



£1,740/GAMING PC

SCAN 3XS VENGEANCE

The Vengeance is a machine best served cool and quiet

VITAL STATISTICS

Price £1,740 **Manufacturer** Scan Computers **Web** www.scan.co.uk **CPU** Core i7 2600K **Motherboard** Gigabyte GA-P67-UD4 **GPU** EVGA GTX 580 **RAM** 8GB Corsair Vengeance 1,600MHz DDR3 **Storage** OCZ SSD 120GB, Samsung HDD 1TB **OS** Windows 7 Home Premium 64-bit **Sound** Asus Xonar DX **Price check** www.scan.co.uk

We're not entirely sure who Scan Computers is aiming to exact its vengeance upon with this rig but, by the numbers the 3XS Vengeance is producing, it's a safe bet it's going to manage it.

This is the first full PC we've seen to put the new second-generation Intel Core platform into context. You'll have read just how good this Sandy Bridge platform is by now, but until you actually see it in a machine, it's tough to quantify.

The pairing of the Core i7 2600K and the NVIDIA GTX

580 could well turn out to be the top CPU/GPU partnership of the next six months or so, but until we get a few more rigs across our test benches it's a little hard to tell. No matter what the context, though, the only machine in the past year to come close to the 3XS Vengeance's performance numbers has been the CyberPower Charybdis from last October.

That was a £2,000 machine sporting an overclocked Gulftown, six-core CPU and twin 1GB GTX 460s running in SLI. Granted, that rig still has the performance lead, but only by a hair's breadth – and that's mostly down to the twin GPUs beating at the heart of the PC, rather than the CPU itself.

Safe and sound

The other major difference between the two machines is the noise. The Charybdis had to water-cool the CPU to keep it happy, but still relied on two large fans, and the twin GPUs also made a bit of racket happily heating up the innards. Scan's

3XS Vengeance, on the other hand, is whisper quiet.

Despite the fact that the Core i7 2600K is running at a lightning 4.5GHz, it's kept cool by the Alpenföhn Matterhorn active-cooler, which is itself a rather softly spoken chiller. The GTX 580 too still surprises us with just how quiet it manages to be. Compared with its GTX 480-shaped forebear, that's doubly impressive.

At £1,740, this is by no means a particularly wallet-friendly machine, but considering the combination of top-end tech and spectacular benchmarks, it comes out looking pretty good value. There's no compromise in this system: at no point have cuts been made to ensure this machine hits a certain price point. Indeed, if the rather scarce GTX 580 becomes more widely available, the pricing may actually come down.

You've got the Sandy Bridge CPU, seriously overclocked; the best graphics card on the planet; a full 1TB storage drive and a SandForce-powered SSD from

Technical analysis

From these benchmarks, the Charybdis might look the better machine, but it's not £250 better. The performance figures you're getting from the 3XS are so close, and on DiRT 2 slightly ahead, that you'd happily go for this setup.

These benchmarks also don't take into account the superior OCZ SandForce SSD and dedicated soundcard of the Scan machine.

CPU performance

Cinebench R11	INDEX: HIGHER IS BETTER
3XS VENGEANCE	8.73
CYBERPOWER CHARYBDIS	10.32

DirectX 11 tessellation performance

Heaven	FRAMES PER SECOND: HIGHER IS BETTER
3XS VENGEANCE	25.9
CYBERPOWER CHARYBDIS	28.2

DirectX 11 gaming performance

DiRT 2	FRAMES PER SECOND: HIGHER IS BETTER
3XS VENGEANCE	90
CYBERPOWER CHARYBDIS	88

OCZ; a bloated 8GB of speedy DDR3; and even a particularly tasty discrete soundcard as an extra cherry on top.

Faster components and chipsets will arrive, but a 3XS Vengeance purchase is going to remain relevant for a while yet. Essentially, this is a machine that will happily be playing at the top of its game for the next two years at least.

As the first machine of what's effectively a new generation, it was always going to blow the previous rigs we've seen out of the water, but even so we can't help but be impressed by the 3XS Vengeance. **Dave James**

PCFormat Verdict

- Awesome performance
- No compromise on components
- Whisper quiet
- Comparable with a hex-core rig

It shows what you can do with the top end of this new generation of components.

92

