

Dell Inspiron XPS-2

MICHAEL DELL WANTS TO PIMP YOUR NOTEBOOK. LET HIM

It takes us six shots of Jack Daniel's and a good slug of NyQuil to really fall into a deep, deep sleep. On nights like those, we see strange things: notebooks with felt lids and DayGlo fringe, hydraulics, and those funky wheel rims that spin the CHOICE opposite way you're going.

And then we wake up, only to be faced with Dell's Inspiron XPS-2, a computer so bling'd out you really

shouldn't operate it unless you're wearing a limegreen leisure suit and a hat with a peacock feather sticking out of it.

Undoubtedly the first feature you'll notice about the XPS-2 — the second incarnation of Dell's

high-power gaming notebook - is the cool light emanating from the top panel and the undercarriage. Dell isn't the first company

合合合合合

game performance

matched by pantskicking design

ST FEATURE Blazing

ORST FEATURE Dude. you're gettin' a loan

over to the QuickSet control panel and you can actually change the color and intensity of those ground effects. Three zones can be configured independently, so if you want blue light shooting out from the front speaker grilles

to make its computer light up — but head



It looks like part of your car stereo, but crack open the lid and you'll find the best gaming notebook on earth.



and red spewing from the sides, it's no problem. (But no, you can't make the colors automatically cycle through the entire rainbow, though we expect that feature in the XPS-3.)

There's more than pretty LEDs to this machine: The entire XPS chassis has been redesigned from scratch. Every trace of the old, hideous chopshop design has vanished. (Sorry, the deathly "Skullz" top panels are gone, too.) The revamped XPS-2 is sleek and stylish, done up in black and silver and featuring a brushed-metal lid design that blows away anything we've ever seen before. Evoking the look of an automotive amplifier, the mirrored metallic surface sports a glossy clear overlay and black plastic bumpers on either side. At first glance it doesn't look like a notebook at all.

At the lofty price of \$3,586, you aren't going to buy the XPS-2 for its good looks alone, so you'll be happy to hear the notebook is also totally revamped under the hood. The biggest change is that Dell has dropped the

XPS's power-hungry Pentium 4 in favor of a 2.13GHz Pentium M, a huge architectural switch that gives the XPS-2 a ton of headroom for gear that sucks more juice and runs hotter. Chief among these: The 15.4-inch LCD jumps to a full 17 inches, and a 256MB Nvidia GeForce 6800 is on tap for gaming delights. Oh, and don't forget the duallayer DVD±RW drive.

The sum total of the XPS-2's upgrades is that it has handily become the fastest gaming computer we've ever seen, blowing recent vintage machines out of the water with over 410 frames per second on our *Unreal* test and 101.5 frames on a highquality Doom 3 time demo, about 25 percent faster than anything we've benchmarked to date. Sysmark is a fast yet unremarkable 218, but what gamer is going give a flying hoot about that?

It's almost beside the point to mention that despite the much larger screen, the new XPS is an astonishing 2 pounds lighter and has a longer battery life than its predecessor. And

it's quiet, too. A machine like this isn't meant to stray far from a power outlet (and a titanium lock, if you're smart), but it's far more portable than other 17-inchers we've reviewed. Now bring on the hydraulics! -Christopher Null





The XPS-2 isn't on fire: Those are customizable LEDs, which glow from six different spots on the machine. Now that's just kick-ass.



