



# BLACK

| THE OFFICIAL COMPANION |

| Top secret *BLACK* intel |

| Contains important game information |

| Book will self destruct if not opened in ten seconds |

# THE INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE OF SHOOTING

How *Black* redefined 'going in with all guns blazing'

**E**verybody loves a shooter. Okay, so perhaps not Gandhi, and Tupac Shakur's mum probably went off them too, but trifling moral compunctions aside, guns are the best thing ever – specifically, the sound, the feel and that sheer sense of unequalled power you get from crunching that trigger and unloading a stream of machine-tooled lead. And *Black* does guns frighteningly well.

The brainchild of Criterion – the team who took the driving game format and shoved a jet engine up its jacksie with the *Burnout* series – *Black* puts you in the shoes of Keller, a Black Ops commando operating undercover in Eastern Europe to bring an American terrorist to justice. Don't worry too much about the plot, though.

"If *Black* is really about anything," explains producer Jeremy Chubb, "It's about blowing things up." Now you're talking our language...

PLENTY OF THESE TO SHOOT AT!

LOTS OF THESE TO UNLOAD!

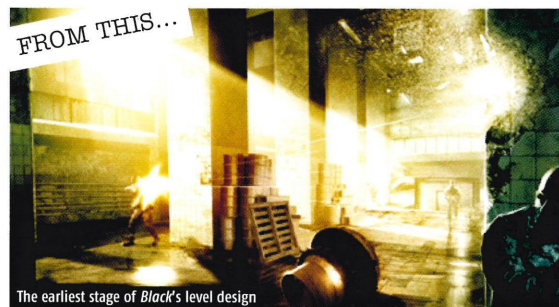
TURN OVER FOR YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO BLACK ▶

# BLACK ARTS

You have to create before you destroy...

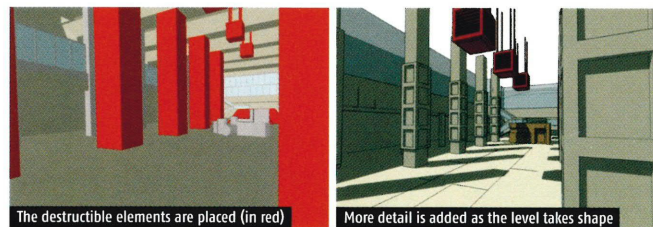
**B**lack was never about big warehouse spaces that merely acted as enclosures for the action, as every level has been designed to crack, crumble and come to pieces like a freshly unwrapped Christmas present in a spoilt child's hands. Criterion producer Jeremy Chubb talks us through *Black's* evolution, from conception to explosion.

"An awesome piece of concept art. The tough goal was to deliver visuals of this quality on PS2 in a relatively small environment, so that we could focus the gameplay on destruction."



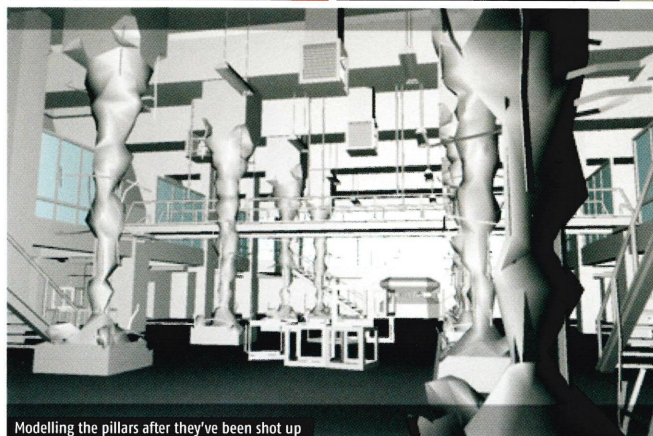
The earliest stage of *Black's* level design

"A very early piece of game art indicating the key focus of the level – massive pillars that you can destroy and smash chunks off with machine gun fire, and huge air conditioning units that can be blown apart and drop to the floor. We would later fill the level with shield-carrying enemies that were tough to kill with bullets, but could be eliminated using falling masonry."



The destructible elements are placed (in red)

More detail is added as the level takes shape



Modelling the pillars after they've been shot up

...TO THIS

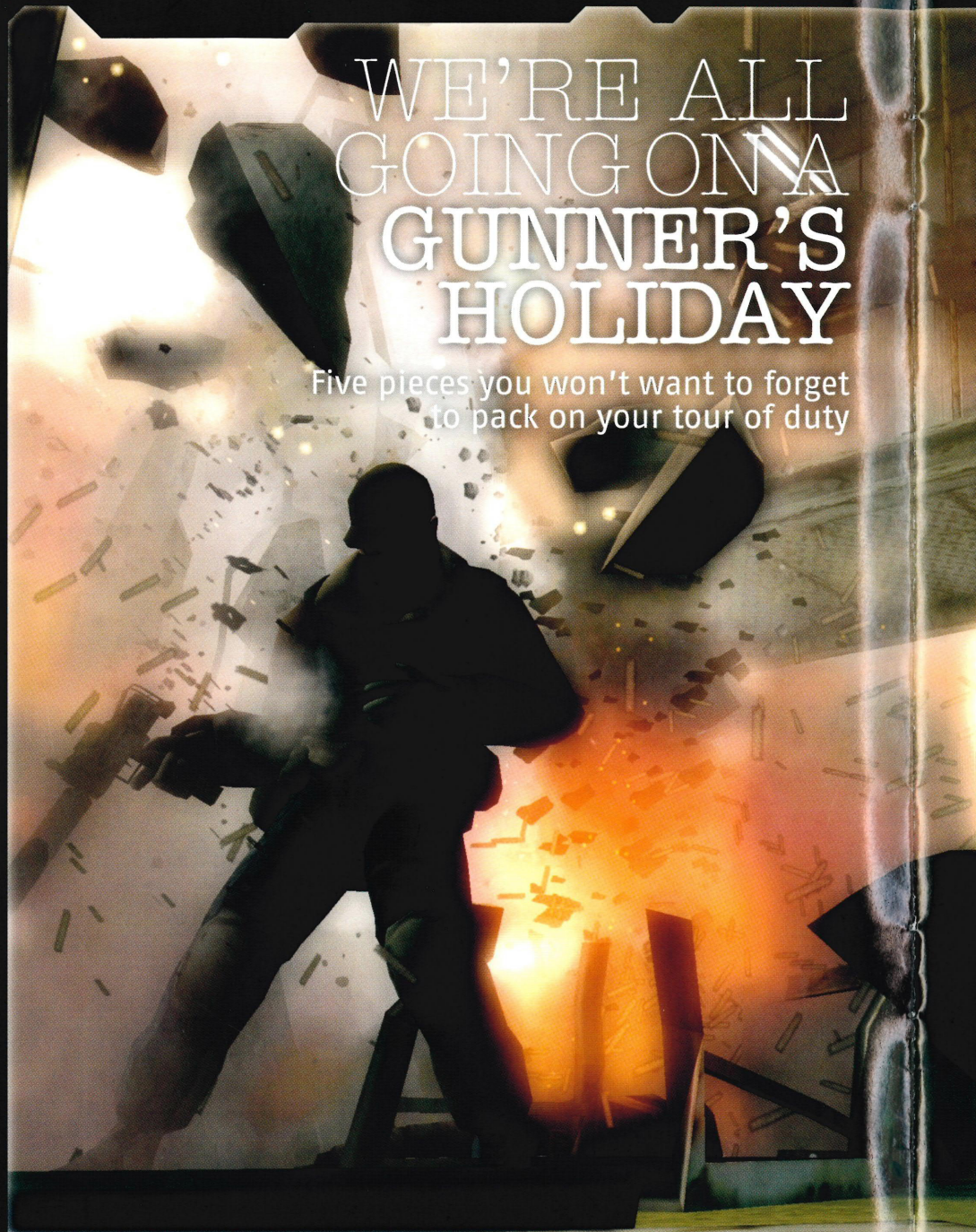
▼ "Before and after shots of the same level. We wanted to achieve a feeling of incredible power from our weapons, so we focused heavily on delivering both the raw feeling of pulling the trigger on powerful modern machine guns and also on the resulting devastation. Check out the enemies strewn around the level, and the dust that fills the air and shows off the strong lighting."



The same level as it appears in the finished game

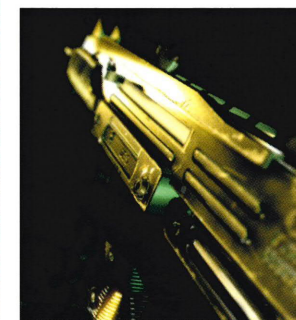
# WE'RE ALL GOING ON A GUNNER'S HOLIDAY

Five pieces you won't want to forget to pack on your tour of duty



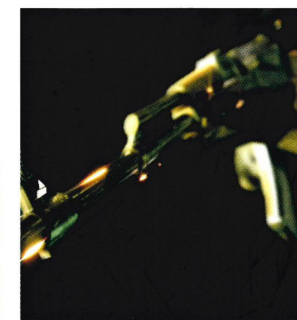
The real personalities in *Black* are the guns, and like any holiday to exotic climes, you'll want to choose your travelling companions with the utmost of care, lest you end up stuck with the firearms equivalent of your nice-but-fat asthmatic mate roughly halfway up Mount Kilimanjaro.

"We just wanted to have everybody's favourite guns," explains producer Jeremy Chubb. "Our first impulse was to have about 50 in, but we couldn't make them different enough. In the end, they really had to earn their place in the game." Lead Designer Craig Sullivan and Jeremy Chubb take us through their personal pick of the armoury.



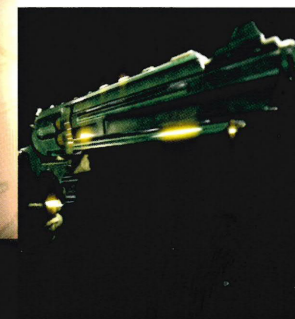
**UZI 9MM**

Compact, short-barrelled sub-machine gun popularised by the Israeli armed forces, and later by Arnold Schwarzenegger in *The Terminator*. Craig: "You can't really aim with these guns, it's just point and fire. They're really short range, ideal for room clearance – if someone just pops up in your face, you just spray them down." **SEE ALSO: MAC-10 ELITE**



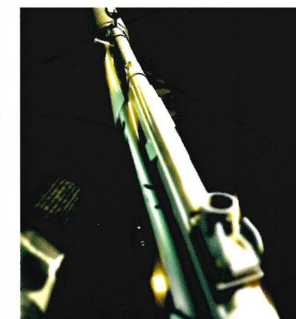
**AK-47**

Hardy Soviet assault rifle, popular throughout the Middle East and slung round the neck of teenage guerrilla soldiers. Craig: "Everyone likes using the AK – there's a big muzzle flash and it rattles around loads". Aesthetics aside though, this is an all-purpose combat weapon that functions well at close, medium or long range. **SEE ALSO: G36, M16**



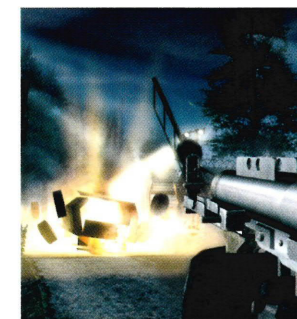
**MAGNUM**

You'll have to seek this weapon out (see our guide on page 12) but it's worth it. Jeremy: "A weapon for skilled players that has a high risk/high reward factor. Because of its power, it can kill with one shot. On the downside, its massive recoil gives it a slow rate of fire and long reloads leaves the player vulnerable in a fire fight." **SEE ALSO: HAS NO EQUAL**



**MP5**

High-powered machine gun favoured by the British armed police division, S0-19. Jeremy: "This bridges the gap between sub-machine gun and assault rifle. The MP5 has the high fire rate of an SMG and couples it with longer range and better accuracy than an assault rifle. Great for use at ranges of 15-30 metres when faced with multiple targets." **SEE ALSO: P90**



**RPG**

The Holy Grail of long-range destruction. Works excellently at point-blank range, too – if you don't mind ending up as nothing but a pair of smoking boots. Jeremy: "Massively destructive, and you can easily carve through walls with it – but take care if you're planning on using it indoors because there's a lot of splash damage." **SEE ALSO: M203 GRENADE LAUNCHER**

# DIAMOND OPS

## BEATING THE THREE HARDEST BITS OF *BLACK*

### 1 NASZRAN TOWN – THE FINAL ASSAULT

**T**his section makes up the final third of the Naszran town level. It begins as you exit the tunnel under the house – you're there when you go through a small room with a hole in the wall and two guards firing through it.

The reason that this section is tough is down to enemies bedded into crows nests and kindly guards firing RPGs at your face that are hidden above eye level in the upper storeys of the buildings. The key is dealing with them first.

#### THE CRACK COMMANDO'S WAY TO DO IT



■ Take out the first few guards with headshots. The best weapon combination is the RPG and the AK-47, as it's a bit hectic to use the Walther 2000 in this area.

■ Beware of the three guards you'll encounter by the RPG – deal with them first by aiming with **1** and *then* grab the rocket launcher if you don't have one yet.

■ Take out the next few guards from as safe a distance away from them as possible – including the one who appears from this room.

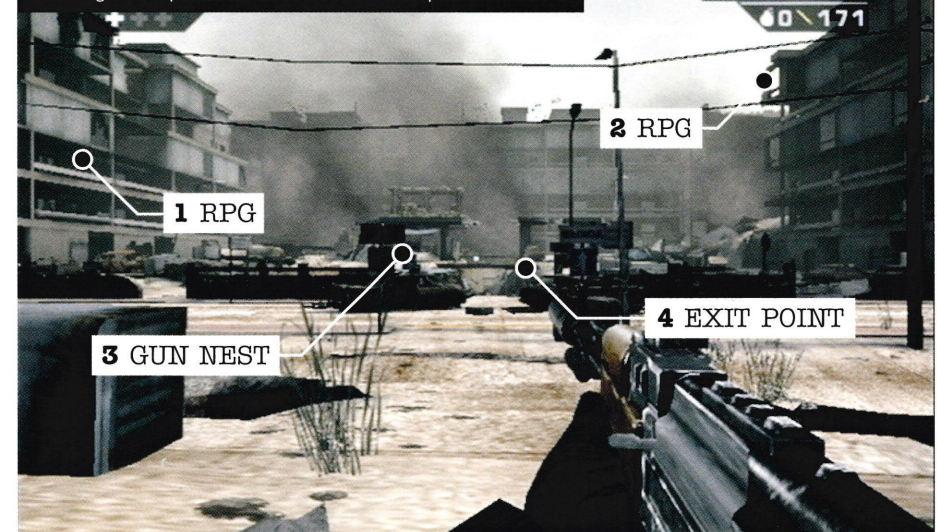


■ Enter the room and tool up with RPG shells and health. On exiting you'll be hit by an RPG to your left from high up. Shoot him down rather than waste your RPG shells.

■ Position yourself as above and give the guards in the nest opposite a few grenades and machine gun fire. Follow the trench round up to the nest and deal with the remaining guards.

■ Get yourself into a relatively covered position and then despatch the RPG – as shown in the shot above. You should find that he'll appear as you enter the nest.

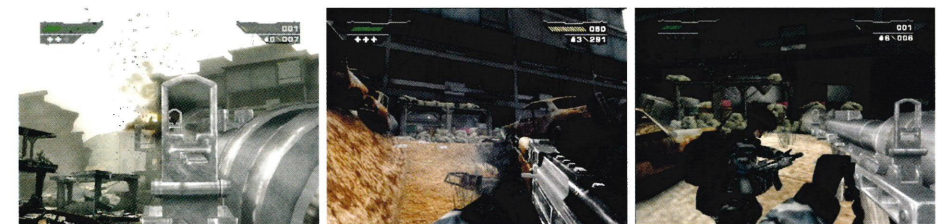
■ This shot shows where the RPGs (1 and 2) will appear from. You'll also get hit from an area to the direct left of you if you're standing in this position. Your aim is a door at point number 4.



■ Take out all the guards beyond the nest, taking cover from RPGs. There's quite a few, so let them come at you and pick 'em off.

■ Look across to the right and you'll spot the machine gun nest right in front of you. Use the RPG to destroy it. KABOOM!

■ Once you've destroyed the RPG positions, waste the remaining guards and drop into the trenches heading round to the door.



■ You probably missed this RPG that appears as you walk over the bridge into the trenches. Blow it up and then head to the exit point.

■ Don't wade in, as there's a final standoff with guards who will appear in the balcony and from the door. Hose them from distance.

■ When it's clear, head through the door and take out two final guards. And that's it, you've completed one of the toughest parts of the game.

## 2 THE SHIPYARD – AMBUSH

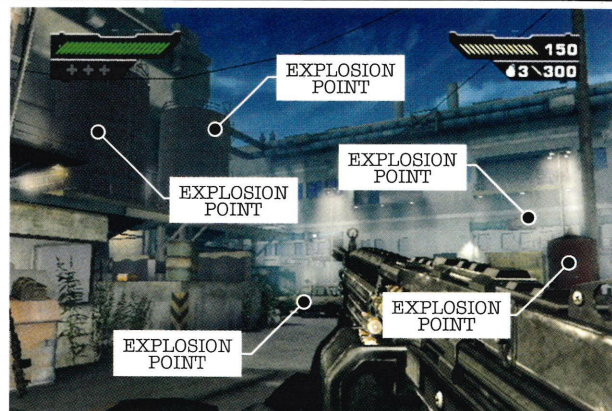
This begins shortly after you pass the first checkpoint. You'll exit a building and then find a guard in a booth. Cap him and it all kicks off. These pointers will help you to make easy work of it.

Two elements are key to a successful sortie: making sure you get the heavy machine gun that's leaning up against the guards' hut and using the surroundings to create a lethal cloud of fallout. Use the screenshot below to see where to hit.

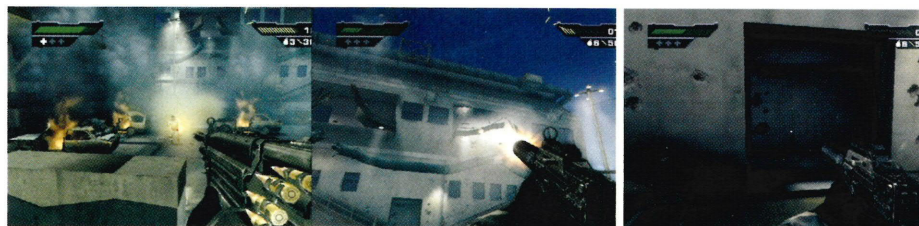
### OUR FAVOURITE METHOD FOR DOLING OUT A PASTING



There are three waves of attack. First hit anything that'll explode – including the cars. This deals with the first wave. Then take a position on the raised platform that your men will climb up to. Stand here and simply pummel the building's entrances and platforms. If it gets too hectic, just look for the red dot and fire.



At some point an RPG will appear in a balcony. Take cover, and while he reloads hit him hard with the HMG. If you're about to die, you'll have to run the gauntlet to the health that'll now be scattered around in front of you.



After a while, the attack will cease and you're nearly home and dry. Just don't run in thinking it's over. Chances are that you'll be low on health and there's a final firefight with a few remaining guards as you approach the entrance – you don't want to get capped at this stage.

Enter the door to end the section, but take care though – this isn't a checkpoint. Just stay alert and you'll be fine.

## 3 THE GULAG – BEATING THE GAME

### THE WAY WE BOSSSED THE FINAL LEVEL



The whole level is an absolute ass kicker, climaxing with the mother-of-all shootouts. Grab the heavy machine gun in the tunnel – you should also be packing the magnum, found at a dead-end on the second floor in the building near the beginning of the level. If you've saved all your magnum ammo you should have about 30 shots. You'll need 'em.



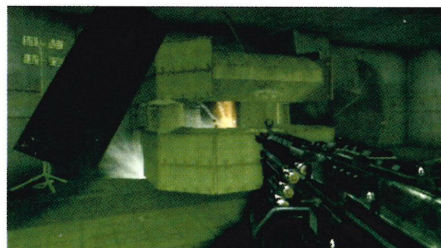
Approach the entrance. The cavernous hall is crawling with guards and dotted with explosive scenery. *Don't* enter yet, because the doors will slam shut. Instead, pick off targets from the relative safety of the entrance. Use the magnum as you would a sniper rifle (one-shot kills, baby!) waiting for the targeting sight to turn red before firing.



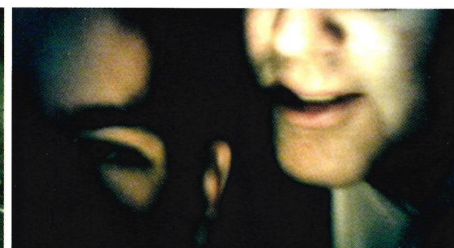
Once you've whittled 'em down, move in and head for the nearby stairs. These lead to a gantry from which you can pick off the reinforcements. At either end there are cells that provide cover and contain health/ammo. Warning: shotgun and shield guys will try to storm the stairs, so feed them some pineapples.



You've done most of the hard work, now move back out into the main area. It's likely to get a bit frantic, so let rip with the magnum and fling a few grenades around. Make sure you drop the most dangerous targets first – heavy machine gunners and the rocket guys who appear on the other gantry.



This is it. The endgame occurs when the two armoured bunkers at the end of the room open up – ideally, at this point you'll be taking cover in the adjacent cells. Now simply lob a couple of grenades through the slots to blow up the bunkers, then move through the rubble to see the ending. And no, we don't really understand it either. Oh well... USA! USA! USA!



# MISSING IN ACTION

There are a few weapons hidden within *Black's* levels that can make your life easier... here's where to find the five most useful



Location: Veblensk City Streets



GUN: UZI

On the main street there's a guard standing in front of a small room with a metal barrier in its entrance. Kill the guard and enter the room behind him, where you'll find a hidden Uzi.

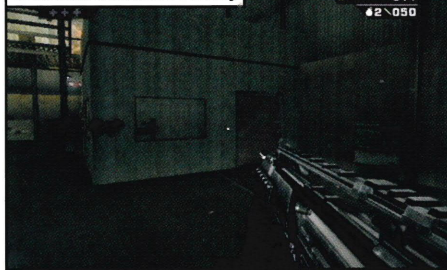
Location: Veblensk City Streets



GUN: RPG (ROCKET LAUNCHER)

As you drop down into the street from the hotel balcony, don't miss the RPG leaning against one of the wrecked cars in the middle of the street. Use it to destroy the lorry at the end of the road.

Location: Naszran Foundry



GUN: MAGNUM

The magnum is found in the large warehouse with the large windows on one side - in a small room on the ground floor. Its one-shot, one-kill capability is great for the close-quarter fights in this section.

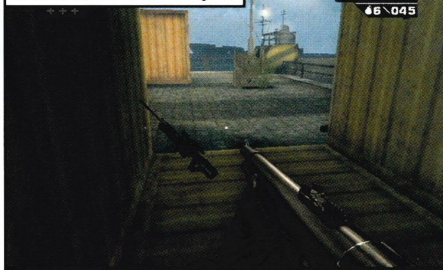
Location: Naszran Town



GUN: M203 (GRENADE LAUNCHER)

There's a wooden outbuilding housing an M203 grenade launcher in the area of the graveyard near the two mausoleums. Finding this helps you progress through the trenches later in the level.

Location: Vratska Dockyard



GUN: WALTHER 2000 (SNIPER RIFLE)

This sniper rifle can be found in the steel containers or near the small office in the first section of the level. Collecting this makes the fire fight near the end of the level slightly easier.

# INSTANT KILLS! BIGGER BANGS! LIVE FOREVER!\*

All that and more, in our terrorist-ventilating *Black* tips

\*Well, a couple of seconds longer anyway



1 DUCK AND COVER

Hiding is a vital tactic in *Black* and there's absolutely no shame in it. Crucially, because the scenery is so destructible, you should only rest behind thick walls rather than timber. Also, you can reduce the number of directions you can be shot at by hugging the scenery and using larger objects further ahead to block the enemy's line of sight.



2 HEADS, THEY LOSE

Taking headshots is just like breathing to us - and in *Black* it's your most essential skill. Past the first level, most of the freedom-hating pinkos are equipped with bulletproof vests, enabling them to soak up implausible amounts of lead. But no amount of armour will protect 'em from a slug to the face - aim between the eyes for a quick kill.



3 OVER A BARREL

*Black* loves exploding barrels like kids love cartoons. Careful though, as the temptation is to nuke anything explosive the second your crosshair strays across it. The smart man knows that you don't detonate until there's at least a couple of goons within flambéing distance. Also note that the trickier enemies are often stood right near explodo-scenery. Whoops!



4 ONE MAN AT A TIME

It's easy to panic when confronted by multiple Russian gunmen, but don't make the mistake of wounding them all a little bit but not actually finishing the job. Once you've picked a target - most dangerous first, obviously - finish him off before moving on to the next one.



5 SPRAY & PRAY

Inevitably, there are times when you just have to let rip and this tip will help you drop your target. Try to aim for the crotch, pull the trigger and the gun's kick will steer the burst in a line up through the body and towards the head - a tactic that's actually used by real special forces.



6 PACK A FULL CLIP

There's nothing worse than wading into a firefight and realising you've only got swearwords to defend yourself with. In *Black* you need to know exactly how much ammo's left in the clip, and you should always reload both weapons whenever there's a break in the action.



7 GRENADES

Bowling the perfect full-toss pineapple is an art form in itself. The basic key to grenade lobbing is understanding that the power of the throw is fixed, so to land further you need to aim higher.



8 THE RIGHT TOOLS

Base your weapon selection on the task at hand, with a specific view to the scenery and types of enemy you're facing. Planning on some tight fighting at close quarters? You'll want to go out with the shotgun and Uzi.



9 HEALTHY OPTIONS

Certain enemies - the shotgun guys and those bastards with shields - will always drop health when they die (on 'easy' and 'normal' levels), so if you're running low, nail them first and dash towards the corpse.

# THE REAL BLACK

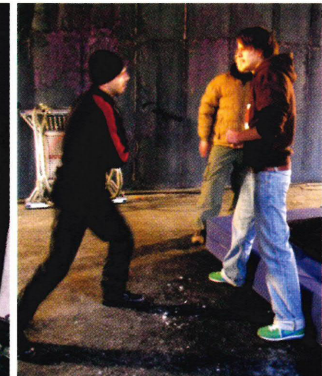
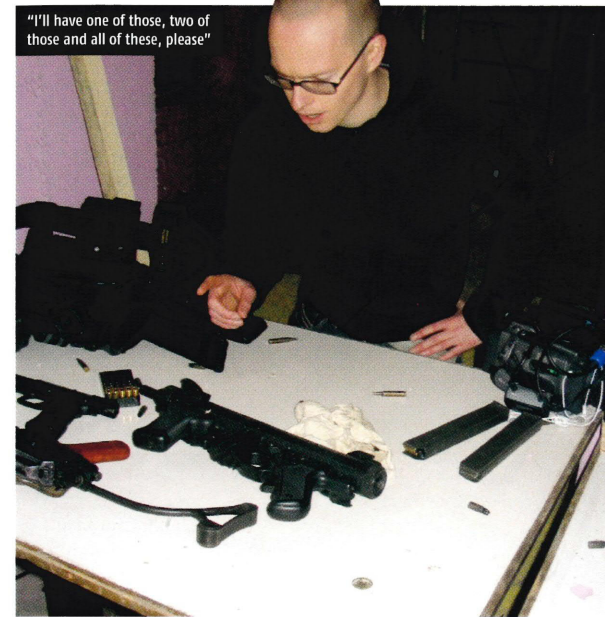
*OPS2* gets blown up in the name of fun

Sometimes, as a journalist, you're called upon to sign a form that says you won't take the hot-off-the-press code that's been entrusted to you and immediately upload it onto the Internet for American kids to download in-between big greasy handfuls of salted pretzels.

However, this is the first time *OPS2* has had to sign something ending with the words '...and under extreme circumstances, death'. Getting flown out to Bucharest, Romania to learn how to be an action film stuntman sounded like a great idea, but now we're not so sure...

First up: gymnastics. That is, a sadistic brand of gymnastics that involves trampolines and the

"I'll have one of those, two of those and all of these, please"



mental image of a nailbomb going off somewhere near your arse. "Bang!" shouts the instructor. "Aaargh!" we scream, attempting a flailing forward roll and making it approximately ten inches off the floor. A co-cadet quietly leaves to be sick in the courtyard. We consider following in the name of 'solidarity', but a hard look from the trainer keeps us in place.

Time, perhaps, for a rest? "Fall back on the mat there," demands the instructor. But just as we're

getting comfortable, suddenly we're hauled up and doing the same thing from atop a five-foot balcony. Then again, backwards.

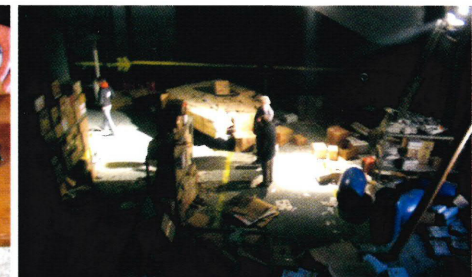
## A CO-CADET QUIETLY LEAVES TO BE SICK

With our eyes closed. "Now try it again," suggests the instructor, "But with a really big scream." Those reserves of panic are not hard to tap. By the end though, we're dying with a grace that

would make corpses pale – well, paler – with envy.

Time to take the power back. Here's what we've all been

waiting for: a massive table of automatic weaponry. First, we make a beeline for the AK47. Then, after shredding our eardrums, we sign to the instructor that we'd like something lighter and the Uzi

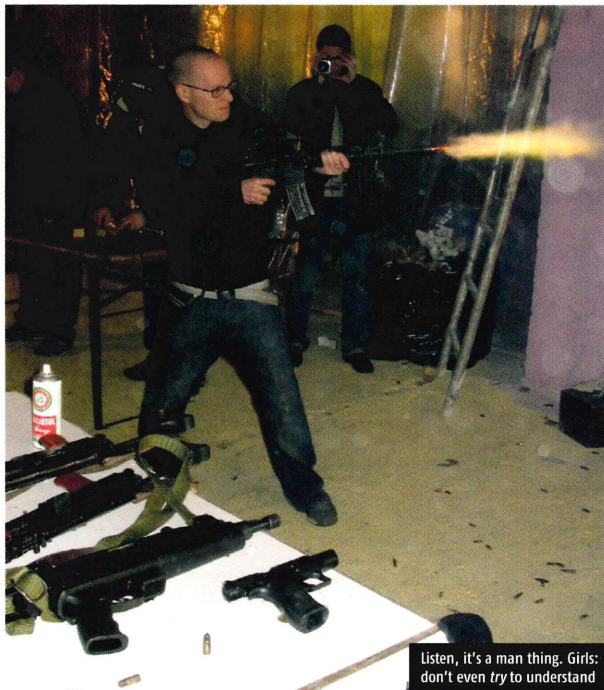


**NAME:**  
Louis Pattison  
**PROFESSION:**  
*OPS2* gun tester





This type of thing would be illegal in this country. God bless Romania's lax gun laws!



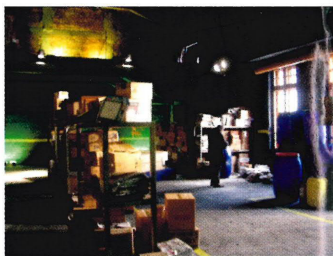
Listen, it's a man thing. Girls: don't even *try* to understand

does the trick – a neat little piece that wriggles around like a dog in a bath. The daddy though, is the M16. Tremble in fear, Russkie!

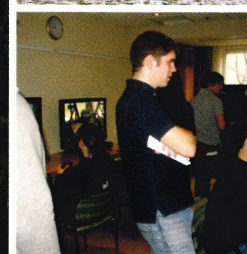
And now it's time for the main event. Rocky Taylor – day job: Sean Connery's stunt double – positions us behind a pile of barrels, kindly pops an Uzi into our hands and relates a stream of instructions we're too scared to properly take in. With some

trepidation, we crept out to see a 'grenade' (actually a potato wrapped in tin foil) sail over our heads. Then something behind us explodes and before we can take in what's happening, we're laying stunned on our back with bits of rubble falling onto our face.

"Cut!" screams the cameraman. But how does it look? Like the best action film ever. Well, actually it looks like a bunch of international



Games journalists don't tend to make the best stuntmen



## WE CREPT OUT TO SEE A GRENADE SAIL OVERHEAD

games journalists running around like headless chickens as they narrowly dodge being immolated by fireballs and crushed by falling Ikea shelving, but at least we managed to live to tell the tale. ■



Trust us, it feels much higher when you're up there

SAY GOODBYE, MR ROOM!



RAT-AT-AT TAT!



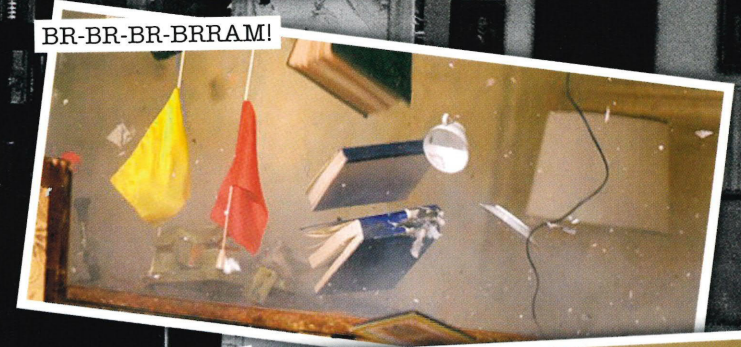
NOOOO! NOT THE CANDLESTICKS!



DU-DU-DUH-DUH!



BR-BR-BR-BRRAM!



CAN WE HAVE A GO NOW?



# THE EXPLOSIVE TV AD

So good it nearly cost an old Romanian woman her life

**P**icture the scene: huge double doors swing silently open to reveal a massive, sumptuously decorated drawing room with marble mosaic floors, grand piano

and a variety of nicely sculpted busts. A champion place to wine and dine an heiress before retiring to somewhere more comfortable, maybe. But possibly more fun just to blow it up...

Directed by photographer-turned-film-maker Sean Elliss, the *Black* ad was shot in one take, using rapid fire machine guns and a whole load of really expensive antiques. To the noble sound of

operatic warbling, pillars are peppered with fist-sized holes, statues erupt like watermelons struck with sledgehammers, and a grand piano spills its guts in epic fashion. "We bought the piano off some old Romanian

woman," explains Criterion's Roy Meredith. "If she'd known what was going to happen to it she probably would have had a heart attack." The ad climaxes on a shot of a wall-mounted plasma TV, where *Black* is playing. The

bullets pause a moment, perhaps appreciative of *Black's* dedication to beautiful destruction. But perhaps fittingly, affairs end with another burst of gunfire and an all-consuming fireball. So long, and goodnight. ■

PlayStation<sup>®</sup> 2  
OFFICIAL magazine-UK

PRESENTS

**BLACK**  
THE OFFICIAL COMPANION



**OUT NOW**