

The Hard Stuff

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REVIEW

OLYMPIC

Heavenly power at an earthly price

by Alex Roth

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Zeus 3000 SE

\$2,200 cyberpowerpc.com

PC GAMER
EDITOR'S
CHOICE
★★★★★



BENCHMARKS

3DMark 11 6462

Unigen Heaven

137/118/58fps
(1680x1050/1920x1080/2560x1600, Ultra setting, 4xAA)

Metro: Last Light

77/66/42fps
(1680x1050/1920x1080/2560x1600, Very High quality, SSAA enabled)

Total War: Shogun 2

141/191fps
(1920x1080 High setting/1680x1050 Balanced setting)

If someone calls a \$2,200 gaming rig a dirt cheap deal, I'd normally roll my eyes and think *must be nice sleeping on that money-stuffed mattress*. The Zeus EVO Thunder 3000 SE by Cyberpower, however, has me thinking twice. Go to Newegg and spec out a system with dual GTX 770s, a top-shelf Asus motherboard, Intel's Core i7 "Haswell" CPU and 16GB of Corsair's finest RAM—plus all the fans and case lights stuffed into this monster. I'll bet you're not going to do any better than that price tag; in fact, you'll probably pay *more*.

The Zeus' CFI case is an enormous full-size, clean and sleek in Storm-trooper white. It has copious extras, such as dual side panel doors and four top-mounted USB ports (two USB 3.0s and two 2.0s) next to the audio and mic jacks. Inside you'll find a cabling job that's among the tightest and most obsessive-compulsive I've ever seen, made easy to admire via the tinted side window and ice-blue case lighting.

While the case looks great and the cable management is dazzling, the combination of plastic and metal in the construction makes the plastic portions feel cheaper by contrast. Those USB and audio ports I mentioned wiggle and bow beneath their plastic frame, and you have to take some care closing the side panels to make sure they shut properly. But

those are my only issues with the Zeus. The two GTX 770s worked together in perfect SLI harmony, laying waste to some grisly benchmarks. They racked up 58 frames per second in Unigine Heaven, and even a slick 42fps in *Metro: Last Light* at Very High quality settings and 2560x1600 resolution.

The combination of 128GB SSD and 2TB HDD whisks you to the desktop in about fifteen seconds, and dares you to max it out with an epic *steamapps* folder.

While I'd rather have an all-metal case than one with quick side-panel hard drive access (there's no RAID setup in my future), I don't have a problem handing the Zeus an Editor's Choice award based on power for dollar. This is an excellent way to make the jump to Haswell, and CyberPower's generous warranty assuages my worries about the build. While I'd never undervalue the joy of building your own system, getting rock-bottom pricing and the confidence of a hefty three-year warranty can't be ignored.

VERDICT

I'd prefer an all-metal case, but this rig is dirt cheap for the performance and doesn't skimp where it counts.

PC GAMER

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SPEC ♦ CPU Intel 3.5 GHz i7-4770K ♦ RAM 16 GB Corsair Vengeance 1600MHz DDR3 ♦ GPU Two Superlocked EVGA NVIDIA GTX 770 2GB GDDR5 PCI-E 3 in SLI-Mode ♦ Motherboard ASUS Z87 Sabertooth ♦ Storage 128 GB SSD, 2TB HD ♦ Optical LG 12X Blu-Ray/DVD RW Combo ♦ Case CFI Borelight White Full Tower Case