

# Joystiq Weekly: Titanfall, Thief Review, Twitch Plays Pokemon and More

This week's news of a new Tony Hawk game isn't exactly what we were hoping for, but it can't stop us from digging out our old cartridges and discs to revisit the series that made us mount real-life skateboards for the first time. Without the killer soundtracks and a focus on pulling off special moves that progressively got more insane with each entry, we might never have spent hours trying to learn how to ollie. Or earning fresh headaches from trying to drop into half pipes. Or building ramps out of scraps from the garage so we could grind our faces off on the pavement.

Thankfully, a revitalization of childhood injury memories isn't the only thing the Joystiq Weekly has in store - news of a Titanfall bundle, reviews of Thief and Plants vs Zombies: Garden Warfare and a sociological exploration of Twitch Plays Pokemon are also available for your immediate consumption! Dive into this week's biggest moments in gaming right after the break.

[Image: Robomodo]

If you spent as much time chaining tricks together and hunting secret tapes as we did in the Tony Hawk games, last week's blip about the series setting up a new trick line might have filled you with anticipation. Well, hopefully that anticipation was for a mobile-only game, because that's what we're getting! Hawk confirmed the game's development this week, and the announcement follows his thoughts in a CNBC interview last year about the best mobile business model. Releasing a free base game and charging for access per level? We're, uh ... so excited.

Twitch Plays Pokemon? Nah, Twitch beat Pokemon in the early hours of the morning, putting down our collective rival's final pocket monster with "AA-j," the team's Zapdos. While this closes a chapter of the event's extensive lore, a countdown timer on the stream suggests that a new adventure will begin at 7:00 a.m. EST on Sunday.

Sony confirmed a round of layoffs this week at its Santa Monica studio, best known for its work on the God of War series. Sony Santa Monica is currently collaborating with three studios on known projects, including The Order: 1886 with Ready At Dawn.

Preparing for TieTieFaw Titanfall? If that includes talking yourself into buying an Xbox One, consider the bundle planned for the game's launch date, March 11. The box includes the console and a Titanfall download code for \$499.99, the current retail price for the Xbox One itself in the United States.

Of course, many Titan pilots are going to want to share their brightest moments of glory in the battlefield with others. Good thing Twitch is planning on patching in support for streaming gameplay on the Xbox One on March 11! The update will also allow players to archive

footage, a feature PS4 fans are currently without.

It's time to start binging on online sessions of your favorite Wii and DS games - Nintendo has announced plans to end support for online matches on both platforms on May 20. The DSi and Wii Shop Channels will remain online, however, as will video services like Netflix and Hulu. The one and only

Craft some script theories involving Creepers and voxel-based tributes to pixel art, because Minecraft creator Markus "Notch" Persson has confirmed work on a movie based on the build-what-you-want simulator. A Deadline report links the project to Warner Bros. and states that The Lego Movie producer Roy Lee will oversee the film.

It's always satisfying when an unlikely combination pans out, and PopCap's adaption of their tower defense series Plants vs Zombies into a third-person shooter, Plants vs Zombies: Garden Warfare, is a great example. Despite some balancing issues between unit types, we found the experiment to be stuffed with charm, with a "much deeper experience than the happy-go-lucky gameplay would lead you to believe."

Editor-in-Chief Ludwig Kietzmann sneaked through the Thief reboot, finding its usage of collapsable pathways, amnesia and boss fights to be the "ugly side of Thief's modernization." Ludwig enjoyed the game most when it followed the "involving, slow-paced stealth that made its ancestor such a tense affair."

Castlevania: Lords of Shadow 2, the conclusion to MercurySteam's trilogy following Gabriel and Trevor Belmont, bears an unlikely combination that doesn't share Garden Warfare's unconventional success. Review Content Director Richard Mitchell found Lords of Shadow 2's stealth sections to be "out of place and, worse, boring," but was pleased enough by a strong soundtrack, engaging combat and inspired bosses.

Senior Editor Jess Conditt solved a path through Jazzpunk's humor-laced puzzles, persevering through the game's minimalist presentation and explanation. Jess was won over by Jazzpunk's "balance of subtlety and in-your-face ridiculousness," including its implementation of a whoopie cushion.

Professor Layton has solved several cartridge-sized bundles of puzzles by now, with Professor Layton and the Azran Legacy's round of brainteasers serving as the closing of his second trilogy. Contributing Editor Sinan Kubba noted that Azran Legacy feels "all but out of aces" due to largely following the puzzle logic of previous Layton games, but admits its conclusion still had him "wrapped around its little finger."

## Original Content

Twitch Plays Pokemon, the live "Lets Play" communal effort of Pokemon Red, became a riveting source of entertainment for thousands of its devoted followers (All praise Lord Helix). Contributing Editor Mike Suszek recently spoke with MIT associate professor T.L. Taylor

about the social elements that have contributed to the project's ignition in web culture.

Ever wonder what it sounds like when a carefree, patient gamer is subjected to the platforming horrors of *The Impossible Game*? Dave Hinkle subjected himself to dozens of rhythmic deaths for your amusement in a recent *Tiny Stream*, proving that "simplistic" is not a synonym for "easy."

Not everyone's cut out for thievery, but if you're having trouble taking on *Thief*'s line of challenges, don't worry - our *Stiq Tips* installment offers pointers for everything from basic, stealth-like movement to properly utilizing your tools to kill birds.

If you participated in our 4 In February challenge, you might have noticed that *Joystiq*'s readerbase decimated the staff when it came to besting our self-assigned goals. Feature Content Director Xav De Matos, Community Manager Anthony John Agnello, Weekend Editor Sam Prell and Ludwig admit defeat on this week's *Super Joystiq Podcast*. After a proper bout of shame, they dive into discussions of *Thief*, *Castlevania: Lords of Shadow 2* and form questionable strategies for turning Capcom's financials around.

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