

Rob Walker
Copy Editor

X-Box 360: 3 Months Later

Some of you may remember I wrote about the x-box 360 and how crazy the hype was getting a few months ago. Aside from apologizing for the fact that I messed up the prices when it went to print, I thought I'd bring people up to speed on how things have gone since then.

The game selection has been pretty lackluster so far. While most of the exclusive titles have been great in and of themselves, there's only about 8 of them. I'm going to do a run down on what's been good, what should be avoided and what's coming up in the very near future. I'm mostly going to talk about the 360 exclusive games and avoid the sports games unless they really stand out, as they don't usually vary much year to year.

What's out there now:

Call of Duty 2:

A fun game in a world war 2 setting. They get just about everything right in the single player, with an immersive environment, fantastic visuals and good sound. The game is pretty linear however, so don't expect much plot-wise. Multiplayer is fun, but the lack of a lobby or being able to create your own games really hurts it. This is supposed to be addressed in a patch, and if so, this could turn into a game worth buying. **7/10** (with a jump to an 8 or 9 depending on support from the developer).

Project Gotham Racing 3:

I used to really dislike racing games. They either seemed to be too cartoony or were too realistic, wanting you to practically build your car from scratch. That opinion changed the second I started racing in this game. It was the first time I'd ever wanted to buy a steering wheel controller, to get the full feel of it. It's fast, it's fun, it's based off the best cars in the world and it's one of the best looking games on the 360 to date. Multiplayer is insanely addicting, with 7 other racers from all around the world (for a great, clean match try finding a group of brits, they're the most fun to play with). Highly recommend it. **9/10**

Dead or Alive 4:

Wa-taaaah! I really enjoyed this game. If you're a fan of games like Soul Calibur or Tekken, or the older 2d fighting games like street fighter, you'll

love this game. While the game can be played as a simple button-masher it also can prove to be a highly technical fighting game. It looks great, if a little cartoony (by design), the moves are awesome and there are actually more female characters than male. Online play is fun if a little laggy at times, depending on who you're playing. Prepare to get your ass kicked if you do play online, there are some disturbingly good players out there. Not much in the way of replay value, it can get a little stale after a while. **7/10**

Kameo:

I've never played it so instead I'm going to say how funny the show 'My Name is Earl' is. It's really funny. There.

Perfect Dark Zero:

Really not a fan of this game. It looks polished, but at the same time filled with bright colours and a little too cartoony for me. Same could be said of the weapons. Gameplay is pretty standard first person shooter fare, the story is mediocre. You can play the single player co-operatively with a friend, which is a big drawing point for me, if it was worth playing in the first place. Multiplayer is decent and mildly more enjoyable, but not enough to make it worth buying. Rent it or buy it on the cheap if you're still on the fence. **5/10**

Condemned:

Holy crap, what a game. Proving that games are moving more towards movies as far as length and production value go, this game is also just plain nuts. Very creepy story, lots of adult themes and plenty of violence. It's single player and not very long, so I'd recommend renting it rather than buying it, but it is a **hell** of a game. A must-play for any fan of dark stories. **8/10** (even though there's no multiplayer, it's just that good.)

Fight Night Round 3:

Well punch me stupid, it's a new fight night game. And boy oh boy does it look pretty. Luckily for us, it plays just as good as it looks. Aside from the fact that you can create a boxer who looks **just** like you (seriously, it's creepy) it is uppercut-filled goodness. Comprehensive yet intuitive controls make floating and stinging easy as could be, and with a huge amount of professional boxers, both current and from days past to choose from every fight is better than the last. Smooth online play and lobby systems make it fun to play by yourself, building a career, swearing at friends in your room or with a stranger online. **9/10**

What's coming:

March is a big month for the 360 and we'll be seeing some excellent titles in the next few weeks. Which is good, because my birthday is in March. I'll be including the supposed release dates, but don't blame me if they're wrong, Microsoft has been sucking on the delivery side of things.

Ghost Recon: Advanced Warfighter (Release Date: 03/10):

Wow, does this game ever look good. I mean, geez, that's pretty impressive for a videogame, and I follow this stuff pretty closely. It takes place with an elite military unit in the near future fighting in Mexico. Single player, co-operative and multiplayer campaigns are all included, and I can't wait to try this one out online. **Anticipation rating: 10/10** will buy on day of release.

The Outfit (03/13):

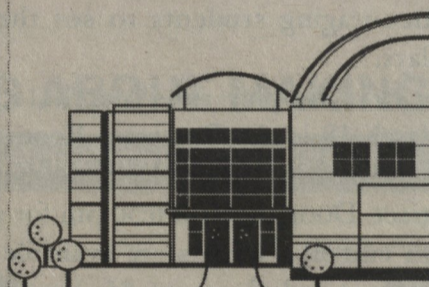
I haven't really heard much about this game. Supposed to be a decent action game taking place in a world war 2 setting. The graphics look ok, nothing spectacular. Really, the lack of videos, a demo or any reviews has almost killed this game before it came out, but it could always turn into an underdog. I'm not holding my breath, although I'll rent it when it comes out cause I'm like that. **2/10** just because

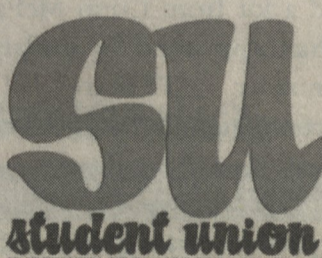
I tend to like this sort of game.

The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion (3/20): I cannot wait for this game. The last Morrowind game was so gigantic and expansive I never even got close to doing everything in it, and this one is supposed to top them all. With voice actors like Sean Bean and Patrick Stewart, Bethesda software has really outdone themselves. Probably going to set a whole new bar for the Role Playing genre. If you like RPGs, own a 360 and don't pick this up you should just pack it in and go home. **12/10**, mostly because it'll be here in stores the day before my birthday, and that's just sweet.

Blazing Angels: Squadrons of WWII (3/23): Did this game slip in under cover of darkness, taking major flak fire, or what? Screenshots look gorgeous and it seems like it'll be a ton of fun. Fly axis or allied planes, including spitfires, get into raging dogfights above a London city background lit by fires from bombs. If multiplayer is even half good this is going to be a great game. **9/10**

March looks to be very kind to 360 owners, and the months afterwards are looking up as well. If you'd like to kick my butt online, feel free to add my gamertag to your live account: Blue Dog (spaces included).





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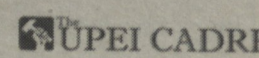

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