

# Air Guitar 401

Pull the Armadillos from Your Trousers and Crank the Amp to Eleven.

words by **Jeremiah J. Shaw**



## Guitar Hero II

Sony [\$499 20gb, \$599 60gb, Wi-Fi]

There's a fine line between stupid and clever, and once again the cats at Red Octane—the publishing studio responsible for the Guitar Hero series—50-50 grind that line with reckless aplomb.

Now, if you're one of the poor unfortunate few who have yet to play the original Guitar Hero, then it's high time to get over your video game snobbery and pick up the Mini-Fender SG for an evening of pure rock poseur absurdity.

The game plays similarly to Dance Dance Revolution, just without the sweaty raver kids and public humiliation. Color-coded "notes" slide toward the bottom of the screen, and you simply press the matching color "fret" button on the guitar while strumming the "string" fob to hit the note. That's it.

Now add some power rock anthems from the likes of Sabbath, Stevie Ray, Pantera and Hendrix, and you've got a recipe for days upon days of replayable fun.

The newest installment, "Guitar Hero 2," releases on Nov. 7th for both the Playstation 2 and the Xbox 360, and promises to be a worthy follow-up to the "Monster of Rock"-sized shoes of its predecessor.

There are more characters to choose from, more guitar styles, "cooperative" multiplayer mode—one person plays rhythm guitar as the other plays the lead—and the new track list is phenomenal.

Okay sure, you're not really playing guitar. Sure, the controller looks more like a keytar than a Fender Strat. And sure, the whole thing rates a 9.8 on the geekdom Richter Scale. But if you just take a deep breath, nod your head to the beat, and embrace your inner Napoleon Dynamite for a moment, those nights in junior high spent playing air guitar while bouncing on your bed will come flooding back to you.

And we promise it's every bit as fun as you remember.

