

# GameOn MAG

The Official Gaming Magazine from GameOn.co.uk

Issue 10 April 2009

## SILENT HILL : HOMECOMING REVIEWED AND RATED

GUITAR  
HERO  
METALLICA

Demo Previewed

STARTRISE



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# Reviewed



**STORMRISE**

**SEGA**

# ISSUE 10

## WELCOME

### Meet the Team

Project Director  
**Steve Greenfield**  
(Rasher)

Chief Editor  
**Steven Dawson**  
(djdawsonuk)

Graphics Editor  
**Simon Bonds**  
(Si^)

Graphics Artist  
**Robert Whetton**  
(Bobster)

Journalists  
**Chris Wakefield**  
(evilgiraffeman)

**Pete O'Brien**  
(POBMaestro)

**Neil Hetherington**  
(Wedgeh)

**Kevin Malone**  
(Dead Alive)

**James Bralant**  
(TheGingerKid)

**Mohamed Magdy**  
(Solidsnake)

**Kyle Nutland**  
(JK Ferret)

Welcome to Issue 10 of the GameOn Magazine.

You may notice we're introducing new features with each issue of the magazine; this issue things like the coffee break word search are still around but we've also added a crossword puzzle to this section and elsewhere you'll find a caption competition which we're sure is going to end with some laughs! In addition, it is now much easier to read older issues of the mag thanks to a full list of them at the back of this very issue. Of course reviews/previews and articles are all still in here :)

We hope you enjoy this issue.

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We highly suggest that you are at least of the age 13 to visit the forums or click the links within the magazine.

# ARTICLE

## ROLE PLAYING GAMES

**What is real? What is life? What is love? What is heroism? What is good? What is right? What is wrong? What is evil? Too many questions define our lives and it isn't often that you find an answer. Life has too many variables and too many constraints. There is only one place to find what you desire, one place to find what your true self is, one place that truly defines you: your imagination!**

A form of art has managed to flare through darkness and light, giving you a second chance that you might not have in life. You have probably heard of it, imagined it, seen it, read it, or even done it yourself. In one way or another you have come into contact with it. Don't be afraid now, it doesn't hurt but it is addictive!

A role-playing game is a game in which the participants assume the roles of fictional characters. Participants determine the actions of their characters based on their characterization. Within the rules, players have the freedom to improvise; their choices shape the direction and outcome of the game.

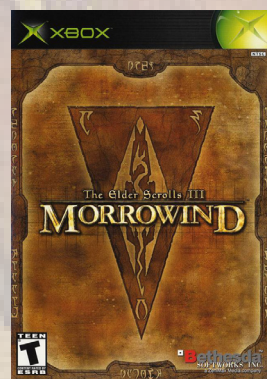
Role-playing as defined by many people is the act of taking a role. Put simply, it is imagining everything possible about a certain character and living in their shoes. In fact role-playing is more than that. To role-play is to have a life, a vision of what you want to be, what you desire and to take in every moment and action until the end of the character, not deviating from that path. It could be in a MMORPG (Massive Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game), an RPG (Role-Playing Game), a MUD (Multi-User Dungeon) or even on an E-mail game. It might even be in real life while you play with your friends, as far as it can go! Those that used to play Cowboys and Indians were role-playing; they took on the character and personality of either side and pretended to battle each other.

The idea of Role-playing advanced. it took over almost all aspects of life. It appeared in children's games, board games and eventually on PCs and computers. It all started with the two people that created the famous Dungeons and Dragons series of games, Gary Gygax and David Arneson. The genre was very successful and many games followed in its lead. Later on came Zork, Zork 2, Zork 3, Hammurabi, and Myst. Since then, role-playing has spread from genre to genre.

RPG's now are held to be one of the greatest genres in the gaming community. They are respected by all players due to their potential. Gamers have come to accept RPG's involvement in all types of games. So what are the main constructs of an RPG?

A lot of games have managed to be both popular and immersive. You will find many of those around, The Elder Scrolls, Fallout and Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic series. To play them, it is easy: let your mind float through your desires. Imagine yourself through the world you are targeting to live in and let go of your thoughts. It is all up to you. All you need to do is immerse yourself, which is when games come in handy.

So let's get down to the technical stuff: what is an RPG exactly? In this case I am going to take some case studies and base my theory on them.





# ARTICLE

## ROLE PLAYING GAMES

### The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind:

This is one of the best RPGs that defined an era of gaming. If you played it or read about it before you will instantly grasp of the idea.

The game opens with you as a prisoner being released for an unknown reason. After that you set out into the world of Tamriel, to find your destiny. Early on you discover many elements that created a new world.

- The world is vast. As you can tell from both the world map and the travels you undergo from one place to another, running errands.
- You are not alone. You will encounter many characters through your travels. Not only that, but almost all of them are able to make intelligent conversation with you. Even provides you with bits and pieces of information you didn't know. Some even go so far as telling you their opinions on politics.
- There is a main quest in which you have to do something grand, ultimately producing a hero out of you.
- Not all people are just there by chance. Most NPCs are placed so they would be give you some sort of side quest in addition to your original main quest.
- You will find that there is more than one city and one town. The world contains many creatures and many places as well.
- Freedom of choice. You are not limited to one thing that you have to do. You can be a bard, a trader, a warrior, a thief, a rogue or even a fighting mage. It is your call.
- Consequences: there is always a consequence to your actions: defeat the evil spirit and your people would hail you and name you their hero. However, joining with the evil spirit meant destruction will roam the world. Or you could leave the dark spirit and flee and be called a coward.
- Items and weapons. You will always find your trusty inventory there for you to hold all the shiny items that you will find in your travels.
- Economic system, just like real life. There

is an economic system flowing through the world. Mostly it is the same in all towns and places. You will find that there are traders to buy from, or sell to. There are also the makers of items and those that can repair it, this keeps the currency in the game flowing and maintain its value. Of course such a system is more noticeable and more powerful in larger scale games like MMORPGs

• The end. Here you will ultimately be a hero or doomed to be the powerful entity that will control the world. Either way the end will be solely decided by you and will afterwards effect and control the whole world's fate.

Mohamed Magdy

Continued next month



PREVIEW

## GUITAR HERO: METALLICA DEMO



**The Guitar Hero franchise is continuing to build its collection with Guitar Hero: Metallica. It is expected to be released in the UK around May.**

The demo has been made available on Xbox Live with 4 songs to try out: Sad But True, Seek & Destroy, No Excuses (by Alice In Chains) and Stone Cold Crazy (by Queen). The gameplay is similar to World Tour, with lead and bass guitar, vocals and drum tracks being available. There doesn't appear to be a demo on the PS3 however.

All instruments from World Tour work with this game, and the vast majority of features are carried over too - for instance, the slider bar and the open bass notes. Both single play and band play are also available, although the band play is limited to local only for this demo version.

Now as you may have noticed by the demo songs available, not all the songs in the game will be by Metallica. Quite a number of them are by Metallica's influences and good friends, for example, Queen and Alice In Chains, who each have a song in the demo.



# PREVIEW

## GUITAR HERO: METALLICA DEMO

Guitar Hero has now brought in one of Rock Band's more popular features, with this game - a star rating indicator. For the first time, GH players will be able to see just how well they are progressing whilst in-song, rather than just at the end. Also, during Band Play mode, you can see how well you are doing individually by your own track, rather than by the star meter. Band members still all contribute to the same rating though, and one member failing out will still fail the whole band. Star power is also pooled and can be used by anyone.

Depending on the song played, you will either be placed directly into Metallica's line-up as the relevant rocker, or you will be in a virtual band as you were in World Tour. The option is also there to mod your own rocker for use, although the demo only lets you choose their gender, musical influence and name. The same options as there were in World Tour look to be in place for the full version though.

The demo is very much a teaser: although I wouldn't consider myself a massive Metallica fan, I found myself wanting more very fast. The difficulty seems to be placed somewhere between GH3 and GH:WT, meaning the insane levels of the first, and the relative ease of much of the second, are being balanced out well, which is excellent news. This is already looking to be a firm addition to the best of the series - even more so for the Metall-heads.

Kyle Nutland





# ARTICLE

## GAME CHARTS

### Top 20 Platform Games

1. **Wii Fit**
2. **The Chronicles of Riddick: Assault on Dark Athena**
3. **The Godfather II**
4. **FIFA 09**
5. **Resident Evil 5**
6. **Professor Layton And The Curious Village**
7. **Mario Kart Wii**
8. **Wii Play**
9. **Call Of Duty: World At War**
10. **Carnival: Funfair Games**
11. **Mario & Sonic At The Olympic Games**
12. **Dr Kawashima's Brain Training**
13. **Guitar Hero: World Tour**
14. **My Fitness Coach**
15. **Sega Mega Drive Ultimate Collection**
16. **Call Of Duty 4: Modern Warfare**
17. **Rayman Raving Rabbids TV Party**
18. **Grand Theft Auto IV**
19. **Ben 10: Alien Force**
20. **LEGO Indiana Jones: Original Adventures.**





# ARTICLE COMMUNITY

This month user photo has been picked from the "Photo a day" thread.

GameOn user DannyM wins this months Editors pick With this "Evening Lake shot".



From forum regular "iNTOXiCATION " there comes this quote

**"I have always fancied one down me trousers however, looking at them claws, i think i will pass ! "**

The forum post can be found here



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Posted By [evilgiraffeman](#) - 01/11/2008

[Preview](#) [Games](#) [Siren: Blood Curse](#)

# REVIEW

## SILENT HILL HOMECOMING

The Silent Hill series has provided some of the most heart-stopping, pant-staining psychological terror ever seen in any form of media. More or less a decade ago, I remember sitting with a controller clenched in my hands scared witless but desperate to play on, in the original Silent Hill. After a disappointing decline after the previous two iterations, *Homecoming* sets its sights on rebooting the franchise.

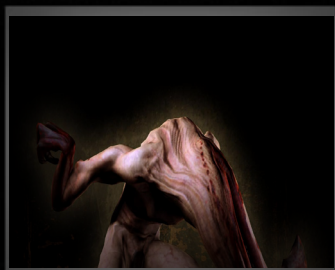


This instalment follows Alex Shepherd, an injured soldier, as he returns to his hometown of Shepherd's Glen. It quickly becomes apparent that all is definitely not well as the streets are uncharacteristically foggy, his father is missing and his mother is a shell of her former self. The story opens strongly, leaving you with a plethora of questions and virtually no answers in true Silent Hill style.



As soon as you have begun, you are thrown straight in at the deep end with a sinister opening set in the mandatory hospital level. Thankfully, the developers seem to acknowledge this and treat it as a sort of tutorial which doesn't end up taking too long. It soon comes to light that this isn't the classic Silent Hill formula, familiar from the first few games. This is initially hard to swallow as a great fan of those

## SCREENSHOTS





# REVIEW

## SILENT HILL HOMECOMING

early classics, especially when a lot of the new style seems to be drawn from the film adaption. Yet, I found myself coming to terms with this and acknowledging that the series was moving in a new direction and at least wasn't stagnating.

The most immediately obvious change is the shift in focus of the game itself. In previous titles, you were physically weak and combat proved difficult and challenging as you were just a normal person. In fact, it was better to run or attempt to avoid enemies than stand your ground. However, Homecoming is a very different beast and it is now virtually impossible to avoid or outrun most enemies.

In order to deal with this the combat system has been improved giving you more precision when shooting and a set of moves for melee fighting. You have a choice of both heavy and light attacks when using one of the many weapons which can be strung into combos. When shooting, an over the shoulder camera takes over and you are given a reticule with which to aim. The combat is challenging and hard to get to grips with at first and is very different from anything seen before in the series.

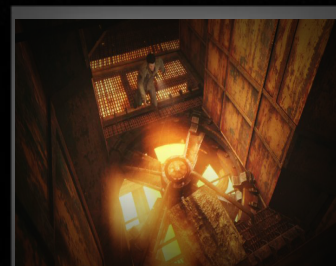
Critical aspects to the combat are dodging and evasion which are tricky to get used to. During combat it is necessary to dodge enemies' moves whilst squeezing in attacks, the timing required for the dodges varies depending on enemies. This proves to be challenging but effective though it never quite becomes second nature as

it should. The heavy emphasis on combat does feel misplaced in a Silent Hill title and as such the atmosphere never quite materialises.



Homecoming doesn't scare which is perhaps my biggest criticism. The combat orientated gameplay means you never fear your enemies and some patchy enemy design also undermines some of the horror. A greater focus on "shocks" feels misguided which is a shame as these have previously been overlooked in favour of building a chilling ambience.

## TRAILERS





# REVIEW

## SILENT HILL HOMCOMING



Other flaws include an inventory system which is overly sensitive and can waste valuable health items when you are instead trying to select a key for a puzzle. This caused several serious cases of anger when valuable health kits were wasted through no real fault of my own. Some of the boss fights feel petty and frustrating, when you are knocked down only to be repeatedly pummelled into submission before you can even get to your feet. It must also be noted

that there have been a wide range of glitches and bugs reported in Homecoming, including keys disappearing upon loading after saving your game. Be advised to make duplicate saves, though hopefully these technical problems will be addressed in upcoming patches.

However, despite these shortcomings, Homecoming managed to impress me as a horror game. The technical aspects of the title are simply superb with fantastic graphics making some of the transitions between the "Otherworld" and "reality" very impressive. The real standout achievement is another outstanding soundtrack by Akira Yamaoka which is not only evocative but immersive. Sound in horror games is essential and here it works perfectly being the game's strongest feature.





# REVIEW

## SILENT HILL HOMECOMING



The real lynchpin of a Silent Hill title is its story. Here I was a little disappointed especially in the latter portion of the game where things move in a different direction, a little too far from the established mythos of the series. Some may feel a little cheated by the knitting together of the plot but it is effective enough. In some ways the narrative feels like a simplified version of something which was initially more complex though the presence of five endings does make up for this.

So, it seems that Silent Hill has changed as a series in order to find its place in a new generation. If you are a die hard fan of the series this may be especially galling and I really do yearn for the complex horror of Silent Hill 2. Yet, for all I dislike about the new feel for the series, I completed it in only a handful of sittings. There is definitely something here that still appeals even if it has been diluted down. Horror fans sit back and enjoy the blood filled tale: Silent Hill fans approach with some caution.



REVIEWER: **CHRIS WAKEFIELD**  
GAME: **SILENT HILL HOMECOMING**  
PLATFORM: **PS3**  
DEVELOPER: **DOUBLE HELIX GAMES**  
PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**  
RELEASED: **FEBRUARY 27, 2009**

PLAYABILITY: **8**  
REPLAYABILITY: **7**  
SOUND: **10**  
GRAPHICS: **9**

**OVERALL: 8**



# REVIEW

## MADWORLD



Well here I am with another title from Sega, to which its tongue is firmly sticking into cheek. Some of you may remember my review of **House of the Dead: Overkill** and its rather colourful voice acting. Well **MadWorld** is following suit with dishing out the profanities, though **House of the Dead** can rest easy with its recent award from the **Guinness book of world records** for the **most swear words held in a gaming title**.

Though with that said, what **MadWorld** lacks in profanities compared to **Overkill**, it more than makes up for it in the violence stakes as you will soon discover that the crimson flows thick and fast through the streets of Varrigan City, which again warrants a BBFC 18 certificate with good right.

Our protagonist for this outing is a stereotypical grizzled hard man, named Jack, who acts cooler than the proverbial cucumber in the face of insurmountable odds, equipped with a prosthetic right arm which conceals his deadly chainsaw of death. All of which, in a stylised black and white theme akin to **Sin City** with subtle influences from western comic books, makes this a refreshing change from the usual push towards realism.



This could also explain to how Sega have been able to get away with the level of violence within the game for Nintendo to allow this on the Wii.

So the story starts off with an introduction to the mysterious sponsor only known as XIII, looking for a potential volunteer to sponsor to participate in the Death Watch games.

Some local uncouth inhabitants are seen beating seven shades of black and white out of each other with one yobbo coming out on top, seemingly acquiring XIII's sponsorship. Then out of the shadows steps Jack challenging the victor for sponsorship and with one deft punch the opponent is out for the count with Jack then obtaining the sponsor of XIII.



## SCREENSHOTS





# REVIEW

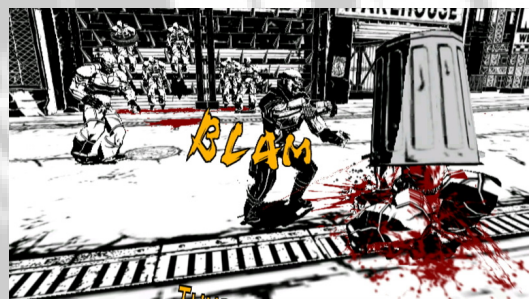
## MADWORLD

The game then takes you to a brief tutorial level allowing you to become accustomed to the relatively easy control system, utilising both Wiimote and nunchuck, the 'chuck stick' moves Jack around with the Z button to jump and the C button to lock onto targets or reset the camera to view Jack from behind. Flicking the nunchuck makes Jack back flip out of danger or if you are currently holding a local yobbo, you then head butt the said yobbo into a stunned state. If you feel particularly mean, keep flicking the nunchuck until you make your opponents head 'pop'.

The A button allows you to grab items or foes along with dishing out quick repetitive jabs, while the B button lets you unsheathe the chainsaw - this has its own meter which decreases and replenishes over time, so while you can't run about causing havoc constantly you also don't have to look out for any pick-ups to refill the gauge. Finally, swinging the Wiimote horizontally allows you to swipe away at enemies while a vertical motion uppercuts adversaries into the air sometimes allowing for a rather brutal finisher involving your chainsaw while the opponent is still airborne. The same motions applied while having your chainsaw out simply just slashes in those directions.



After your basic moves come more complex and brutal ways of dispatching your enemies, the more complex the move is the more points Death Watch award you, so be imaginative in your methods of killing and the points come rolling in. For example simply punching someone into submission may get you 3000 points while throwing a tyre over them, then impaling them with a sign post before repeatedly impaling them on a spiked wall, known as a rose bush, could net you in excess of 25000 points.

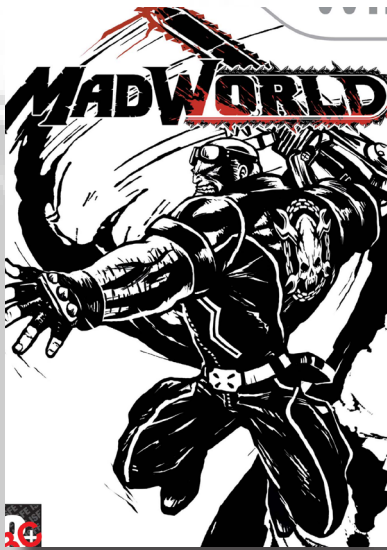


## TRAILERS



# REVIEW

## MADWORLD



The ultimate goal of each level is to gain enough points in order to face the level boss, each with their own extra-brutal finishing move once dispatched, after that you then gain their Death Watch ranking and move on further into Varrigan City to face your next opponent in the rankings. Now not all is as it may seem within the MadWorld scenario, more sinister happenings are afoot which become more apparent while you progress through the game.

Each level contains additional weapons such as spiked bats or butterfly knives which unlock at certain point totals, additionally 'Bloodbath Challenges' can be unlocked which are basically little mini games held within the confines of your location. These allow you to obtain even more points for your ever increasing total, a personal favourite being 'Man Darts'; I'm sure you can guess what's involved in that one. Each challenge is introduced by the Black Baron, a trash talking pimp who then gives a brief description of what each challenge involves, before getting swiftly dispatched in that very method by his Debbie McGee like assistant. Whilst watching the cut scene was initially humourous, the novelty quickly wore off after the third or fourth challenge.

While you rampage through the streets painting the town red, quite literally too, your actions are commented by Greg Proops of Have I Got News For You?, along with John DiMaggio, the voice of Futurama's Bender. Comically interpreting your actions in a sports caster like manner, both drop enough "F Bombs" to make even the most hardened of sailors blush. While most of the commentary was pre scripted, there are some ad-lib moments between the pair during the recordings, some of which were retained for the actual release of the game.





# REVIEW

## MADWORLD



It comes to light that there is more to Jack than first impressions gave. Jack is actually a former marine and former three-time champion of previous Death Watch games who is secretly on a mission to find the mayor's daughter holding deep within the city. The organisers quickly discover the truth of Jack's intentions but realise that he is quickly becoming an audience favourite, and although they could dispose of Jack at any time they wish, the opportunity to try and kill him in the games with so many sponsors and people betting on his success seems to be the wiser course of action.



Annoyingly though, the later stages in the game are on controller breaking frustration levels and the camera can work against you at times - like when you want to line up that perfect swing with the spiked baseball bat - or just be a plain pain in the arse and not behave in the manner you want it to, normally resulting in you taking a beating. As a piece of entertainment you can't go wrong with MadWorld, while not perfect by any means its bloody good fun, bottom line is, MadWorld is definitely one for the collection without hesitation.



REVIEWER: **NEIL HETHERINGTON**  
GAME: **MADWORLD**  
PLATFORM: **WII**  
DEVELOPER: **PLATINUM GAMES**  
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**  
RELEASED: **MARCH 20, 2009**

PLAYABILITY: **8**  
REPLAYABILITY: **7**  
SOUND: **8**  
GRAPHICS: **7**

**OVERALL: 8**





# REVIEW

## GRAND AGES: ROME

Many moons ago, city-building games were all the rage; Sierra's Caesar and Pharaoh series appealed to history enthusiasts, The Settlers games were the cult favourite whilst Sim City was the one to beat. Nowadays Impressions Games (the developers behind Sierra's city-builders) are no more, Blue Byte have been consumed by Ubisoft and are relegated to milking their former glory with lacklustre remakes. Will Wright is one of the few to outlast his virtual cities, however these days he is more concerned with the lives of individual Sims, or interfering with the theory of evolution.

Haemimont Games, recent inheritors of the fabulous Tropico franchise, are seeking to reinvigorate the classic city-building genre by mixing in RTS mechanics along with a pinch of RPG for good measure.



Grand Ages: Rome follows the traditional formula of calling on the player to expand their settlements and meet a series of criteria whilst balancing the needs and desire of their citizens. Campaign mission goals normally revolve around trade, city development or military conquest; alternatively a number of the maps are available to play in Free Build mode, giving the player the option to construct a city without the objectives.

City inhabitants are split into three social classes - Plebians, Equites and Patricians - each has more needs that require fulfilling than the previous. For example, Plebians only require food to be happy, Equites additionally require entertainment and Patricians also desire religion.



## SCREENSHOTS





# REVIEW

## GRAND AGES: ROME



It's all well and good wanting luxuries, but those luxuries must come from somewhere. Thankfully there is an extensive supply chain that will ensure your citizens are working hard for their creature comforts; a number of these structures can be staffed by different classes for improved productivity, whilst some can also resort to slave labour.

Resources themselves are not stockpiled; rather supply must outweigh consumption, meaning it's rare to be waiting for sufficient resources to be collected in order to continue building other than when running low on Denarii, the games currency. One minor issue is that whilst satisfaction providing structures operate on an 'area-of-effect' basis, resource gathering and producing structures contribute to a universal pool without needing transportation or storage - as a result, a butchers shop will happily produce sausages even if the pig farm that supplies it is located on the other side of the map.

## TRAILERS





# REVIEW

## GRAND AGES: ROME



With a city's expansion (or as the campaign scenario dictates) you will often encounter hostiles, either in the form of local barbarian villages or an organised enemy force. Assuming the appropriate military structures have been constructed, it is possible to recruit squads to defend your walls. Unfortunately the resulting RTS action is less Rome: Total War, and more Age of Empires - combat is limited with massed ranks more likely to win battles than any particular strategic decisions.

Success in individual missions awards points which can be spent on numerous talents that confer a variety of bonuses which can be carried between missions. There is also the option to purchase a selection of territories which grant additional resources once they have been unlocked through secondary mission objectives.

Graphically, the game does not disappoint; individual units and buildings are lovingly detailed, day blends seamlessly into night and the camera zooms smoothly between tightest and widest views. Unfortunately there are a handful of issues, mainly revolving around structures not being as solid as they would first appear - spend any amount of time at the maximum zoom watching citizens go about their lives and you will frequently see people taking shortcuts by walking through buildings; similarly trade caravans crossing rivers will walk directly through the bridge and water, leaving only the caravan master with his feet dry.

The interface is very streamlined with a row of context sensitive icons showing resource availability and satisfaction levels, whilst building is handled by a single circular right-click menu. This works well but can lag slightly when switching between build categories.



# REVIEW

## GRAND AGES: ROME



Ambient sound effects do a good job of bringing the city to life but can quickly become repetitive - after you've heard a hyena being whipped for the twentieth time, you begin to question the reasoning behind allowing hyenas to roam your city regardless of whether they are being followed by a man with a whip or not.



Multiplayer games come in both competitive and cooperative flavours with Team City mode granting multiple players control over a single city, however there is no LAN support for anyone able to get their friend(s) within the reach of a network cable.

Despite all the effort that has gone in to creating a game that is both streamlined and deep, Grand Ages: Rome fails to deliver in a number of areas, including the previously mentioned poor combat mechanics. This would not be such a big issue if the foundation of the game, the city building, was solid, however as

there are no restrictions on which buildings are available in the campaign missions you find that you are repeatedly building the same city albeit with a slightly different landscape each time.

Ultimately it's hard to recommend the game for fans of the city-building genre; players looking for a more in-depth and challenging economic experience should probably look towards something like the two year old Anno 1701 (assuming they haven't already mastered it). Newcomers to this RTS subset or gamers looking for an easily accessible interpretation could do a lot worse than picking up a copy of Grand Ages: Rome.



REVIEWER: **MATT STUDD**  
GAME: **GRAND AGES: ROME**  
PLATFORM: **PC**  
DEVELOPER: **HAERMIMONT GAMES**  
PUBLISHER: **KALYPSO MEDIA**  
RELEASED: **MARCH 6, 2009**

PLAYABILITY: **8**  
REPLAYABILITY: **6**  
SOUND: **7**  
GRAPHICS: **8**

OVERALL: **7.5**





# REVIEW

## SONIC AND THE BLACK KNIGHT



to say that it isn't too bad. The fast paced levels that you encounter throughout the game feel good to play. They bring back the essence of what Sonic is, racing around a level and reaching the goal as soon as possible. The thing that makes the game only "not too bad" are the Were-hog levels. They take out the fast paced action of Sonic and flip it on its head. This being the case, you would think they could change their ways and bring out a lightning quick game to suit all Sonic fans. Prepare to be disappointed.

**The Sonic series on the next generation consoles really has not hit off, to say the least. The games have been slated time and time again by game reviewers saying that the games are nothing like the originals and have lost the spirit of the retro Sonic titles. Although this may be true, game developers need to be creating new ideas continue to advance the industry. In my eyes, they should only be doing this if the games are actually worth playing. So what do I think of Sonic and the Black Knight? The same as all reviewers before me.**

It wasn't too long ago that Sonic Team last brought out their last major Sonic title; Sonic: Unleashed. I have the game and have

The title is on the Nintendo Wii only, which was a rather strange move in itself by Sega and Sonic Team as surely having the title on several platforms would enhance sales etc.



## SCREENSHOTS





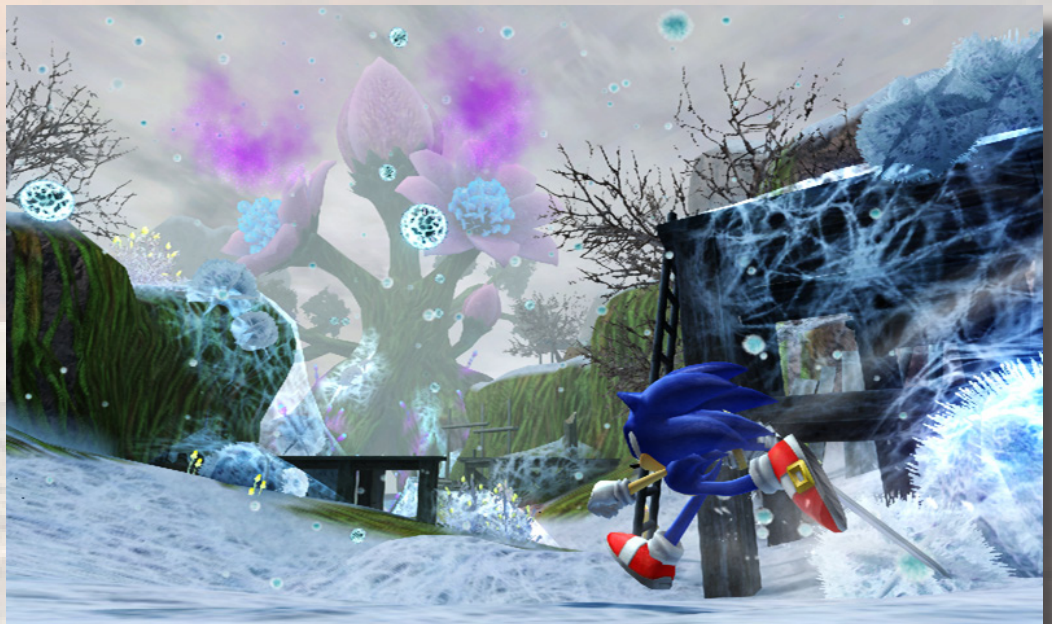
# REVIEW

## SONIC AND THE BLACK KNIGHT

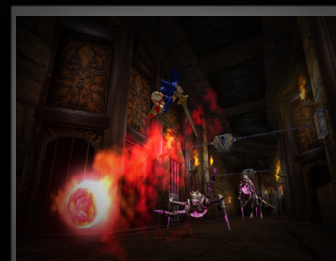


As well as this strange twist, there is a couple more. To make sure this game wasn't 'Sonicy' enough for you, the makers had to have each of the series' characters a member of the legend's characters. For example, Amy is the Lady of the Lake and Knuckles is Sir Gawain. Following this theme, you wouldn't think anyone else would be King Arthur but Dr. Eggman. This isn't the case; King Arthur is King Arthur, that's it. I was dumbfounded when I found this out.

The main storyline to the game is as follows: you play as Sonic (of course) in Camelot, where your main mission is to stop and defeat King Arthur. As ludicrous as this may sound, the story is that he has been given the sword Excalibur and has turned evil. All the power has gone to his head as he has become immortal. The only way to defeat the King, is to claim three other legendary swords wielded by 3 different Knights of the Round Table whom are also evil. Basically, the game revolves around a twisted version of the King Arthur legend.



## TRAILERS





# REVIEW

## SONIC AND THE BLACK KNIGHT



Further on in the game, you can use a powered move by jumping back, holding B and then slicing to dispatch an enemy quickly. This is all well and good, but isn't a move that keeps you flowing. Once used, you grind to a halt, which is stupidly frustrating when trying to get through a level at speed.

Poor movement is something that bugs this game throughout. When running at

speed, you can move about across the map quite freely from left to right etc., but once you tap back the slightest bit you grind to a stop having to re-build up your speed once again, which takes a long time as Sonic walks for a while before starting to run. Another thing I found rather strange was the fact that Sonic will not face the camera. After stopping, and wanting to walk back and grab a couple coins, you simply just walk backwards until you reach the desired point.

The game opening is actually quite stunning. I was gob smacked at how good the opening cut scene was, it really shows off some of the best graphical works. The opening cut scene however is where the goodness ends. For the rest of the game, you aren't treated with smooth 3D animations - instead you are given 2D pictures that move slightly as each of the characters speak. I was bitterly disappointed when I found out this was the case as I was hopeful from the opening. The graphics in the game are around average for a Wii game. They aren't anything special, but they aren't bad.

There isn't any frame rate drops when playing so the team have found a good balance there. It's only worth having good graphics if the console can actually handle it.

The controls are the main gripe I have. The game itself utilises the Wii motion controls to some extent but not fantastically. You swing the Wii remote to slice with your Sword, but there is no special technique to alter the moves.





# REVIEW

## SONIC AND THE BLACK KNIGHT



When you have stopped and are trying to walk into some coins or boxes that have potential coins within it takes forever. I can't exaggerate how poor these controls are. If you want to strafe into a box or coin, it's like having to push a boulder along with you just to reach the side where the coin is. "Could this game get any worse?" I hear you cry. Well yes actually, it took me 2 hours to complete. 2 measly hours. That includes me writing notes, checking out all the game modes and completing the entire storyline in depth. Surely the game could last just a bit longer? Sega have tried to increase the longevity of the game by providing collectables you can obtain whilst running through the levels and defeating enemies but it's not as simple as just picking them up and getting them. You have to reveal each item using 'I.D. Points' of which you have a certain limit for each level completion. It's a stupid idea as you can waste time spending points on items you already have. Most of the items are 100% pointless and are there simply for bragging rights, but some can

be wielded to enhance your game such as starting off with 5 rings at the beginning of each level.

As well as the main storyline, you can play time trials to compete against people online. As you continue through the main story, you unlock more of these to attempt to reach the top of the leaderboards. A multiplayer battle mode is available, but isn't online. You fight using close combat moves in a general free-for-all battle to thrash your mates as you see fit.

The only likeable part of this game is the music. Although repetitive at times, the music is well made and very cool to listen to. You can unlock and check out some other tracks in the gallery and they are all rather good. This is something that Sonic has never got wrong, how good the soundtracks are, but sadly, it seems this is the only thing they didn't get wrong on this attempt.

I started off playing this game with a clear mind. I emptied all the thoughts I had of all the previous next gen Sonic games and went on to play this. Although I did all this, it was a waste of time. This game should not have been made and with it being only a couple months since Sonic last game, this could only be seen as a rush to be released for no reason whatsoever. Maybe, one day Sonic Team and Sega will get things right, but they certainly haven't done here.



REVIEWER: **JAMES BRALAND**  
GAME: **SONIC AND THE BLACK...**  
PLATFORM: **WII**  
DEVELOPER: **SONIC TEAM**  
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**  
RELEASED: **MARCH 13, 2009**

PLAYABILITY: **6**  
REPLAYABILITY: **4**  
SOUND: **8**  
GRAPHICS: **8**

**OVERALL: 6.5**





# REVIEW

## STORMRISE

When the world was ravaged by humans, they deployed tactics to save it from the environmental crisis they had made. However, that only served to worsen the situation - firestorms ripped through the world, and the vast majority of the Earth was torn apart, with billions dying. A small fraction of the elite went underground and into a cryogenic sleep, ready to take back the world when the time was fit. Those remaining on the surface were left to die, yet somehow some survived, and mutated in order to survive. Time passed, and now the underground Echelon forces, led by Commander Geary, have left their slumber to take on the surface Sai army in a battle for Earth's remains.



After a cutscene depicting the back-story, you are landed in the tutorial. This gives explanations on movement around the battlefield, and movements between units. Doing something different to the norm, Stormrise has implemented a third person view from ground level, rather than the view from above that most RTS's have.



There aren't really that many controls - you can move the targeting cursor with the left stick and change units with the right, while A gives the order to move out. All units attack any enemy units they see automatically. You could theoretically play through the game using just these three controls, although it would be pretty hard. Some more button uses are introduced in the missions - Back loads a tactical overview and Left Trigger

## SCREENSHOTS





# REVIEW

## STORMRISE

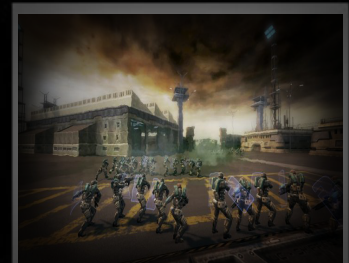


lets you assign certain extras, like Geary's flamethrower, to whichever unit you are currently controlling. The Right Bumper and Trigger zooms out and in respectively, for however long the button is held. Pressing X lets you issue an indirect order, which is an order given to a group you don't have selected directly.

Units have varying characteristics: Your main unit is the Commander, who comes in a big metal suit with big metal guns to match. The downsides are that they move slowly, and if one is killed in story mode then you lose the mission. The main "lesser" units are: Enforcers, the grunts of the Echelon army; Sentinels, who are defence groups with heavy machine guns; and Infiltrators, units designed more for high ground and a little stealth with their powerful sniper rifles.



## TRAILERS





# REVIEW

## STORMRISE



You can also gain control node towers, which can do a number of things: teleporting in recruits is the main one, which is usually restricted to one or two master portals. They also generate energy which can be used to buy upgrades on the towers - the upgrades include weaponry, shielding and refinement, and have maximum caps at level three, although most towers will max at level two. Weaponry adds guns to your tower, which do more damage with each upgrade; Shielding protects the upgrades that have been installed, and refinement generates more energy for buying upgrades. A fully upgraded tower is a much bigger beast than it is with nothing, but it will still need guards to protect it. Cover can also play a part in battle - you can hide your troops behind broken walls, behind pillars and, in certain situations, the shadows. Soldiers crouched behind cover will need to stand up to keep firing, and shadows only work on certain enemies though, so use of cover will only be a secondary handy extra in your battle plan.

This is a game clearly designed for more modern TVs; everything is a bit cramped on smaller, older ones, making the field a little difficult to view and writing hard to read. The game

also tends to lag a bit with all the information being processed; a lot of the time you can see that you've wiped out a unit because the health bar disappears, but the enemies still run forward and your units still fire for a few seconds. There are detailed parts to the game, but some parts are a bit dull also - most of the terrain is either grey or dark red, and the only vivid colours are the intense red and blue icons that discriminate between friend and foe. For the most part, battles take place in ruined cities, with smashed roads and bridges opening up energy rifts. The sky has either the grainy red swirl of doom that is associated with apocalyptic catastrophes or an ashy cloud with the odd lightning bolt, whereas the ground floor is the usual grey of most tarmac roads, interspersed with cracks and strains of rift energy.

The sound is also a little lacking, with it usually being the sounds of gunfire and the occasional environmental sound. Sometimes there is a burst of battle music when you step into a battle out of calm, but that's about it. Your army will helpfully tell you when they spot enemy units though, and you are also informed whenever a unit is killed off or a tower upgrade is installed.



# REVIEW

## STORMRISE

Sometimes the difficulty is rather uneven. After making it to the middle ground on Mission 3 on hard I was left facing endless numbers of Sai foes, with the battle lasting for hours. During this time, what little attempts I was able to make at forward progress were cruelly halted. The enemy AI can often outstrip that of your unit members - a few times I was slaughtered on an easy mode skirmish simply because my small number of men insisted on running around in circles while the enemy created massive armies to come and pummel mine.



If the story mode starts getting to you, or you just fancy a break, then there is both Skirmish and Multiplayer modes. Skirmish consists of you versus the computer AI on one of ten maps. You can choose whether to have a time limit or not, how much of an energy supply you start with, a difficulty setting for the computer and select up to seven AI teams to be against. The objective is simple: wipe all traces of your enemies from the map. You start off with a master portal and a Commander, and there are several control nodes you can take over to generate supplies. The key to winning here is to get one or two control nodes fast as well as building an army that can withstand enemy attacks. However, the computer can handle this process much more efficiently than a player could, and will more than likely get an attack on you before you are ready for it, even on easy mode.

Multiplayer mode is just like Skirmish mode, except against real people. There is no option for local multiplayer, only online and through system link. This is a good thing though, as you will need all the screen you can get to keep an eye on what's happening, and cheating would be pretty easy anyway. In both of these modes it is also possible to choose the Sai team.

Although Stormrise is not a brilliant game, it is by no means bad. A few little issues are denting the game, which is a bit of a shame considering the jump it's made with the original ground third-person view, and it's a jump that is made well. If you are a fan of epic long battles, especially on the harder difficulties, then this is a game for you. The ground view may take a little getting used to, but with a little practice you can whip around the field with ease.



REVIEWER: **KYLE NUTLAND**  
GAME: **STORMRISE**  
PLATFORM: **XBOX 360**  
DEVELOPER: **THE CREATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
PUBLISHER: **SEGA**  
RELEASED: **MARCH 27, 2009**

PLAYABILITY: **9**  
REPLAYABILITY: **8**  
SOUND: **5**  
GRAPHICS: **7**

**OVERALL: 8**





# CAPTION COMPETITION

## RESULTS

We thought we would try something a bit different.  
This month we uploaded some screenshots  
and asked for some captions.

From what the users submitted, we picked a winner.



[Read More](#) [Add New Comment](#)

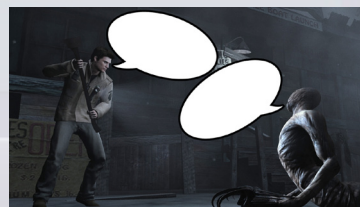
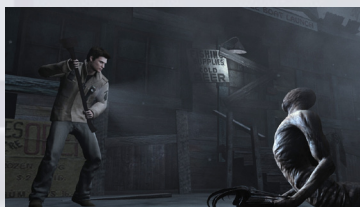
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shared between the  
Community

5

ates on Social Network  
s (Update Feeds)

1

Other (Please state in  
Comments)

0

These are the original screenshots we uploaded.  
You can view the other images submitted here.



[17 comments](#) [14 votes](#)

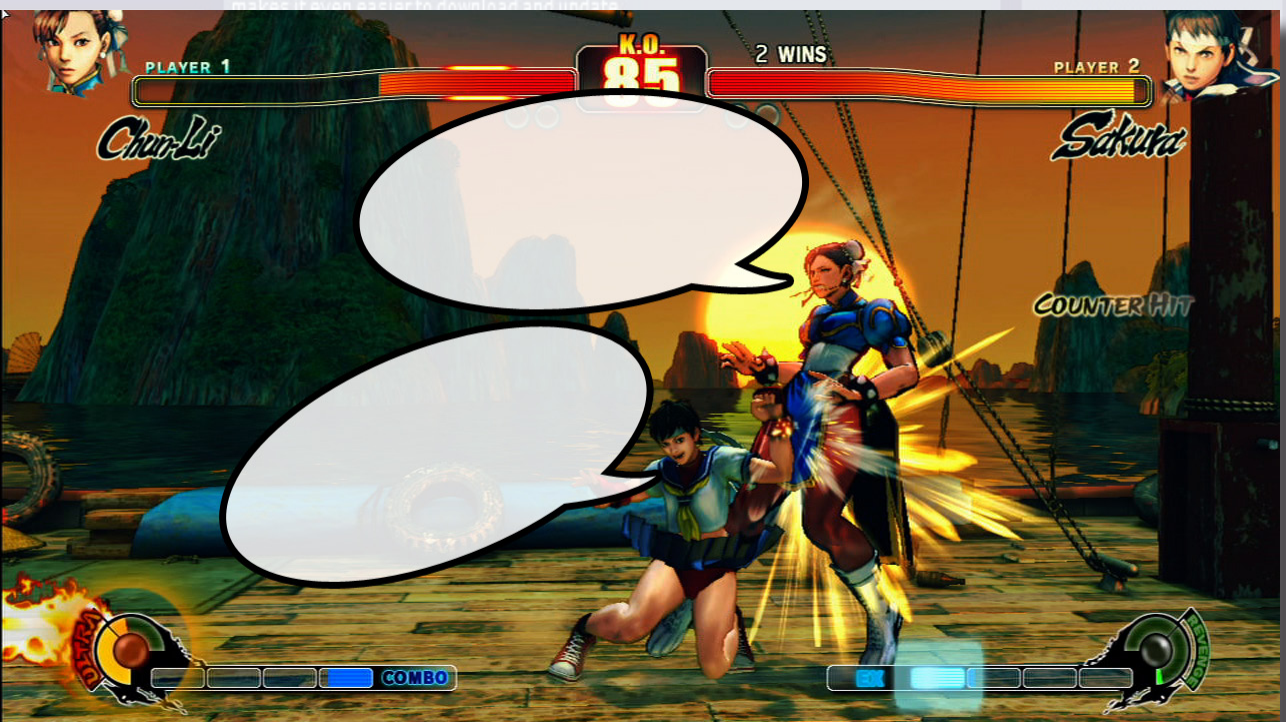


# CAPTION COMPETITION

## THIS MONTH'S NEW ONE

We thought we would give you two different images this month to play around with.

To take part, just download the images (link at bottom) edit in any editor (even a simple one like MS Paint) then post your image in the following forum, which you can find by clicking the bubble to the right.



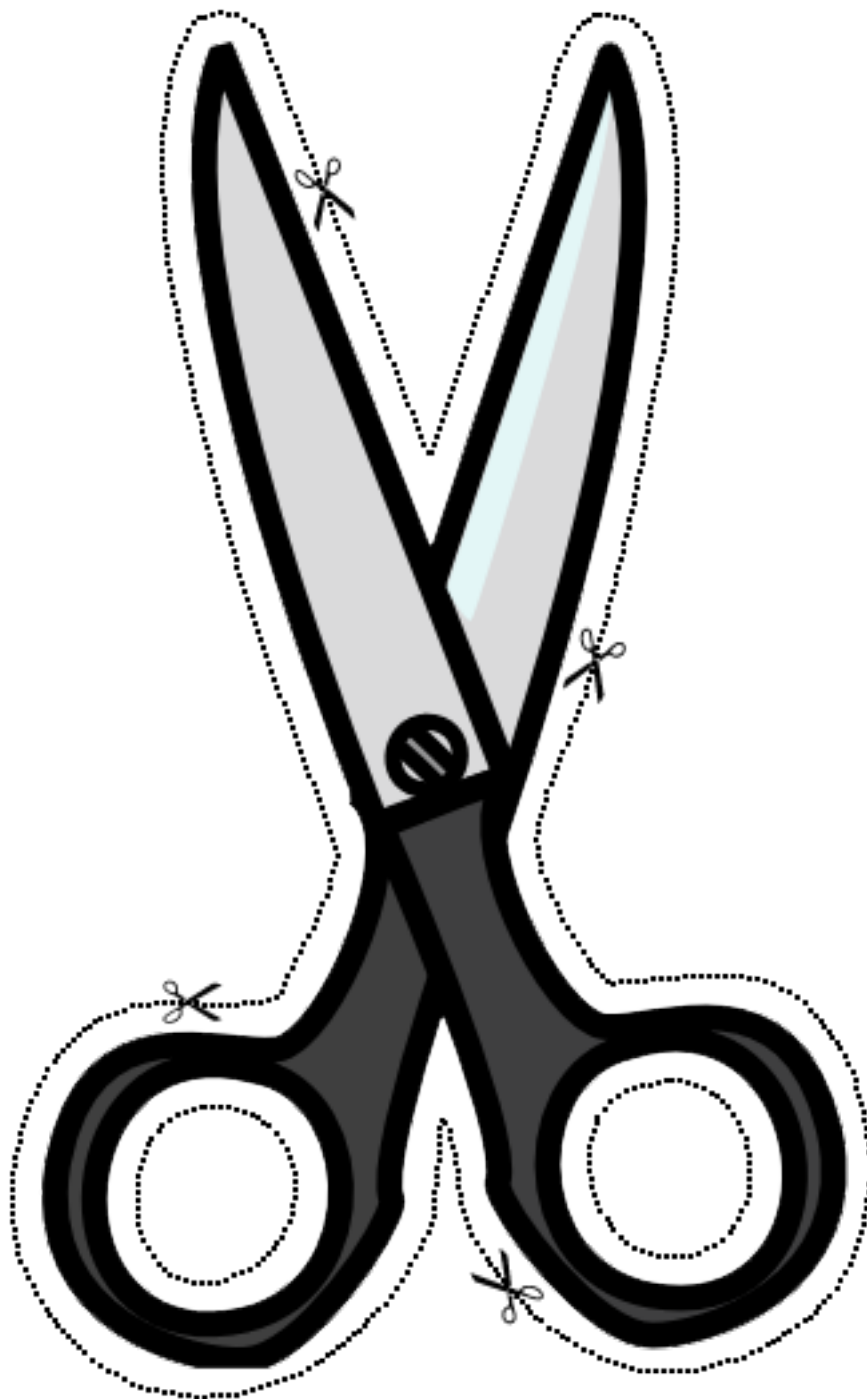


# CUT OUTS

## SCISSORS

As we are planning on doing Cut Outs each month  
We thought it would be handy if we gave you some  
tools for cutting out.

So here you are, a pair of scissors  
to help you along your way each month.



[Printer friendly version can be downloaded here](#)



# Silent Hill Homecoming Word Search

N L O M S C P T I H Y D T U Y H  
 O U S E P U L C H E R R T I A H  
 M C R I D E E M D R R E A D T O  
 E H E S L R E D R O E H T M I T  
 D E O N E E D L E R L P E L N E  
 I S N R L G N I M O C E M O H L  
 M D M C R S A T A S P H Y X I A  
 L A C I G O L O H C Y S P N P T  
 H R N O Y H R R T I X X F E E I  
 P C E N R H E P I P L E E T S P  
 S Y R E E H D N I T E L R A C S  
 N R R E T Q N O O A R A A E U O  
 L H E A E S U R V I V A L I R H  
 E R E W M P S I K O N A M I S E  
 T H U I E I E M N A S M O N E A  
 O P O E C S D R G E D C A S V D

Alex Shepherd  
 Creeper  
 Head  
 Hospital  
 Mary  
 Pyramid  
 Silent Hill  
 The Order

Amnion  
 Curse  
 Heather  
 Hotel  
 Needler  
 Scarlet  
 Steel Pipe

Asphyxia  
 Demon  
 Homecoming  
 Konami  
 Nurse  
 Sepulcher  
 Sunderland

Cemetery  
 Feral  
 Horror  
 Mannequin  
 Psychological  
 Sewers  
 Survival

This month's  
 word search is based  
 on the game  
 Silent Hill  
 Homecoming

All words are related  
 to the game.

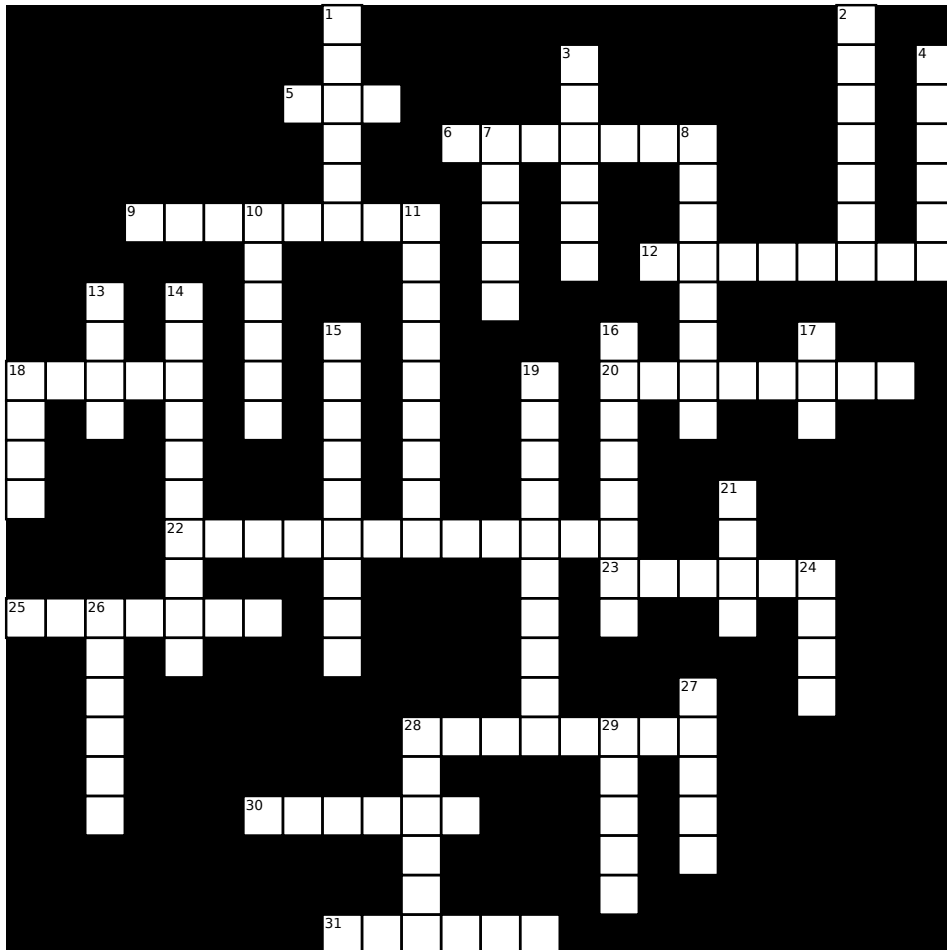




# BACK ISSUES

## CROSSWORD

### House of the Dead: OverKill



#### Across

- 5 The initials of the secret agency
- 6 A small hand-held weapon that shoots bullets
- 9 It's yummy scrummy, and very creamy
- 12 When you hit someone
- 18 A damp marshy place
- 20 Excessive killing
- 22 A sort of character usually used in Science Fiction, or Gothic Horror
- 23 One of the main characters
- 25 A hideously ugly, repulsive person or being
- 28 Also known as a funfair
- 30 Another word for scary
- 31 The lucky guy with the hot sister

#### Down

- 1 An undead being
- 2 A gun that fires short ranges
- 3 Well, it ain't your father
- 4 A place you go to, where you play games
- 7 The main character who wants revenge
- 8 Someone that takes their clothes off
- 10 One of the most famous rulers of Ancient Rome
- 11 A vehicle with two wheels
- 13 No longer alive
- 14 Another word for a test
- 15 The city where the game is set
- 16 A place where you can be cured
- 17 Another way of spelling something that you would associate with the toilet
- 18 The creators of Sonic
- 19 A gun that fires many bullets in a short period of time
- 21 A type of weaponry
- 24 Blood and chopping heads off
- 26 Another word for fear
- 27 It's not skin
- 28 Angelfromabove has a phobia of these
- 29 The stripper



Printer friendly version can be downloaded [here](#)



# BACK ISSUES

## DOWNLOAD OLDER ISSUES

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and store them on your PC from here



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SEE YOU NEXT MONTH

