

'SOCOM 3': Guns, more guns and not much else

PlayStation 2's newest shooter is fine venue for blasting friends with array of weapons in multiplayer mode

BY ANDREW MCCOLLUM
PULSE REPORTER

Playing a shooter with the PlayStation 2's DualShock 2 controller is like playing a game of tennis with a badminton racket. In a pinch it will work, but it's awkward and ultimately ineffective. This, combined with the PS2's relatively weak graphics capability, has made the PS2 a fairly poor console choice for fans of the genre. However, one shooter game has proved to be very successful on the PS2: Sony's SOCOM series.

The SOCOM series has one of the most rabid fan bases in gaming. The series is one of the PS2's most played online titles and was the main

reason to buy a network adapter for the PS2. "SOCOM 3: U.S. Navy SEALs," the newest game in the series, is sure to please fans but won't sway anyone who didn't play the first two games.

The keyword in "SOCOM 3" is more. Zipper Interactive, the game's developer, hasn't made any major changes to SOCOM's game play, instead opting to add a variety of new game-play elements.

One major addition to the game is the introduction of vehicles. Players are able to pilot both land and air vehicles ranging from gunboats to tanks. The game's vehicles are fun to drive and easy to handle. Vehicles are a welcome addition to the series

and prove necessary when traversing the game's massive environments in both the single player and multiplayer modes.

The single-player campaign is decent, but the game's shoddy artificial intelligence can get frustrating. Too often, players will find one of their squad mates sitting while the rest of the squad is engaged in a firefight. Sometimes squad mates will quit following orders and the only solution is to restart from the last checkpoint and hope that the AI doesn't fall into the same glitch.

But the SOCOM series has never been about the single-player experience. The third installment's multiplayer mode supports a whopping 32 players in a single game. The multiplayer maps are huge and the game's multiplayer modes include

all the standard shooter fare, with a couple of atypical modes.

The coolest feature of "SOCOM 3" is its weapon customization options. The game sports 31 different weapons and 21 weapon attachments. The attachments include scopes, grenade launchers, tripods and more. Each weapon and attachment has a weight, and a player's weight affects how quickly he or she moves. The weapon customization is a great feature, and I would love to see other shooters adopt it.

Graphically, the game is murky and weak.

Fans of the SOCOM series should love "SOCOM 3." I am not a huge fan of the series. For me, the PS2's poor graphics and annoying controller make the game unplayable. But if you're looking for a good PS2 shoot-

er, "SOCOM 3" may be your best choice. However, I wouldn't recommend buying it if you don't intend to play it online.

amccollum@dailyemerald.com

GIVE ME 5!

Run your "for sale" ad (items under \$1,000) for 5 days in the ODE Classified Section. If the item(s) doesn't sell, call us at 346-4343 and we'll run it again for another

5 days free!

MCDONALD THEATRE

DAMIAN JR. GONG MARLEY
- & THE EMPIRE -
WELCOME TO JAMROCK TOUR • FALL 2005

PLUS SPECIAL GUESTS
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 17
ALL AGES 7 PM DOORS GENERAL ADMISSION 8 PM SHOW

NEW ALBUM IN STORES NOW

ON SALE NOW!

\$1 FROM EVERY TICKET TO GO TO VICTIMS OF HURRICANE KATRINA

TUFF & GONG UNIVERSAL **Weekly**

7 PM DOORS **ON SALE NOW!**

SAGE FRANCIS
A HEALTHY DISTRUST

MONDAY OCTOBER 24
GENERAL ADMISSION LIMITED SEATING

HELL'S BELLES
OCTOBER 22 SATURDAY
GENERAL ADMISSION 7 PM DOORS 8 PM SHOW

ON SALE NOW!

DIERKS BENTLEY

ON SALE NOW!

SUN OCT 30
ALL AGES 7 PM DOORS GENERAL ADMISSION

BLUES TRAVELER
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5

ON SALE NOW!

Weekly 7 PM DOORS

ON SALE NOW!

GENERAL ADMISSION LIMITED SEATING

KATE CLINTON **ON SALE NOW!**
THURSDAY OCTOBER 27
7 PM DOORS RESERVED SEATING

NICKEL CREEK
89.7fm **WIPX**
WITH **ANDREW BIRD**

FRI DEC 9
ALL AGES 7 PM DOORS GENERAL ADMISSION

ON SALE NOW!

ON SALE NOW!

HENRY ROLLINS
SPOKEN WORD

MON NOV 21
ALL AGES 7 PM DOORS GENERAL ADMISSION

Nancy's cultured dairy and soy

Concert Tickets, Detailed Event and Venue Info at www.mcdonaldtheatre.com
Tickets Available at Safeway **TicketsWest** Outlets
And Charge By Phone 1-800-992-TIXX Service charges may apply
General Admission WILL CALL Tickets at mcdonaldtheatre.com