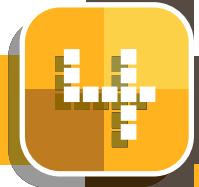


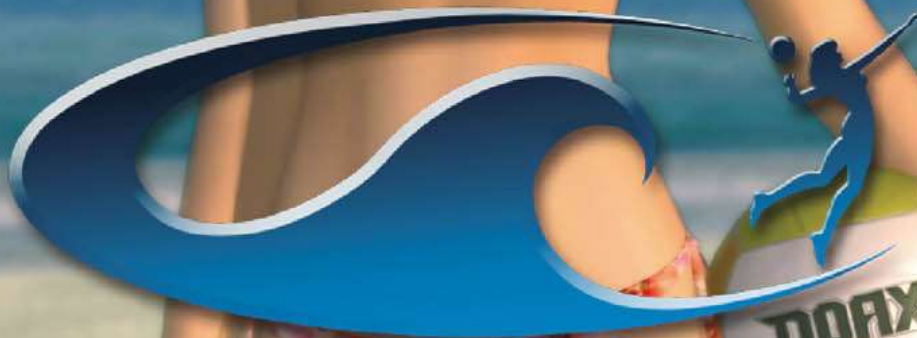
GSO

GAMESTYLE OFFLINE



DEAD OR ALIVE
THE VERDICT

DEAD AGAIN?
DO CHEATERS WIN?



DEAD OR ALIVE
XTREME BEACH VOLLEYBALL

WELCOME TO GSO#4



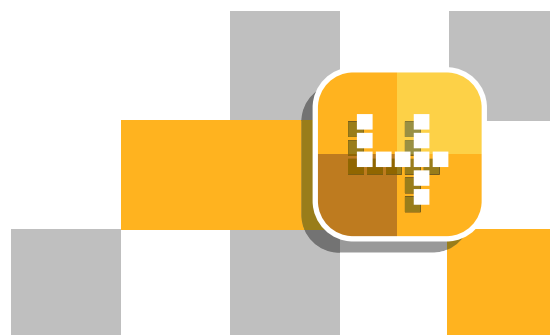
XTREME?

No. In a word. Is *Dead or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball* the most hyped game we've ever seen? Quite possibly. Does it really offer the player unrivalled freedom to do as they please on Zack Island? Of course not.

Whilst we cannot deny the amazing graphics on display, there's something sadly missing in surely the most important part of any game: the *game*.

This issue we get under the skin of the Xbox's apparent killer app; because although we're not totally convinced there's enough here to keep you interested beyond the Barbie-esque collecting, *DoA XBV* is selling like hotcakes.

CONTENTS



- 04/ News
We've got the lowdown on what's new in the world of games this month, including an Enclave sequel and a look ahead at May's E3 expo.
- 06/ Released this month
A special look at the Special Project - Nintendo's brand new Gameboy Advance. It's also good news for the full-size consoles - Orta and Prime are both out!
- 08/ Review: DoA Volleyball
Although some of our forum members don't agree with us, we're of the opinion that Doa Volleyball is a huge wasted opportunity. See why on page 8.
- 10/ Review: Capcom vs SNK 2
Our final review from Darran as he plugs into Xbox LIVE to give us the low down on the first online scrapper from Capcom.
- 12/ Review: Ape Escape 2
The original heralded the introduction of the first Dual Shock games (requiring one to play) - is the sequel as innovative?
- 14/ Feature: New Release Day
Do you still get the tingling excitement when you finally get your hands on a game you've been waiting for for years? Michael Lysons does.
- 15/ Feature: Live: Confessions of a Beta tester.
In his last feature for GSO Darren Jones takes us through the whole Xbox LIVE experience, from opening the box to kicking arse at Unreal.
- 18/ Feature: Dead again?
Gamestyle.net editor Jason Julier looks over the whole gaming industry that is cheat devices, and why people cheat in the first place.
- 22/ Retro review: R-type Leo
Technically the third in the arcade series of the seminal shooter, Leo dispenses with the Force and ramps up the difficulty level. Ollie takes a look.
- 24/ Next Issue

GAMESTYLE OFFLINE / ISSUE 4

GSO editor, art director

Alex Carroll

alex@gamestyle.co.uk

PR

Mike Tooley

Online / Technical

Mike Holmquist

Contributions

Michael Lysons

Jason Julier

Darren Jones

Usman Zia

Ollie Barder

Site Staff

Dean Swain

Michael Bather

Additional artwork

Reidesign

M e d i a

reidesignmedia@tkmail.co.uk

(front cover manipulation)

Tom Hammarberg

info@suburb51.com

("dead again?" illustration, page 21)

Produced with Macromedia Freehand and Adobe Photoshop. Thanks, as ever, to gamespress.com, all the publishers for the code and artwork, and everyone on the gamestyle.netforums. Well, most of you. This magazine is available free at www.gamestyle.net as a pdf download.

Due to the limitations of space inherent in this medium, you will find the original unabridged versions of this issue's features and reviews at gamestyle.net over the next couple of weeks. Apologies mainly to Michael for tearing out most of his feature for this issue.

100% Made with Mac.



GOING LIVE

Microsoft has revealed that it's Xbox Live service now has more than 350,000 subscribers. The service is officially launched in Europe on 14th March and will cost £39.99. For this you receive a year's subscription, communicator and two free Xbox Live game demos.

We here at Gamestyle give it the two thumbs up - the experience is second to none, especially during late night bouts of Ghost Recon.

GAMING NEWS ROUND UP

EA WAIT FOR SONY

Publishing giant Electronic Arts has revealed that it is already looking ahead to the next generation of consoles.

"Today we're already in discussion with Sony, with Microsoft, with Nintendo on the next generation of consoles," said Chief Financial Officer Warren Jenson. "When do we think the transition would occur? Sometime around 2005, 2006 - that's really Sony's call to make."

ACTIVISION SIGN THE MOVIES

Activision has revealed an exclusive agreement with Peter Molyneux for his latest project, currently called The Movies. The deal will cover all formats when the title is due for release in 2004.

"Peter is undoubtedly one of the most talented video game designers in the world" says Larry Goldberg, executive vice president of Activision Worldwide Studios.

MIYAMOTO CONFIRMS GC MGS

Several sources this month announced that Miyamoto himself has confirmed that not only is Konami mid-way through a Metal Gear Solid game (it's unclear which at this stage, sadly) but he's actively involved in it's development, which can only be great news.

Let's hope, then, that it's the original PlayStation game with the usual Nintendo extras. All eyes on E3...



MORE ENCLAVE

Those of you that enjoyed Enclave will be happy to learn that Starbreeze studios has announced that Enclave 2 is currently in development for all platforms.

The Swedish developer is promising more characters and more weapons for those that enjoyed the original release.

E3, of course, is but weeks away. Here's what we think will be the ones to watch:

ACCLAIM

XGRA (Xbox, PS2, GC)

ACTIVISION

Lost Kingdoms II (Gamecube)

Pitfall (PS2, Xbox, GC, GBA)

CAPCOM

Gamecube 4

Dino Crisis 3 (Xbox)

Red Dead Revolver (PlayStation2)

Resident Evil 4 (Gamecube)

EIDOS

Deus Ex: Invisible War (PS2, Xbox)

ELECTRONIC ARTS

Alien vs. Predator (PS2, Xbox)

MoH: Rising Sun (PS2, Xbox, GC)

INFOGRAMES

Driver 3 (PS2, Xbox, GC)

Enter the Matrix (PS2, Xbox, GC)

KONAMI

Metal Gear (Gamecube)

Metal Gear Solid 3 (PlayStation2)

MICROSOFT

Counter-Strike (Xbox)

Fable (Xbox)

Halo 2 (Xbox)

Project Gotham Racing 2 (Xbox)

NAMCO

Soul Calibur II (PS2, Xbox, GC)

Star Fox (Gamecube)

NINTENDO (all Gamecube)

1080

Animal Crossing 2

Donkey Kong

Mario 128, Golf, Tennis, Kart

Metroid Prime 2

Mother 3

Pikmin 2

Wario World

SEGA

F-Zero (Gamecube)

New Panzer Dragoon (Xbox)

Out Run (Xbox)

SpikeOut X-treme (Xbox)

SONY (all PlayStation2)

Colony Wars Online

Destruction Derby

G-Police

Ico 2

Jak & Daxter 2

R-Type Final

TECMO

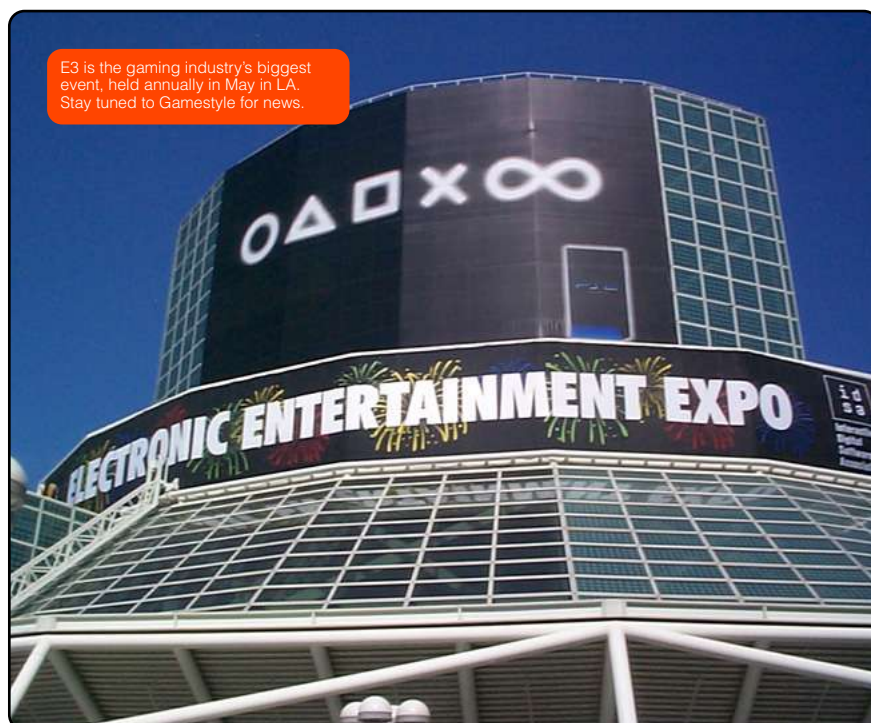
Dead or Alive 4 (Xbox)

Ninja Gaiden (Xbox)

Recently announced Medal of Honor: Rising Sun will feature heavily on EA's E3 stand this year.



E3 is the gaming industry's biggest event, held annually in May in LA. Stay tuned to Gamestyle for news.



It might well be tiny but you can't deny it's attractive - welcome to the new Gameboy.

Whilst the brand new Gameboy Advance SP might do not anything new under the bonnet over it's older brother, the additional of Afterburner-style front-lighting and the gorgeous new styling should hopefully be enough to tempt existing GBA owners into picking one up when it's released on the 28th of March.

We spent time with the new machine and we can confirm that it feels just as good as it looks, although the two shoulder buttons are a little tricky to get used to.

The lack of a headphone jack is a major issue, though, and although you can buy an adaptor separately we'd have liked to have that all-important audio-privacy out of the box instead of having to fork out extra cash, but that's life.

Obviously the major attraction (aside from the design, of course) is the newly lit screen. Those of you that dared to install the Afterburner to the original GBA screen will be familiar with the front-lit mechanism that Nintendo have opted for here. It's not a true back lit screen but it certainly does the job, and when switched on there's (at last) no problems with playing the games in anything less than direct sunlight anymore.

Obviously it's backwards compatible again, meaning that you can play all your old Gameboy, Gameboy Color and (obviously) Gameboy Advanced games, but the slightly crisper screen offers a better view of the action. We had trouble getting 3rd party Flash ROM carts to fit the machine, mind, but we're sure Nintendo aren't particularly bothered about that one.

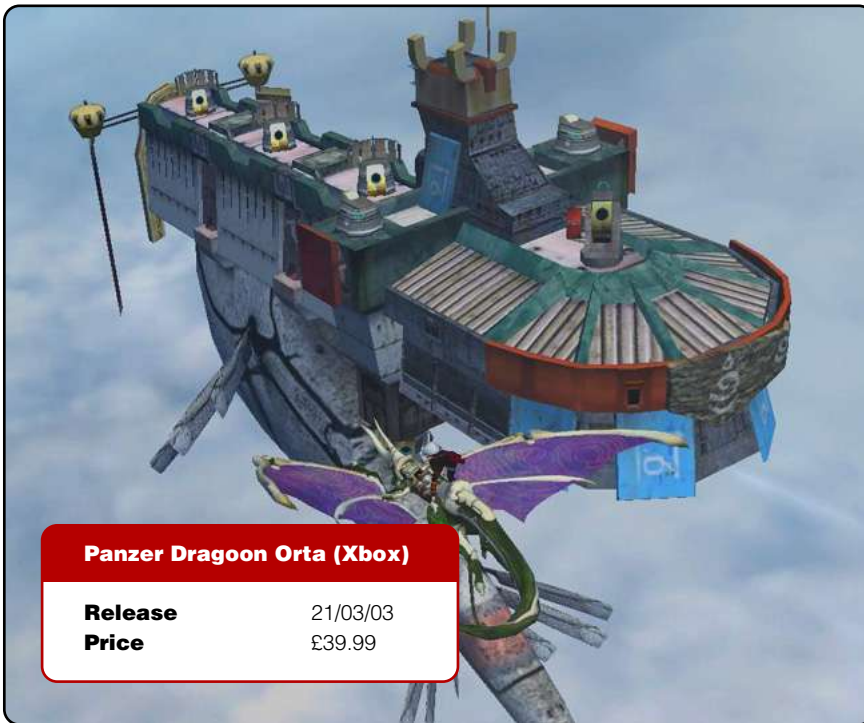
With this and Legend of Zelda: A link to the Past out on the same day you're quite likely to pick up a nice bundle too if you shop around, and we've also had word that the GBA SP will come with a £30 rebate voucher against other Nintendo software, which is great. Well recommended, then.

ON THE SHELVES IN MARCH AND APRIL



Gameboy Advance SP

Release	28/03/03
Price	£89.99



Panzer Dragoon Orta (Xbox)

Release	21/03/03
Price	£39.99

- Xbox**
- House of the Dead III [14/03]
 - The Two Towers [14/03]
 - Panzer Dragoon Orta [21/03]
 - DoA Volleyball [28/03]
 - The Sims [04/04]
 - Kung Fu Chaos [11/04]

- Gamecube**
- Resident Evil 0 [07/03]
 - Super Monkey Ball 2 [14/03]
 - The Two Towers [14/03]
 - Metroid Prime [21/03]
 - Ghost Recon [21/03]
 - The Sims [ETA 04/04]

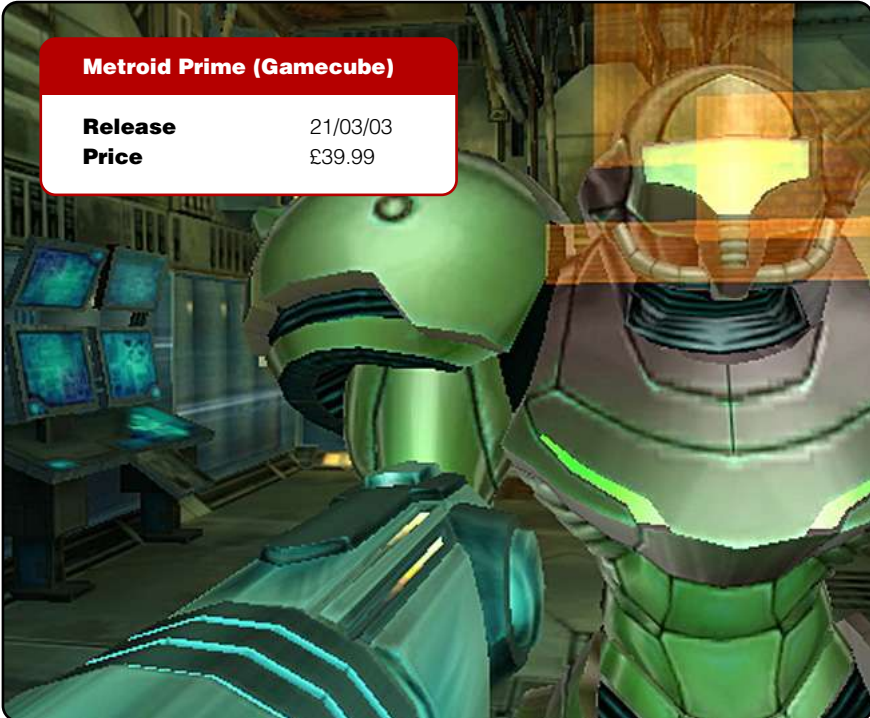
Over on the full size consoles there's two absolute treats out In March. For the Gamecube there's the Gamestyle 10/10 Metroid Prime (see GSO Issue 3) which is finally launched in PAL territories on the 21st of March. Seasoned gamers will be already familiar with the adventures of Samus Aran on the NES and SNES (and more recently in the excellent Metroid Fusion on the Gameboy Advance) but this all-new 1st person title takes the Metroid games a step further.

Incredibly involving, this deep and engaging game will keep you captivated from beginning to end, and sports easily the best graphics on the Gamecube so far. If you've got even the slightest interest in first person games this is a must-have - we think it's the best game on the machine and we're sure you won't be disappointed.

Of course, Panzer Dragoon Orta on the Xbox is out too, and is also a truly amazing game (the *other* 10/10 Gamestyle game) and takes the superb Panzer Dragoon gameplay from the Saturn days and throws it headfirst into a visually stunning shoot-em-up not a million miles away from the likes of Rez (and, naturally, past Dragoon games). Unrelentless but always fair, Orta is an essential purchase for every Xbox owner out there. Enjoy.

Xbox owners can also look forward to House of the Dead 3, whilst not exactly setting our lives on fire (see GSO Issue 2) it's a solid lightgun game and of course the inspired inclusion of the Dreamcast House of the Dead 2 ensures that you're getting superb value for money, and of course March is the month that both Nintendo and Xbox roll out their online gaming titles and hardware, including PSO for both machines.

- PlayStation 2**
- Tenchu - Wrath of Heaven [07/03]
 - Mark of Kri [14/03]
 - Devil May Cry 2 [28/03]
 - MGS 2 - Substance [28/03]
 - Splinter Cell [28/03]
 - Tomb Raider [18/04]



Metroid Prime (Gamecube)

Release	21/03/03
Price	£39.99

Sometimes a game sells on the strength of its name alone; the very presence of a previous game in the series is enough to secure pre-orders before even screenshots (let alone bullet-pointed press releases) are seen. Last year pictures started to circulate the web of bikini-clad women. Tecmo had just announced that the female half of Dead or Alive 3 would be starring in their own Volleyball game, and just to get the interest up released the aforementioned images. They weren't of the girls playing volleyball, mind, but surely they would come soon. But they didn't.

After 12 months of a continuous stream of ever-more revealing swimsuits and poses less than 5% of the screenshots actually involved the eponymous sport, and that's still the case if you choose to look for them now. The killer punch came with the recent press statement confirming that the game would receive an 'M' rating on its US release; M for Mature. The internet newsgroups and discussions forums went wild with excitement - there would be nudity. It's all marketing, of course: despite an



DEAD OR ALIVE XTREME BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Dead or Alive Extreme Beach Volleyball (2003)

Platform	Xbox
Developer	Team Ninja
Publisher	Microsoft
Reviewed	US Import
Price	£50 (approx)
Certificate	Mature (US)
PAL release	21/03/03
Players	1-2
Online	No
Aspect ratio	4:3 & 16:9a
Refresh rates	60hz
Sound	Dolby 5.1
Own soundtrack	Yes
Analog buttons	Yes (opt)
Vibration	Yes
Saves to	Hard disk
Space needed	N/A

'over-17s' release for the game, the target audience was the mid-teen male. These are computer-generated 'women' in computer-generated 'swimsuits' but of course the promise of controllable cameras and interaction between the protagonists was enough to send half of America into an uncontrollable frenzy - the game was going to sell with out without the volleyball. When screenshots surfaced of the actual gameplay very little was said about it - in the same press pack were several other shots showcasing the very latest see-through bikini or a pseudo-lesbian exchange between two of the girls. You can't blame Tecmo, though, because it's worked. Both in American and its native Japan, the game is literally flying of the shelves. Xbox's will be bought just to play this game, especially good news for the Asian market.

Dead or Alive XBV revolves around the same girls (plus Lisa, who's new to the series) being invited by a Dennis Rodman-voiced Zack to his island for the 4th DoA tournament. Sadly, it's all a big con and instead of being treated to multiple-tiered

arenas and hundreds of combos we get a barely passible volleyball game and hundreds of buyable costumes. Still, we knew that, and that would be okay because Tecmo had promised a huge interactive island with plenty to do so that if we got bored with volleyball we could chill out, chat to the other islanders and play some minigames, right? Wrong.

The minigames have been reduced to just one - pool hopping, and the interaction between the girls was bastardised into one of just a few present conversations mainly revolving around whether or not they will join your team. See DoA XBV is set up so that basically you start the game on your own and before you even start playing any volleyball you'll need to find a partner willing to help you out. Those familiar with the Japanese dating game genre will be in familiar territory here - you need to continuously splash out your hard earned cash (initially, sadly, almost entirely from pool-hopping) on buying the right present for your intended partner.



Buy enough presents that she likes and there's a chance that you'll form a team, but upset her (by buying the wrong colour/style/shape headband, shoes or bikini for example) and you can forget her for the rest of the 14-day 'vacation'. Yes, the game is timed. Each day is timed, too, and there's only 3 opportunities per day in which you can actually play volleyball, should you be lucky enough to actually get a team together in the first place. Once they're up, it's night time and you're reduced to gambling your winnings away in the casino or just going to bed. Almost anything you choose to do takes up one of these 3 units of time - whether it's asking someone to join your team or hopping your way across the pool, and in fact it's entirely possible to see the end credits after barely an hour of playtime. Whilst the casino aspect is a good idea (and there are several games including Poker, Roulette and some slot machines) and you can play for as long as you want once you enter (shopping, too, does not take any game-time) it doesn't really excuse the fact that the gambling is rather vacuous. Which brings me back around to the volleyball.

It will have it's hardened fans that no matter how much you present the raw facts they'll still try and convince you that there's some hidden depth to the gameplay and that underneath the two button game mechanics there's some mastery to be had. With Virtua Tennis, yes, but with the above Nintendo title and this one, no: the so-called 'Xtreme' volleyball here requires two buttons - pass and shoot, basically. Your player will jump automatically in the case of a spike and will, somehow, be just in the right place to return a shot from your opponents. It's not entirely on autopilot but you never feel as involved as you do in, say, Beach

Spikers. The lack of on-screen cues doesn't help either, you just get the sinking feeling that this, the actually volleyball, should have been a minigame in the last proper DoA game. Ironic, then, that that was originally the intention.

There is some short-term fun to be had with 2 player exhibition matches (but there's no 4 player support) but the one player volleyball games aren't all that interesting and they really do feel shallow, even after extended play. DoA XBV desperately needed more mini games, even some notion of a longer termed competition or ratings for the volleyball games themselves would have helped. Without them you're basically looking at a gorgeous, next generation fusion of Pokemon and Barbie such is the repeated emphasis on purely collecting more items and clothes.

Those screenshots didn't lie though - the graphics are incredible. Everything from the volleyball courts around the island to the girls themselves is rendered well and some clever shading means that the women look as real as possible with current technology. Whilst they're not photorealistic by a long way the visuals are as splendid and everything runs at a silky 60 frames a second. It's worth noting here that without a widescreen TV it's incredibly difficult to play the volleyball games - there's no camera control and the game doesn't zoom out to compensate for a standard 4:3 ration television set meaning you'll quite often not see your player on screen.

DoA XBV is inherently repetitive, and without the semi-naked women the game would have died on it's arse. Sadly disappointing, then.



The scores:

Graphics	9
Sound	6
Presentation	8
Playability	4
Lastability	4
Overall	6
(not an average)	

Fingers still smarting from the extensive workout *Marvel Vs Capcom 2* gave them? Do you curse the raised buttons of the original Xbox controller – vowing to never participate in another scrap until your poor pinkies are better? Tough. *Capcom Vs SNK 2 EO* will soon be hitting the shelves and simply needs to be played if you love 2-d fighters. Better start building up those calluses again...

Forget about the game's "let's all meet up for a scrap" plot – you don't need it. Instead concentrate on getting the most out of this massive game. There's such a mind-boggling amount of options to choose from, that your head won't stop spinning – 44 fighters (including 2 unlockables), 6 groove styles – with the option of making your own – and an incredibly ridiculous amount of moves to remember. This is by far the most comprehensive fighter Capcom have so far produced and the sheer range will bring players back again and again.

Repeated playing is definitely a worthwhile investment as the first obstacle you'll

have to overcome is Microsoft's controller. As has already been mentioned in our *Marvel Vs Capcom 2* review, it isn't particularly well suited to button bashers. When you also take into consideration the fact that special moves in this are a lot harder to pull off than in their previous release – you use the double fireball method – things seem even bleaker. Fear not though, Capcom have taking this into account and added something to make your life a little easier.

Scratching your head over that EO prefix? Worry no longer, EO stands for Easy Operation, use it at your own risk however as it proves to be the game's undoing. Rather than having you suffer from the aforementioned damaged fingers, Capcom have kindly enabled you to pull off all special moves via the second analogue stick. While fine if you have the dexterity of a 3 toed sloth, it completely undermines the whole skill of the actual game. The *Street Fighter* franchise has



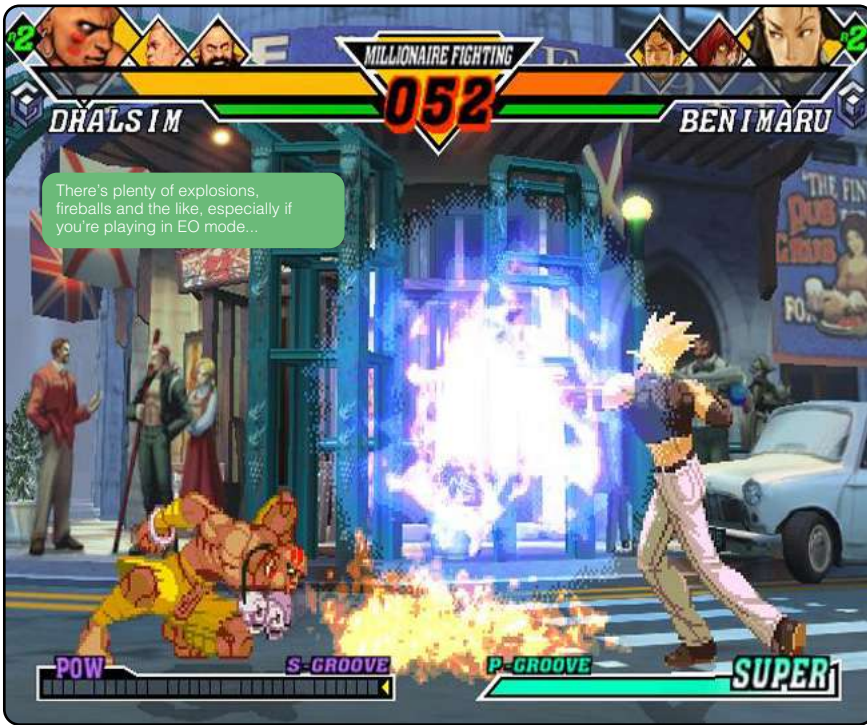
CAPCOM VS SNK 2 EO XBOX LIVE



Whilst the backgrounds are all fully 3D the traditional Capcom flat sprites are still low-res.

Capcom VS SNK 2 EO LIVE (2003)

Platform	Xbox
Developer	Capcom
Publisher	Capcom
Reviewed	US Import
Price	£50 (approx)
Certificate	Teen (US)
PAL release	Out now
Players	1-2
Online	Yes
Aspect ratio	4:3
Refresh rates	60hz
Sound	Dolby 5.1
Own soundtrack	No
Analog buttons	No
Vibration	Yes
Saves to	Hard disk
Space needed	N/A



fun you can have by describing every special move as you inflict it upon your hapless opponent. Overall the chance of playing an online fighter is wonderful and hats off to both Capcom and Microsoft for pulling it off.

Overall Capcom Vs SNK 2 is a worthwhile purchase. Ok, so it may have been out for some time now on the Playstation2 – but that shouldn't stop you from hurrying down to your local games emporium and picking up a copy. Quite simply, this is the best 2-d fighter currently available on the Xbox (even if it doesn't have Strider Hiryu in it.)

Sure, the graphics may not be phenomenal to look at and the EO system makes things ludicrously unbalanced – however, the game is a hell of a lot of fun (providing you treat yourself to the more-friendlier Controller S or arcade sticks available.)

been around for years now – and if you can't master the wonderfully intricate system by now – you never will. As long as you remember to switch to the more user friendly AC-ISM (unfortunately EO-ISM is preset) you will soon get into the swing of things – and before long be reaching the final boss (and no, I won't tell you who it is.) All the other options will be instantly familiar to anyone who has played the original game, and the end result is a rather tidy and well presented package.

Graphically Capcom Vs SNK 2 is yet another mixed bag. Whilst the backdrops are superb - the rally cars flying over sand dunes being a particular highlight – all the sprites are in desperate need of a makeover. Though the SNK bunch fair a lot better than the Capcom counterparts (with animation for both as superb as ever) they all simply look like they'd be happy scrapping away regardless of what was taking part in the actual background. Capcom's developers obviously take pride in the arenas, so why can't they lavish the same loving care on the participants?

Oh, and the Morrigan sprite – for goodness sake, get rid of the hideous pixelated thing, she looks like she been regurgitated from a child's colouring book. Surely someone as Capcom has a better sprite?

Wondering if the music has improved since the last iteration? Well, lets just say it's pretty much what you'd expect nowadays from a Capcom beat-em-up. A few reasonably good tunes can be found hidden amongst the turkeys – however, let's face it we don't buy these games expecting to hear sweeping orchestral scores, hell no, we want brutal sound effects aplenty. Fortunately, this is where Capcom deliver. All the characters have a massive selection of grunts, taunts and victory chants and come across as a lot more vocal than in previous installments. The commentator is as annoying as ever - but to give him his due – he does fit in.

What makes Capcom Vs SNK 2 such an essential purchase however is the network play. Sure it's bound to upset those without broadband (it sits there on the option screen mocking you) and initial bouts against Americans and the (deathly quiet) Japanese will have you crying into your controller after a string of humiliating defeats.

However, once the Europeans enter the scene when the game is released over here though things will hopefully be a little different, bouts will be a lot more commonplace and the lag (sometimes fighters simply stop in midair) should simply disappear. Also lets not forget the



Despite not having the sheer replay factor of the original (no secret shop here) the chance of playing live against your friends (and enemies) seals the deal. However, if you're not LIVE-enabled just yet, we'd still heartily recommend either the DC or the PlayStation 2 versions. Just keep away from the Gamecube iteration, eh?

The scores:

Graphics	6
Sound	6
Presentation	6
Playability	9
Lastability	8
Overall	7
(not an average)	



APE ESCAPE 2 HEY HEY, MONKEYS

With Sony practically dominating the industry with the Playstation brand, it's not really surprising if you have a picture of them in your head as a big evil money making corporate company. Hey, even I have visions where some big Sony execs are sitting around a diamond studded table laughing away because one of them said "Can you believe they fell for the emotion engine gag?" However, there have been times when Sony In House Developers has shocked us all with very inspiring, beautiful and original games. Much praise was given to Ico last year, a game of artistic magnificence and wonder. However, in terms on sales it was more or less entirely ignored.

The same happened with a game on the psone called Ape Escape. Trouble was the game needed the dual shock controller at the time when the digital controller was mainstream, so instead of being a gimmick, it led to being a burden because the game had to be sold with a dual shock hence being about £20 more than the other games. So it flopped here.

Despite this, it didn't stop Sony from releasing the sequel for PAL PS2 and you and I should rejoice, because the game itself is as much

fun as its prospect. Do I want to chase around intelligent cute monkeys with a net? Yes please.

For those of you who ignored Ape Escape on the psone (tut tut) it wasn't just your average platformer. What happened what a bummer up with an experiment with intelligence boosting helmets and monkeys (didn't we learn anything from Planet of the Apes?) and so they developed personalities and ran around rampant. You had to catch them with the help of various gadgets. Stun them with your erm..stun club (which is actually a light sabre), hit them with your RC car, shoot them with your catapult, and once they're in your sights, secure them with your net. The cool thing was that the first analogue stick was used for movement, while the other one was used to control the gadget in hand. A well integrated feature.

The prospect more or less stays the same with the sequel, with it subtle differences and improvements. The first is obviously the graphics. Ape Escape on the psone was nice, but due to limited hardware it seemed very jaggy and pointy (even the main character was called Spike). Everything has been nicely rounded off for the sequel, but

APE ESCAPE 2 (2003)

Platform	PS2
Developer	Sony
Publisher	Sony
Reviewed	PAL
Price	£40
Certificate	All
PAL release	Out now
Players	1-2
Online	No
Aspect ratio	4:3
Refresh rates	60hz
Sound	Stereo
Own soundtrack	N/A
Analog buttons	No
Vibration	Yes
Saves to	Card
Space needed	N/A



don't expect a jump like with psone metal gear solid and it's ps2 sequel. It's a colourful game, with clean, simple levels that suit the game perfectly but it's all by no means amazing. It's the same concept with the sound, perfectly ok, but the levels tunes won't stick in your head like the ones in Mario games do.

Good. The technical stuff is out of the way. Here comes the fun bit. The way the game plays. Picture the scenario, you've just been let into a level with green hills, a blue sky and a few enemies to dispose off like walking piggy banks and flying tomato bird erm...things. Then you assign the gadgets to the main buttons on the PS2 pad.

When you press that button, you'll switch to that gadget. So you take out a radar device, and it picks up a monkey nearby. Press L2 and you can spy on the unknowing simian. On the camera screen you'll see the monkey's details, like its name, personality, attack, aggression, alertness and how hungry it is. From here you'll have to plan how to catch it. Not early in the game of course, since it's the dumb easy ones you can just sneak up on and throw your net around, but certainly the later ones... with machine guns, missiles and even manned...er I mean monkeyed tanks. You see the monkey's wearing glasses, ah, it can't see too well! Pressing R3 and crawling army style should allow a good ambush. Good. Four more to finish the level!

As you can see the game is essentially a hunting one more than a platformer, but without the violence and Kenya safari tour guide. In later levels (there 25 of them!) you'll encounter monkeys with different themes according to the environment. You'll find heavily armed bouncer types in the casino, ninja monkeys in the Japanese temple and ones lazing on the sand in the beach level. They'll also be wearing different pants according to their skills. Blue ones are incredibly fast and you can't run and keep up with them so another approach is needed. Green ones are armed to the teeth and are wearing combat goggles which can only detect movement. Basically catching each new monkey is a fun and different experience. In terms of personalities, amusing references to actors and famous people are made. You'll find a dim monkey who always wants to eat and is called Homer or one in a space suit called Neil Apestrong.

Between levels you'll meet bosses (yes who are also monkeys, I'm going to struggle finishing this off without saying monkey in every sentence), and in good platforming tradition it's a case of recognising their weak points while avoiding their attacks. The game is never too hard but is always challenging, and pretty addictive. I finished it off in the weekend I got it and it took about 10 hours, but the point is every time I turned it off I wanted to go back to capture another chimp. However if you collect coins throughout the levels, when you exit them and come to the base where you can choose your next level, save etc, there are vending machines. Stick in 10 coins and a kinder surprise type egg comes out which can contain anything from artwork, soundtracks, stories or minigames.



As for flaws, unfortunately the camera can get very awkward and because of the game using up both analogue sticks the only way to adjust it is the d-pad, which can really be very annoying when the heat is on. In terms of lifespan I can't see it lasting most gamers more than a week, but that's not the point - Ape Escape 2 hooked me by being just plain fun while being different and original from today's generic platform games. Oh, and best of all - it has monkeys in it.

The scores:

Graphics	7
Sound	7
Presentation	7
Playability	9
Lastability	7
Overall (not an average)	8

It's Thursday night: New Release Eve. Nervous excitement means little sleep. That's ok, because I'm not at work on New Release Day. It's not ok, because I want to be awake for an all-day gaming session tomorrow.

New Release Eve is once a week, but frequency dilutes impact compared to Christmas Eve. Occasionally one so special comes along that it's like all your Christmas Eves rolled into one. Do you remember Christmas Eve when you were 8 years old? Do you remember feeling so excited in your stomach that sleep seemed impossible? That's how I've been feeling the last two nights. I'll be up early, assuming my body doesn't rebel at 7.30 because of lack of sleep.

Then it's straight into town to the nearest game shop.



RELEASE DAY SOUND FAMILIAR?

It's bustling with people. Quite a few of them are picking up game boxes, turning them over to find out what the graphics are like, and then putting the boxes back on the shelf. There is a whole stack of boxes for the game I am after. I know I'm buying it, but I go through the same routine anyway.

I stand in front of the shelf and look at the rows and rows of the new game. Although they look the same, are the same, one will catch my eye and that is the one I will pick up; second row, fourth one in. Desperate to get back and play, I'm also keen to keep this moment alive a little longer. I wander round the shop looking at the games for all the consoles.

It's noisy and colourful; clack-clack-clack as people flick through the bargain bins.

Time to go get my game. This time I don't hesitate. I just pick up a box and take it the counter and pay. 2 hours later and I love it. Like I said I would, I love it. Sleep won't be easy now, not with the visions running amok in my head. I just want to play again and again. The gamers' obsession: taking a day off work just to play a game. I go five better though. I've booked the whole of the next week off.



LIVE

confessions of a beta tester

The package arrived without fanfare, and via my next door neighbour. Briefly staring at the various outrageous mug shots on the front of the box it was soon time to appraise what lay inside.

1) Han Solo style Head Set communicator, Check

1) 1 Demo disc containing online versions of Moto Gp and Whacked, Check

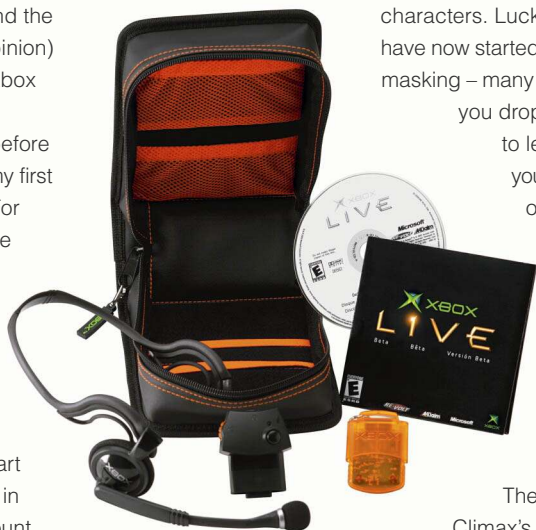
3) 1 Orange limited edition memory card, Che.... Bugger, I didn't join early enough to receive one.

Quickly getting over my initial disappointment I turned my attention to the rather funky headset. Now for someone who works in a call center all day, the thought of adorning my bonce with yet another communication contraption wasn't exactly a pleasant one. Fortunately however, a lot of thought has gone into the actual design. It's lightweight, incredibly simple to assemble and most importantly very robust (although you still feel like an idiot when you're wearing it.) Swiftly putting aside what I must look like, the next job was to set everything up. One quick

telephone call later, and my best friend (and fellow forum loiterer) Madd Aussie, was on his way around to take care of (I mean help me out with) the technical stuff. Not having an Ethernet modem, I would have to go online via my actual PC. The actual ins and outs can be found here, needless to say in less than 10 minutes I was soon stealing my wife's debit card from her purse – well how else was I going to pay the subscription charge?

Slipping in the start up disc – which incidentally, comes with online demos of Moto Gp and Whacked – I was soon keying in my gamer tag. shit, Strider had already been taken. Choosing instead to represent my country, I eventually decided on Strider UK (lame I know, but what ya gonna do about it?) One thing to remember however is that once you've inputted your gamertag details, you cannot change it again for all the tea in China. It's all very well being able to get online, but what's the point if you don't have any games for it? Thanks to the likes of Capcom, Microsoft and THQ, I soon had a motley selection of games to keep me going until the official launch (March the 14th, for those in the dark.)

First of all let us start off with the good old demo disc that Microsoft kindly package with your subscription. Having to decide between an online party game and the best (in my opinion) racer for the Xbox wasn't exactly difficult, and before long I was in my first game lobby. For those not in the know, a lobby is essentially a room where everyone meets up before they start a game. Even in this small amount of time certain lobbies are a lot better implemented than others are. Moto GP's for example is superb (you can clearly see who is talking and everything is easily accessible); Unreal Championship's on the other doesn't even have one (strange seeing it was created specifically for live.)



Once enough of you are together, a game can begin in earnest... Now I used to think myself pretty good at Moto GP – getting a severe caning online for the first time soon taught me otherwise though. The rivalry between players is incredibly intense (though never nasty) and before long I had hooked up with a few regular players to receive help on performing better lap times and where the best corners to overtake were. Lag (the delay between servers) is practically non-existent thanks to you only being able to talk to the rider directly in front and behind you. Whilst this may seem rather pointless on paper, in game it works very well – especially when you are racing similarly matched players lap for lap.

One quick thing about the speech in live games, many are constantly slating the quality of the communicator headset. Speech in game is not unintelligible. Sure, there will be instances when everyone sounds like the digitised speech from a Spectrum game, however these occurrences are normally few and far between. One word of warning however, the voice masking (when selected) is

pretty poor. Not only does the clarity suffer when it is used; you also end up sharing your sessions with gamers who sound like psychotic cartoon characters. Luckily most people have now started to stop using the masking – many hosts will insist on you dropping it, or ask you to leave – so most of your games will be free of the loons

displayed on Microsoft's – I am Dark Master - Xbox live ads.

Right where was I? Oh yes, Moto GP.

There's no doubt that Climax's racer is one of the most popular games currently available on the Live service. It works incredibly well, enables those that don't own the original to play any of the tracks the host has unlocked – although they'll only be ghosts and won't score points – and overall is an incredibly satisfying experience. There are a few bugbears about the game however... Certain gamers will insist on conducting rather unsportsman like qualities once they are in game. Nudges and rams are sometimes a problem (especially when it causes you

precious places on the scoring table) but the real problems arise from the players who insist on driving around the tracks backwards. Luckily, you have the option of booting these guys off the server (should you be hosting a game.) If not, you can always report their sorry arses to the big M. The gamertag is also helpful, as you can simply refuse to play these people (once they become known to you) while you are in the lobbies.

It must be noted that this is not something that is simply found in Moto GP. All the current games share similar problems, luckily however, they can all be worked around and regular updates by Microsoft will hopefully ensure that cheaters never prosper.

The other demo disc game is Whacked. Mostly enjoyed by younger Xbox owners - it is a game you should enter at your own risk. Practically everyone uses the voice masking mode and whilst it's suited to the cartoon structure of the game, it makes for a bloody annoying gaming experience. The actual game itself fares only marginally better online than it does offline. The annoying swings in position are still evident and it takes a real effort to continue playing when you've constantly got a 12 year old rabbit constantly saying "what's up doc"



whenever they frag your backside into oblivion. On the plus sides, the lobby is rather pleasant (although each game can only be enjoyed/endured by four players.) Put it this way, Whacked will not be getting a lot of play a few hours after you first place it on your console (the fact that new copies are already selling for around 17 quid explains it all.)

Next stop, Unreal Championship. This is undoubtedly Microsoft's flagship title for Xbox Live. An adaptation of the extremely popular PC game, Unreal was designed as a live experience first and an offline experience second. While the lack of a lobby is fairly annoying, it doesn't take long to actually set up (or join) a game. And once you are up and running? Well, bugged me. The first thing I realised was that everyone was bloody good, the

second was that I'm bloody shite. I was also properly introduced to lag in all its glory. While an update is on its way, this game can give you a fair amount of stress if connected to a slow server. Whilst I initially took part in 16 player death matches, I soon got tired of the constant humiliation suffered - I'm sure some of the buggers are using a keyboard and mouse combination - so before long I tried out some of Unreal's other options. I find the team games a lot more fun than solo play, seeing that a few other forum members had now subscribed to the Test Drive, it was time to start my own sessions up.

I've always been a huge fan of the Street Fighter series and was pleased as punch when Capcom brought out Capcom Vs SNK 2. My god, this is superb fun. Look,

there's Ryu pulling of yet another Dragon Punch, now he hanging suspended in midair - funny, I don't remember that special move? Be aware, Capcom Vs SNK tends to suffer from some awful lag. Admittedly, it's normally when you're playing overseas. Even so, the other day, quite a few of my games against UK players were still suffering. Hopefully, once the English servers are up this will become a thing of the past, as Capcom's fighter is superb stuff and already getting a lot of acclaim by live players (despite the odd problem.)

Finally we come to my favourite online game, the superb Ghost Recon (yes I know Mech Assault and NFL Fever are also available on launch, but I'm not made of money.) In my mind, Recon, more than any other of the current releases totally encapsulates the Xbox Live experience. There's something about taking on the computer with a load of your mates that's incredibly fulfilling. The game gets incredibly intense and you really feel like you're out there. Even when you get bored playing the standard missions, you still have loads of other options available, Last man standing being a particular highlight. Recon has given me a huge amount of enjoyment over the last few weeks, like all the other games there are occasional lag problems, however even this cannot dampen such a great game.

Ultimately, things are looking pretty good for Xbox Live. Sure cynics will say that Broadband will never succeed in Europe (or at the very least, take a long time to establish itself), however this feature was planned on my own live experience, not on whether it's a feasible venture for Microsoft.

There's a great array of games already and plenty more on the way. I've not mentioned games with downloadable content, mainly because only Mech Assault currently has it - much more is promised though for all the major games (Splinter Cell's first downloadable level apparently takes place on a submarine). If you have access to both Broadband and a credit/debit card Xbox live is certainly worth the cost of a game.

In fact the only major problem I've found is that there no longer seems to be enough hours in the day.



DEAD AGAIN?

GSO LOOKS AT GAME DIFFICULTY

Video games that challenge the player to learn new skills, adapt to new environments and overcome difficult obstacles seem to be a dwindling minority.

Many of us fail to complete the video games which we purchase – but is this the fault of a fast food styled consumer demanding even quicker thrills and experiences or those that produce the games themselves?

When judged against video games from the 8bit era or beyond it is hard to come to any other conclusion except that games today are easier despite their increased size. Of course there are exceptions to every rule and several established developers through experience know how to create a challenging and fulfilling concept. The various Sega divisions,

Nintendo, ID, Rare and Treasure immediately spring to mind as developers who won't sacrifice the level of challenge to appease Western tastes. Video games such as Super Monkey Ball, Samba De Amigo, Skies of Arcadia, Gun Valkyrie and Ikaruga are recent examples of titles that demand a high level of competence and work rate from the player in order to progress. Yet it is not merely a case of throwing in a few precarious jumps or upping the number of baddies to increase the difficulty and durability - and this is where many games fail.

Skies of Arcadia was a release which attacked all the recent trends in the RPG genre. It dared to be difficult: a feature that Squaresoft has constantly overlooked and immediately threw the player in at the deep end. The linear progression

was well hidden through the ability to explore the map, locating secrets and treasure. The early bosses were exactly that, harking back to the giants of Contra and not easily overcome. The first boss was just as difficult as rival end of game bosses, and because Skies of Arcadia demanded you rose to the challenge, not many ventured past this stage. Many friends returned the game disillusioned by the toughness and more importantly being unable to cheat. Unfortunately the image of being a difficult title combined with the Dreamcast meant that Skies of Arcadia never reached the audience it deserved.

Thankfully Sega has seen fit to port the game to the Gamecube and I will be very interested to see if any adjustments have been made with regards to the difficulty.

Very few video games return the player to the beginning of the level when they have died, but this was a common feature in older games. Perhaps technology was one reason, but the majority of us had to face the level from the beginning after our initial failure. Admittedly such an approach was exceptionally frustrating and many games remained uncompleted, but others rose to the challenge building detailed maps of complex games and helping one another.

Today's gaming culture perhaps owes more to this and the need for pokes (Spectrum term for cheats) than any dingy seaside or motorway station arcade.

Recently I reviewed Sucker Punch's Sly Raccoon for the Playstation 2 and apart from the visual splendour the other memorable aspect was the player having to start at the beginning of a level, after their attempts were used up. A game



principle that at one time was so common is now exceptionally rare. Other recent examples include Maximo and Gitaroo Man as both possessed a steep difficulty curve one admittedly that only effort; guts and ability could overcome. There are obviously games that have no end and instead can be enjoyed over and over again, especially now that multi-player gaming is so popular. These include sports releases such as FIFA, Madden and ISS that have become a social event for many friends who prefer to stay in, rather than go out. Such releases enjoy a limitless life and are the source of much onscreen amusement and cheating.

Just like a modern day stuntman or circus performer, today's gamers are kept in check with a series of rules and safety nets if they fall. Releases such as Sabre Wulf, Manic Miner, Jet Set Willy or the majority of releases from this era only offered the initial story and your overall goal. There was no carefully planned initial stage, which showed players how the game worked as perfected by Nintendo over recent years. Rather you had to learn from your mistakes as you progressed without the help of any training mode. Even such common features as difficulty settings are only a recent trend as originally games shipped as a single commodity – a beginning, middle and end complete with few options. Having recently reviewed a series of video games for our retro section at Gamestyle, the lack of basic options as such has been one of the most noticeable aspects. From the initial boot sequence to the game itself only involved one or two button presses – how many games are similar today?

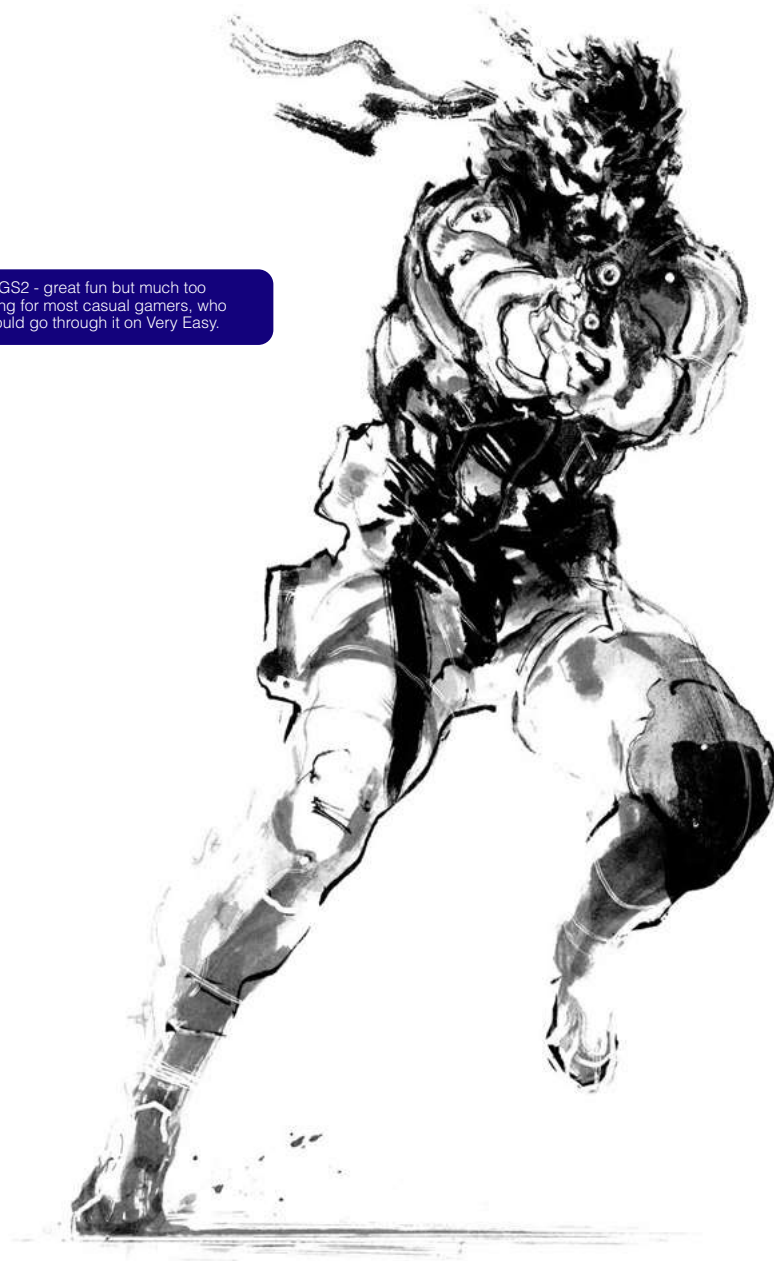
The diluting of game difficulty has been taking place slowly over the past few years. We can all remember the extra provision of an ultra easy mode in Metal Gear Solid 2, to suit Western tastes. The original Tomb Raider was a fantastic romp and one where you soon learned to treasure each save point. These were ideally spaced apart providing just enough challenge to create a sense of accomplishment and relief when each one was reached. The sequels lost this important feature by removing the save points and instead allowed the player to save anywhere at anytime. There was

no longer any sense of threat or achievement as the sequel and subsequent releases were reduced to nothing more than trial and error. Having lost her creator, Lara Croft has yet to return to the wonderful heights of her debut release and I doubt she ever will. In the meantime the rest of us wait impatiently for Confounding Factor to release Galleon.

Cheating is a Western trait that comes in a variety of disguises, whether it is hacking into the game itself or opening up those tough extras, the premise is exactly the same – you're cheating yourself. Ollie Barder in his What is your wish? feature raised the issue of cheaters within the

popular Japanese Armored Core series. Players who were struggling to come to terms with the game and slid into debt to the tune of 50,000 credits were automatically operated on. After the operation was complete they would possess a special ability that would allow them to build and design with few constraints. Players who used this feature were considered cheaters and dubbed PLOW users (Plus and OverWeight) by those who tried to play the game properly. This is a good example of how cheating is frowned upon in Japan, where I would envisage the completion rate is far higher.

MGS2 - great fun but much too long for most casual gamers, who could go through it on Very Easy.





PSO - the first multiplayer console RPG was ruined by cheaters and hackers.

Perhaps a more recent example to us all was the gaming nirvana of Ragul, where the adventures of Phantasy Star Online took place. Initially it was a wonderful experience, playing with and communicating with others from across the globe. Then as word spread of secret items, extreme weapons and the work needed to level up your character, the wrong sort of gamer soon appeared on servers. By using third party cheating devices this type of gamer soon became a plague on Ragoul, spoiling the wonderful achievement of Sonic Team. They were not prepared to put in the extreme human hours necessary to become the all-powerful character they saw themselves as. Instead they content themselves by stealing from others and running rampant throughout the world – so much so that one weekend I pulled out my modem connection and have never returned. I could no longer bear to see such a fantastic video game ruined by a mindless minority, the majority of whom were Westerners.

If video games are easier today, then why do we feel the need to cheat our way through them? There is no single reason; rather a multitude of factors which combine to create the phenomenon. The first is peer pressure amongst younger players – the need to be seen as good.

How can you call yourself a proper gamer if you have not achieved 100% on Grand Theft Auto: Vice City? This need to be seen and accepted comes at the expense of the game itself as surely the greatest pleasure in Vice City is messing around within the confines of the map, and causing your own urban chaos? A whole multi-million pound industry has sprung up around cheating or maximising your games as they suggest. Magazines that include the latest codes, maps and solutions support this and fan the flames.

Retailers also play a part by offering the latest cheat peripherals and guides – funnily enough combining both on the day of release. Unlike any other sport or past time cheating almost seems encouraged when it comes to videogames.

The explosion in cheating is shown through the financial figures of Datel, the UK company that specialises in helping gamers. In 2002 Datel accounted for a staggering 73.4% of the cheat device market across all formats, with this figure rising to 85.4% for the Playstation 2 market. The company, which is in its 20th year looks set expand on its annual turnover of £100 million in 2003 with the release of Freeloader and further cheat products for the Gamecube and Xbox. The reason for such a boom over the last

five years is down to the video game market becoming more accepted as a leisure activity and the rise of casual gamers. Adding to this growth is the usage of the CD and DVD across all formats which allows Datel to release specific cheat discs for specific releases.

Instead of releasing a single cheat program where the user has to enter new codes as they are discovered, Datel can now issue a disc which contains all the necessary codes for that game. The Ultimate Cheats series as its known has proven to be very popular due to the ease of use and price tag of £9.99 with the Getaway and LOTR: The Two Towers releases being amongst the best sellers.

For some consumers buying a cheat disc or guide on launch day is a routine event and allows them to get further into the game, faster.

Other factors worth considering are the price of games and the sheer amount of releases the industry churns out. It is an impossible task to play every game which is being released each week, and even more so if you wish to complete each one. Yet even now the majority of us are struggling to play the games we want without leaving many untouched or half completed for a day that never comes.

More than ever before social factors come into play when discussing consumers and video games. As the average age of those playing video games has grown so has their potential spending power, however the drawbacks have been overlooked. The older we become the less time we should theoretically have for playing games – unless you're a 28 year old bachelor still living at home. The demands of modern life combined with a career and partner all devour your playing time, never mind spending power. So we are often left to cherry pick releases hampered from making impulse or risky purchases. Those few releases, which we manage to purchase, we need to justify through size, quality or attraction to others. Given the emphasis on size and total playing time today it is no surprise that many turn to guides for games which might take normally 10+ hours to complete, but instead last for months. Are the players of video games today

nothing more than a bunch desperados devoid of true gaming skills? Perhaps so in the mind of those who concentrate fully on one release or series, displaying a high level of skill far beyond any normal Virtua Fighter or Armored Core owner. Yet today such dedication and enthusiasm is extremely rare - especially in the West. If you offer someone the world of course they'll gladly accept, even though they will never manage to explore or appreciate it completely. Therefore by offering consumers vast arrays of releases they'll feel inclined to desperately digest one before moving onto the next - fed by information from magazines and websites.

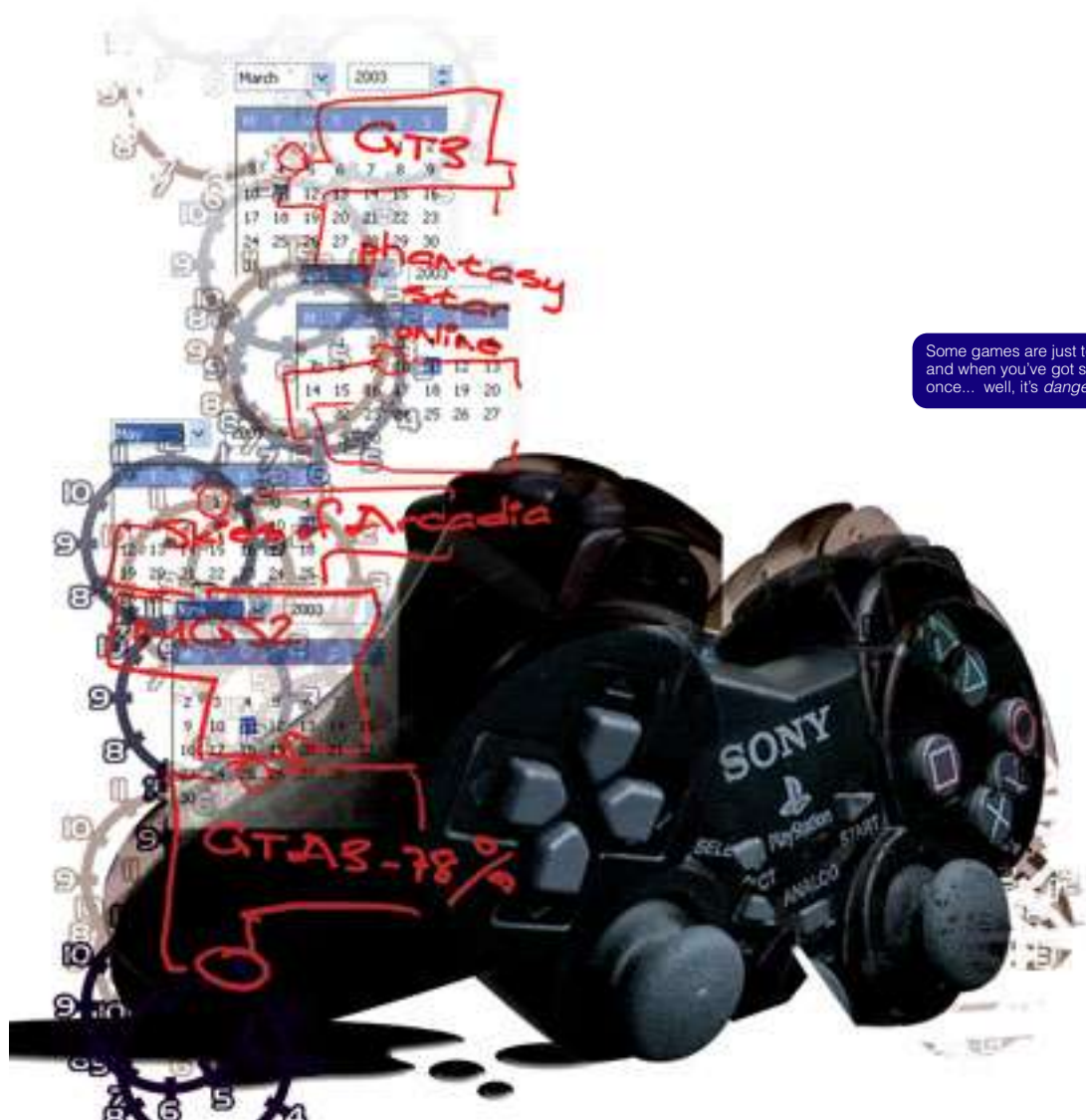
There is a severe lack of effort when faced with a challenge; patience and dedication are qualities that have certainly dwindled in players over the last decade. It's the

desire for new experiences fed by a quantity over quality approach from the industry that is the problem. The industry needs to recognise that the consumer has changed and therefore the market has evolved. Research and respect are two qualities that Japanese developers /publishers show towards their consumers.

Feedback is a vital feature which they take advantage of by listening to the fans and responding. You cannot have a successful company, series or franchise without taking on board criticism and identifying your target market. Too many games today are a combination of several genres in a vain attempt to appeal to everyone, but the final code manages to alienate us all. Have you ever completed a questionnaire or been interviewed about your gaming

preferences, habits and opinions? I would confidently predict that the majority reading this feature have never had this opportunity, but the information we contain as a group would be very useful. Whilst we can debate if the recent Fair Play campaign actually achieved anything, one thing is certainly clear as it showed the consumer needs to have a voice.

Many video game releases make a loss and it is the few big sellers, which maintain the current thriving industry. We need to slow down and enjoy each game but the industry cannot adapt to such a theory, not when there are shareholders and overheads to satisfy. If the consumer had more input and recognition then we would be able to enjoy those few purchases we make, and quite possibly even reach the end more frequently.



Some games are just too much, and when you've got several at once... well, it's *dangerous!*



RTYPE LEO (1992)

Platform	ARCADE
Developer	Irem
Class	Wide release
Monitor	Horizontal Raster Colour
Conversion	JAMMA
Players	2
Link	No
Sound	Mono

RTYPE LEO A BLAST FROM THE PAST

The R-Type series has a particularly chequered family tree, to the extent that IREM ignores a fair few entries. Many people will already know of the seminal R-Type and its somewhat disappointing sequel, R-Type II, but not many will know of the third arcade entry.

R-Type is renowned for many things, two of these being that you kill Bydo scum and you that you do it with an impenetrable shield, called the "Force", which can be subsequently powered up. The "Force" could also be attached at either the front or back of your R-9 ship, giving the player a varied menu of defence. Many would argue that it is this feature alone that makes R-Type unique, forcing players to forge themselves within the euphoria of defensive shooter strategy. R-Type Leo, on the other hand, had a different take on the matter.

Both of the iconic aspects of R-Type, the Bydo and the "Force" power-up, are absent in R-Type Leo. Admittedly the enemies are Bydo in all but name, they are actually the spawn of the surreally titled "Paradise Project", but the "Force" is noticeably absent.

As well as the use of the "Force" power up in the original R-Type, the player also had

access to two "Bits" that hovered above and below one's ship. Mostly there for dormant protection, their potential wasn't really utilised in either of the first two arcade outings. In Leo the "Force" power-up was removed entirely, leaving in its place a rather novel way of utilising the "Bits". Again they hover above and below your ship, and also offer increased modes

of fire (much like the old "Force" did), but the real feature that these little beauties offer is that of selective homing death.

R-Type originally used one button for firing and one to control the "Force". The same is in effect within Leo. One button fires shots and the other dispatches the "Bits" to obliterate any of the foes on screen. To explain, the "Bits" fly off and ram enemies on screen. Charging of the "Bits" allows the following carnage to be pretty compreh-ensive, but at the expense of leaving the player defenceless whilst they re-charge.





Judicious usage of the "Bits" requires strategy on the part of the player. Admittedly it is a vastly different form of strategy from that of the "Force's" use in the original R-Type, in that the emphasis is far more on offensive rather than defensive combat, but the level of lateral thinking is still of the same level.

Leo is also a particularly hard game. The lack of the "Force" power-up means now that the player's ship now lays particularly vulnerable. Destroying everything on screen really is the only way forward. Which means the player crucially relies upon the "Bits" to open up a safe path forward. Some sections verge on insanity, where comprehensive destruction and nimble dodging are the only way open

for the player to progress, not to mention studious memorising of many passages through enemy fire. The latter especially being a hallmark of the series. Upon its release in 1992 many fans were dismayed at the severe change in design focus. Yet for all the differences from its respected lineage, Leo is still a truly impressive shooter. The strategy that the series is famous for is still present, just in a different form. Thought is required by the player in order to cleanse the screen of enemies, but just in a different manner. Moreover it is a refreshingly cathartic experience too.

Aesthetically it is probably the most accomplished of all the R-Type games.

Vibrant colours and innovative designs make Leo probably one of the most sumptuous 2D shooters to ever grace the arcades. That's the catch though; this is an arcade game, trying to find Leo at a chipshop near you may be quite the challenge. To date, Leo has never been ported to any console nor was it ever released outside of its native Japanese soil (officially at least). Considerably off the beaten track, Leo left fans confused and subsequently dissuaded them to bother with the third arcade entry into the R-Type canon. Naturally, IREM have been distinctly reluctant to follow Leo up.

In the eyes of this reviewer, a foreign release and/or a port of this superb title would most certainly be an opportunity lost on the part of IREM. R-Type Leo is a paragon of, and a particularly innovative take on, the side scrolling shooter format. Ultimately the game's R-Type heritage has worked against it, but for those few inquisitive gamers out there that are after a cerebral shooting experience, you really cannot go far wrong with R-Type Leo. May the Force not be with you?

The scores:

Graphics	9
Sound	8
Presentation	9
Playability	9
Lastability	7
Overall	9
(not an average)	

In association with Gamestyle.net

Coming Soon

GamesImporter.com



NEXT ISSUE
UNDER THE BONNET