

NEVER MIND THE BALLOTS...WHICH CONSOLE WILL GET OUR VOTE IN BID FOR TOP SPOT?



Sidelined... Neil

Strictly's Neil flogs £15 class on web

By STEPHEN MOYES

STRICTLY's sidelined star Neil Jones is making up for lost earnings by flogging £15 dance classes.

The pro dancer, 38, was dumped from the main line-up of the latest BBC series and is involved only in group numbers. So he has turned to advertising a 45-minute urban ballroom class.

It is said to offer cha cha, samba, salsa, pasodoble and jive with an urban flavour.

Neil's £15 fee includes an online tutorial and a recording to help customers practise.

His site states: "Urban-Ballroom is not just for young dancers, it's for all ages and all levels, even complete beginners."

Neil split from fellow Strictly pro Katya Jones, 31, after she kissed comic Seann Walsh in 2018.

And new love, bisexual Luisa Euse, 23, cheated on him with Spanish student Daniela Becerra, 20.



U-19... George Nunn

Starlet's £8k '007' watch is robbed

EXCLUSIVE by MIKE SULLIVAN

A TEENAGE Chelsea starlet was robbed of an £8,000 "James Bond" watch by muggers who threatened to stab him in front of his sobbing, girlfriend, a court heard.

Two thugs held up George Nunn, 18, while he was walking with Libby Thompson.

They demanded the under-19 forward hand over his Omega Seamaster watch, worn by '007 in every Bond film. He offered them £1,000 for it back and, while at a cashpoint, Libby called cops to Mayfair, central London, within minutes. One robber escaped.

A student of 17 of Battersea, South London, got a ten-month community order and was ordered to pay George £500 compensation at Highbury Corner Youth Court.

XBOX SERIES X BEST TITLES



Gears Tactics

THIS may have hit PC earlier this year but the strategy game based on the beefy Gears Of War world has finally come to the consoles.

It takes the classic Gears gameplay and merges it with turn-based combat in dramatic style to deliver a prequel to the first Gears Of War game.



Yakuza 7: Like a Dragon

THE Yakuza series has been making a name for itself in the west after being a smash series at home in Japan.

You explore the mean streets of Yokohama with a new RPG focus that combines the series' signature intense brawls and a new adventure starring a fresh hero. Fans will love it.



Dirt 5

DIRT 5 is a star racer game for the new Microsoft console — but it's not a traditional rally sim, it's a full-blown arcade thriller.

That's a slightly different direction for the mud-loving series.

But it works well and even has campaign narration by gaming juggernauts Nolan North and Troy Baker.



Assassin's Creed: Valhalla

THE latest chapter in Ubisoft's much-loved series is heading north to the world of the Vikings.

You can expect the signature Assassin's Creed sandbox style but with more focus on the tale and less side missions collecting 1,001 items.

Which is a good thing.

THE Xbox Series X/S UK launch will be marked by a livestream, Microsoft announced yesterday. The show will be hosted by Xbox On and will feature gameplay of launch titles as well as prizes to be won via live interactive challenges. It all kicks off at 6pm on Monday at twitch.tv/xboxon. Don't miss it!

PLAYSTATION 5 BEST TITLES



Marvel's Spider-Man: Miles Morales

THIS follow-up to the outstanding Marvel's Spider-Man is easily one of the must-have launch titles. The action is set one year after the events of the first game and is backed up by the exciting combat from the first outing as you swing around a snowy New York City.



Demon's Souls

IF you're looking to test your skills then Bluepoint Games' PS5-reimagining of Demon's Souls is a must.

This hardcore action RPG led to the creation of the now infamous Dark Souls series and is part of PS lore. It looks absolutely amazing but be prepared to die...a LOT. It is tough. You have been warned.



Godfall

GODFALL is a new looter/slasher which means kicking ass in stylish melee combat as you collect and use bigger and better gear.

From new studio Counterplay Games, this three-player co-op will throw you and your mates up against all kinds of enemies and bosses.



Astro's Playroom

GAMERS of a certain vintage will remember pack-in games with consoles.

Astro Bot is the adorable PS robo-mascot and he is getting a game that really shows off the cooler features of the PS5.

The best bit? It is pre-installed so it's ready to go right out of the box.

1,803 creative staff now work in the industry

Boom as Scots jobs rise by 17%

THE Scottish video games industry is booming as new figures show a 17 per cent rise in jobs between November 2018 and April this year.

That makes Scotland the fourth-largest games cluster in the UK after London, and England's South-East and North-West.

Professor Gregor White, dean of design and informatics at Abertay University Dundee, welcomed the findings by industry body TIGA.

He said "Another period of strong growth in the Scottish sector is welcome news in uncertain times."

"Recent developments in the Scottish sector reflect a period of consolidation, growth in studio size and inward investment by major technology companies. All of which is good news for graduates from games courses looking for entry level opportunities and strong career prospects."

Scotland now has 1,803 permanent and full-time creative staff working on game development in 96 companies. That is a hike from 84 firms employing 1,537 staff in November 2018.

These companies are now accountable for 7.3 per cent of the UK's firms and 10.7 per cent of its developer headcount as a whole.

And that is a huge boost to the economy — firms north of the border make a direct and indirect contribution of £236million to the UK's GDP as a whole.

The video game sector now accounts for more than half of the global entertainment market. There are currently 2.5billion gamers worldwide, with China having the most at 500million, followed by the US with 167million. The EU boasts 243million, 32million of them in the UK.

TIGA chief executive officer Dr Richard Wilson hailed Scotland's important role to the industry worldwide.

He said: "Scotland has a critical mass of experienced game developers, renowned universities preparing skilled graduates for the games industry (including TIGA-accredited Abertay University) and supportive agencies including Scottish Enterprise and Creative Scotland."

"The UK Games Fund is also based in Dundee."

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X BOX SERIES X
 Price: £449.99
 Dimensions: 15.1cm tall, 15.1cm deep 30.1cm wide
 Weight: 9.8lbs
 GPU: Custom RDNA 2 GPU 12 TFLOPS
 Internal Storage: Custom 1TB NVME SSD
 HDMI resolution and framerate: 4K @120Hz
 External Storage: 1TB Seagate Storage
 Expansion Card or USB 3.1 HDD or SSD
 Coming Games: Halo Infinite, Fable, Forza Motorsport
 Other option: Xbox Series S £249.99

PLAYSTATION 5
 Price: £449.99
 Dimensions: 39cm tall, 26cm deep and 10.4cm wide
 Weight: 14.7lbs
 GPU: Custom RDNA 2 GPU 10.28 TFLOPS
 Internal storage: Custom 825GB SSD
 HDMI resolution and framerate: 4K @120Hz
 External storage: USB HDD support
 Coming Games: God of War, Horizon Forbidden West, Gran Turismo Sport
 Other option: Sony PS5 Digital Edition £359



Battle to be Xmas PREZZIEDENT

X BOX SERIES X VS PLAYSTATION 5

By STUART CULLEN
THE battle for the White House gripped the world this week.

But there is an even more intense fight than Joe Biden, below, versus Donald Trump, far right, as the two major gaming console juggernauts go head-to-head to be Nol at Christmas. Microsoft release the Xbox Series X on Tuesday, with Sony unleashing the PlayStation 5 the week after. Just like the US presidential race, both tech companies have ardent supporters who will follow the brand without question.

But what about the undecided voters? Microsoft and Sony have both made their pitches and there is plenty to like in their policies. Both machines promise eye-watering visual treats at lightning speeds, but the £450 price tags are quite an investment in the thick of a global pandemic. On the flip side, you'll be spending more time in the house so you'll get your dollar's worth. Microsoft have landed the first blow by launching earlier — and the Series X is a real beast of a machine. It is slightly more powerful than the PS5 (on paper), making it the fastest console ever produced. Even better, Microsoft have the know-how to harness that power — loading games now takes a fraction of the time and that means more play time. You can also make use of the new Quick Resume feature — where you can jump between a number of time saves and pick up the action where you left off. Say you're playing Gears Tactics and a pal wants a race in Forza Horizon 4...it takes just seconds to load the game where you left it. There is also the smart delivery system that adds a host of new upgrades to games to really make them shine in 4K. They will run at a fluid 60 frames per second or higher in some cases. There is a slight gripe on the Series

X — there aren't really any exclusive titles for it just yet and that won't change for a good few months. That said, there is a huge selection to dive into from Day 1. With the PS5, on the otherhand, you get Marvel's Spider-Man: Miles Morales straight off the bat, as well as the highly anticipated Demon's Souls remaster and Bugsnax. And it is fast. You can go from the dashboard to swinging through New York as everyone's favourite web-slinger in seconds. It is mind-blowing when you see it happening in real time. This machine seems to have made load times a thing of the past. Everything is a visual sensation — it looks great as you fight crooks. This is the jump you expect from next-gen technology. The PS5 looks like it can pack a punch right enough. It is a unit — but that may make it a tight fit for many TV cabinets. Unlike the Series X, when you fire up Sony's latest toy it looks like a new console. The interface has a classy space-like vibe and it is very easy to move around. That could change as you add more games, though. So, which one will win this race? Like Biden v Trump, it's tight and only time will tell. But unlike the US electorate, gamers WILL be the winners in this one.

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