

● **CRASH Bandicoot 4: It's About Time** is officially on the way. The first new Crash game in a decade has been created by Toys For Bob and is set after the end of

the original Naughty Dog-developed Crash trilogy. It will feature playable Crash, Coco and Neo Cortex among others. It's due out on October 2 on Xbox One and PS4.

mixer

● **MICROSOFT** is closing its live streaming platform Mixer on July 22 after teaming up with Facebook Gaming. It had played second fiddle to

Twitch before signing up stars like Tyler "Ninja" Blevins and Michael "Shroud" Grzesiekas. Breaking their deals earned Shroud a reported \$10m and Ninja \$30m.

SHOOT FOR THE STARS

It seems that every other game at the moment is about fish or cowboys.

We have already had this week's fish quota (see opposite) so it's time to saddle up and see how this cowpoke differs from the normal Western fare.

UK-based Upstream Arcade has set up a tale that takes place in 1888. You play as William Mason, who's had better times. He's dead, you see.

He is in Purgatory — that place between Heaven and Hell... but which also turns out to be in Wyoming.

It follows the usual formula in that you have no memory of how or why you're there but it seems there is a preacher who can throw some light on proceedings.

Mason starts his search for the holy man in the most unholy of places.

Needless to say, this journey is far from easy — to get to the preacher you'll have to work your way through an ever-changing labyrinth of enemies with only your guns and whatever items you find

West of Dead

Xbox One and PC £16.74

along the way to help you. You also face a trip into the unknown because each chapter is procedurally generated.

This is where the roguelike side really kicks in, so you can expect to die a lot.

The gameplay often sees you entering a room containing a few bad guys. They all have an undead vibe — ranging from riflemen who can hit you from way off to monster dogs who like to get up close and personal before trying to hurt you. That means thinking on your toes is

key. Fortunately, there is a solid cover shooter mechanic. Once you fire off a few rounds you can take cover, reload and think out your next move. However, you can't hang around or else your cover will be destroyed... and you'll soon follow.

There are some neat toys to find that will help you clear rooms. They can be weapons or skill upgrades, but we found it was easy to get over-geeky and end up dead. Then you go back to the beginning so it is worth taking your time to solve the puzzle each room provides.

It is a fair bet that you will love the stunning art style. There is a strong comic-book vibe that looks extremely cool. And the soundtrack adds a great guitar twang.

But the star of the show is the narrator. It is a great coup to have Ron Perlman, left of Sons Of Anarchy and Hellboy fame. He adds a real weight and a certain grit.

This is not just a run-and-gun affair. It's extremely challenging and you need to take your time to appreciate the outstanding roguelike element. ★★★★★



NEW MUSIC

By Jim Gellatly

FORGETTING THE FUTURE

WHERE: Thurso, Caithness.

WHO: Robbie McNicol (vocals/guitar), Jamie Mackay (guitar), Max Paul (bass), Connor Wilson (drums). FOR FANS OF: Catfish And The Bottlemen, Arctic Monkeys, The Snuts.

JIM SAYS: These youngsters burst onto the scene earlier this year with their fantastic debut album Broken Phones & Hormones.

A confident indie-rock stomp, it's a great introduction to a band whose CV is already peppered with some impressive names.

The lads started jamming together at a local youth club when they were just 14. They soon found themselves in the studio with music legend Edwyn Collins.

His wife and manager, Grace Maxwell, just happened to be a beauty salon customer of drummer Connor's sister Lara. They got talking and Lara mentioned that her brother was in a band.

Frontman Robbie, 19, said: "They looked us up afterwards and enjoyed our sound. They rang us up a few days later were inviting us down to their studio."

He added: "Working with Edwyn was a surreal experience, especially at such a young age! We were only 15-year-old boys when we got the call to go to his beautiful studio on the hillside in Helmsdale."

"Edwyn, Grace and their studio sound engineer Jake Holt made us feel so welcome. That first recording session has helped pave our recording process to this day."

Forgetting The Future got another break when they hooked up with their manager, Alan Greer, and producer Ken Allarday after winning a battle of the bands contest.

Alan founded The SUBlist (The Scottish Unsigned Bands List) which was running the competition. Ken spent many years as a producer and engineer in LA, working with big names such as Supertramp, Green Day and Fleetwood Mac.

The band are now signed to the pair's Naim-based label InTime Records. Robbie explained: "After winning the prize of recording a four-track EP with Ken, they decided to offer us a record contract."

The band have also been building an impressive live portfolio, supporting the likes of Sam Fender, Baby Strange and local heroes Neon Waltz. While some bands are desperate to escape a small town, Forgetting The Future are thankful to Thurso for giving them time to develop.

Robbie said: "It's a great place for local music and it helped us become the band we are. We do have plans to venture out to major cities in the UK and the USA."

The latest single Inhaler has been going down a storm, complete with an impressive spaghetti western-style comic strip and live action video. Robbie said: "It only came out at the start of June and has already managed to hit over 20,000 streams on Spotify and growing."

MORE: forgettingthefuture.co.uk ● Jim presents a weekly showcase of New Music on Amazing Radio, Sundays 2-4pm.

amazingradio.com
jimgellatly.com

Watch video of Forgetting The Future at thescottishsun.co.uk

● **THE Last Of Us 2** is less than a week old but super-fans can now pick up a replica of Ellie's guitar.

OK, it's for an eye-watering \$2,299 — or £1,836.

The custom Taylor 314ce is available on the PlayStation Gear

website and has a distinctive rich tobacco sunburst top and a moat fretboard inlay in grained ivoroid. It has a solid sapele back and sides and a Sitka spruce top, and produces a balanced voice across the tonal spectrum. So they say.

TOP 5 GAMES THIS WEEK

- 1 The Last Of Us Part II
- 2 Ring Fit Adventure
- 3 FIFA 20
- 4 Mario Kart 8 Deluxe
- 5 Call Of Duty: Modern Warfare

● **SUPER Smash Bros Ultimate** is getting a new DLC fighter — Arms character Min Min — next week.

Another five characters will arrive as part of the game's second Fighter Pass over the next 12 months.

Min Min has a new Spring Stadium stage, with jump platforms and arches. There will be a

fresh wave of Mii costumes, including Arms' Ninjara, Heihachi from Tekken, Callie and Mari from Splatoon and Vault Boy, the Fallout mascot. They all join the fun tomorrow.

The Spirits mode has been updated and purchased costumes will appear as Spirit Board targets. There's also a new Spirits rematch option.



Blades of glory

XENONBLADE Chronicles fans will be giving thanks to the Scottish Government for keeping the "stay at home" message going in this lockdown.

That gives them the perfect excuse for attacking this Definitive Edition because you need a lot of time.

It's fair to say Japanese role-players traditionally take up swathes of your time — many are slow-burners that will require hundreds of hours to complete.

Now Switch owners have a huge, hulking beast of JRPG. It demands that you take your time and appreciate every twist and turn.

Xenoblade Chronicles have done the rounds. We saw them on the Wii before being ported to the 3DS but the Definitive Edition is where the game can and does really shine.

The whole "event" has been given a beefy nip and tuck — especially on the visual front.

The world and the characters have been given a spectacular new lease of life that far surpasses the low-resolution versions of the past. That move alone helps the world come to life — it's far more striking and memorable, although you can spot a few

Xenoblade Chronicles: Definitive Edition
Switch £49.99

hangover low-res textures from time to time. But, overall, it is a massive improvement.

There have not been too many changes to the core tale — you are Shulk. His village is attacked by human-eating robots called the Mechon.

Shulk and his ragtag band of friends swear revenge and head off on an epic adventure across the corpses of two titanic gods — Bionis and the Mechonis.

You never know what's waiting around the corner. One minute you are knee-deep in the jungle, the next you're in a steel labyrinth. Then you head into a huge monster to battle a horde of nasties.

But that's just the tip of this JRPG iceberg. It delivers a truly wonderful, if weird, tale that pulls you by the scruff of your neck.

The Definitive Edition also adds a new story chapter. Future Connected takes place a year after the core game and a standalone tale to the point where you can play it out with the core game. But we'd recommend doing the core tale hard yards to get the most from it.

Future Connected sees you team up with Melia and a few new buddies. This is where returning fans will get most excited.

The gameplay has had a few tweaks — the

characters now have health bars and the mini map has been overhauled which makes it more helpful.

The back room has also had a bit of love and attention and the menus are now clean, clear and easy to navigate. The whole experience is more streamlined.

The combat is another area that has barely been touched. You auto-attack enemies in range and there's a tactical element in how you pick your abilities and super-attacks and when to go into action.

There are two new modes. Causal makes things easier. It pops up after you have been defeated a few times.

Expert then let's you dial the game to your own tastes, but that will only really appeal to the returning fans.

We liked the fact that it's easier to track quests. That was a huge issue in the earlier versions where the massive selection of side quests quickly became unruly. Now it's easy to see where to go and what to do though. That said, you could argue that some of the exploring has been sacrificed as just run from point to point.

This, quite simply, is the best version of the game. Newcomers will find it is the ideal starting point. Fans will welcome the tweaks, and love Future Connected. The only question is whether that will be enough for them to fork out for this. ★★★★★

