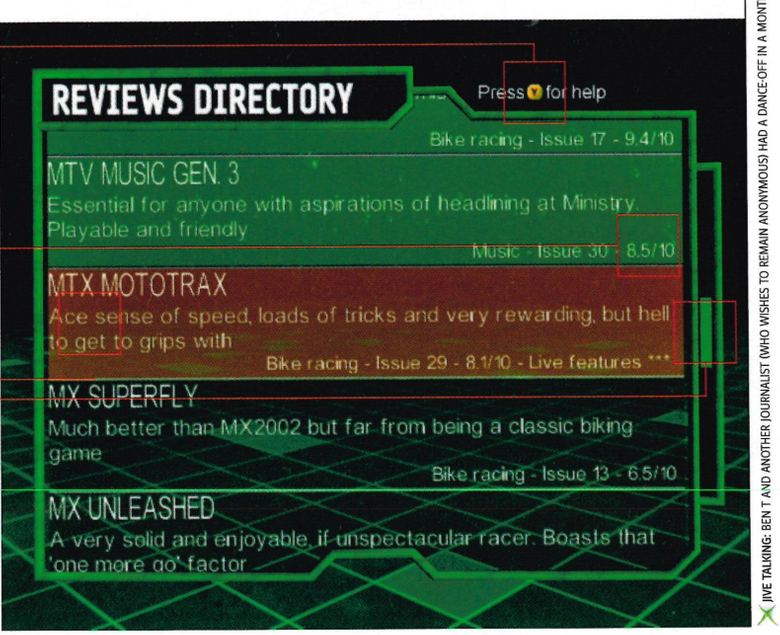
Official Xbox Magazine ELITE

ON THE DISC

Full interactive Reviews Directory...

The ultimate guide to Xbox games

DON'T WORRY, we haven't forgotten about the non-elite Xbox games. We've simply moved them to a new section on the Game Disc. Select the Interactive Reviews Directory menu option and use the Left thumbstick to scroll through our comprehensive A-Z. Below, you can see a brief guide to some of the features.



If you forget what any of the different colours mean, press the Y button to bring up a handy help menu.

The bottom bar indicates the game type, the issue the review appeared and the review score out of ten.

A game highlighted in orange is Xbox Live-enabled. A game in bright green is an Xbox Elite title.

The scroll bar indicates how far down the list you are. You can progress one game at a time with the D-pad.

JIVE TALKING: BEN T AND ANOTHER JOURNALIST (WHO WISHES TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS) HAD A DANCE-OFF IN A MONTREAL NIGHTCLUB. AFTER FOUR HOURS IT WAS DECLARED A DRAW. THE REALLY SAD FACT IS, THEY WERE THE ONLY ONES ON THE DANCEFLOOR...

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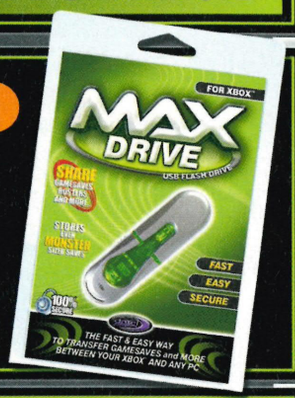
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bboxmag

touch my bushy eyebrow!
MC Monobrow shoots good music dead

future undercover kid
The new face or the new ass of party?

dj go
The big dog's crucial guide to Glossop

the brown revolution
Why the BLF are in trouble again

stick it in his dusty shed!
Techno wizard Mooper explains the homegrown Euro music scene!

FREE! NINE DJ TRACKS!

superstar dj steve lawler
Two exclusive tracks

09

Name: Future Undercover Kid
Speciality: Party
Fave Tune: *Candle in the Wind* (The Smurfs version)

BACK IN '99, Andy Irving's weekends went like this: one hour shaving, two hours waxing, one hour moisturising, 30 minutes plucking eyebrows, three hours tanning and 12 hours mashing his face off at the east coast's most rincin' under 18s night.

It was there that he was discovered by famed *Top of the Pops* DJ Dave 'Hairy Cornflake' Lee Travis and went on to become one of Southend's hottest wedding DJs. "There was no party too wild, no venue too happening. I had residencies at every club from the world-famous Gala Bingo Hall to the Southend Leisure Centre," he boasts. "OAP nights were my speciality. But some of them just got way out of control – the old ravers often got out of their tree! We even had to call out the riot squad on one occasion!"

The English Costa del Sol has less reason to be afraid these days. "There used to be a time for grooming and a time for mixing, but now I just bang on a party mix tape and stand around buffing my mullet." Class.



Name: MC Monobrow
Speciality: D'n'B
Fave Tune: *Half Man, Half Machine* by Goldie Lookin' Chain

IT'S SUNDAY 22 August and there's an uneasy quiet on the streets of Cardiff. Where normally a line of goths and rockers flock outside the legendary Metropolitan club, there's only a surreal thumping, growling noise.

You'd be forgiven for thinking it was the sound of a seal being brutally clubbed to death (that's one of MC Monobrow's hobbies) or even being blasted with an uzi (that's his other one), but no. It's actually the sound of the self-confessed 'crazy salad-dodging mutherf***er' getting busy on the wheels of steel.

"Twice a year, this is my f*cking manor and I'm turning it into a vortex of junglism! Don't be fooled by the games that I got, I'm still Benny from the flock. Along with my B-Boy homeboys, we're here to remind Cardiff that I'm the new Face of Bass, and those pound-shoppin' Barry girls are there for the takin'!" Most people can't do bass like MC Monobrow, but then again most people don't have a giant hairy caterpillar on their forehead...



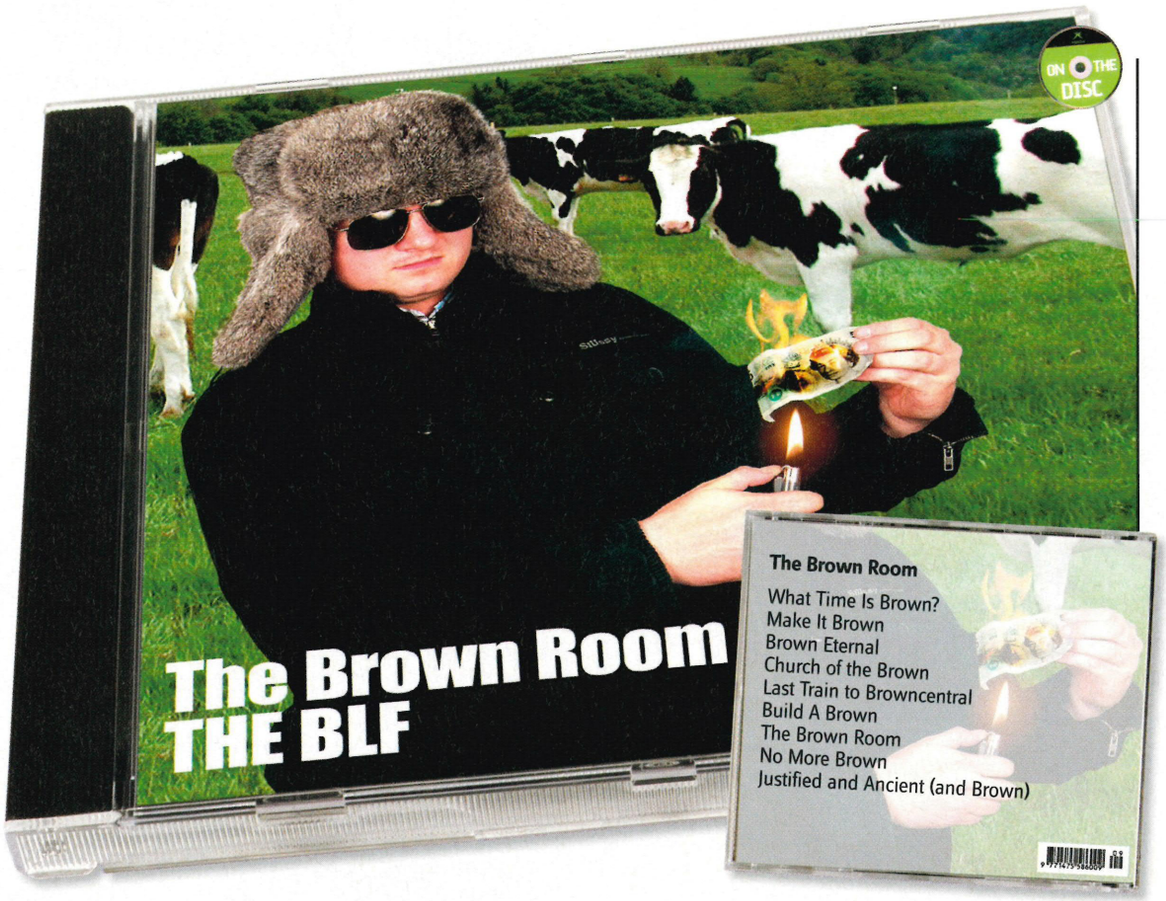


Name: DJ GO
Speciality: Hardcore (music and porn)
Fave Tune: *Just Say No* by the cast of *Grange Hill* (Rave version)

"DRY YOUR eyes, mate. I know it's hard to take but you lost at *Halo* again." DJ GO is a lot more sensitive than he sometimes appears. Right now it's a balmy Ibizan afternoon up in blistering Glossop and we're sat chilling with one of the biggest names in dance music.

The Ogdasaurus's divisive third album has been described as "an irresistible call-to-arms" by some critics and "a work of *Halo*-addled brain damage" by the more sensible ones.

"I started out in trance, but took it a bit too literally. I'd just spend hours staring out into space," he muses. Without knowing it, he's doing exactly the same thing now. Every word we say falls on deaf ears, as if he's dreaming up some new social commentary or urban innovation. In truth, he's actually dreaming about Jenna Jameson taking a shower, and frankly who can blame him?



Name: BLF (Brown Liberation Front) Feat. BrownMan Brown
Speciality: Electro
Fave Tune: *Lick my Love-Pump* by Spinal Tap

JUST WHAT is it about the colour brown that needs liberating? We couldn't get an interview with the BLF to ask them why, but in truth we didn't actually try to. The home counties' most famous bovine-botherers have gone underground recently after legal disputes with local farmers' unions. Amongst the allegations listed was that the BLF were 'modding' cattle with spray paint and neon lights and were racing them down Guildford high street.

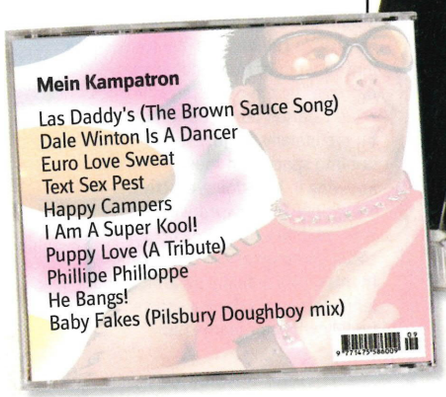
The BLF continues Kraftwerk's Teutonic electro legacy with steely resolve despite everyone saying they're shit. Their latest album is a complete homebrew 'brown in your face' effort, combining drum machines and loud Scots shouting about Irn Bru.

Aficionados of crap music might be interested to know though that it took 20 takes to get that £5 note-burning album cover right. That's £96 more than their entire global record sales.

Name: Mooper
Speciality: Euro Techno
Fave Tune: *Dragostea Din Tei* by O-Zone

"I LIKE it hard and filthy, ya!" says Mooper of his 100mph techno obsession. A regular on Berlin's warehouse scene, Europe's most fabulous DJ rose to fame under the alias Benito Bendini. "Being more camp than Billy Butlin is key to my success, ya!"

It's all fun until we broach the subject of where the name 'Mooper' comes from. "It's the name of my dead dog, ya! He was good schutz hund, ya!" Despite the tears welling up in his eyes, Mooper still can't help but wave his hands around, making triangle and square shapes in thin air. Tit.







DJ Steve Lawler.



↓ You can buy the 12" single at www.amazon.com



It's The Remix

How to download your exclusive Lawler tracks

STEVE LAWLER is a trendsetter on the house music scene. He's filled dance floors in famous, far-flung destinations including Miami, Singapore and, of course, Ibiza. If you want to blow away your earwax, check out the Audio Mixes section on this month's game disc. From here, you can download the *Rise In* radio edit and two remixes that are exclusive to *OXM*! As an extra special treat, there's also the full 12" version of Steve's upcoming track *Lost*. If you're really insane in the membrane, you might also want to clap your eardrums around five *OXM* mixes including *London Town*, *Dirty Talk* and *Happy Campers*.

Simply select the track you want and press A to listen to it. Pressing the A button again will download the track to your hard disk. Look for the soundtrack '*OXM* 34' on your hard disk. Now you can listen to the spirit-lifting beats of *Rise In* while racing around in *PGR2*!

We've even included the *OXM* tracks as *MTV Music Generator 3* (Issue 30, 8.5) saves. If you own the full game, you can download the tracks and remix them. If you've created a remix of one of our *OXM* tunes (excluding tracks by Steve Lawler), why not send it in to Play:More on the Disc (see page 105)? Also make sure you check out www.djstevelawler.com for news and previews of Steve's hottest new gigs and tracks.

All the tracks are available for download from www.subversiverecords.com for *Lost* and www.bedrock.org.uk website link for *Rise In* aols that the CD will carry the following credits: Subversive and Bedrock logo's in the credits and the text; *Lost* and *Rise In* samples courtesy of Subversive Records Ltd, P&C 2004 Subversive Records Ltd and Bedrock Music Ltd.



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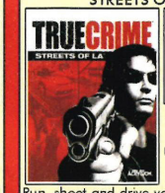


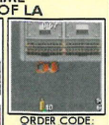


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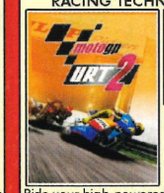


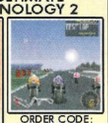


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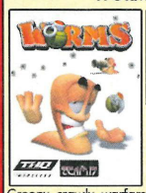




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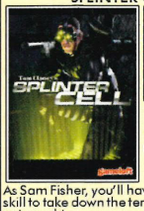


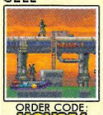


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As Sam Fisher, you'll have to use all your skill to take down the terrorists, just don't get caught.

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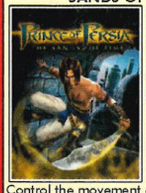




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For Mobile Phones: BDEFJKL UVWXY

Once again Sam Fisher is sent to do what no one else can do! A gruesome terrorist threat is looming over the world.

PRINCE OF PERSIA: SANDS OF TIME

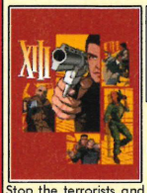




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Control the movement of time and save the day in this classic platform adventure.

XIII

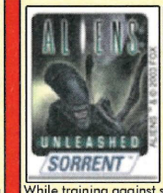




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Stop the terrorists and solve your own personal identity crisis, in this high action shooter.

ALIENS™ UNLEASHED

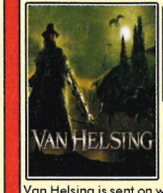




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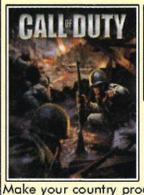




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Van Helsing is sent on what could be the mission in which he discovers the truth about himself, his past, and his fate.!

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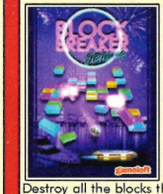




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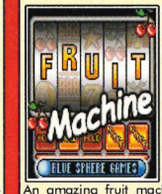




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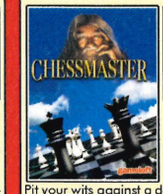




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3650	= E	Z105	= H	V500	= U
3650	= E	**SHARP**		V525	= U
5100	= D	GX10	= J	V600	= U
6100	= D	GX10i	= J	**SONY ERICSSON**	
6310i	= C	GX20	= K	T610	= W
6600	= F	GX30	= L	T630	= W
6610	= D	**SIEMENS**		Z600	= X
6800	= D	C55	= N	**SAGEM**	
7210	= D	C60	= M	My V65	= Y
7210i	= D	M50	= O	**LG**	
7250	= D	M55	= P	5300i	= Z
7250i	= D	MC60	= R	5400	= Z
				7100	= Z

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Please ensure you have read the above instructions carefully. All games cost only £6, pre-pay customers, please check you have enough credit before ordering. The delivery of games requires a short WAP connection for which your mobile operator may charge you. At peak times there may be a small delay in delivery. Put comments and questions in writing to Interactive Telcom Ltd, 8 Grants Walk, PL25 5AA. To contact customer service, email: custserv@mobilegamesunlimited.com, or call **(Freephone) 0800 081 6001**

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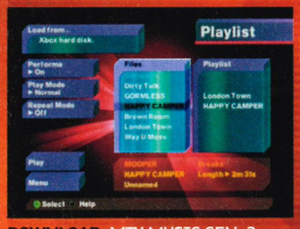
Play:More

PLAY:MORE is, quite simply, about getting more from your games. From straightforward tips and cheats to in-depth Masterclasses and Beginner's Guides, you'll find everything, explore everywhere and beat everyone.

It's all about playing games until the disc wears out. It's about demonstrating your expertise, proving you're the best and taking your rightful place among our elite community of Xbox gamers. It's about winning stuff, beating the challenges and earning respect from your fellow gamers.



DEMO: JUICED



DOWNLOAD: MTV MUSIC GEN. 3



GUIDE: SUDEKI

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BT

Unlock the true potential of Xbox Live with Broadband from BT for online console gaming and challenge gamers worldwide with the latest Xbox Live games

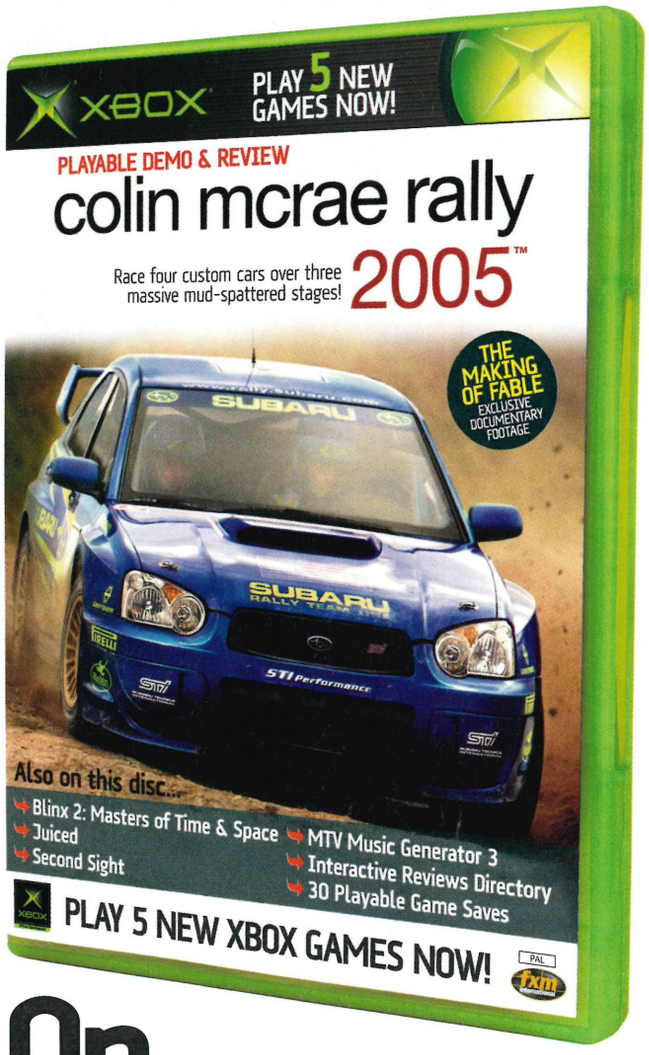
This month's must-have Xbox Live-enabled game is Ubisoft's action shooter *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six® 3: Black Arrow™*. Join Team Rainbow in their undercover war against terrorism in the oil-rich regions of the Black Sea. Single-player features include brand new weapons and equipment at your disposal to aid you in various challenging and diverse campaigns. With improved AI, you've got to be careful out there, as the enemy can now call for back-up when outnumbered and also use hostages as human shields.

What's more, *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six® 3: Black Arrow™* will be one of the first games to offer the new Xbox Live features including user-created tournaments and Clan statistics. With brand new tactics for online multiplayer, take advantage of the new private team lobbies where players can use a planning interface to develop strategies before online matches begin, and give your team the added edge to wipe out the opposing force.

Now you can take the challenge online and Broadband from BT for online console gaming has everything you need.

To find out more about this service, log on to www.bt.com/xboxlive. Plus sign up to Broadband from BT for online console gaming and receive an Xbox Live-compatible router for only £20 (online purchases only).

1Mb Broadband
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now only £29.99* a month



On Your Disc...

WELCOME TO THE new face of Play:More. Your favourite Xbox gaming bible now looks better than ever, and your playable Game Disc also lavishes you with new features.

Headlining this month's trial version is *Colin McRae Rally 2005*. There are three stages to race and four unbelievable motors. *Second Sight* is next up. This stealth-based action adventure gives you loads of deadly psychic abilities.

Juiced is a driving game with a very different vibe from *Colin McRae*. Having a flash motor with all the modifications is just as important as crossing the finishing line! *Blinx 2: Masters of Time & Space* and *MTV Music Generator 3* round up this excellent disc. You can also listen to nine DJ tracks and check out the brand new interactive reviews directory. It's the ultimate guide to Xbox games!

Colin McRae Rally 2005

ON THE DISC

Reviewed: This Issue | Score: See page 068
Players: 1

MR McRAE HAS been a very busy man, winning rallies and reinventing the rally game (with his friends at Codies) in his spare time. *Colin McRae Rally 2005* is the biggest evolution in the series to date, offering a huge new career mode and full Xbox Live play.

There are three rallies and four cars to choose from in this nerve-wracking trial version. We recommend starting on the accessible Gwyddelwern rally stage before moving on to the more challenging Niederlauterbach stage in Germany and the icy Hjalmarson in Sweden. You can randomise the stage and weather conditions by pressing Y on the Stage Select screen.

A brand new feature to *Colin McRae Rally 2005* is the shellshock effect. After a heavy collision, the screen blurs for a few seconds like a spell of disorientation.

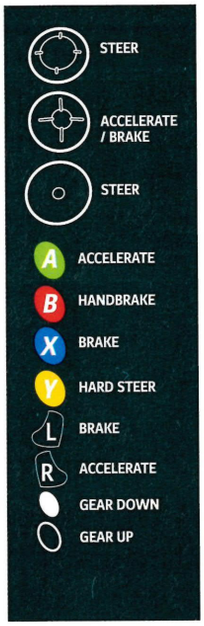
Demo Challenge

We want you to achieve the fastest possible time on the German rally stage. You must use the Peugeot 206 and race in dry conditions. Ben T clocked it in a time of 03:52:67 but he drives like an old man so you must be able to beat that!

Our fastest driver will win a copy of the full game of *Colin McRae Rally 2005*, courtesy of Codemasters. If you achieve a qualifying score, we'll contact you to ask for a video recording or photo of your fastest time. Please don't send in your proof unless we contact you first. Complete the coupon below and send it in before the closing date of Thursday 07 October 2004.



↑ More realistic farming equipment than *CMR04*!



Second Sight

ON THE DISC

Reviewed: Issue 33 | Score: 8.1
Players: 1

IF YOU'RE A Play:More regular, you probably played our *Psi-Ops* trial version last month. *Second Sight* takes a much more stealthy approach to using psychic abilities, although many of the attacks you can perform are very similar.

John Vattic wakes up in a research centre and you have to sneak into the Patient Records room to discover how you got there. Psychic powers including telekinesis, psi-pulse, heal and charm will help you evade some tight security.

To use the powers of telekinesis and psi-pulse, you must first target an object or enemy by holding L. Toggle your target using the Right thumbstick and once you're ready, press R to activate. Telekinesis allows you to manipulate and move objects as well as attack your enemies. You can either throttle them or throw them into walls until they're battered to death.

Psi-pulse, on the other hand, sends a massive shockwave towards your target, sending it flying across the room. Depending on the range, it will either knock guards unconscious or kill them.

Checking computers will help you find out where the Patient Records room is located. While logged on, you can also deactivate security cameras, open locked doors and even eavesdrop on people's chatroom conversations!

Clicking the Left thumbstick at any time sends you into first-person mode. This allows you to aim weapons and control your telekinesis more easily. Unfortunately, you can't move while in first-person mode, but can lean from side to side.



↑ Go on a charm offensive and remain unseen.



Replay

WANT a sub-machine gun in *Second Sight*? Pull a cop towards you through the lobby window. Once they're dead, the gun will drop to the floor for you to grab.





Challenges

THINK YOU'RE HOT stuff when it comes to Xbox? Challenges gives you the chance to become a gaming celebrity! There are several ways to make your mark: in the demo challenges, Xbox Live competitions and clan leagues. Some are for prizes, others just for glory. Check it out!

PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY

Game Disc 32

THE CHALLENGE: Cause the most movement property damage.



NAME	ADDRESS	BEST SCORE
RYAN ROBERTS	FLINTSHIRE	244,461
JAMES O'NEIL	SOUTH WIRRAL	236,243
DARREN EGGERTON	SHROPSHIRE	193,428
OWEN & MIKE O'LOUGHLIN	NOTTS	193,305
DANIEL JACKSON	LIVERPOOL	175,819
SAM BALL	LONDON	173,838
ROBERT WRIGHT	HANTS	145,257
LEWIS WHEAL	CORNWALL	144,284
JAMES ZAMYSLIANSKEJ	N. LINCS	143,304

Surely there's a game out there that Ryan Roberts isn't good at! For winning this challenge, he wins a US Robotics Wireless Adapter set.

Issue 34 Challenges

Dear Official Xbox Magazine

Here is my Demo Challenge score for you to admire:

COLIN McRAE RALLY 2005

Fastest time to complete German Rally stage:

.....

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Telephone number .....

Either cut out or photocopy this coupon, fill it in, and send it to Game Disc 34 Demo Challenge, *Official Xbox Magazine*, 99 Baker Street, London, W1U 6FP.

NEXT MONTH: KEEP YOUR DRIVING SKILLS SHARP BECAUSE WE'VE GOT AN OUTRUN 2 LIVE-ENABLED DEMO FOR YOU! BRILLIANT PRIZES WILL BE UP FOR GRABS.

Game Saves

NO BOSS TOO tough, no mission too impossible, Play:More is determined to crack open every Xbox title and bring you the hottest downloadable Game Saves. This month we've got Saves for these 15 games:

Breakdown
A number of saves spanning the entire game.

Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge
Start on level 16.

Grand Theft Auto Double Pack
100 per cent complete with 100 per cent of packages found.

Max Payne 2
A Quick Save before fight with final bad guy.

Morrowind: Game of the Year Edition
Play as a werewolf 600 days into the game.

Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time
Original *Prince of Persia* game unlocked, plus saves spanning the updated adventure.

Red Dead Revolver
The entire game complete with Bounty Hunter mode unlocked.

Secret Weapons Over Normandy
100 per cent complete with Tie Fighter and X-wing unlocked in Instant Action mode.

Shadow Ops: Red Mercury
All Campaign missions, Co-Op missions and videos unlocked.

Sonic Heroes
100 per cent completed with all two-player games and bonus items unlocked.

Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow
All levels unlocked.

Tenchu: Return From Darkness
Play with Tesshu with all missions unlocked.

The Suffering
Start on level 17 'Death be not proud' and level 20 'Last breath before dying'.

TimeSplitters 2
All Story mode, Arcade mode and Challenge mode levels unlocked and completed.

Van Helsing
Start on Hard. All upgrades, max ammo bar, all moves, most weapons and 17 bonuses.

How To...

Download your Game Saves

FIRST, GO TO the Game Saves and Extra Content menus. Highlight the one you want and press A to download it to your hard disk. If the save is greyed out and can't be selected, you already have a save of this type on your hard disk. Simply go to the memory screen on your Dashboard, delete the save and, the next time you load the game disc, the option will reappear in white.

Blinx 2: Masters of Time & Space

ON THE DISC

Reviewed: Coming soon | Score: TBA
Players: 1-2

SURPRISINGLY, YOU don't actually get to play as Blinx the cat in this trial version. Instead, you can choose from two different teams: the Timesweepers and the Tom-Toms and customise your own hero from scratch.

The Timesweepers are the same as Blinx from the first game. You use your hoover to suck up junk items and fire them out to damage monsters. Defeated monsters drop time crystals. Collecting three of the same colour time crystals gives you one time control. A blue time control lets you pause time, making dodging hazards easier. Purple time controls allow you to rewind time. Bridges that were destroyed by bombs will re-form in front of you. Grab three orange crystals and you'll have the power to slow time!

Playing as the Tom-Tom gang is a completely different experience. In this mode, you have to use stealth and control space to steal treasure from the time-travelling tabbies. Your most basic technique is to hold the Y button to crawl and avoid detection. Of course, no self-respecting criminal hog would leave unprepared and you've got a huge bag of tricks to use against the 'sweepers. Throwing a banana skin will make them slip up, while using a holographic decoy will misdirect them from your misdemeanours. You can even create portals to teleport you from place to place. See how quickly you can complete the Tom-Tom's missions. We clocked them in a speedy 6:32:00.



Juiced

ON THE DISC

Reviewed: Issue 32 | Score: 8.0
Players: 1

IMAGINE GAVIN OGDEN flying down the street in a Vauxhall Nova SRI with a well-thumbed copy of *Redline* tucked in his back pocket. Scary thought, isn't it?! Thankfully you'll never have to worry about that... unless you're hooked up to Xbox Live and decide to beat him at his own game.

This trial version of *Juiced* isn't Xbox Live-enabled but it does allow you to customise three Toyotas: the Celica GT, Celica 2000 and the Supra before taking them out onto the streets of San Ricardo. You can also adjust the number of laps, time of day and the weather conditions.

The San Ricardo route two is a short but challenging circuit. Although you can burn up some nitrous on the early straights, doing so later on will surely end in disaster. Press Y to use nitro, but keep an eye on the N_2O indicator to see how much you have remaining.

The latter part of the circuit is a minefield of right angle turns. The handbrake should be used only in emergencies. It'll really kill your acceleration, allowing your opponents to overtake with ease. Although it's impossible to write off a car completely, you can destroy the alloys, fluorescent lights and knock off the spoiler.

There's no prize for getting the best time on this one, but we managed a whirlwind fastest lap of 1:06:05. See if you can beat that!



MTV Music Generator 3

ON THE DISC

Reviewed: Issue 30 | Score: 8.5
Players: 1

IF YOU'VE READ our BoxMag Music feature (see page 097), you'll already know how much we love *MTV Music Generator 3*. This excellent demo gives you a chance to muscle in on the action with your own superstar DJ music tracks. The trial version gives you 30 minutes to remix Snoop Dogg's *From the Chuuuch to Da Palace* and dancefloor filler *Katja* by Carl Cox.

The remixer allows you to swap and chop samples on the fly. All you have to do is choose the drums, bass and riff options and move left or right to change the sample. Audio levels for each sample can be adjusted separately while you're listening to your rincin' beats.

If that sounds too easy, try creating a track from scratch. Select the Studio option from the main menu and the track you'd like to use as a template. This trial version lets you use all the samples from the two DJ tracks to create an entirely new one. You first have to select a sample from the samplebase and move it into the grid. Try pinning down a good breakbeat before adding a couple of riffs. Vocals are the trickiest samples to work in, so it's best to leave them until last. Unfortunately, there's no option to save your work in this trial version, but you could still record it onto VHS. If you've made a tune that you think everyone should hear, send it into Play: More On The Disc (see right).



Replay

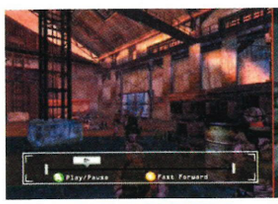
COME A cropper on one of San Ricardo's right angle turns and you'll literally go for a spin. In one tremendous *Juiced* smash, we rolled the car 15 times!



Download Centre

DOWNLOAD CENTRE IS the place to find the hottest new levels, characters and saved games. Some have previously been available on Live, but this month's content has never been seen!

You too can send in your custom-built extra content. It could be anything from *Tiger* golfers to a *TimeSplitters 2* map, *Driv3r* movies to a *THUG* skate park. There are two ways you can send in saves. If you own any Datel Action Replay device, email your saves directly to ben.talbot@fxmi.com. If you don't own an Action Replay device, but do own a memory card, email or write to Download Centre at the usual address or email ben.talbot@fxmi.com. If we like the sound of your save, we'll arrange for you to send your memory card to us. DO NOT send memory cards without prior arrangement. See page 104 for instructions on how to download content and start playing your old games again!



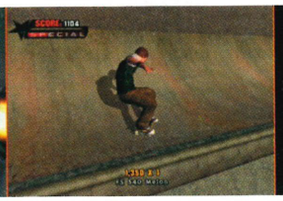
FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR

This replay of the final mission demonstrates a great way to get through unscathed. If you have found a better way to achieve the mission goals, create a replay and send it to us! To load the replay, go to the extra content menu in *FSW* and select 'Chapter 11'.



TIMESPLITTERS 2

We still reckon that *TimeSplitters 2* is one of the best multiplayer FPS out there. Check out five new maps: Colour Kill, Crazy Course, Bigg Batzen, VIRUS and Kickass Core. They're compatible with most game modes. Load them up through the Mapmaker menu.



TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND

We receive loads of videos featuring *THUG* combos, so we made two courses to test you: JurassPark and Startin Summat. If you achieve a mega combo on these courses, video it and send it in! The best ones will go on the disc and in a league.



AUDIO MIXES

There are two ways to download our ace audio mixes. The MP3 versions can be played from the Game Disc menu or ripped to your hard disk by hitting A twice. You need the full game to play and remix the *MTV3* versions of our audio tracks. Check out page 097 for full instructions!

Play:More On The Disc

EARN A PLACE in Xbox history and appear in your section of the Game Disc. Play:More brings you the maddest tricks, and we love to show Xbox Live clans causing mayhem.

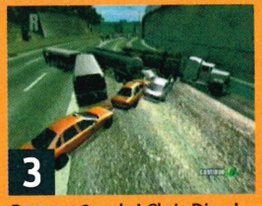
Complete and cut out this coupon and attach it to the front of your VHS tape before sending. Entries must be less than 10 minutes long and rewound to the correct starting position. Please don't have custom soundtracks playing.



We're not sure how Daan and Matteo achieved this glitch in *True Crime*, but Nick Kang is holding a pistol upside down! When driving and shooting, the laser sight goes nuts!



Jacob Tevendale really wants a *Jet Set Radio Future* sequel. Nothing's been announced, so he's taken it upon himself to create this logo for *JSRF2*. He's saved Sega a job there.



Burnout 2 rocks! Chris Diver's pile-ups are savage – one of them sends a bus flying 20 feet! Chris's compilation also shows you where to find *Ninja Gaiden's* prototype Xbox.



Driv3r is very popular for Play:More on the disc (probably because it's so buggy). Expect tons of clips next month, but first, here's Matthew Morris's snappily directed replay.



The Washington DC Cone Challenge is so popular, we've started a league! This month Ryan Roberts scores a 190x kudos combo and Daniel Moffat racks up a decent 185x.

Play:More On The Disc

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Postcode _____

Description of my Top Play _____

❑ I have made sure that custom soundtracks are turned off.

Replay

WE NORMALLY reject *Halo* clips as we get so many, but Chris Divers' clip is exceptional. It shows a Banshee squishing MC during a cutscene!



Challenges

ANOTHER TOP challenge league for you. If you want to suggest a new challenge or have some results from an event you've organised, send them into the usual address. We're also going to be running regular leagues based on your entries for Play:More On The Disc.

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2

Full game challenge

THE CHALLENGE: Highest Kudos combo on any of the cone challenges in *Project Gotham Racing 2*.



↑ There are two Washington cone challenges on this month's disc.

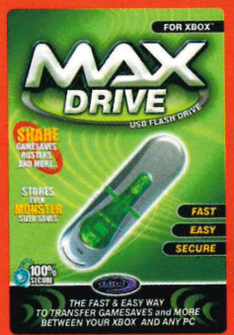
NAME	CONE CHALL	KUDOS
Ryan Roberts	Washington DC	190
Daniel Moffatt	Washington DC	185
Glyn Horsley	Yokahama	137
Daniel Moffatt	Edinburgh	132
Glyn Horsley	Yokahama	65
Your name here	Your City Here	Your Kudos Here
Your name here	Your City Here	Your Kudos Here
Your name here	Your City Here	Your Kudos Here

Over the past few months, competition has been hotting up between Ryan, Glyn and Dan to become the top *PGR2* driver. Why not send in a video or saved replay of your best score for the league?

WIN A DATEL MAX DRIVE!

EACH MONTH, we'll pick the five best entries and award you with a Datel Max Drive. To see if you've won, look out for a golden Play:More award, like the one shown here, on your entry in the mag. It's the ultimate Xbox accessory scoring 5/5!

Max Drive is the fast, easy and secure way to transfer files between your Xbox and any PC. Max Drive is available from all good videogame stores, or you can purchase it online instead at www.codejunkies.com



LEAP OF FAITH: NEXT MONTH WE'RE GOING TO START A CHALLENGE LEAGUE BASED ON YOUR LONGEST JUMPS IN THE GTA DOUBLE PACK! SEND YOUR VIDEOS TO THE USUAL ADDRESS.

LiveCalendar

Your official guide to the hot game releases, events and Xbox Live gaming sessions for the next month.

FRI 10 SEPTEMBER 2004

EA Live service launches as *Burnout 3: Takedown* hits store shelves. www.eagames.com/official/burnout/burnout3/us/home.jsp



SAT 11 SEPTEMBER 2004

SUN 12 SEPTEMBER 2004

MON 13 SEPTEMBER 2004

Xbox Live Race Night - *Burnout 3* racing. www.xbox.com/en-GB/live/calen dar/default.htm



TUES 14 SEPTEMBER 2004

Official Xbox Live Magazine is still on sale - have you got your copy? www.officialxboxmagazine.co.uk

WEDS 15 SEPTEMBER 2004

Xbox Live Play:More Night - Look out for our Gamertag, OXM PLAYMORE, on *Rainbow Six 3: Black Arrow*, from 6-7pm if you want to fight Ben Talbot. www.rainbowsix3.com/uk/pub.php

THURS 16 SEPTEMBER 2004

FRI 17 SEPTEMBER 2004

Madden 2005 and *Vietcong: Purple Haze* are both released www.take2games.com



SAT 18 SEPTEMBER 2004

SUN 19 SEPTEMBER 2004

Xbox Live Chill-out Night - The Night for less competitive gamers. Try cruising in *Midtown Madness 3*. www.xbox.com/en-GB/live/calendar/default.htm

MON 20 SEPTEMBER 2004

Star Wars Trilogy DVDs released with *Battlefront* Xbox Live-enabled trial version. www.starwars.com



TUES 21 SEPTEMBER 2004

Xbox Live Just for Fun Night - The night for new players to get together. www.xbox.com/en-GB/live/calendar/default.htm

WEDS 22 SEPTEMBER 2004

THURS 23 SEPTEMBER 2004

Xbox Live Old Skool Night www.xbox.com/en-GB/live/calendar/default.htm



FRI 24 SEPTEMBER 2004

Star Wars Battlefront, Colin McRae Rally 2005 and *Juiced* hit the shelves. www.lucasarts.com



SAT 25 SEPTEMBER 2004

Master Ninja Tournament World Finals in Japan. www.xbox.com/en-GB/ninjagaiden/tournament.htm



SUN 26 SEPTEMBER 2004

MON 27 SEPTEMBER 2004

Xbox Live Race Night - The night for Colin McRae Rally '05. www.xbox.com/en-GB/live/calendar/default.htm

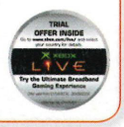


TUES 28 SEPTEMBER 2004

WEDS 29 SEPTEMBER 2004

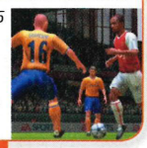
THURS 30 SEPTEMBER 2004

Xbox Live Two-month Trial offer ends. www.xbox.com/en-GB/live/trialoffer.htm



FRI 01 OCTOBER 2004

FIFA Football 2005 hits stores! www.easports.com/games/fifa2005/home.jsp



SAT 02 OCTOBER 2004

SUN 03 OCTOBER 2004

Xbox Live Chill-out Night - The Night for less competitive gamers. Try *World Champ Snooker*. www.xbox.com/en-GB/live/calendar/default.htm

MON 04 OCTOBER 2004

Xbox Live Race Night - The night for *Project Gotham Racing 2*. www.xbox.com/en-GB/live/calendar/default.htm

TUES 05 OCTOBER 2004

WEDS 06 OCTOBER 2004

Xbox Live Sports Night - the night to play *FIFA Football 2005*. www.xbox.com/en-GB/live/calendar/default.htm

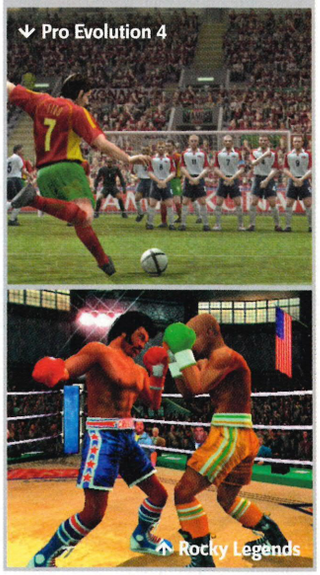
THURS 07 OCTOBER 2004

OXM35 on sale with *OutRun 2* Xbox Live-enabled demo! www.officialxboxmagazine.co.uk

Coming Soon

Better start saving for these...

GAME	GAME TYPE	RELEASED
Area 51	Shooter	2005
Backyard Wrestling 2	Wrestling	10/04
Battlefield: Modern Combat	Action	Late 05
Black 9	Action	TBA
Blinx 2	Adventure	Spring /05
Conflict: Vietnam	Squad shooter	09/04
Conker: Live & Reloaded	Action	Spring/05
Dead or Alive Ultimate	Beat 'em up	2005
Delta Force: BHD	FPS	2005
Destroy All Humans	Action	11/04
Doom 3	FPS	TBA
ESPN NCAA	Sports	TBA/04
Forza Motorsport	Driving	Spring/05
GoldenEye: Rogue Agent	FPS	Spring/05
Halo 2	Shooter	11/04
Iron Phoenix	Beat 'em up	TBA
Jade Empire	RPG	Spring/05
MechAssault 2	Mech shooter	2005
Midway Arcade Treasures 2	Retro	11/04
Mortal Kombat: Deception	Beat 'em up	11/04
MotoGP 3	Racing	2005
NBA Live 2005	Sports	Spring/05
NHL 2005	Sports	Spring/05
NASCAR 2005	Sports	Spring/05
NFSU 2	Racing	Winter/04
Operation Flashpoint: CWC	Squad shooter	2005
Painkiller	FPS	2005
Phantom Dust	Action shooter	2005
Pool Shark 2	Pool	12/11/04
Pro Evolution Soccer 4	Football	11/04
Rocky Legends	Boxing	08/10/04
Serious Sam 2	Shooter	TBA
Sid Meier's Pirates!	Action	Spring/05
SNK vs. Capcom: SVC Chaos	Beat 'em up	TBA/05
StarCraft: Ghost	Action	Winter/04
Star Wars: Rep. Comm.	FPS	Spring/05
SW KOTOR: The Sith Lords	RPG	Late 2004
Street Fighter: The Anniv. Ed.	Beat 'em up	30/10/04
TimeSplitters Future Perfect	FPS	Spring/05
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon 2	Squad shooter	11/04
Tron 2.0: Killer App	FPS	Autumn/04
Unreal Championship II	Shooter	02/05
Worms Forts Under Siege	Strategy	Winter/04

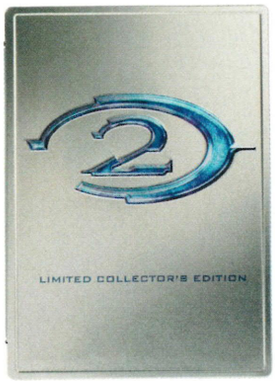


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WIN HALO 2 SPECIAL EDITION!

SKY TeleMedia Ltd is conducting research into the next generation of Video Game Television. It's hoping to make its new show totally interactive and completely live. To make it as exciting as possible, Sky TeleMedia wants you to tell it how the show should be made, what kind of features you'd like to see, how you'd like it presented... even if you want presenters at all!

For a chance to win a Limited *Halo 2* Special Edition, email your suggestions - with your name and address - to skytelemedia@projectxbox.com

All the entries will be entered into a sweepstake and three lucky winners will be picked at random to win a copy of *Halo 2*. The games will be sent out just after the release on 11 November. Only one entry is allowed per household and multiple entries will be disqualified. The closing date is 31 October 2004. Good luck!

Game Star of the Month



Name: David Long
Age: 19
GamerTag: ESXJedi
Home town: Wivenhoe, Essex

A NATURAL gamer, David Long breezed through BritXbox.co.uk's LANfour tournament (see page 112) to become their new Grand Champion. "I love Xbox games - racing titles are at the top of my list. There's nothing more fun than beating seven opponents on a tough track." He certainly demonstrated his prowess at *PGR2*, leaving finalists SquirEll, Outsider and Hicks in his dust trail. And he only practises for five hours a week.

"Winning the BXB event was my greatest gaming achievement to date. I was surprised to get through the qualifying round on *Halo* - I hadn't played it in a good three months. Once *PGR2* was announced as the title for the final, I had a gut feeling that I was destined for victory."

Dave anticipates leading his clan Forsaken Angels (FKA) and its 18 members to fame on the UK scene. "We're not overly serious and just enjoy getting on Live and competing with fellow British clans, but we're undefeated on *Ghost Recon: Island Thunder* and *RTCW* Elimination."

Challenges

RALLISPORT CHALLENGE 2 TOURNAMENT

An Xbox Live Challenge
The Challenge: Fastest time on Australia SS1/ Cooper Hill 1 using the Honda Accent Evo 3.

GAMERTAG	NATIONALITY	TIME
Pianzo	Italy	01:44.095
Shao Wu	Finland	01:44.117
Freefaller_UK	UK	01:44.303
M1CROLORD	Spain	01:44.554
Stranius	Finland	01:44.894
SHIN FAYA SAN	France	01:45.750
Marmite_UK	UK	01:46.194
Sonic H	UK	01:46.582
Bab69fr	France	01:46.791
Tigrecito	Norway	01:47.255

Not a bad showing from the UK massive in Microsoft's international Xbox Live challenge. The top five gamers were incredibly close with only a fraction of a second between them. The lucky winner, Pianzo, wins two tickets to the LG Super Racing Weekend in Belgium.

LAST MAN STANDING RAINBOW SIX 3 TOURNAMENT

An Xbox Live Challenge
The Challenge: Be the last man standing in Survival mode.

POSITION	GAMERTAG	REAL NAME
1	SAS Quickshot	Rob McCarthy
2	OSK Nuclear	Luke Jackson
3	Elite Lucky	Matthew Annette
4	Daztroyer	Mr D Way
5	Eagle Star	Michael Duffy
6	xx Infa Redd xx	Daniel Lee
7	OSK ColdWar	Matthew Rampton
8	Chikkin Dippa	Daniel Bernett
9	Sub UK	Eric Park
10	Mr Rep	Craig Gibson

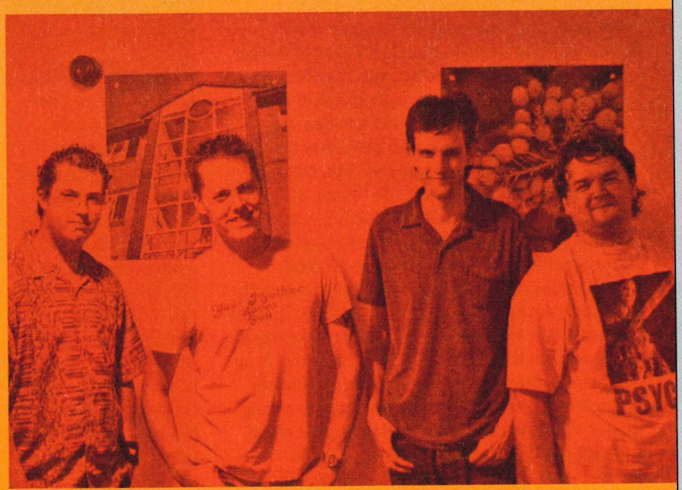
More than 400 players competed in thelastmanstanding.co.uk's *Rainbow Six 3* competition. Three hundred and ninety-nine players down, SAS Quickshot, aka Rob McCarthy, survived all three rounds unscathed to take away a games bundle worth £200 and four tickets to Game Stars Live. Thanks to www.xequted.com

Clans reunited How a team of misfits conquered all

THIS MONTH'S top clan is unusual, as it only existed for one day. Having met up at BritXbox.co.uk's LANfour event (see page 112), gamers Adam 'Smudge' Morris, Pete 'Mr Psycho' Egginton, Michael 'Goblinzrule' Clifford and Philip 'Sephiroth' Ramsbottom formed the impromtu team SSDD. They're all members of different UK clans, notably TTK, Khaos Dreamers and TTP.

SSDD gelled during the opening heats. Their monstrous individual *Halo* skills were multiplied as they stuck together in the Hang 'Em High showdown. They proved just as unstoppable at *DOA3* in Tag Attack. Their semi-final clash was one of the highlights of the entire competition.

It was back to *Halo* in the final, a head-to-head Blood Gulch rally against reigning champs FKA (Forsaken Angels). It went down to the wire, a 24 to 25 point victory for the new challengers. Everyone in the clan took home massive games bundles and a year's subscription to *OXM*. Maybe they should get together more often...



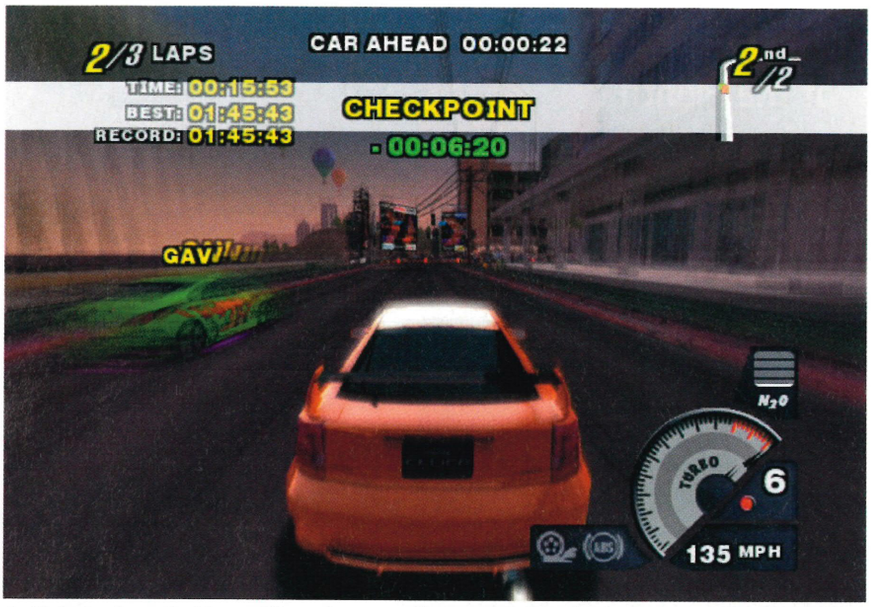
↑ **The fatal foursome at the end of a hard day's fragging.**

BT www.bt.com/xboxlive XBOX COMPATIBLE

NEXT MONTH: WE'LL HAVE FULL COVERAGE OF THE WINNING TEAMS FROM THE ELITE GAMING CHAMPIONSHIPS AND AN INTERVIEW WITH SAS QUICKSHOT, CHAMPION OF THE LAST MAN STANDING COMPETITION.

LiveReviews

We take another look at last month's review games and rate their performance on Xbox Live



↑ It's just as important to use Nitrous boosts on Live, so save them for the most appropriate moments.

Juiced

Turn hotties' heads online with this slick street smoker

✕ Reviewed: Issue 33	✕ Score: 8.0
✕ Players: 1; 2-4 Split	✕ Live: 2-6 players
✕ Players: 2-6 S.Link	

IF YOU'RE A REGULAR reader of the mag you'll know how much we lamented the loss of the ace *Lamborghini* to development heaven with the demise of Rage. Rising like a modded phoenix from the smouldering rubber ashes of the game, *Juiced* (Issue 33, 8.0) lived up to expectations and left its squealing skidmarks all over Xbox.

After the video opener (that has to be seen to be believed), waste no time in creating your crew and building up those mad skillz out on the tarmac. Once you feel man enough, take it to the virtual streets and make the Live community kiss your grits.

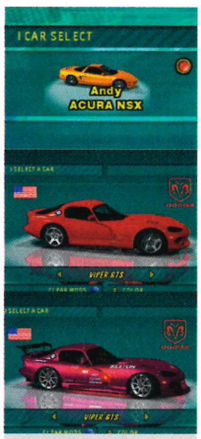
Juiced has full Live racing for up to six players, over all the tracks from the single-player game. The gameplay is just as fast and fluid as it is offline, but without the annoyingly aggressive enemy AI. Hitting that Nitrous boost at precisely the right time is just as vital and adds more depth and strategy to each race than the average street-smoking sim.

The team-based racing element of the offline game, where rival crews race three on three and it's the points total rather than individual placing that matters, returns with a vengeance. What the Live element really accentuates is the fantastic strategic factor this introduces. Team talk via the headsets is vital, and it's perfectly respectable to talk dirty to your accompanying crew and use innovative manoeuvres to limit your rival's success. And believe us, there really is no other feeling to double team an opponent into the nearest crash barrier on the final straight. Watch your own wheels though, because this is the real world and any damage incurred will stay with you, and cash earned online will have to be spent to repair your little beauty to race condition. It just wouldn't do turning up with scratched Alloys and flickering UV lights, would it?

But we all know that street racing is all about slick skirt-chasers making up for any physical imperfections and insecurities they may have, with ridiculously oversized body part extensions. To their cars we mean, because modding is the only way to get noticed on the street circuit, and Xbox Live is no exception. Festoon your beast with one of literally millions of modding permutations to create a truly unique ride, and then show it off to the rest of the car-customising community. That way, if you become proficient enough your Gamertag will become a secondary identifier, in favour of your notorious Nitrous-fuelled nemesis-maker.



↑ Take a custom car online and people will be kissing your grits in no time.



↑ We're about to host a Live game. There is nothing wrong with the Acura NSX, but we prefer something a bit more flash. The Dodge Viper - now there's a classy car, but everyone has red, don't they? Change the colour, quickly choose a custom option with the Auto-mod button, then get back to the race. Instant rudeness!



↑ Blatantly trying to take other cars out is frowned upon in the Live community, you know.



↑ He's spun that corner, so make your move.

The Verdict

Juiced brings something new to the table with its brazen style and brilliant team tactics. Get used to the handling and this deep racer could go the distance.

4//5

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↑ There's plenty of scope to sneak up on enemies and catch them unawares.

Rainbow Six 3: Black Arrow

Like the Red Arrows, only black. And on foot. With guns

Reviewed: Issue 33	Score: 9.0
Players: 1; 2-16 S.Link	Live: 2-16 players
Content Download	

SPLINTER CELL, Ghost Recon, Rainbow Six 3... whatever Tom Clancy puts his name to turns to gold. But Xbox owners can't complain, because we get all these titles exclusively before anyone else.

While we wait for the third in each of these series to storm our console (check out the world-exclusive review of *Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory* in next month's mag), developer Ubisoft has kindly released an expansion pack for the huge *Rainbow Six 3*. If you're an advocate of Xbox Live, you'll no doubt own, or at least have played, the Rainbow boys' first Xbox outing. As an expansion pack, *Black Arrow* shoots straight along the same flight path as the original, but this is by no means a bad thing.

The single-player game is your familiar squad-based shenanigans, but it's the online aspect that's got us so excited. The original *RS3* Live options were fun but fairly limited, but *Arrow* has taken note of this and should be awarded a medal for its efforts. Tons of game modes are now at players' fingertips, for either team-based or individual action.

Sharpshooter (Team Deathmatch, for all intents and purposes) and Terrorist Hunt (co-operatively eliminate all enemies in various maps from single-player) return, and are as exciting as ever. You must once again use the Communicators to co-ordinate attacks, and backing up your team-mates is the only way to survive. But it's the spanking new features like Retrieval (Capture the Flag) and Team Conquest (King of the Hill) that elevates *Arrow* to top of the online shooters tree. Lacking from the first game, they introduce a whole new strategy element to the frantic action, and top level design means frequent ambush points prevent any mad grab and dashing.

To complement this sneaky style of playing the game, *Arrow* is the first game to incorporate the new Xbox Live 3.0 features. Clan-based stats and options, instant voice messaging and improved leaderboards all add to the immersive experience. When coupled with the atmospheric lighting and sound, it'll only be a matter of time before you're kicking every door down in the house and checking corners, before yelling "Clear!" over your shoulder.

We love *Arrow*. Just as the appeal of the original was starting fade, along comes a newer, improved model which, being the shallow and selfish individuals we are, we'd trade in without a second's hesitation. Certain to dominate Xbox Live for a few months (at least until a certain little game arrives on 11 November), this should more than satisfy the online gun-toting troupe. Superb.



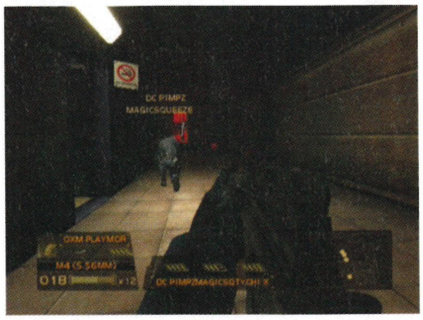
↑ Co-op Terrorist returns, and is just as tense as before.



↑ A great new feature of *Black Arrow* is the addition of pre-game private lobbies. Here, each team can talk tactics and decide the best options for the upcoming match. We decided to split up at the start into two smaller groups and outflank 'em! They won't know what's hit 'em!



↑ Sharpshooter incorporates loads of great new maps to explore. Or camp. The choice is yours.



↑ Let your online accomplices take the heat.

The Verdict

A significant improvement over the online original, *Black Arrow* hits the bull's-eye of buddy-based blasting. A multiplayer masterpiece.

5//5

RETRIEVAL GAME MODE: FROM WHAT WE PLAYED, IT REQUIRES DIFFERENT TACTICS TO YOUR NORMAL RS3 GAMEPLAY. WE FOUND TWO 'SNATCH' TEAMS OF TWO THE BEST OPTION, WITH THE REMAINDER OF THE TEAM BACKING THEM UP.

BT www.bt.com/xboxlive XBOX COMPATIBLE

Hints&Cheats

This is the only place you need for all your freshest codes and unlockable extras for the latest Xbox titles. You should never be stuck on a game again!

CHEATS IN MOTION

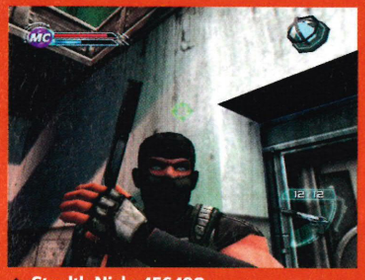
PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY

Issue 33, Score: 8.6

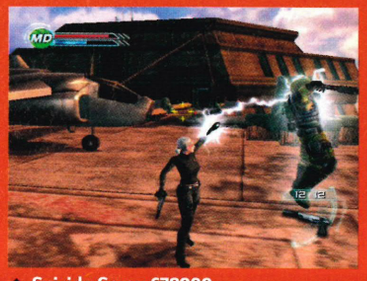
Highlight the Extra Content option at the main menu and press the R trigger, then enter the following codes. Most codes will only work in Replay Mission and Bonus Mission modes.



↑ **No head: 987978**



↑ **Stealth Nick: 456498**



↑ **Suicide Sara: 678999**



↑ **Gnomotron: 456878**

CATWOMAN

Issue 33, Score: 7.8

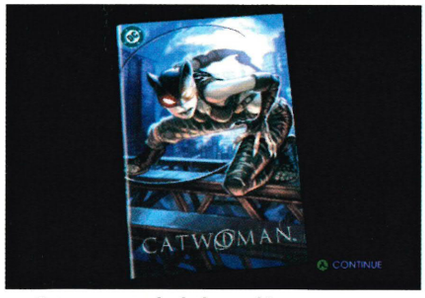
Unlock galleries and comic cover: Enter the vault, enter the combination 1940

PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY

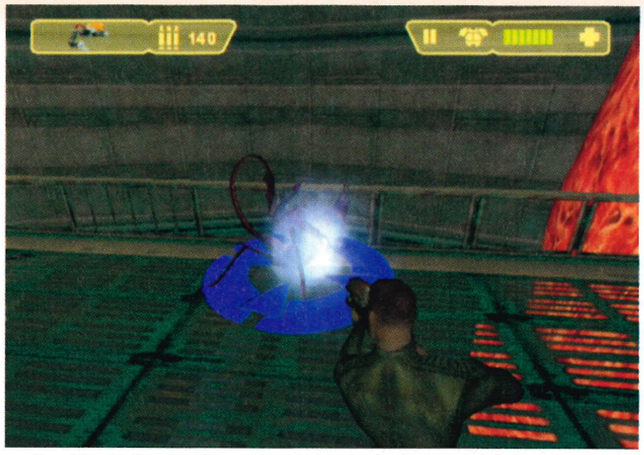
Issue 33, Score: 8.6

Highlight the Extra Content option at the main menu and press the R trigger, then enter the following codes. Most will only work in Replay Mission and Bonus Mission modes.

Take less damage: 548975
Use less PSI power: 456456
All powers: 537893
Unlimited ammo: 978945
Arcade mode: 05051979
Coop mode: 07041979
Survival mode: 7734206
Dark mode: 465486
Training Nick: 564689
Urban Nick: 484646
Wasteland Nick: 975466
Sara: 135488
Psi Sara: 468799
Barrett: 497878
Training Barrett1: 196001
Training Barrett2: 196002
Training Barrett3: 196003
Training Barrett4: 196004
Training Barrett5: 196005
Training Barrett6: 196006
Wei Lu: 231324
Dragon Wei Lu: 978789
Tranquility Wei Lu: 654654
General: 459797
Clown General: 431644
Marlena: 489788
Tonya: 136876
Fetish pyro: 231644
Bikini pyro: 135454
Saranae: 65496873
Jov: 468987
MP1: 321646
MP2: 698799
MP3: 654659
Jack: 698798
Soldier: 365498



↑ ***Catwoman*: unlock the vault's secrets.**



↑ ***Run Like Hell*: upgrade your weapons to the highest level.**

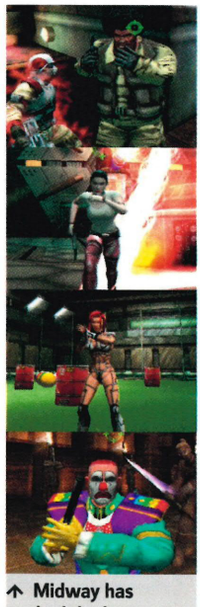
Burned soldier: 454566
Labcoat: 998789
Dock worker: 364654
Komiko: 978798
Scorpion: 546546
Pitfall: 05120926
Panic room: 76635766
Up and over: 020615
Stop lights: 945678
Gasoline: 9442662
Bottomless pit: 154897
TK alley: 090702
Gear gauntlet: 154684
Tip the Buddha: 428584
Psi pool: 565485
Aura pool: 659785
Bouncy Bouncy: 568789

RUN LIKE HELL

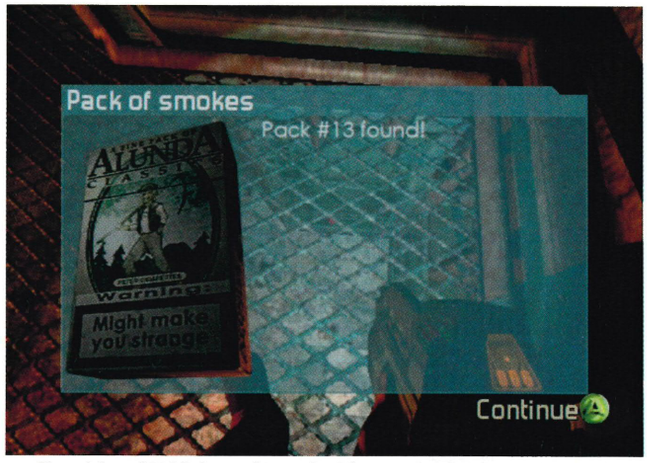
Issue 33, Score: 6.9

Press Back to enter the inventory screen. Then press L + R + click Left thumbstick + click Right thumbstick. A code entry screen will appear.

Baby Nick: B, A, B, Y, Down, Down
Breaking Benjamin video: Left, B, A, L, R, Up
Credits: X, B, A, Up, Down, Y
Refill health: Up, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, A, B
Max assault rifle damage: Left, B, Right, X, Down, Y, Up, A
Max bolt thrower damage: X, Y, B, White, B, Y, X, Black
Max pulse rifle damage: B, Down, Left, A, White, Black, X, Y



↑ **Midway has pushed the boat out with unlockable costumes and bonus levels for *Psi-Ops*.**



↑ ***Chronicles of Riddick*: smoking is bad for you, but not in Butcher Bay!**

Max repeater rifle damage: Left, Y, Right, A, Up, X, Down, B
Max rifle damage: Left Stick, Left Stick, X, Y, B, A, Click Right thumbstick, Click Right thumbstick
Max shotgun damage: A, A, Left Stick, Right Stick, Up, Down, Left, Right

THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK: ESCAPE FROM BUTCHER BAY
Issue 33, Score: 9.0

Unlock loads of goodies by finding the following:

Cigarette list: Space Cowboy in Take-off Platform
Game concept art 01: The Beetle Blend in Mainframe
Game concept art 02: OP in The Pit (Pope Joe)
Game concept art 02: Cone Puffs in Courtyard
Game concept art 03: Karavan in The Pit (Dark Tunnels)
Game concept art 04: Twenty Musketeers in Container Route
Game concept art 05: Carl's Blend in Courtyard
Game concept art 06: Clemens in Tower 17 Base
Game concept art 07: Maestro in Container Route
Game concept art 08: CA Alderholm in Container Route
Game concept art 09: Robot Smokes in Container Route
Game concept art 10: Five Fingers in Couryard
Game concept art 11: Pirate in Feed Ward
Game concept art 12: Yups in Showers
Game concept art 13: Mummy in Abandoned Equipment
Game concept art 14: Count Gunther in Abandoned Equipment
Game concept art 15: Iron Lungs in Feed Ward
Game concept art 16: Swift in Mining Core
Game concept art 17: Mount Noir in The Pit
Game concept art 18: Enfermo in Central Storage
Game concept art 19: Charlie's in Tower 17
Game concept art 20: Yoyall in Tower 17 Base
Game concept art 21: Rolles Rok in Mine Entrance
Game concept art 22: Alunda Classics in Mainframe
Game concept art 23: Space Jockey in Upper Mines
Game concept art 24: Voodoo in Prison Area
Game concept art 25: The Counts in Prison Area
Game concept art 26: Tiny Tims in Work Pass
Game concept art 27: Jimboro in Mining Core
Game concept art 28: Old Timer in Courtyard
Game concept art 29: Noname in Tower 17 Base



↑ ***Chronicles of Riddick*: unlock movie photos and concept art.**

Game concept art 30: Nordqvist in Security Checkpoint
Game concept art 31: Q in Showers
Game concept art 32: Bloss in The Dream
Game concept art 33: Lungbusters in Courtyard
Game concept art 34: Greas in Loading Docks
Game concept art 35: Habibs in Aquila Territory
Game concept art 36: MBryo in Aquila Territory
Game concept art 37: Roulette in Feed Ward
Game concept art 38: Sicher in Mine Entrance
Game concept art 39: Starlife in Tower 17 Base
Movie concept art 01: Gawd in Facility Control
Movie concept art 03: Candy Candy in Take-off Platform
Movie concept art 04: JR Grass in Aquila Territory
Movie concept art 05: Cloud No. 17 in Abandoned Equipment
Movie prop 01, Riddick prototype 3: Gronko's Bar in Guard Quarters
Movie set 01: Dog Smokes in Feed Ward
Movie set 02: Black Death in Feed Ward
Movie set 03: Charlie's CC in Feed Ward
Movie set 04: Red Frog in Work Pass
Movie set 05: Yoshimi in Courtyard
Movie set 06: Dr Filur in Infirmary
Movie set 07: Guards in Guard Quarters
Movie set 08: 68th in Container Route
Movie set 09: Painful in Courtyard
Movie set 10: Addictive M in Cargo Transport
***Chronicles* combo trailer, Riddick prototype 1:** Hogdahl's Finest in The Dream
***Chronicles* movie teaser, Riddick first playable 1:** Sensai in Feed Ward



↑ **Many of the unlockable extras in *Catwoman* demonstrate how to execute her feisty feline moves.**

Classic Cheats

MEDAL OF HONOR: RISING SUN
Issue 24, Score: 5.1

Enter at the code entry screen, then move to the extras menu to activate.

Achilles head: CARDINAL
All replay items: BOXFISH
Bullet shield: WRASSE
Immortality: BANNER
Invisible soldiers: PARROT
Men with hats: DOTTYBACK
Rubber grenades: BETTA
Silver bullet: BATFISH
Unlimited ammo: JAWFISH
Unlock all missions in mission menu: TUSKFISH

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING
Issue 23, Score: 8.5

Pause the game during play, then pull and hold L+R and input the code sequence.

All upgrades: Up, Down, Y, X
Infinite missiles: X, X, Down, B
Invulnerable: X, B, X, Up
Perfect mode: B, Down, Y, A
Restore health: X, X, B, B
Targeting indicator mode: Down, B, Up, X
Play as Faramir: A, A, Y, Y
Play as Merry: A, Down, Down, A
Play as Pippin: Y, B, X, Down



↑ ***MOH: Rising Sun*: silver bullets.**



↑ ***Return of the King*: control Merry.**

Your Opinion

ON A TRIP to Montreal to play *Splinter Cell Chaos Theory*, Ben T went feral. After dashing out into the wilderness to hunt moose, he was captured in a net and deported by the authorities. Last month, we asked you what new Sam Fisher skills you'd like in *Chaos Theory*.

A change of clothing wouldn't go amiss - that black latex isn't doing anything for his figure. Maybe an elegant white suit or at least a shirt and tie so he looks presentable.
Champagne Supernova, from the forum

The ability to fashion makeshit [sic] weapons from rubbish strewn about the levels, MacGyver-style.
Grobmonkey, from the forum

A kind of jump-on-their-shoulders-throw-em-over-and-jump-on-their-heads-and-squash-it attack. Or a kick up the arse with metal toe-capped boots.
Fudge, from the forum

Using the headset, you should be able to distract guards by shouting down a corridor or into distraction devices. [You can - Ben.]
Krakajak, from the forum

Be able to poke them in the eye then give them a wedgie!
The green machine, from the forum

Sam should be able to grab an enemy's gun and then smack them in the face with it!
Boozjoker, from the forum

The ability to dress up as a female and lure the guards into a big spiky pit.
Spadge, from the forum

How about a trip wire or those things that keep wires tied together? Alternately how about a deck of cards so he could amaze them with magic tricks?
Flea008, from the forum

I think Sam should carry a stress ball with him. I bet with that lazy Lambert moaning at him all the time he gets well aggravated.
Beatx500, from the forum

sms | www

NEXT MONTH'S TOPIC: Unless you're new to the mag, you'll have noticed (and hopefully been impressed by) Play:More Live's new look. Every month, more and more people jump on board the Live express train. But what are the best and worst things about Live? Email suggestions to ben.talbot@fxmi.com with 'Your Opinion' as the subject line, or send them to Your Opinion, *Official Xbox Magazine*, 99 Baker Street, London, W1U 6FP. Alternatively, use the *OXM* forum at http://forum.officialxboxmagazine.co.uk or text your suggestions to 0778 148 2669 (standard network rates).

MORE OPINION: MOLLARI FROM THE FORUM WOULD LIKE TO SEE SAM FISHER DO A CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK-STYLE DISARM ON ENEMIES.

YourShout

Reader events and reviews

The Sexiest Man in Wales visits BritXbox LANfour



RECENTLY, BEN T'S gaming skills have been getting a little rusty. So what better way to get his groove back than to hook up with some of the UK's top gamers on the Play: More Summer Tour?

To kick off this gaming odyssey, we were ecstatic to be invited to BritXbox's LANfour event. BXB is a website and Xbox community, running several LAN parties a year. This was the biggest and best yet, with gamers from all over the nation travelling to Loughborough to test their skills.

A massive range of games was on offer, from classic titles like *Fusion Frenzy* and *Halo* to newer sensations including *Mashed*. Empire's crazy racer was one of the most popular games of the event, especially with Ben T who'd been practising for weeks in advance. While *Mashed* gave us laughs, the pure drama was provided by 16-player *Halo* battles. You could cut the tension with a plasma sword as eight clans tussled for the BXB team championship. Some of the skill on show was exceptional, particularly from finalists FKA1 and new champions DDSS (see page 107). Ben was also particularly impressed by MCTim's lightning-footed mastery of *Dancing Stage Unleashed*.

The single-player championship was claimed by this month's Game Star Dave 'ESXJedi' Long (see page 107) who dominated the *PGR2* final. 'Gamer of the Day' was awarded to Trevor 'Outsider' Crooks, who went against his own nickname by being the friendliest and most sportsmanlike player. More than £1,000 worth of prizes were given out in total.

BXB editor and LAN manager Mike Rossell cemented his reputation as an excellent host and organiser. He said, "I'd like to thank everyone who supported the event - you make it what it is. The next event will be taking place in November, so keep your eyes on www.britxbox.co.uk over the next few weeks for more details."

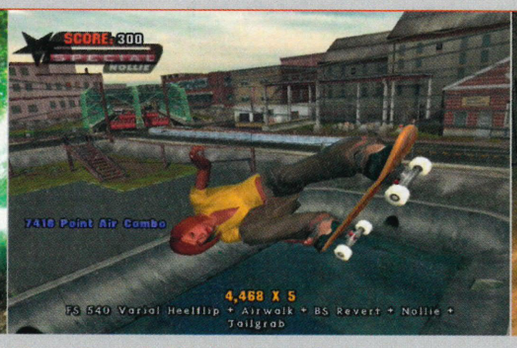
We had a great time at LANfour and can really recommend BXB's events. Next month, Ben T visits the Elite Gaming Championships 2004 in London.

IF YOU ARE running a major Xbox event or competition, let us know about it! Write to Your Shout, *Official Xbox Magazine*, 99 Baker Street, W1U 6FP.

YourReviews

Have you ever wanted to be a games reviewer? Well, Play:More is here to put your reviews in print! Send your reviews - but no longer than 160 words, please - to Your Shout, *Official Xbox Magazine*, 99 Baker Street, W1U 6FP. The star review we publish each month will win a mystery prize. What are you waiting for?







STAR REVIEW
Sam wins *Splinter Cell* goodies

Panzer Dragoon Orta

By Michael McQuillan, Staffs

IF YOU THINK Xbox does not have enough variety of games, check out Sega's gem, *Panzer Dragoon Orta*. You fly around a fictional medieval world, shooting at creatures from the back of a dragon. The game is not very complex and does get a bit samey, but there is rarely a dull moment because there are so many things to shoot at. The environments are very varied but a little cartoonish. The game is based around the pattern of completing a level and then beating a boss. Want to add some variety to your games collection? Get this.

Score 8.2 / 10

Tony Hawk's Underground

By Adam Costello, Leicester

RECENT *HAWK* games have had features that we've already seen, so is another one a waste of dosh? No! Tony's return features an intricate career mode, true to the life of an urban skater. The journey to become a pro as you gain sponsors and respect comes with many challenges - some new, some old - but enough originality to entertain. Customisation is greatly improved too; Create-A-Trick is impressive and the ability to create levels with goals is great. Multiplayer is better but there's no Live play. *THUG* adds new flavour to the series.

Score: 8.9 / 10

Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow

By Sam Parsons, Bath

SAM FISHER is back: twice as silent and three times as lethal. The controls are easier to understand and the graphics make you drool. Sam's new athletic moves and gadgets let you play how you want to. Don't think it'll be damn near impossible just to complete the tutorial either; the difficulty is balanced just right. It is frustrating at times, but the lush jungles and sneaking into a high-security compound make up for it. It's Live, but multiplayer doesn't work for this Clancy title. Single-player is awesome though - it's the best stealth game ever.

Score: 9.4 / 10

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10-minute Masterclass

10 cool things to do in Psi-Ops before you die!

PSI-OPS: The Mindgate Conspiracy (Issue 33, 8.6) is one of those rare games where you can spend almost as much time messing about as you do completing the missions. We completed it ages ago, but keep going back to find inventive new ways to torture those poor, unsuspecting meat puppets. After all, with all those great psychic powers at your disposal, it'd be a shame to waste them, wouldn't it? If you don't own the full game, why not try some of these tricks out on our exclusive trial version that came bundled with Game Discs 32 and 33.



GAS A MEAT PUPPET TO DEATH
The Implant Ops mission features several horrific execution chambers. Instead of stumbling into them, raise the alarm and wait for some evil puppets to show up. You can then TK-throw one of them into the chamber and switch on the gas.



REACH THE BOTTOM OF THE SILO ALIVE
TK-surf on a box over the Implant Ops silo and release L to drop. Just before you hit the ground, re-aim your targeting reticule over the box and press L again. You'll surf again and won't break your legs.



CRUSH PUPPETS UNDER THE ELEVATOR
At the bottom of the silo, TK-lift a few corpses and place them under the lift platform. Press the button and the lift will descend, squishing anything under it. Do this with living meat puppets too!



BLOCK LEONOV'S PUPPET GENERATORS
When battling the boss Jon Leonov, try blocking a few of the generators. If you plan ahead and move boxes into the room before the boss battle starts, you can actually block all of them.



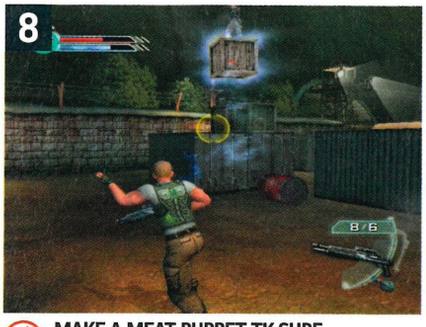
CATCH A FALLING SCIENTIST
In the Implant Ops mission, you'll have to escape via the elevator. Press the button and a scientist will fall from the sky. Catch him with TK-lift. He's already dead - maybe he had a heart attack.



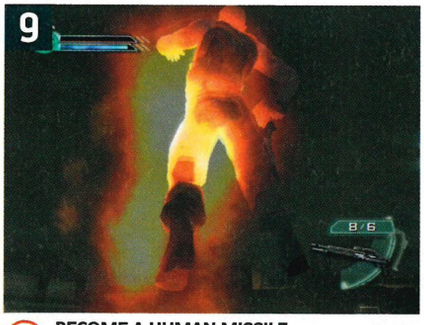
FIND SECRET IMPLANT OPS LANDING PAD
At the top of the silo, you're meant to jump through the elevator doorway. Find something to TK-surf on and you can float from the door to reach a secret landing pad. You'll stop at an invisible wall.



LOOK INSIDE EDGAR BARRETT'S VAULT
During the Factory Office mission's cutscene you get a glimpse of the orb in Barrett's vault. Once the sequence has ended, use Remote View to take a longer look behind the metal door. Loads of gold!



MAKE A MEAT PUPPET TK-SURF
Why should you get to surf while the puppets do the footwork? TK-lift a puppet on top of any crate or large object. Immediately re-aim your crosshair over the object before he has a chance to jump off.



BECOME A HUMAN MISSILE
Try TK-surfing on an explosive object, like a propane cylinder. If you don't get shot down first, fly over a group of meat puppets and release L. You'll drop on them, killing everyone (yourself included).

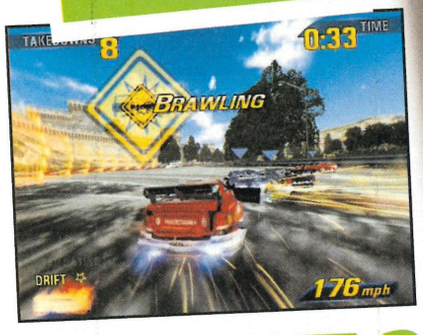


SEND A PUPPET ON A TRAIN RIDE TO HELL
On the Assembling the Pieces mission, the cargo train has space for a passenger. TK-lift a shock troop into position. Immediately activate the signal point and he won't have time to jump off! Class.

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ISSUE 32 ON SALE NOW!

Masterclass: Sudeki

After you've read this comprehensive masterclass, Siege Ogres and Arconite Sorcerers will quake with fear at the sight of you. Defeat all the bosses and find all the orbs and legendary weapons!

CENTURIES AGO, a war between gods split the world of Sudeki, and everyone in it, into two realms of Light and Shadow. A princess, a soldier, a scientist and a feral warrior are selected by the gods to set things right. Give them the help they need with *OXM*'s exclusive guide.

Illumina Castle

Use the swordplay demonstration to get acquainted with the combo system, particularly blocking and dodging.

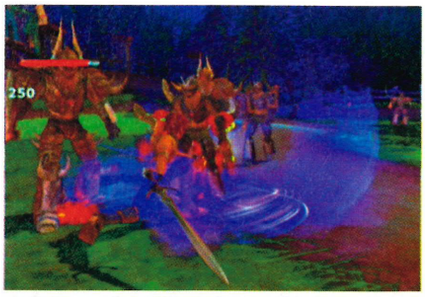
Afterwards, enter town and go to Kamo's. When you come out with your new map, you will be given your first mission. Head out via the Castle Checkpoint.

King's Road

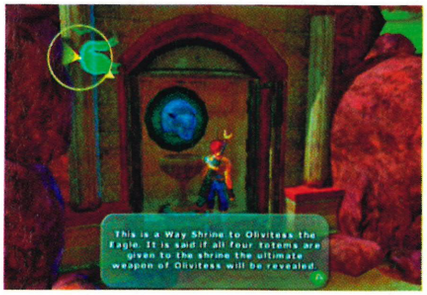
Dispatch the Aklorian raiders as best you can. If you get outnumbered, hit the B button to push them back, or use Tal's Shin Splitter. Past the Molan Farm, the road will be blocked by some crates – push them out of the way.

On Brightwater Beach, victory over the Grotesque will reward you with the Mojo sword. Equip it, save, and go up to the New Brightwater tunnel entrance to face your first boss: the Siege Ogre. It'll recklessly pursue you, only attacking when you stop moving; bait it into swinging, then give it two quick hits. When its shield breaks, it'll start using a gas attack to Poison you; obviously avoid that at all costs.

Victory earns you the first Spirit Strike and the Shadow Armour. After the movie, go down the path to New Brightwater and visit Yumi's house. You'll need to go meet Ailish outside the Lighthouse. Together, return to the Castle.



↑ **Tal's excellent Shin Splitter will help to thin out the advancing crowds.**



↑ **Each character can offer Totems at their patron deity's shrine. This is a shrine to Olivitess.**



↑ **Bat Fang and Spirit Bite runes are both great choices to keep your strength up.**

Illumina Castle

You're in Tal's room. Go to the Training Grounds, then visit the queen. When all's said and done, you're in control of Ailish.

To get to Shadani-Mo, head back along the King's Road to the clearing where you fought the Grotesque. Now you can cross the bridge and go through Woluf Valley to Shadani-Mo. In said valley, defeat a pack of Wolufs to receive Ailish's first Spirit Strike and Witch's Armour.

Shadani-Mo

Replenish SP by smelling the incense outside one of the tents. To reach the temple, you must speak with the chieftain and get a Hunting Spear. Once you have it, the guard on the temple path will let you pass.

Temple of Mo

After your first encounter with a pack of spiders, have Ailish use her Dispel ability to reveal the invisible statue. Switch to Tal, and push each brazier onto the correspondingly coloured floor tile. This will unlock the blue door.

Heal up in the Fountain Room, then proceed to the next chamber. Defeat the spiders, then use the spiral ramp to travel up. Dispel the wall to reveal three coloured torches, each of which has Incense underneath it. To unlock the two gates across the bridge, use the coloured incense to turn the white fire first green, then purple. Go through the gate with the purple torches, and you'll switch over to Buki and Elco.

To open the locked yellow door, use Buki's claws to scale the walls and reach its switch. The next two rooms contain pitched melees. When you



↑ **Ailish's Celestial Circle is her only worthwhile attack spell but is great against groups.**



↑ **Take big lungfuls of incense to fully restore SP.**

WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY

When you activate a skill or Spirit Strike, your character enters an invulnerability window that lasts until the end of the move. If you pick the right moment to use a spell such as Celestial Circle, you can completely ignore an enemy's attack and instantly counter.

BALANCING ACT

When levelling up Tal, keep in mind that he will be on his own for two important boss battles, including the finale against Talos. Iron Warrior is invaluable, and Blade Dance is his strongest offensive option. Keep his HP and Power high, but don't neglect his SP.

reach the area that Tal and Ailish started in, use the yellow crystal to charge up Elco's rocket pack. Fly over to the ring on the other side of the room to unlock the red door.

Through that, dispatch a roomful of Light Spawn to receive a new set of claws for Buki. In the next room, you'll need to get both characters across the broken floor to the other side of the balcony. Elco can just fly there, while Buki will have to climb along the mossy wall. Stand both characters on the two symbols on the floor.

Meanwhile, as Tal and Ailish, you're standing outside the Long Hallway, where another batch of tough Light Spawn are lying in wait. After the battle, use Dispel on the statues, then pull them onto the floor tiles as Tal. This will unlock the next door, leading to the Dragon Chamber.

At the bottom of the ramp, push the idols so that each one has a glowing diadem pointed at the centre of the room. This will unlock the last door, which leads to a boss fight.

Queen Ghara cannot be hurt under ordinary circumstances. Your best option is to dodge her venom bolts, then wait in front of one of the large stone blocks. When she charges, duck out of the way and she'll clout herself on the wall. Lay in a few combos while she's dazed, then rinse and repeat as necessary.

Realm of Shadows

The anthropomorph guardians of the Shadow Realm are pretty serious opponents. Be very careful as you progress, and keep Ailish's SP up so she can heal with Witch's Kiss.

Follow the path forward until you reach a grassy forest clearing. Use its side path to reach Hexam's house. He will tell you what to do next. He'll also let you rest here, so abuse his hospitality. Make sure Tal has learned Iron Warrior before you continue your journey.

The sage will open the next gate for you, allowing you to reach the Tomb of Farex Lore. This is a hectic melee, made even more difficult by Farex's habit of constantly summoning more soldiers to back him up. The fight will only end



↑ **Pick up a Ghost Orb, and the spectres' attacks will heal your lead character.**

when you kill Farex himself. Ailish's Celestial Circle spell is the safest way to damage him, short of using a Spirit Strike.

On the other side of the gate, switch to Buki and scale the wall. At the end of the path, you'll find the Navigation Stone, her Spirit Strike, and a new suit of armour (nice butt). Return to the point where you entered the Realm of Shadows; along the way, you'll meet the Ferryman, who'll give you weapons in exchange for Spirit Orbs. Buki and Ailish's weapons are particularly good, so trade in at least 50 orbs. Don't bother getting 100, though, as Pitt's sword is crap.

New Brightwater

You are now back outside the Lighthouse. Talk to the fisherman behind the dockhouse. As Buki, climb down the ledge near the Blacksmith to find the fisherman's Oars, then trade them to him for a boat.

Illumina Castle

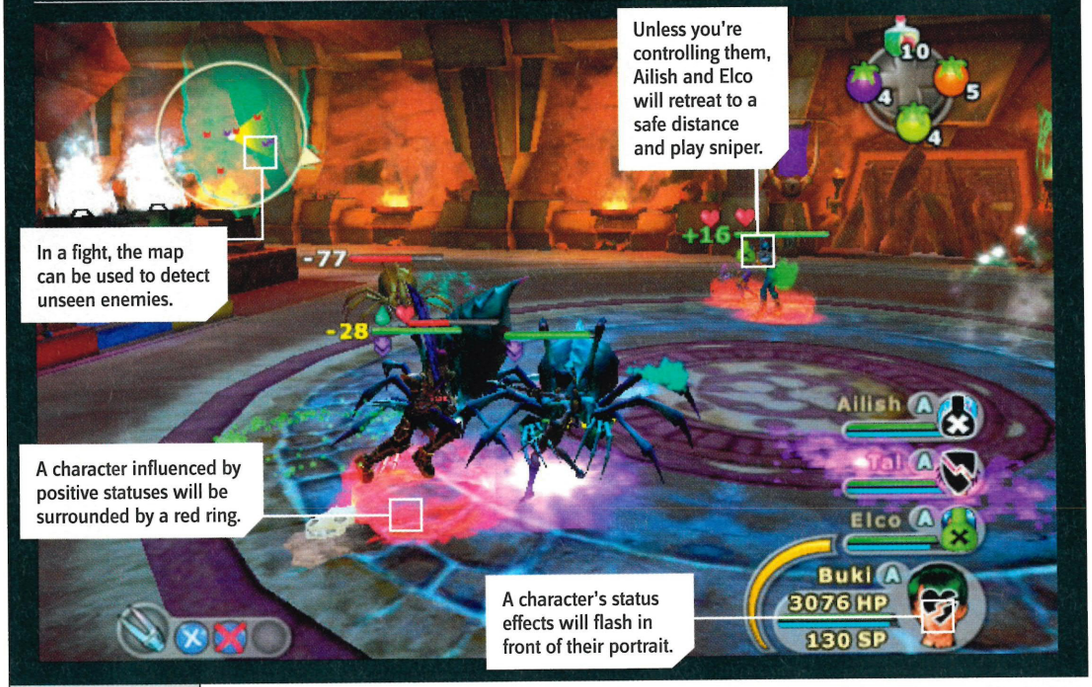
Talk to the technician inside the Castle's Machine Room, then visit the queen. Tal and Elco will leave the group, leaving you with the No-Trousers Squad of Ailish and Buki. To get to Transentia Road, return to Illumina Countryside. At this point, there is only one gate you haven't used yet.

Transentia Road

You'll run into some difficult battles on the way to Rivet Point, as well as Tetsu, who'll give Ailish her Seraphic Armour and final Spirit Strike. Use Ailish's Dispel ability to reveal the first of two switches, then send Buki climbing down the cliff face to find the second. This will raise the bridge. Cross it and talk to the robot to get to Transentia.

You'll switch perspective, to Tal and Elco. Go to Transentia via the same route the girls took. When you're in the city proper, use Elco's rocket pack to help fix the elevator, then take it up and into the city. There's a second lift here, which you should take to the University. Enter the building, and climb the stairs until you see a movie.

COMBAT SCENE A lesson in squashing bugs



AILISH'S ADVANCEMENT

Concentrate on raising Ailish's Essence and SP, while using Orbs of Vigor to increase her HP. Celestial Circle is the only worthwhile attack spell, and Gaze of the Wind helps in pitched melees. Witch's Kiss is your best way to heal the group.



↑ **Climb down at this point to find the Oars.**



↑ **Batholith staff: like a two-shot rocket launcher.**



↑ **Elco's Plasmatic is useful early in the game.**



↑ **Check the Research Centre desk for a clue.**

Transentia Research Centre

Run forward and take the lift down. The enemies in here are tough, but nothing you can't handle. Ignore the orbs, as they'll self-destruct once all the robots on the ground have been destroyed.

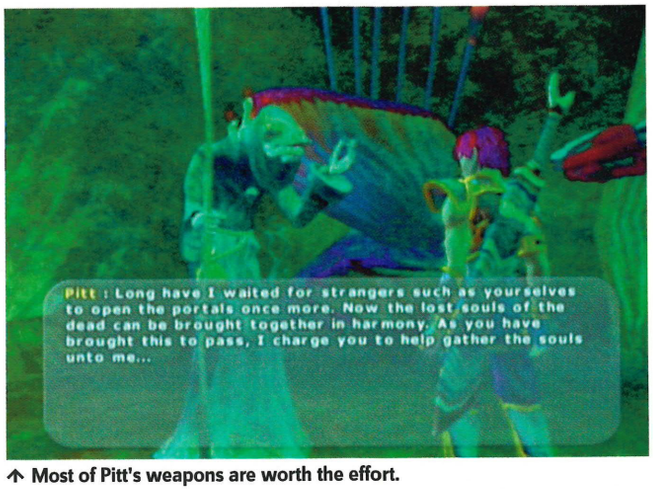
Win the first bout to unlock a nearby door. Open it and enter the office. Use Ailish's Dispel to reveal a secret room behind the desk, with four switches on the walls. Arrange the switches like so:

1: Down
2: Up
3: Down
4: Up

This will open the first vault door. Now rearrange the switches:

1: Up
2: Down
3: Up
4: Up

Retrieve the Master Keycard. This opens the second door out in the main chamber, which leads to the Computer Room. Defeat its guards, then at »



↑ **Most of Pitt's weapons are worth the effort.**

SPENDTHRIFT: LIKE KOTOR, MONEY IN SUDEKI DOESN'T EXACTLY GROW ON TREES. SAVE IT AND RELY ON CRATES, BARRELS AND ITEMS DROPS FOR YOUR CURATIVE ITEMS.

Sidequests

Eagle Totems

1: Use Ailish's Dispel ability in the Smugglers' Shack next to Brightwater Beach.
2: A well in Parham County has yellow fairies flitting about one side. As Ailish, Dispel the side of the well and climb down its side.
3: To open the Temple of Mo's Treasure Room turn the fire from the incense puzzle green.
4: Speak to Lupa in Transentia's Observatory. Bring her 21 chunks of Omnium (dropped by Research Centre robots) for the Power Plant Key. Outside, use Buki to climb the wall, enter the Plant and find the Eagle Totem.

Wolf Totems

1: In Illumina Castle's South Courtyard is a locked door. The switch that opens it is on the battlements above you, but you'll only have ten seconds to get from the switch to the door before it shuts. The Totem's inside.
2: After you meet Ailish in New Brightwater, speak to at least five townspeople. Get their items from the shipwreck, which wash up two or three at a time on Brightwater Beach. Enter Smuggler's Shack for new crates. The fifth townsperson gives you the Wolf Totem.
3: Move the crates at the base of the elevator shaft in Transentia before fixing the elevator.
4: Climb the ladder and defeat the Hunter-Killer robot on Level 3 of Transentia.

Cat Totems

1: Kirklin-Ra, a brat outside the Blacksmith's in New Brightwater, wants Brightwater Pearls. Give him a total of 21 to get the key to his tent, up in the anthropomorphs' campsite, where you'll find the Totem.
2: When Buki and Ailish reach Transentia, Buki climbs down a wall to lower the bridge. From the end of that ledge, climb down a second wall to find a secret treasure room.
3: Speak to Malik in Shadani-Mo to get permission to enter the Trials of Mo. The entrance is to your left as you leave Shadani-Mo, behind a wall you must Dispel. Only Buki can enter the Trials (five increasingly difficult battles) and earn the Cat Totem.
4: The Spirit Canyon's on a road between the Illumina Countryside and Shadani-Mo, after the Path of Totems. Cross the stone bridge; on the left is a mossy wall Buki can climb. The Totem is in the chest on the other side.

Dragon Totems

1: Dispel the wall in the Temple of Mo's Fountain Room. Elco can rocket over the gap.
2: By the Rusty Cog Tavern in Transentia, talk to a robot named Heart. Her Heart Circuit will be dropped by a robot in the Mines in the Research Centre after you defeat Krenn.
3: On the Transentia Road, across the path from the trader near Transentia, look for a ladder. Send Elco down it to find a crystal. Charge up his rocket pack then fly across the canyon to hit the switch on the other side. Immediately take off again and go grab the contents of the chest before the door shuts.
4: Take the airship to Transentia. Climb the ladder inside the city entrance. Charge Elco's rocket pack, jet across the gap, climb the ladder and jet to the chest on the otherwise-unreachable platform above the first ladder.



↑ If you're a bit overwhelmed, quickly hit B to knock your foes back.

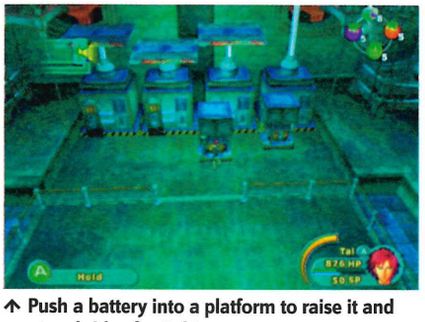
» Elco's "request," take the side door to the main lift. Use Buki's claws to climb along the side wall and turn on the lift, then hit the green button twice.

On the lowest floor, run down the hall until you reach the Mines. Break a bunch of robots to get the raw minerals you need and, on your way back, a scene will play. Take the lift up a floor, where you will find the door to the Processing Room is now unlocked.

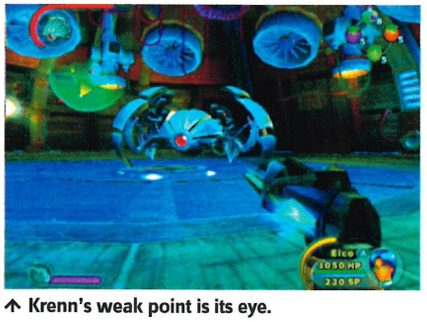
Destroy the robots in the Processing Room to receive Buki's Coelacanth Scale and a second Spirit Strike. To get back out, use Tal to shove the Battery away from the section of wall near the door that can be climbed, then send Buki up. To get her across the room, you must use Tal to arrange the batteries near the platforms, thus creating a bridge for Buki. When she makes it to the other side, she'll drop down on her own.

Take the minerals to Elco. Now he has a short time limit in which to fly up to two platforms above the Computer Room and hit two switches. Once he does, he'll have to return to the ground floor, and face the mad computer Krenn... alone.

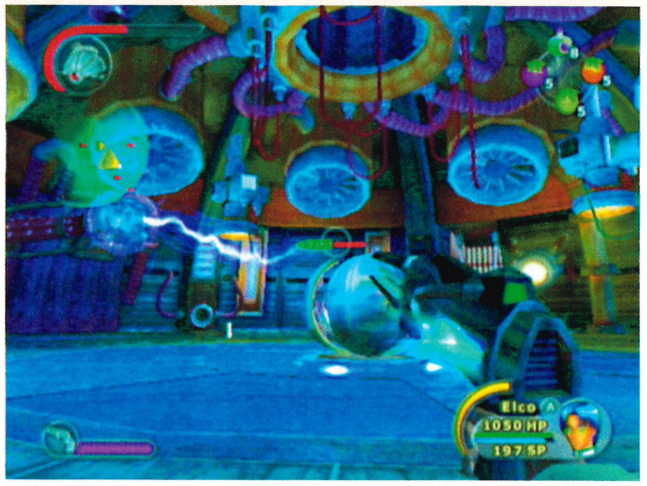
Keep using Nano-Enhancement to raise Elco's damage, and arm yourself with his Ion Fluxinator. The only point on Krenn's body that can be injured is its eye, which also tends to fire massive lasers at you. Stay one step ahead of it. When it balls up and starts regenerating health, dodge the Suicide Drones and destroy the massive robot arm that's feeding it power. You'll be fine as long as you can stay out of the way of the laser.



↑ Push a battery into a platform to raise it and create a bridge for Buki.



↑ Krenn's weak point is its eye.



↑ Destroy the arm that's feeding Krenn health or this fight will never end!

BUKI'S ADVANCEMENT
Buki doesn't have Tal's HP, so use Bat Fang to help keep her strength up. For skills, Path of the Warrior and her summoned Wolf will provide everything she needs.

ELCO'S ADVANCEMENT
Oddly, Elco can get his best weapon very early on. The Ion Fluxinator does massive damage and penetrates targets; its low fire rate is nearly insignificant. That and Nano-Enhancement are really all you need, so raise his HP and Power.



↑ Plasmatic kills robots dead.

Transentia

With your new crystal, repair the teleporter on the fourth level of Transentia.

Crystal Reef

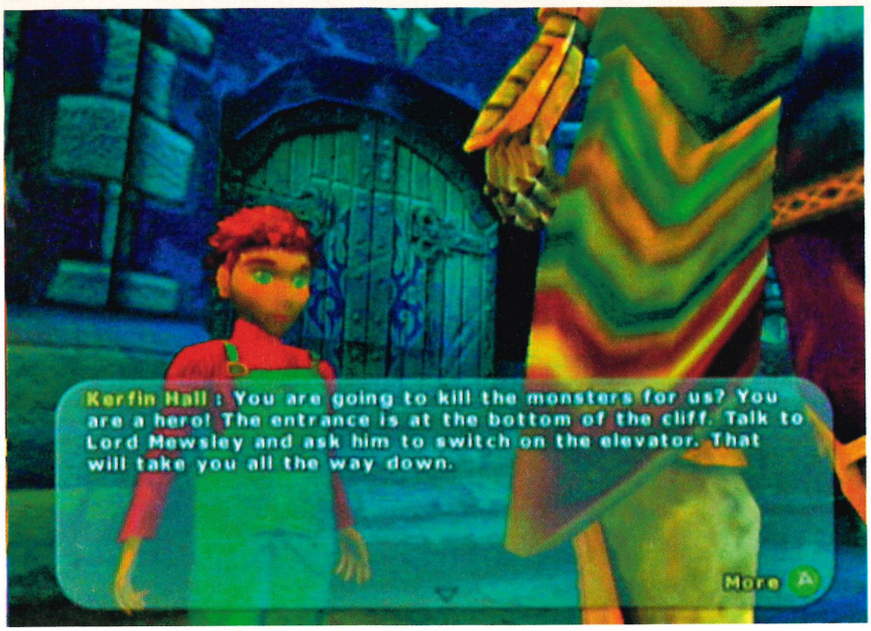
Go to the mansion overlooking the town and speak to Mewsley. To get access to the elevator and thus to be able to progress, you'll have to speak to the priest in front of the church, and Finbar, the fisherman near the pier. Send Tal into the Boathouse and push the crates out of the way so you can get the Holy Symbol. Give that to the priest, and he'll let you talk to the kid in the church. Now you can use Mewsley's lift.

Dead Fish Cave

When you reach the cavern at the end of the corridor, you'll wind up losing Tal and Elco. With Buki and Ailish, defeat the ensuing ambush, then go up the path that surrounds the statue in the centre of the room and stand on the circles on the floor. Next, cross the nearby bridge, go downstairs, and open the recently unlocked door to discover the Endless Stairs.

Don't go upstairs yet. Open the door on to the stairs' left, go down the hall, open a second door, and follow the path to its end. Dispel the invisible object, then ride the platforms to the mossy wall. Scale it with Buki, then hit the switch to reveal another platform. Ride that, and you will find the Shell Key.

Backtrack to the Endless Stairs. Climb all the way up until the path splits, and take a left. You'll find yourself in a large watery room. Climb the wall as Buki, hit the green button, flip the switch, and hit the button again. Switch to Ailish, cross the bones to the next platform, and flip the switch on the wall underneath Buki. Turn around, cross the bridge, and flip the switch ahead of you. Switch back to Buki and hit the green button again. This will raise



↑ **Aw, kids say the darndest things, don't they?**

another bridge for Ailish, letting her claim an Orb of Vigor. Now flip Ailish's switch again and hit Buki's button. Switch back to Ailish, take the newest bridge around to the open shell, and stand on one of the circles. Finally, switch to Buki and follow the side balcony all the way around to the shell. Stand on the other circle to get the Mermaid's Pearl.

Return to the Endless Stairs and go straight. Dispel the invisible bridge, open the door, and you will now find yourself in front of a large green button. Hit the button, and you'll hear a short piece of music. Stepping on one of the nearby tiles reproduces a note in that melody. Use the tiles to play that melody and you will reveal the second Mermaid's Pearl.

Go place the Pearls in the statue in Dead Fish Cave. This will open the seashell. Descend into the depths for a battle with Nassaria.

If you see her tail, she'll come up near it. You can save yourself a lot of damage if you run straight up to her, wait for her to begin to attack, and cast Celestial Circle. Since Ailish is invincible until the end of the move, Nassaria's attacks will pass right through her and she'll eat the spell. Between spells, pelt Nassaria with blasts from the Batholith.

After the battle, you'll be back in control of Elco and Tal. Despite the name of the area they're in – the Maze – it's a relatively straight line. At the end of the road, use Tal's brawn to move a chunk out of the wall, thus returning them to the Dead Fish Cave.

USING ORBS
Use orbs wisely. Ailish could use the extra HP and Power, while Buki tends to be low on SP and Tal could use the Essence.

DON'T STOP MOVING
Stand still, and you will die. Constantly duck and weave to avoid projectiles and teleporting enemies.



↑ **Step into the musical orbs in the correct order to reveal a magical pearl.**





↑ **Interrupt Nassaria's staff swings with spells.**

You can now leave Crystal Reef, and cross Devil's Belch Canyon to this world's 'Illumina Castle': Cyantine Citadel. There's fierce opposition en route, so stay healthy. When you get to the Citadel, use Tal's strength to shove the blocks out of the way, then charge up Elco's rocket pack using the yellow crystal that was behind them. He'll need its full charge to get to the nearby ladder, climb it, and fly across the courtyard to the switch that opens the portcullis, all before its fuel runs out.

Cross the East Bridge for a long series of cutscenes. Afterwards, Elco will receive his first Spirit Strike and a new suit of armour.

Aklorian Stronghold

Your new group consists of Tal, Nico, Alexine and Kazel; the latter three are slightly different, higher-level versions of Buki, Ailish and Tal, right down to their character-specific abilities. None of them have additional weapons or runes though, so you may want to buy them some handy upgrades at the Blacksmith's.

You probably nearly blundered into the Stronghold earlier, in the Canyon. It's a pretty long path, but a relatively straightforward one; you can rest up by taking the tests at Eagle Rock. Also, in front of the Stronghold, there is a portal to the Realm of Shadows, which you can use if you want to backtrack.

In the Stronghold itself, enter the front gate and go upstairs via the side door. Dispatch the guards, and look for an illusion that Alexine can Dispel. This will allow Tal or Kazel to pull the blocks out, and push them into the gaps in the opposite

EQUIP SCREEN It's tool time!



WEAPONS MASTER: ELCO AND AILISH'S WEAPONS ARE OFTEN BETTER THAN THEIR STATS INDICATE. THE BATHOLITH AND ION STABILIZER ARE BOTH MORE POWERFUL THAN THEIR 'ULTIMATE' WEAPONS.



↑ It's Nico! Half the skin tone, twice the cleavage.



↑ The blast shields are proof against all the Behemoth's attacks...



↑ If Tal gets trapped, use Kazel to free him.



↑ If in doubt, use a lot of Enhancement spells.

» wall. Use Nico to scale that wall, cross it, and hit the switch on the other side.

This will open a door that leads to a simple crate puzzle; the key is to remember that both Tal and Kazel can shove the boxes around. Flip this new switch to open the last door on the battlements, behind which is your contact. Use the final switch to open the door to the castle courtyard.

When you get there, you'll see one of the soldiers ringing the bell. To win this fight, you need to either kill all the soldiers at once, or make sure none of them can ring the bell. Otherwise, they can call an infinite number of reinforcements. This is a good chance to earn some XP, but if you're not interested, park Alexine by the bell rope and drop Celestial Circle on anyone who gets close.

The main door in the next courtyard is locked. Go to your left, first, and speak to Carlos in the barracks. Enter the blue door, heal up at the fountain, then open the next door. Kill two ogres, then send Kazel through the gate. You'll need to arrange these crates so you can get to the switch to the right of the stairs, thus dropping the ladder.

Back with the rest of the group, cross the courtyard from the barracks to find the kennel. Kill the Wolufs, then leave via the next door to find the laboratory. You'll need to destroy the glowing doodads on the machines, or they will keep generating ogres.

After the fight, send Tal past the gate. Nico will climb the balcony. Tal's job is to shove the ledges around so she can walk across them and reach the counterweight.

Back out in the courtyard, switch to Alexine and climb the ladder. Dispel the illusion on the gears, thus opening the final door. This leaves Tal alone to fight the Behemoth.

This isn't as hard as it looks, thankfully. Use the blast shields to take cover from the Behemoth's bursts of green flame, then run out and destroy the blue 'eyes' that are powering the Behemoth's containment field. Once they're gone, run in and try to bait the Behemoth to swing its axe at you. It'll miss and get the blade stuck in the floor; this is your chance for a high-damage combo. You only have time for one, though, before you'll have to retreat to the safety of the nearest blast shelter, and thus avoid the Behemoth's powerful explosion attack.

WIN EASILY
Put multiple Essence Drain enchantments on Elco's Ion Destabilizer. Drop Nano-Enhancement at the start of every fight he's in. He'll regain the SP quickly, and you will do amazing amounts of damage.

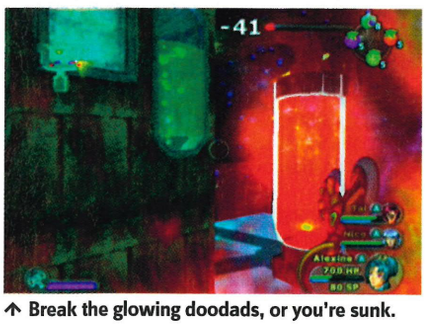
TRADE ROUTES
Give Furs and Skins to the trader near New Brightwater, and save your gems for the trader outside Crystal Reef. You'll make a lot more money than if you sold 'em to Kamo.



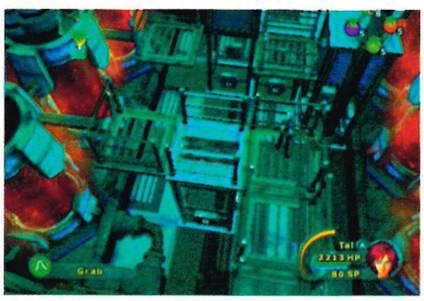
↑ ...even the big one.

Illumina Castle

Return to Cyantine Citadel. As Elco, you'll need to make a relatively meaningless choice. Whichever you pick, Talos will join you to gently shepherd you back to Illumina Castle. When the cutscenes are over, Elco's on his own, with his wife Tilly in tow, and must get her from Illumina to New Brightwater. Fortunately, she has more HP than God, but unfortunately there's what looks like an entire cavalry detachment on the King's Road. Power up the Ion Destabilizer at a Blacksmith's in



↑ Break the glowing doodads, or you're sunk.

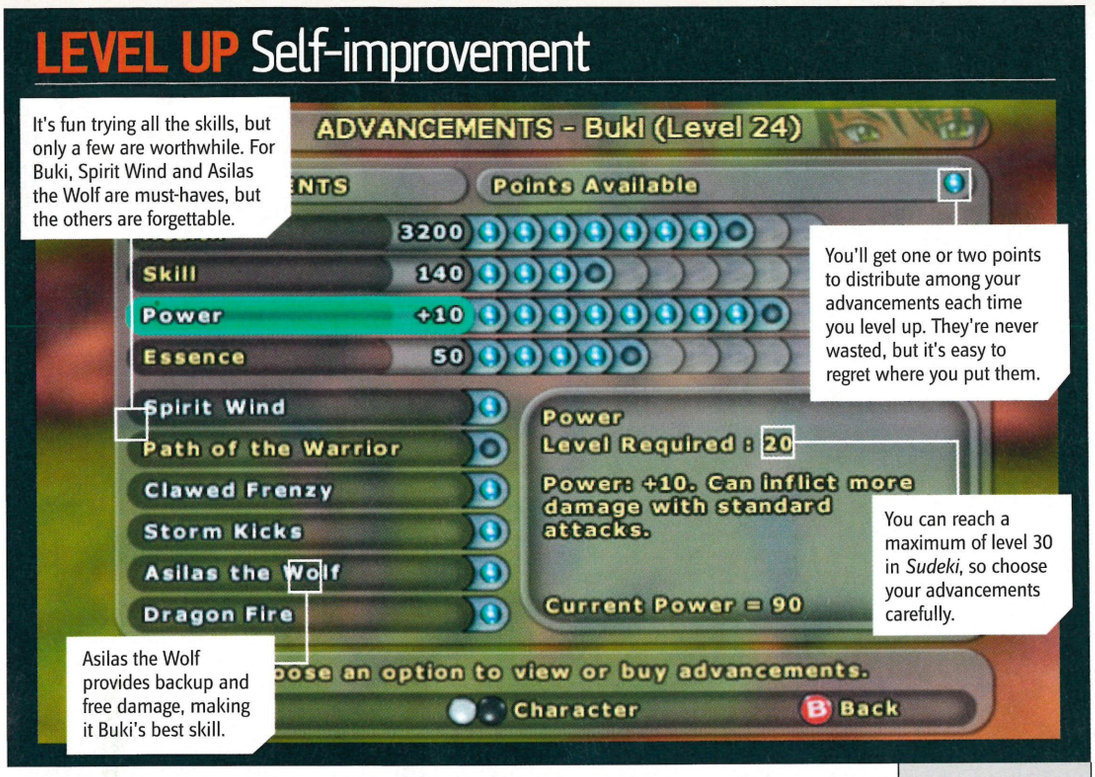


↑ Line up the railings so Nico can pass.



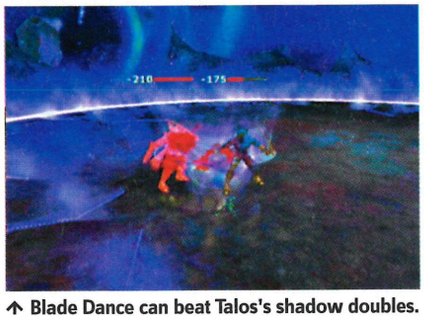
↑ This choice is really irrelevant.

LEVEL UP Self-improvement





↑ Stop at a save point to check Tilly's HP.



↑ Blade Dance can beat Talos's shadow doubles.

SELL HIGH
To fulfill various sidequests, you need 21 chunks of Omnium, five Arconite Skulls, 21 Shadowstones, three Glue-Spider Ducts, and 21 Brightwater Pearls. Don't sell these unless you have some extra.

Illumina Castle, pick your shots carefully, and use items that heal the group to keep Tilly on her feet.

You'll receive Elco's last armour upgrade and Spirit Strike (the strangely effective Cruel Universe) when you reach the farmhouse. Continue on to Brightwater, then use its teleporter to return to Cyantine Citadel.

At this point, the group's back together. Go explore or gather items if you want, because all that's left to do is teleport to the Void and face the final boss...

The Void

Tal is on his own again for the finale. Use attacks like Shin Splitter to interrupt Talos's combo strings, and keep Iron Warrior up. When Talos summons his firebreathing skull, dodge around it and use Blade Dance to punish him. Activate area-effect skills to dispel his duplicates, and if he hits you with his final attack, which reduces Tal's HP to one, be ready to recover with a Miracle Potion or Healing Tincture. Defeating Talos ends *Sudeki*! Congratulations!



↑ Cruel Universe: slows 'em down; speeds you up.



↑ Be ready to dodge Talos's attacks - many are unblockable.

Weapons

Tal

Recruit's Sword: starting weapon.
Mojo: defeat the Grotesque on Brightwater Beach at the start of the game.
Hukin's Fate: found inside the house on Molan Farm outside Illumina Castle. The door is only unlocked after you defeat the Siege Ogre.
Chain Sword: bought from Kamo.
Agarth's Cleaver: give 21 Shadowstones to Campos outside the Temple of Mo in Shadani-Mo.
Preystalker: give 100 Spirit Orbs to the Ferryman in the Realm of Shadows.
Siren's Song: in a treasure chest at the end of the Maze in Dead Fish Cave.
Mammoth's Fang: climb the Tree of Woe near the Aklorian Stronghold and defeat the monsters there.
Faustian Blade: located inside a treasure chest in the barracks near Carlos in the Aklorian Stronghold.
Runic Blade: bring four Wolf Totems to the shrine near the farm outside Illumina Castle for the Runic Blade.

Ailish

Royal Scepter: starting weapon.
Xuric's Shockstaff: starting weapon.
Histanica: bought from Kamo.
Batholith: give 50 Spirit Orbs to the Ferryman in the Realm of Shadows.
Wizardwood Stave: use Dispel to reveal the invisible chest in the secret room in the Research Centre's office.
Chilltip Cane: use Dispel to reveal an invisible bridge in Crystal Reef. You'll find the Cane on the other side.
Nightshadow: bring four Eagle Totems to the shrine near Brightwater Beach.

Buki

Kalamarka: starting weapon.
Shalizeh: found in the Temple of Mo.
Melakorka: climb the wall in the Fountain Room in the Temple of Mo.
Mephiticus: bought from Kamo.
Jakome: give 25 Spirit Orbs to Rexam in the Realm of Shadows.
Pathosis: in Shadani-Mo, take the Fallen Warrior's Skull from the bookshelf in Carrick Lore's tent and return it to the Hall of Heads near Farex Lore's lair in the Realm of Shadows to earn Pathosis.
Anemomir: climb one of the ruined buildings in Crystal Reef.
Staeysekin: bring four Cat Totems to the shrine outside Shadani-Mo.

Elco

Proton Phaser: starting weapon.
Chronotron: give 75 Spirit Orbs to Rexam in the Realm of Shadows.
Neutron Blunderbuss: bought from Kamo.
Ion Fluxinator: can be found in a treasure chest on the other side of Farex Lore's lair in the Realm of Shadows.
Omnium Rocket Gun: jet across the lava in Devil's Belch Canyon to find this in a chest underneath an outcropping.
Plasma Launcher: bring four Dragon Totems to the shrine on Transentia Road.

SWITCHING OUT: IF YOU SEE TAL OR BUKI WINDING UP A COMBO, SWITCH CONTROL TO THEM RIGHT BEFORE THE LAST HIT TO DO FULL DAMAGE.

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How Easy Is This?

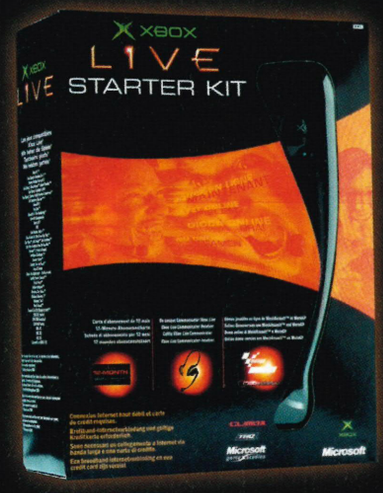
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Got it? Good. As an *OXM* reader, you should.

Xbox Live Starter Kit
All you need in one box, including the Xbox Live Communicator and a subscription to the service.

Broadband Internet connection
Is your ISP Xbox Live compatible? Almost certainly – but check xbox.com for a complete list of approved broadband/DSL providers and plans.

And here's how you put it together:
1. Connect your Xbox console to your broadband/DSL modem.
2. Log on and set up your account – choose your unique Gamertag wisely.
3. Start playing and build your reputation.



>> Xbox Live Communicator

>> 12-Month subscription

>> Demo games: MechAssault™ and MotoGP

Available now wherever you get your Xbox games

The Power of People

Xbox Live Community:
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Global Gaming:
Play with and against gamers worldwide.

Voice Chat:
Talk in real-time for free – whether you're gaming or not.

Real Opponents:
Smarter, tougher and more creative opponents than any A.I. can offer.

Want Even More?

EXPERIENCE THE XBOX LIVE CALENDAR
There's always something exciting happening in the Xbox Live community, whether a friendly game on Just for Fun nights, out-and-out competition in tournaments, or playing celebrities for prizes, you can play the way you like to play. Check out the Live calendar on xbox.com.

ONLINE TOURNAMENTS
Put your skills to the test for real-world rewards (or just bragging rights) in competitions – including ones you create.

ACCESS THE LATEST NEWS AND INFORMATION
Keep up-to-date on the latest news, events, games, tips and content downloads by signing up to free newsflashes and updates from the Xbox Live team.

GET HINTS, TIPS, FACTS AND FUN
Visit the forums on xbox.com and meet new gamers, get updates, trade tips, ask for help or simply exchange ideas. It's your first stop online to get in touch with like-minded gamers.

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The Best Online Games Are On Xbox Live

With more than 100 games, 150 downloads (and counting), you'll always find what you want to play. Get ready for all these great new titles...



Halo® 2

November 2004 – the biggest event of the year

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Forza Motorsport™

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Only on Xbox Live



Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory™

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Co-op stealth mode

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MechAssault™
MechAssault II: Lone Wolf™
Ninja Gaiden®
Star Wars®: Battlefront™
Star Wars®: Republic Commando™
Steel Battalion™ - Line of Contact
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3™
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3™: Black Arrow
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory™
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow™
Unreal® Championship
Unreal® II - The Awakening
Unreal® Championship 2: The Liandri Conflict
XIII

ROLE PLAYING

Star Wars®: Knights of the Old Republic®
Star Wars®: Knights of the Old Republic®II - The Sith Lords

FIGHTING

Capcom® Vs SNK: E.O.
Dead or Alive® Ultimate
Mortal Kombat: Deception

SPORT

Amped® 2
FIFA® Football 2005
Links® 2004
NBA Inside Drive 2004
NFL Fever 2004
NHL Rivals 2004
Outlaw Volleyball™
Top Spin™

RACING

Burnout®3: Takedown™
Colin McRae Rally 2005™
Forza Motorsport™
Midnight Club II
Midtown Madness® 3
MotoGP™ 2
MTX: Mototrax™
MX Superfly™
Need For Speed® Underground 2
OutRun® 2
Project Gotham Racing® 2
RalliSport Challenge 2
Sega® GT Online
TOCA Race Driver™ 2

For more information check out www.xbox.com

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- LINKS 2004
- NINJA GAIDEN
- PSI-OPS: THE MINDGATE CONSPIRACY
- RALLISPORT CHALLENGE 2
- SHADOW OPS: RED MERCURY
- SUDEKI
- TERMINATOR 3: REDEMPTION
- TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES
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- WALLACE & GROMIT IN PROJECT ZOO
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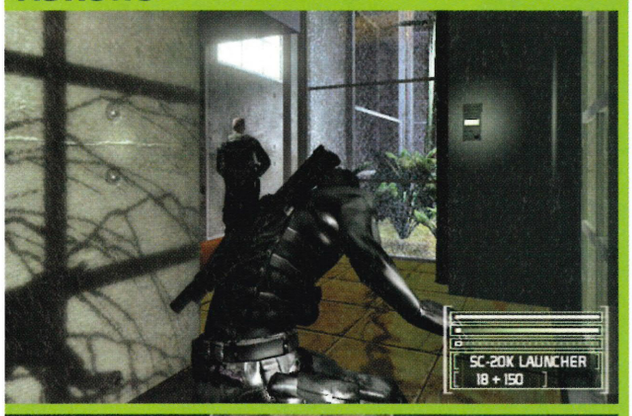
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Official XBOX Magazine

NEXT MONTH
Official XBOX Magazine

Reviews





Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory
Sam is back and we're not talking Hobbits returning to the Shire! Covert killing just got even sneakier.

Star Wars: Battlefront
It's time to dust off the Snow Speeder and clean the harpoon because those pesky AT-ATs are back.

Men of Valor: The Vietnam War
The horrors of the Vietnam War come hurtling home next month as we review 2015's jungle shooter.

Def Jam: Fight for New York
Hippety-hoppety bifferty-boppery as this fight club for bad-ass rap stars hits the Big Apple.

Tony Hawk's Underground 2
Jackass influences rule in the most off-the-wall version yet of the skateboard special.

FIFA Football 2005
Aftertouch is this year's new footy feature along with long-awaited Xbox Live support.

Rocky Legends
Brutal button-bashing steps into the ring for another round of boxing with our favourite pugilist. *Adriaaan!*

HALLOWEEN SPECIAL
Scare yourself stupid with our roundup of the 13 top terror titles on Xbox!

Bringing you the biggest Xbox exclusives first!

Previews



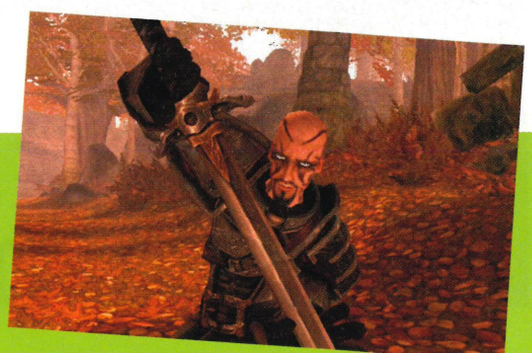
Unreal Championship 2: The Liandri Conflict
We get the first hands-on play of the online shooter sequel that's going to blow Xbox Live wide open in spring 2005.

Area 51
The plot thickens as we visit the secret research labs of this gorgeous alien conspiracy shooter and play through all-new levels.

Carmageddon
The goriest racing franchise ever to mow down an innocent pedestrian makes its controversial return on Xbox. Prepare for tabloid outrage now!

STUNNING GUIDE!

FABLE
Avenge the murder of your family using our walkthrough to the wonderful world of this gargantuan game!





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NEXT MONTH
Official XBOX Magazine

The only disc with Xbox games to play!





PLAY!

OUTRUN 2
Play a stunning Live-enabled trial version of Sega's arcade-perfect Xbox exclusive racer as many times as you want. Can you perform the drive of your life to impress a future wife? You'll find out soon enough with this great demo!


PLAY!

CONFLICT: VIETNAM
Here's the first of a playable Vietnam double whammy. The *Conflict* boys are back and ready to get rough in the jungle with your help. Have you got the skills to smoke out the Vietcong from the thickest bushes and undergrowth?


PLAY!

SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM
Konami's sickening horror adventure is back on Xbox and we've got an exclusive playable trial version to prove it. You'll lose sleep and plenty of bodily fluids after playing this demo with the lights turned off and the curtains shut.


PLAY!

MEN OF VALOR: VIETNAM WAR
Round two of the Vietnam assault kicks off with a breathtaking insight into the battlefields of Vietnam. We've been looking forward to this particular war game for months now. Find out why with this exclusive trial version.


PLAY!

DEF JAM FIGHT FOR NEW YORK
We've got the exclusive playable trial version and review of EA's hip-hop-powered fighting game. Choose a character from an A-list of rap stars and babes, take them into the ring and cause as much bodily harm as possible!



PLAY!

KINGDOM UNDER FIRE: THE CRUSADERS
Orcs go to war in this action-strategy game that will leave you with sore thumbs. Play the trial version next month!


PLAY!

LEISURE SUIT LARRY: MAGNA CUM LAUDE
Toilet humour makes a mighty cumback as does retro cheeky boy Larry. Play this exclusive demo!

GAME SAVES!

TIMESPLITTERS 2
Breathe new life into Free Radical's zany shooter by downloading five new custom-made multiplayer maps!

COLIN McRAE RALLY 04
Working overtime to unlock every car in last year's *McRae* game before the next one's released? Allow us to save you time by unlocking them all in a matter of seconds!

HITMAN: CONTRACTS
A fair few gamers are scratching their heads thanks to this game being a tad on the hard side. We're offering a Game Save that will open all the levels on every difficulty setting.

SHOWDOWN: LEGENDS OF WRESTLING
Bored with the men and women in tights that come with the game? Then check out this Game Save that features four new custom wrestlers for you to launch out of the ring.

BEYOND GOOD & EVIL
Ubisoft's massive action-adventure game can make your head spin at times. Cheat time by using this save that gives you all the pearls and MD discs in one easy download.

MOVIES!

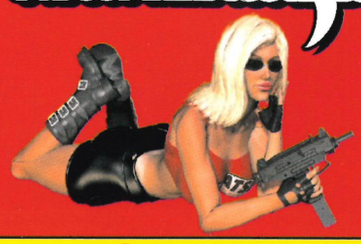
STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT
Stunning in-game footage of the *Star Wars* multiplayer shooter every fan will want to own.

TERMINATOR 3: THE REDEMPTION
Arnie's back with a brand new *T3* game that's shaping up to take SkyNet by storm. Seeing is believing!

STREET FIGHTER ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION
Watch all the original hard men and women kick off in spectacular 2D fashion.

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005
Golden (golf) Balls is back again to test your putting powers.

ROCKY LEGENDS
Ringside footage of the hardest boxers around clubbing each other to near-death in this *Rocky* game with a twist.



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GAMECUBE

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Conflict: Desert Storm
Eternal Darkness
FIFA 2003
FIFA 2004
Freedom Fighters
Godzilla: Destroy all Monst.
Harvest Moon 2: Wond. Life
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hobbit
Leg.of Zelda: Majora's Mask
Luigi's Mansion
Mario Kart: Double Dash
Metroid Prime
Nightfire
Pokemon Colosseum
Pool Paradise
Prince of Persia: S. of Time
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Resident Evil
Resident Evil Zero
Shrek 2
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Sims: Bustin' Out
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle
Sonic Mega Collection
Spider-Man: The Movie 2
Splinter Cell
Splinter Cell 2: Pandora T.
Star Wars: Clone Wars
Star Wars: Rebel Strike
Starfox Adventures
Super Mario Sunshine
Super Smash Bros Melee
The Sims
The Sims: Bustin Out
Turok, Evolution
Viewtiful Joe
WWE Wrestlemania XIX
XIII (Thirteen)
Zelda: Majora's Mask
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Zelda: The Wind Waker

Plus Many More...

PC

Age of Empires
Broken Sword
Cat Woman*
Champ. Manager '00/'01
Champ. Manager '01/'02
Champ. Manager '03/'04
Championship Manager 4
Com. & Conq.: Red Alert 2
Com. & Conq.: Tiberian Sun
CSI: Crime Sc. Investigation
CSI: Dark Motives
Doom 3*
Empire Earth
Far Cry
Gangland
Gothic 2
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City
Ground Control 2
Hitman 3: Contracts
Master of Olympus
Medieval: Total War
Painkiller
Rollercoaster Tycoon
Sim City 4
Sims
Sims: Deluxe
Splinter Cell
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
Stronghold
Tom Clancy's: P. Tomorrow
Tomb Raider: Angel of Dark.
Total Club Manager 2004
Vietcong
XIII (Thirteen)
Zoo Tycoon
Zoo Tycoon: Marine Mania

Plus Many More...

PS2

Alias
Alone in the Dark 4
Arc the Lad:Twilight of Spirit
Backyard Wrestling 2*
Broken Sword 3 S Drag.
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Catwoman
Champions of Norrath
Clock Tower 3
Colin McRae Rally 4
Conflict Zone
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 2
DRIV3R
Enter the Matrix
Evil Dead: Fist. of Boomstick
FIFA 2003
FIFA 2004
Fight Night 2004
Final Fantasy X
Final Fantasy X-2
Getaway
Ghost Hunter
Ghost Master
Gran Turismo 3
Grand Theft Auto 3
Grand T Auto: Vice City
Harry Potter: Chamber of S.
Harry Potter: P. of Azkaban
Harry Potter: Philosophers S.
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hitman 3: Contracts
Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb
Jak 3*
James Bond 007: Nightfire
Karaoke Stage
LMA Manager 2004
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Mafia
Manhunt
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Mortal Kombat: Deception*
MX Unleashed
Need for Speed Undergr'nd
Onimusha 3: Demon Siege
Premier Manager 2002
Prince of Persia: S. of Time
Rainbow Six 3
Ratchet and Clank 2
Ratchet and Clank 3*
Red Dead Revolver
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Rise to Honor
Roadkill
Rocky Legends*
Shrek 2
Silent Hill 2
Silent Hill 3
Silent Hill 4: The Room*
Sims: Bustin' Out
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Spider-Man: The Movie
Spider-Man: The Movie 2
Splinter Cell
Splinter Cell 2: Pandora T.
Star Wars: Battlefront*
Suffering
SWAT: Global Strike Team
Syphon Filter: Omega St.
The Simpsons: Hit & Run
The Sims
The Suffering
TOCA Race Driver
Tomb Raider: Angel of Dark.
Tony Hawk's Underground
Total Club Manager 2004
Transformers
Van Helsing
WWE Smackdown! 5: HCTP
X-Files: Resist or Serve
XIII (Thirteen)
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duellists of Roses

Plus Many More...

X-BOX

A = 0 1

A Fistful of Boomstick
Agent Under Fire
Aggressive Inline
Air Force Delta Storm
Alias
Aliens vs Predator:Extinction
Alter Echo
Amped 2
Amped Snowboarding
Apex, Racing Evoluzione
Armageddon - Spawn
Armed and Dangerous
Arx Fatalis
ATV Quad Racing 2
Auto Modellista
Azurik: Rise of Perthia

B = 0 2

Back to Baghdad
Backyard Wrestling
Bad Boys 2
Baldur's Gate: D. Alliance 2
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
Batman Vengeance
Batman: Dark Tomorrow
Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu
Battle Engine Aquila
Battlecry, Robotech
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Battlestar Galactica
Beyond Good and Evil
Big Mutha Truckers
Bionicle
Blackstone: Magic & Steel
Blade 2
Blinx: The Time Sweeper
Blood Omen 2
Blood Wake
BloodRayne
BlowOut
BMX XXX
Bond 007: Agent Under Fire
Bond 007: E. or Nothing
Bond 007: Nightfire
Bounty Hunter, Mace Griffin
Breakdown
Brokn Sword 3: S Dragon
Brotherhood of Steel
Bruce Lee: Quest Dragon
Brute Force
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Buffy The Vampire Slayer
Burnout
Burnout 2 Point of Impact
Bustin' Out, The Sims

C = 0 3

Call of the King, Haven
Castle Wolfenstein, Ret. to
Cat in the Hat
Catwoman
Celebrity Deathmatch
Chamber of Secrets
Champ. Manager '01/'02
Championship Manager '02
Chaos Bleeds
Chase: Hollywood Stunt Dr.
Chris Edwards' Aggressive I.
Chronicles of Riddick
Clone Wars, Star Wars
Club Football
Colin McRae Rally 3
Colin McRae Rally 4
Commandos 2
Conflict: Desert Storm
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Contracts: Hitman 3
Counterstrike
Crash
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Crash Nitro Kart
Crazy Taxi 3: High Roller
Crimson Sea
Crimson Skies
Crouching Tiger, H. Dragon

D = 0 4

Dakar 2
Dance Dance Rev. Ultramix
Dark Alliance, Baldur's Gate
Dark Angel, J. Cameron's
Dark Legacy
Dark Tomorrow, Batman
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2
David Beckham Soccer
Dawn of Destiny, Yu-Gi-Oh!
Dawn of Fate
Dead Man's Hand
Dead or Alive 3
Dead or Alive Volleyball
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Dynasty Warriors 3
Dynasty Warriors 4

E = 0 5

Elder Scrolls: Morrowind
Enclave
England Int. Football
Enter the Matrix
Escape from Butcher Bay
Euro 2004
Everything or Nothing: 007
Evil Dead: Fist. of Boomstick
Exile, Myst 3
Extreme Destruction

F = 0 6

F1 2002
Fall of Max Payne
Fellowship of the Ring
FIFA 2003
FIFA 2004
Fight Night 2004
Finding Nemo
Fire Blade
Fist of the Lotus
Fistful of Boomstick
Freaky Flyers
Freedom Fighters
Freestyle Metal X
Frontline, Medal of Honor
Full Spectrum Warrior
Futurama

G = 0 7

Galleon
Genma Onimusha
Ghost Master
Ghost Recon
Ghost Recon:Island Thunder
Gladiator: S. of Vengeance
Gladius
Glitch in the System
Global Strike Team - SWAT
Goblin Commander
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Gotham Racing 2
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Grand Theft Auto 3
Grand T Auto: Vice City
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Great Escape
Group S Challenge
GT 2002
Gun Metal

H = 0 8

Halo
Harry Potter: Chamber of S.
Harry Potter: P. of Azkaban
Harry Potter: Philosophers S.
Harry Potter: Quidditch Cup
Haunted Mansion
Hit & Run, The Simpsons
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hitman 3: Contracts
Hobbit
House of the Dead 3
Hulk
Hunter: Redeemer
Hunter: The Reckoning

I = 0 9

Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb
Indycar Series
Inter. Superstar Soccer 2
Invisible War, Deus Ex
Italian Job: L.A. Heist

J = 1 0

James Bond 007: Nightfire
James Bond: Agent Under F.
James Bond: E. or Nothing
Jedi Knight 2: Jedi Outcast
Jedi Knight: Jedi Academy
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Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death
Juiced*
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K = 1 1

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L = 1 2

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Lord of the Rings: F. of Ring
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers

M = 1 3

Mace Griffin: Bounty Hunter
Mafia
Magic Gathering Battlegr'nd
Manhunt
Marvel vs Capcom 2
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Matrix, Enter the
Max Payne 1 & 2
MechAssault
Medal of Honor Frontline
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Mercedes Benz Racing
Metal Arms:Glitch in System
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Micro Machines
Midnight Club 2
Midtown Madness 3
Mike Tyson Boxing
Minority Report
Mission Impossible:O.Surma
Morrowind
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
Moto GP2: U.R.T.
MTV's Celebrity Deathmatch
MTX Mototrax
Munch's Oddysee
MX Superfly
MX Unleashed
Myst 3: Exile

N = 1 4

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NBA Live 2004
NBA Street Volume 2
Need for Speed Undergr'nd
Need for Speed: H.Pursuit 2
New Legends
NFL Fever 2003
NFL Primetime 2002
NFL Street
Night Caster
Nightfire
Ninja Gaiden

O = 1 5

Obi Wan, Star Wars
Oddworld Munch's Oddysee
Onimusha Genma
007 Nightfire
007: Everything or Nothing
Otogi: Myth of Demons
Outlaw Golf
Outlaw Volleyball

P = 1 6

Painkiller*
Pandora Tomorrow
Panzer Dragoon Orta
Phantom Crash
Pirates of the Caribbean
Pitfall: The Lost Expedition
Prince of Persia: S. of Time
Prisoner of Azkaban
Prisoner of War
Project Gotham Racing
Project Gotham Racing 2
Project Zero

Q = 1 7

Quantum Redshift

R = 1 8

R Racing
Rainbow Six 3
Rallisport Challenge
Rallisport Challenge 2
Rally Fusion
Raw 2, WWE
Rayman 3
Red Card Soccer 2003
Red Dead Revolver
Red Faction 2
Red Mercury, Shadow Ops
Reign Of Fire
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Roadkill
Robin Hood: Def. of Crown
Robot Wars: Extr.Destruction
Rocky
Rogue Ops
Rollercoaster Tycoon
Rolling
Run Like Hell

S = 1 9

Sea Blade
Secret W. Over Normandy
Sega GT 2002
Serious Sam
Shadow of Memories
Shadow Ops: Red Mercury
Shenmue 2
Showdown: L. of Wrestling
Shrek 2
Silent Hill 2: Inner Fears
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Simpsons: Road Rage
Sims
Sims: Bustin' Out
Soldier of Fortune 2
Sonic Heroes
Soul Calibur 2
Spawn: Armageddon
Speed Kings
Sphinx & Cursed Mummy
Spider-Man: The Movie
Spider-Man: The Movie 2
Splashdown
Splinter Cell
Splinter Cell 2 Pandora T.
Spy Hunter
SSX 3
Star Trek: Shattered Gal.
Star Wars: Battlefront*
Star Wars: Clone Wars
Star Wars: Jedi Academy
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
Star Wars: Knights Old Rep.
Star Wars: Obi Wan
Starsky & Hutch
State of Emergency
Suffering
Superman: Man Of Steel
SWAT: Global Strike Team
Syberia

T = 2 0

Tao Feng: Fist of Lotus
Teenage Mut. Ninja Turtles
Tenchu: Ret. from Darkness
Terminator 3 R.of Machines
Terminator: Dawn of Fate
Test Drive: Wide Open
The Awakening - Unreal 2
The Great Escape
The House of the Dead 3
The Hulk
The Return of the King
The Simpsons: Hit & Run
The Sims
The Sims: Bustin Out
The Suffering
The Thing
Thief: Deadly Shadows
Thirteen
Tiger Woods Golf 2003
Tiger Woods Golf 2004
Time Splitters 2
TOCA Race Driver
TOCA Race Driver 2
Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon
Tom Clancy's Island Thunder
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4
Tony Hawk's Underground
Top Spin
Total Club Manager 2004
Transworld Snowboarding
Transworld Surf
True Crime: Streets of LA
Turok, Evolution
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger

U = 2 1

UEFA Euro 2004
Unleash the Horde
Unreal 2: The Awakening
Urban Freestyle Soccer

V = 2 2

Van Helsing
Vendetta, Die Hard
Vexx
Vice City, Grand Theft Auto
Voodoo Vince

W = 2 3

Wakeboarding Unleashed
Whacked!
Wolfenstein,Return to Castle
World Champ. Snooker '03
World Championship Rugby
Worms 3D
Wrath of Cortex
Wrath Unleashed
Wreckless: Yakuza Mission
WWE Raw 2: Ruthless Aggr.

X = 2 4

XIII (Thirteen)
X-Men 2: Wolverine's Rev.
X-Men: Next Dimension

Y = 2 5

Yager

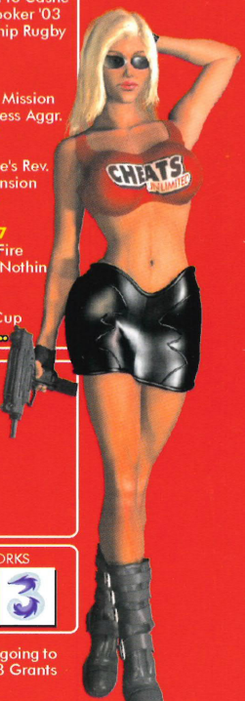
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