

## DEFENDING

# Shadow The Hedgehog

Oscar Taylor-Kent argues that the black-and-red 'hog's first appearance is king

**W**ith Knuckles cemented as Sonic's ally, the hedgehog hero needed a new rival come the big tenth anniversary game, *Sonic Adventure 2*. Enter Shadow The Hedgehog. Originally sealed away by Dr Robotnik's own mad scientist grandfather, when he's freed he works with the doc to fulfil Robotnik senior, Gerald Robotnik's, posthumous destructive machinations.

But it's not evil for evil's sake. Nor is Shadow really working for either Robotnik. His real goal is to avenge Maria Robotnik, who he was raised alongside on the orbital Space Colony ARK. When the colony was raided by the government, she was gunned down as she helped Shadow escape. His memories of her final words are muddled – but the event isn't. The extrajudicial war crime literally occurs in a Sonic game. It adds a lot of depth to the 'dark' half of the game, and builds out Shadow as a tragic figure, yet one with his own agenda, neither a perfect foil for Sonic nor a simple henchman for Robotnik. He's a full 'hog in his own right.

Yet it's revealed that Gerald Robotnik played them all from beyond the grave. Shadow wasn't the true ultimate lifeform, and the doc's secret orbital laser has been programmed to destroy both itself and Earth. Taking a back seat as the others try to stop it, Shadow is prompted by Amy to remember Maria's real final words: "For all the people who live on that planet... give them a chance to be happy... let them live for their dreams." Springing into action, he helps save the day, and sacrifices himself in the process.

It's the perfect conclusion to his character arc in the game. Perhaps so much that while we love his reappearances, they undermine a game that manages to toe the line between heightened action and genuine sincerity. Sayonara, Shadow The Hedgehog.



## FAKER? I THINK YOU'RE THE FAKE HEDGEHOG AROUND HERE."

Mistaken identity plagues the Blue Blur in SA2, but Shadow doesn't love the comparison either.



## INFO

**MAIN GAMES**  
Sonic Adventure 2; Sonic Heroes; Shadow The Hedgehog; Sonic The Hedgehog (2006)

## STATS

In *Shadow The Hedgehog*, it's revealed the devilish Black Doom lent his blood to Shadow's creation.

He'll co-star in the third Sonic movie, voiced by Keanu Reeves.

He can utilise the chaos emeralds to use special powers, like the iconic, time-stopping Chaos Control.

## SPIN-OFFS

Sega Superstars Tennis; Sonic & All-Stars Racing Transformed; Sonic Riders; Sonic Rivals

## HOW TO PLAY?

*Sonic Adventure 2: Battle*, PS Store, £6.49