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Brian Michael Bendis , Phil Hester , Matt Wagner , Terry Moore (Text) , Mike Allred (Illustrations) , Bill Sienkiewicz (Illustrations) , David W. Mack (Illustrations) , Rick Mays (Illustrations)

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Collecting all 16 issues of Ultimate Marvel Team-Up, plus the star-studded Ultimate Spider-Man Super Special! Teenager Peter Parker may just have started out in the crime-fighting game, but there are plenty of heroes and villains already doing their thing. And it doesn't take long for Spider-Man to encounter these strange new allies and enemies - including Wolverine, the Hulk, Iron Man, the Punisher, Daredevil, the Fantastic Four, the Man-Thing, the X-Men, Doctor Strange, the Black Widow, Shang-Chi and more! Take a wild tour through the ever-exciting Ultimate universe, as Eisner Award-winning writer Brian Michael Bendis teams up with the comic industry's greatest artistic talents! Through the eyes of Peter Parker, Ultimate Marvel Team-Up showcases all the Ultimate heroes. From uncanny mutants to gleaming Avengers to rampaging green brutes, this volume has it all! Collects Ultimate Marvel Team-Up #1-16 and the Ultimate Spider-Man Super Special.

Ultimate Marvel Team-Up: Ultimate Collection Details

Date : Published September 13th 2006 by Marvel (first published 2002)

ISBN : 9780785123613

Author : Brian Michael Bendis , Phil Hester , Matt Wagner , Terry Moore (Text) , Mike Allred (Illustrations) , Bill Sienkiewicz (Illustrations) , David W. Mack (Illustrations) , Rick Mays (Illustrations)

Format : Paperback 464 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Comics, Graphic Novels, Superheroes, Marvel, Spider Man, Graphic Novels
Comics

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From Reader Review Ultimate Marvel Team-Up: Ultimate Collection for online ebook

Tvrtko Bali? says

The stories vary a lot in pretty much every way, style, tone, quality... they're all all over the place. So it is hard to judge them all as a whole, but I enjoyed them all and decided to rate the series based on that. The stories don't really fit in with the continuity of the ultimate Marvel universe, but they ultimately don't have to fit in, they are made as stand alone stories. And while I would rate individual issues lower, I recommend this series as just a fun collection of comicbooks. That's what it is, it's fun comics, don't expect more and if more comes just enjoy it.

Neil R. Coulter says

Ultimate Marvel Team-Up is a collection of stories that take place between the end of *Ultimate Spider-Man, Vol. 1* and sometime in the midst of *Ultimate Spider-Man, Vol. 2*. If you're reading through the *Ultimate Spider-man* series, you'll find that this collection includes events--such as the first Ultimate appearances of Lizard and S.H.I.E.L.D.--that will be referenced in the main series, so it's worthwhile to read this book. The best part of this collection is the variety of artists who work on the stories. Each story is done by a different art team. As someone who doesn't know much about graphic novels, I really liked this opportunity to see the vastly different art styles of contributing artists. I found it fascinating seeing the ways that the contributors envision the Marvel world.

I was happy with the stylistic variety, but I recognize that others might find it jarring. Because preferences for art styles are subjective, each reader will see a different balance of good and bad. For me, the biggest standout in the collection is Bill Sienkiewicz's Punisher story. Sienkiewicz's visual sense is astounding. I hadn't ever seen anyone craft a page the way he does, and his visuals have a cinematic poetry that transcends Bendis's writing. Look, for example, at the two-page spread in Part 2, beginning with the text "I came to Frank and I told him what was going on." I love the subtle, minimalist beauty of that image, which is matched in this case by a beautiful passage of dialogue. It is my favorite graphic novel page.

The other memorable story is Ted McKeever's take on Dr. Strange. It took me longer to appreciate McKeever's unsettling, abstract style, but it is a perfect match for Dr. Strange. I especially like his full-page images, such as in the flashback of Dr. Strange's history. I also enjoy two pages early in the story that are made up of tall, slim horizontal spaces.

Other styles are less appealing to me. Jim Mahfood's Fantastic Four story is the low point of the book (though I really like his short vignette of Peter and Mary after the Elektra story; it's a great-looking Mary Jane). Other stories are just a little bland: Matt Wagner's Wolverine, Mike Allred's Iron Man, and Terry Moore's Black Widow. And I do pity anyone who has to draw *The Daily Bugle's* Ben Urich. Are artists prohibited from giving this guy a decent haircut?

With the wide range of visual styles, what are the constants in this collection? There is running theme through all of the stories of Peter trying to come to grips with what has happened to him, what he is supposed to be, what his identity truly is. Some of his moments of self-doubt are poignant, even if his final speech that closes the book is overdone. He wonders how he can even know who the "bad guy" is when he swings into tense situations, and he regrets mistakes he has made. It's a good theme, and it's a lot for a 16-year-old to deal

with.

Unfortunately, no matter who is on the art team we can't escape the prose style of Brian Michael Bendis. He wrote all of the stories. I'm used to his writing style accompanying Mark Bagley's visuals in the regular series, but the Bendis voice feels incongruous against other artists' interpretations. It's odd, for example, when Dr. Strange Jr. starts speaking just like Spider-Man in the final battle. I felt like I was missing something. As usual, Bendis is on shaky ground when he's writing dialogue for a character smarter than he himself is.

These complaints aside, this collection of stories is quite fun. I liked it as an introduction to the origin stories of the core Marvel characters (I first read it before the recent Marvel movies that cover many of the same characters), and as an introduction to some wonderful artists.

Craig says

As a writing experiment around the Marvel's Ultimate Universe this is an unusual misfire from Brian Michael Bendis. It would be easy to justify as being a very early work but that doesn't really hold when compared to the absolutely brilliant Ultimate Spider-man opening arcs.

Frankly, the done-in-one (or two) issues plots are the best part as once he adds the flesh (the pacing, the dialogue, the conclusions) to the bone it falls apart.

So why isn't this a one-star dud review?

Firstly, this is the hugely rare, out-of-print, done-in-one hardcover, which means it was a joy to find and buy on eBay. No you can't have it, it's mine.

Secondly, and bearing in mind the collaborative effort of most comics, a lot of the art is simply stunning. Drawing on a wide variety of artists and styles Bendis brings together some of the best talent in the business. The Bill Sienkiewicz Punisher/Daredevil/Spider-Man artwork is breathtaking and where else will you find a Matt Wagner Wolverine or Mike Allred Iron Man.?

The final reason is the concluding chapter of this collection, which might possibly be Bendis' single finest issue. At the very least it's a close contest between this, his first Daredevil with Alex Maleev or his Luke Cage Civil War issue of New Avengers. It's nothing more than a series of art spreads 'touring' the Ultimate U, framed around a class of Peter Parker's on heroes, but the whole thing is genuinely touching in a way most superhero comics just aren't.

If you can slog through Bendis' tepid writing then this one is worth a look.

Randy Lander says

A bit of a mixed bag, and there are some misfires toward the end, but this book is a great buy for the wide variety of artists, including Jim Mahfood, Terry Moore, Phil Hester, Matt Wagner, Bill Sienkiewicz and tons more.

Óscar Trobo says

Los team-up de Spiderman con Lobezno, Hulk y Iron Man de este universo Ultimate son tan malos a nivel de gui3n y dibujo como los de los Marvel Team Up originales.

Menci3n aparte merece los n3meros 6 al 8 con un Bendis bastante afinado y un Bill Sienkiewicz espectacular en una historia del Castigador y Daredevil donde Spiderman ejerce un papel muy secundario.

Kevin Richey says

Wow, this was really uneven. It is essentially an anthology series of Spider-Man stories, and in each story (some running two issues) he teams up with a different super hero (whose origin story is typically introduced in the issue, as most of these guys haven't gotten their own Ultimate series). I knew most of the characters (Punisher, Daredevil, X-Men, Fantastic Four), but some were new to me (Shang-Chi, The Man-Thing), but overall this line was VERY hit or miss. Some of the issues were decent (none were really spectacular though), but some were downright awful. There's one issue with the Fantastic Four that I had real trouble even finishing. It's seriously one of the worst comics I've ever read. It also had some of the worst comic art of the bunch (different artists drew different issues. Most were okay, but again, some were really bad and did not even seem at a professional level). Can't recommend this series at all. Really, the bad out-weights the good here. And there were no real cross-overs in plot to the main Ultimate lines. My advice: skip these. (1 1/2 stars)

The_Mad_Swede says

This volume collects all 16 issues of *Ultimate Marvel Team-Up* as well as *Ultimate Spider-Man Super Special #1* and although the collection is not without its merits, it is not hard to imagine why this title had a relatively brief run. In 16 issues, there are 10 different artists (or artistic teams), with styles that vastly differ, and Bendis for better or worse bends his writing to the respective artists, resulting in a title that is widely different in style, feeling and, I have to say it, quality.

The first story (issue #1) has Matt Wagner at the artistic helm and features Spider-Man and Wolverine (before his joining the X-Men in Ultimate X-Men) and develops into a big fight with Sabertooth.

The second story (issues #2-3), with art by Phil Hester, is less interesting, in my opinion (which should not read as a comment on Hester's artwork in any way, really). Spider-Man meets up with the Hulk, but obviously the Hulk of the Ultimate universe is such a no-brainer that his dialogue mostly does not stretch beyond wordless grumbling. A sad treatment of this character, and like many other character appearances in this series, it jars with how these characters are eventually portrayed in the Ultimate universe (though in the case of Hulk, the question could of course be if this brainless version isn't better than the cannibalistic one in *The Ultimates*).

The third story (issues #4-5) is one of the best by far in the volume, both in terms of story and artwork (by the brilliant Mike Allred). Here Spider-Man meets up with genius Tony Stark a.k.a Iron Man (here not even concealing his dual identity). It is a spy story with nice fighting sequences and flashbacks into Stark's own

story of becoming Iron Man (which incidentally works rather well with the depiction in *The Ultimates* but both of which differ widely from the jarring account in *Ultimate Iron Man*). It also offers interesting promises of scheming involving Nick Fury and S.H.I.E.L.D., not to mention the Latverian state.

The fourth story (issues #6–8) offers in interesting arc with art by Bill Sienkiewicz. Stylistically speaking, it **is** quite a jarring break from previous issues, but it does suit the story very, very well. It is basically the story of the Ultimate version of the Punisher (first issue more or less all about him) and fittingly how Daredevil deals with him (in the remaining issues), and also Spider-Man's attempt to deal with different moral areas than he is used to. In terms of the series, the main problem would be that Spider-Man has been relegated to more or less cameo appearances. He can found on two pages each in the first two of the issues and on three in the final one, but at least those three pages have him involved in the actual story (rather than swooping by in true cameo style as in the other issues). This could well be a sign of where the title started losing readers, both because of the strong change in style and because the team-up bit is somehow missed and the main stay character remains largely missing in the arc.

The fifth story (issue #9) with art by Jim Mahfood is without a doubt the low mark of this collection. Mahfood's way too cartoony style for the subject and Bendis' far too metafictional writing in this issue is utter crap. The fact that the story, in parody at that, gives us a first glimpse of the Ultimate FF and Skrulls that in no, and I mean **no**, way correspond to the later *Ultimate Fantastic Four* series is beyond words bad. And Mahfood's art sticks like needle in my eye.

The sixth story (issue #10) featuring the art of John Totleben returns the title to better quality. Using Totleben's association with DC's character the Swamp Thing, Bendis tells a horror story involving the Lizard and Man-Thing, using classic devices of the gothic novel, like narration through letters. Arguably the story's main flaw lies in not using the Man-Thing more (because his brief appearances are among the most beautiful things in the story, art wise).

The seventh story (issue #11), art by Chynna Clugston-Major, is another low mark. In an all out day at the mall with no costumes in sight, Peter Parker with friends encounter the X-Men in civvies. Talk, talk, talk and oh, some more talk, defines this artistically manga-esque story. And don't get me wrong, I can enjoy dialogue in comics, but this one turns out mostly boring and really merely shows Bendis trying to be Kevin Smith doing a Kevin Smith movie... and failing miserably at that.

The eighth story (issues #12–13) shows the talent of Ted McKeever. Now, I really enjoy some of McKeever's work on other things (*The Extremist* with Pete Milligan for Vertigo leaps to mind), but he should be kept away from the superhero genre without a doubt. Here his style is much too jarring and doesn't really bring me into the story about Dr Strange. Nor is this story showing Bendis at his finest, sadly.

The ninth story (issues #14) with art by Terry Moore (whose *Strangers in Paradise* this single story has made me really, really interested in) returns the series to better territory. The nice artwork works truly well with the story, which ties in very nicely with the Iron Man two-parter by Allred. Also, Bendis shows his good side and the result is... some really fine material.

The tenth story (issues #15–16), and the end of the series, was drawn by Rick Mays with some brush art pages by Andy Lee. It showcases Shang-Chi, the Master of Kung Fu, and is based on a Chinese fairytale, which is told in the brush art pages and then mirrored in the main story. Sadly, the story is a bit too decompressed for its own good, but I really like the dual storytelling device. All in all not the strongest note to end the series on, but nor is it the weakest one by far.

The final story in the collection, i.e. the *Ultimate Spider-Man Super Special* #1, is a mixed bag. It is a single longer story but drawn by a multitude of artists. Ironically, the story opens very strong and the first four

segments mesh very well, only to be somewhat disrupted by Jim Mahfood in the fifth. Then there are some more segments that also come off as too cartoony. The FF segment still doesn't work with the later *Ultimate FF* work, which just seems like crappy editing. But there is also some really nice artwork done, by among other *Ultimate Spider-Man* Mark Bagley. All in all, the story is actually quite good and where it does mesh, it meshes well. The main downside is towards the end where we are "treated" to a number of double splash pages (more or less) with voice-over narration in captions as it were. The double spreads feel much more like a set of pin ups/posters than anything else, and fails to really be a part of the storytelling (the inclusion of a **very** humour cartoony silent visual narrative sequence in the midst of that seems even more jarring). But the story ends strongly with Bagley at that is that.

So... a long review, but the many ups and downs, good highs and really bad lows, seemed to warrant a closer review of the individual bits. I cannot really recommend the collection though some bits, like the Allred one, really were very enjoyable.

The grade lands on a like because there's some stuff I really like and some stuff I really don't, so all things being equal and all that...

Travis says

I will give Bendis credit, his *Ultimate Spider man* is the only *Ultimate* title that I lasted longer than five issues on. He writes a good teen age Spider man.

He also gets points for trying to use these stories to introduce a bunch of new heroes and just tell some hero meets hero stories.

When it works it's a lot of fun, when it doesn't it's the issue with the *Fantastic Four*.

The series is hurt by Bendis occasional slips into 'Oh, aren't I clever' bits, and the fact that most of these guys are either not any different from the non-*Ultimate* (or original, as I like to call them) versions, or he makes changes that seem pointless.

What the hell was up with that *Doctor Strange* story?

Also, I liked the mix of artists he had. Good mix of up and comers and older classic artists.

This series was an interesting, if uneven experiment.

Stacey says

Trying to stick to the *Ultimate Spider-Man* theme going on here I found a place to force in the *Ultimate Marvel Team-Up*. It was tough, as although all the stories in the team-up were written by Brian Michael Bendis, they don't exactly fit into the continuity.

Some of the stories are great: like the *Spider-Man/X-Men* story or the *Spider-Man/Shang-Chi* stories. Some of them are terrible: like the *Spider-Man/Iron Man* story. The *Spider-Man/ Daredevil/Punisher* story was interesting but seemed more like an excuse to write a *Daredevil/Punisher* story.

The quality of writing and the quality of art is all over the place with this one and I can't really recommend it as much as the series itself. There are some neat things in it and it does put Peter squarely in the *Marvel* universe but it could have been a lot better.

Sina Tavoosi says

A pathetic attempt to tell other character's origin stories with a Spider-man shoe-in. The only good one was Punisher and even that had Spider-man appearing randomly for no reason. The main USM series is way better.

Delaney Felix says

I enjoyed some of these, a lot of them were "misses" for me. Love Spidey's humor though.

Clarence Ratliff says

Gonna be frank. I didn't like most of it but chapter 7 the daredevil, punisher and Spider-Man story was alright.

Charles says

This series of team-up stories are of Spider-Man somehow finding himself interacting or fighting with another costumed "hero." Sometimes it is the results of a deliberate action on the part of Spidey or his co-star(s), but at other times it is simply due to chance, where one sees the other and investigates. Many different "heroes," including the Fantastic Four, Iron Man, Hulk and the Punisher are part of the intermeshed story.

The general theme is that Spider-Man/Peter Parker is a sixteen-year-old with identity problems. He has great powers, yet has as yet been unable to assimilate them into a coherent attitude regarding his role in the world. He is at times very bored, other times his actions do great good and at other times he finds himself in way over his head.

The artwork is modern, the images are drawn in several significantly different styles, there are times when the reader must look closely to recognize the hero when they appear for the first time in the story. While the modern reader will enjoy the style, older people that remember the days of Lee and Kirby may find that nostalgia leads to lesser appreciation.

Mike says

I am hard pressed to accurately review this collection. My feelings about it varied throughout the volume. The first two-thirds are a collection of 15 monthly "showcase" titles, with different artists tackling different team-ups. The last third is the Ultimate Spider-Man Super Special #1, and now the different artist tackle different *pages!* (Well, different vignettes within the overarching showcase story.)

It's all written by Brian Michael Bendis. He's good. Great, in fact. But I think he tackled this at a period in the development of the Ultimate Universe that conspired against him. Because the backstory and look of the FF

team-up is all wrong. Because the stories don't mesh well, because too much introspection not enough action, because the stories are stitched together and the stuffing is oozing out. Maybe he was distracted by other writing duties, and the stories were cobbled together.

Then he goes and writes an afterword that makes me throw out my preconception that it behaves like a mish-mash only because it is a mish mash... that I should come back in a bit and re-read! Curse you, Brian Michael Bendis! I have no room on my TBR list for this namby-pamby tolerance and acceptance carp! Fill my life with only easily digestible comic excellence, or you are out of here! Good day, sir!

I. Said. Good. Day.

Doreen says

Went through my trades to find some good collected comicbook reading for my best friend, and came to this after 9 years (at least. Which I only know for certain due to Michael Avon Oeming signing it in 2002, boast boast.) I remembered it as being a collection of charming stories (because Mr Bendis writing Ultimate Spidey is always charming) with varying levels of quality in artwork. Going through it again, I was relieved to find the story-telling as good as I'd remembered, but was struck by my reaction to the artwork. As Mr Bendis had hoped in his afterword, I'd come to appreciate the many different styles showcased in this collection.

It helped, I suppose, that this was a second reading (at least) and thus I wasn't tearing through the book in pursuit of the story, an approach that I've found is always to the detriment of art appreciation. It was also fascinating to see how Mr Bendis (and Mark Millar, though Ultimate Spidey is arguably the backbone of the Ultimate Marvel line) has pretty much set the template for all the Marvel movies -- and pretty much the public perception of Marvel comic characters -- since. Back when this line first came out, I, like many other comic nerds, was uneasy at what it meant for my favorite characters, but the respectful, even loving, way the Marvel staples were treated (plus the fact that the stories were pretty much excellent) soon won me over. I'm also super glad I got this collection in its hardback edition, as Mr Bendis intended. Just a great introduction to the Ultimate Marvel universe: having Ultimate Spidey as the connecting thread through these stories is a great way to make the vast Marvel Universe accessible to newer readers.
