

TIME IN

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



Scary monsters: You'll be astounded at the battle scenes you'll come across in Chaos Rising.

GAME REVIEW

SPACE OPERA

In Chaos Rising, you are commander of a force of space marines, who must defend the planets of sub-sector Aurelia from the Eldar (space elves), Orks (space hooligans) and Tyranids (space... er, aliens).

When a missing planet reappears, the Chaos Space Marines (evil space marines with spiky bits) join the fray.

The Warhammer 40,000 setting is comic-book grim; the good guys dress in oversized red armour and spout lines like, "We know no fear for we are fear incarnate!"

The story campaign sends you on missions across the sub-sector. This real time strategy game gives you control of your commander and three other squads (you can invite a friend on another PC, splitting the four units between you); you look down on the battlefield and tell them where to go, what to attack and when to use their special abilities.

Between missions, you can swap squads and give your squad leaders new equipment and improved abilities.

The campaign's new twist, Corruption, is underwhelming. I should have felt like I was selling my squads' souls when I gave them Chaos-tainted but bonus-laden gear, resurrected them by channelling Chaos or ordered them to attain an

Warhammer 40,000: Dawn of War II – Chaos Rising

THQ / Relic
PC / RATING: M / RRP: \$59.95

★★★★☆

BY ROB FARQUHAR

evil objective. I didn't because most tainted items look like regular ones; the characters themselves don't act any differently, even when Corruption meters are more than 70 per cent full; and while the story has two paths, the evil path plays like it's inevitable, not a result of my choices.

The main multiplayer mode is almost a different game. It's a race to drain your opponent's score by holding the majority of three central locations.

Other key locations grant resource points to spend on buying and upgrading squads and vehicles and you can choose any one of the game's five warring sides.

It's fast and furious; individual matches usually take around 20 minutes.

You can play with or against friends and match-made players,

and the computer is available as friend or foe for unranked games.

The Last Stand is a fun "got-your-back" mode.

You and two other players control a single hero each, facing up to 20 waves of enemies. Surviving earns you points (ranked on a global leader board) and experience, which unlocks new equipment.

A match-making system will always fill vacant spots with players across the internet if your friends aren't available.

Don't let the term "expansion pack" fool you.

You don't need to own the original Dawn of War II to play Chaos Rising.

Buying the \$80 bundle of both games gives you Dawn of War II's story campaign; complete it and your squads' experience and equipment will carry over to Chaos Rising's campaign.

Chaos Rising is a worthwhile buy if you're new to Dawn of War II.

If you already own Dawn of War II, though, the free version 2 patch has already given you the new multiplayer units for the original four sides.

If you want more campaigns or must play the Chaos Space Marines in multiplayer, then Chaos Rising is for you.

TO

CD REVIEW

Power of the Spoken Mantra

★★★★☆

(OBESE RECORDINGS)

BY JESSE KUCH

OBESE Records seems not to be able to put a foot wrong lately, and this couldn't be more true than with Mantra's debut, which is currently Triple J's Album Of The Week. Mantra's big point of difference is his style: this isn't your regular, party-happy Aussie hip-hop, instead forming a much deeper and more thoughtful release. Dark-edged beats are underpinned by Mantra's intelligent lyricism and slick flow, making this one of the best Aussie hip-hop releases to emerge in 2010. Dope.



CD REVIEW

Los Espejos Nano Stern

★★★★☆

(NANO STERN)

BY ROB MELLETT

CHILEAN sensation Nano Stern returns with his third album, which finds him change direction considerably. Whereas previous album *Voy Y Vuelvo* (I Come And I Go) found him writing about his travels, *Los Espejos* (The Mirrors) has the singer/songwriter guitarist turning inwards into the realm of his psyche and the dark and light discovered in his soul. Highlights include *Azul* and *Los Juegos* and the fiery *Mal De Aitura*, which display still further the 24-year-old's brilliance on guitar. Another winner.



BOOK REVIEW

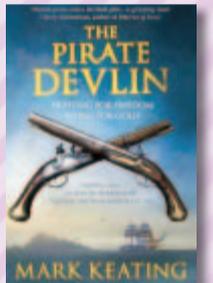
The Pirate Devlin

★★★★☆

RRP \$29.99
HODDER & STOUGHTON

BY JESSE KUCH

A SWASHBUCKLING adventure on the high seas, Mark Keating's excellent pirate epic will have you locked in until the very last page. Telling the story of a young man sold by his father into slavery, Devlin quickly swaps his life of work for a dangerous life plundering the seas. Filled with plenty of twists and turns and a cliffhanger ending, it's relatively faithful to history as well. If you love Captain Jack Sparrow, you'll love this.



TOP 5

Reasons to look forward to Halo: Reach

With Bungie Software edging closer to releasing the so-called final instalment in the Halo universe, timeOUT provides the Top 5 reasons to look forward to what will, undoubtedly, be one of the best games of 2010...

- SANDBOX LEVEL DESIGN.** Unlike other Halo games, developers Bungie say that the new campaign levels will have a "sandbox" approach similar to Grand Theft Auto and the like. This means bigger battles, more enemies and more places to explore.
- THERE ARE LOTS OF SPARTANS.** Dealing with the turbulent battle for the Earth forces' training planet Reach, this new instalment will feature much more than just Master Chief.
- IMPROVED AI.** The game's artificial intelligence is being redesigned from the ground up, meaning smarter enemies that react dynamically to your style of play. Expect the legendary difficulty setting to be, well, even more legendary.
- NEW GUNS AND VEHICLES.** With even more choice in how to dismember Covenant forces, the core base of the Halo experience – shooting warlike aliens – will be even more fun. Expect more on the vehicle front too.
- IT COULD BE THE LAST INSTALMENT.** While Microsoft has just told games website IGN.com that it is still actively pursuing putting together a Halo movie, there is every chance a battle weary Bungie might make this the last hurrah. Halo fans simply can't miss it and neither should anyone else.

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Matthew Lake, *Picasso* 2009

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