

TIME IN

Had enough time out on the town? Check out these home entertainment options

GAME REVIEW



CRASH AND BURN

Crashtastic: A screengrab from Microsoft Xbox 360 and Sony PlayStation 3 game *Burnout Paradise* and (below) one of the wonderful graphics.



Burnout Paradise

Xbox 360 / Playstation 3 / PC

In these tough economic times, splurging \$120 on a new triple-A game can break the bank. Instead, quite a few good games that you might've passed over a year or two ago have not only been discounted but the developers may have also kept the game fresh through releasing downloadable content.

A prime example is *Burnout Paradise*, which came out for the Xbox 360 and Playstation 3 at the beginning of 2008; Windows PCs received *Burnout Paradise: The Ultimate Box* last year. This car

game emphasises fun, speedy thrills, putting the player behind the wheel of an array of cool but fictional vehicles (so no Ferraris or Lambos for the revheads).

Its racetrack is Paradise City, a sprawling network of roads, shortcuts and jumps reaching from coast to mountains. Every traffic light presents either a Race, Stunt Run, Road Rage or Marked Man

event and you can try for the best time or most expensive crash on each street. Yes, *Burnout Paradise* even makes crashing fun!

The graphics are pretty and run smoothly, even when you're using the Boost of the fastest cars. While the controls are easy to learn, *Burnout Paradise* is hard to master. Events and challenges require quick thinking at speed.

While *Burnout Paradise* should still be in stores, you can buy and download it from Xbox Live and the Playstation Network for around \$30. If you want to hang around by

CD REVIEW

Them Crooked Vultures

Them Crooked Vultures

★★★★☆ (RCA)

BY ROB MELLETT

THE Zeps' John Paul Jones hooks up with Dave Grohl (Foo Fighters) and Josh Homme (Queens of the Stone Age) for an album of guitar boogies and classic rock. Although not an ambitious album, *Them Crooked Vultures* pounds along nicely with Jones dropping keyboard solos and Homme paying homage to Jimmy Page. It's impossible to disguise the younger pair's delight at playing alongside Jones in what is a spirited if somewhat pedestrian affair at times.



CD REVIEW

The Fall

Norah Jones

★★★★☆ (BLUE NOTE RECORDS)

BY ROB MELLETT

AFTER selling more than 36 million albums, Norah Jones can be expected to reinvent herself and on this, her fourth album, she remains calmly detached as on previous outings. Undoubtedly, this is her liveliest work to date, thanks most likely to the powerhouse session men she brings in here, such as guitarist Marc Ribot and drummer Joey Waronker. The result on *The Fall* is an album that rocks, be it ever so gently. The standout track is *It's Gonna Be*. Fans of Norah will not be disappointed.



BOOK REVIEW

Luxury

Photos by Martin Parr; intro: Paul Smith

★★★★☆ RRP \$75.00, CHRIS BOOT LTD

BY ROB MELLETT

OK, so this book may set you back the princely sum of \$75 but every cent is worth it to gaze at these amazing pictures featuring rich people in their milieu, at horse races, parties and weddings. The photos show women who have poured themselves into ill-fitting dresses and men who have dressed to excess in a constant show of endless exhibitionism. There are double chins, sparkling diamonds and bad taste aplenty which features a foreword by British designer Paul Smith. A first-class book.



yourself the game provides weeks of fun.

Still, get the free Version 1.9 patch. It's around 1.5 gigabytes but includes a host of gameplay tweaks and a new mode: Motorcycles. You must download the patch before you can play online or download any more content.

Now on to paid DLC, which *Burnout Paradise* set the standard for. To start, I recommend *Big Surf Island*. It's a huge extension on Paradise City with new events, extra unlockable cars and incredible jumps. Solo and online players will all get value out of it.

If you like getting mates over, the Party Pack, a pass-the-controller challenge mode, makes up for *Paradise's* lack of split-screen play. The Ultimate Box includes the Party Pack but console owners can get it cheaply.

Paradise's plethora of online group challenges are usually

co-operative, but if you like to compete, get the Cops & Robbers Pack, where two teams fight over a parcel of gold, aiming to be the first to get it back to their base. The pack includes police versions of many of the basic cars.

Finally, the Legendary Cars, indestructible Toy Cars and game-changing Boost Special Cars (available individually or in packs) all bring something new and unpredictable to the Paradise City experience.

The cost of the game and all DLC is around \$110, but developer Criterion Games has just ended DLC development and will announce a DLC bundle price soon.

It's sad many consider even two-year-old games "ageing" nowadays because *Burnout Paradise* is still a worthy proposition even before you consider its plethora of fabulous DLC.

TO
- ROB FARQUHAR



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