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## The Club - Xbox 360

Brainless shooter or something more meaningful?

by Chris Pickering published on 19 February 2008

That old adage of never judging a book by its cover has never proven so wise as when attached to The Club.

At first glance, The Club appears to be another of those brainless shooters with a hefty body count. But dig a little deeper and you discover that this has much more in relation to the developers Project Gotham Racing routes than a blood thirsty blast-a-thon like Stranglehold.

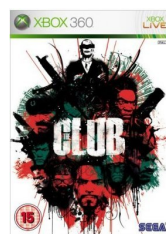
So this illegitimate son of two wildly different genres that shouldn't really come together has finally arrived, with little fanfare. And what a blooming good ride it is.

At its base, The Club is your standard run and gun shooter that offers up a score for your performance at killing a mass of enemies. But instead of a long winded story, and a mass of levels to complete, you're encouraged to replay the large number of challenges to attain the best score you can manage. Gears of War this isn't.

Apparently The Club is a brand new bloodthirsty sport for the masses to enjoy. Choosing one of the eight characters available, you play through a series of challenges, with the top scores giving the highest number of points for the leader board. Think Formula 1 without the cars, but with lots of extra firepower.

The challenges, spread across the eight different locations, vary quite considerably. They all encourage you to kill as many opponents as possible, but each has a separate rule-set which encourages different approaches in order to attain the best score you can grab.

While Sprint and Run the Gauntlet both have you running to find the exit while blasting away at enemies, Seige forces you to stick to a



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designated area and defend for all your worth.

How you score the top points differs from challenge to challenge, but all require you keep close track on your Killbar. Score a kill, and your combo increases, allowing for bigger scores. Score multiple kills and your combo spirals to dizzying heights.

All the while, however, your Killbar continuously drains. Let it sink down to the bottom and your combo depletes, stopping you from nabbing some real top scores. The only way to up the Killbar is score another kill, making sprinting from enemy to enemy an absolute must. There's no time to rest here.

Simply running through The Club and completing each set of challenges - each of which lasts little more than a few minutes - completely misses the point. Replaying them over and over again, and attaining an even bigger score is the true challenge, with The Club's addictive qualities coming to the fore.

Head shots achieve more points than a close range shotgun blast to the chest. Similarly long range efforts are rewarded considerably more than a close-up blast of machinegun fire. It's all there to encourage experimentation, and to kill your enemies in the most point-deserving manner to give you a mega score.

Full Live functionality means that your highest scores are available for all to see. Cheekily replacing one of your gaming chums at the top of your friend's leader board is right up there with that final race at the end of Halo.

## VERDICT

Alright so The Club isn't the greatest looking game in the world. It looks decent enough yes, but it's a way behind the likes of Call of Duty 4, or Assassin's Creed. But with the hectic pace you'll be rushing through the challenges to keep your combo rising, you'll barely have a second spare

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## At a glance

### What is it?

Shooter

### Good

Astonishingly addictive, achieving a high score an incredible feeling, almost infinite replayability

### Bad

Not the greatest visuals, online a joke, could have done with a few extra challenges

### Verdict

The Club is an addictive thrill ride that deserves your attention

**Price** £35

**Our score**

**8/10**

**Your score**

**?/10**

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to indulge your eyes.

A few extra challenges could have increased longevity too. Plus the online multiplayer action does the unthinkable and feels absolutely nothing like the glorious single player mode.

But those few flaws aside, The Club is an addictive thrill ride that deserves your attention. If you remember those old days in the arcades trying to claim that top score on each machine, The Club is going to keep you hooked long into many a night.