

Video Game Reviews: War is swell with 'Devil May Cry 4'

by *Jeb_Haught*

Game: "Devil May Cry 4"

Publisher: Capcom

System: Microsoft Xbox 360 (PS3)

Cost: \$60

ESRB rating: M

Review rating: 4 stars

AWESOME ARSENAL - In 'Devil May Cry 4,' protagonist Nero has an incredibly lethal arsenal of melee and maneuvers at his disposal. CNS Photo courtesy of Capcom. **MODERN-DAY GLADIATORS** - In 'The Club,' an elitist organization pits modern-day gladiators against each other. CNS Photo courtesy of Sega.
Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)

E: Everyone

T: Teen (13 and older)

E10-plus: (Everyone 10 and older)

M: Mature (17 and older) RATING KEY

4 stars - Must have

3 stars - Pretty good

2 stars - So-so

1 star - Don't waste your time

As the only video game to turn the phrase "Wow, that was cool!" into my own personal mantra, "Devil May Cry" spawned a few follow-ups, but none was as good as the original. Until now. The highly anticipated title "Devil May Cry 4" has finally sliced and diced its way onto store shelves, and the combination of fast-paced, stylish combat with gorgeous environments is enough to bring tears of joy to any aspiring demon slayer.

Rather than control Dante, the hero of the series, players start out as a sword-wielding warrior named Nero. While he can't find new weapons to use, Nero does have an incredibly lethal arsenal and cool maneuvers at his disposal. In addition, he can unleash the "Devil Bringer," which is a phantom arm that picks up enemies and slams them to the ground.

Anyone familiar with the series knows that the game is all about looking as cool as possible while dispatching enemies. With a completely open combat system, part of the fun is discovering new combos. As a result, players can use this new move to snatch enemies out of midair or jump and pull demons up to Nero for a deadly greeting.

Halfway through the game, the focus is switched from Nero to Dante, and players control him for the rest of the adventure. This is a nice change in game play since Dante can find and use several types of weapons. Sure, the Devil Bringer will be missed, but Dante makes up for it with elegant swordplay and an ultra-stylish bullet

ballet. I've been an avid gamer for more than 35 years, and I have never seen combat look this cool.

With "Devil May Cry 4," the series makes a welcome jump to next-gen consoles, and the result is a stunning, over-the-top action game that shouldn't be missed.

Game: "The Club"

Publisher: Sega

System: Sony PlayStation 3 (Xbox 360)

Cost: \$60

ESRB rating: M

Review rating: 2 1/2 stars

Before the advent of advanced reward systems (such as unlocking new weapons), gamers were content to simply achieve a high score in their favorite title. However, point reward systems were basically phased out in the late '90s, so most modern gamers have never practiced for hours just to beat a previous score. In an unusual move, Sega has blended this outdated system with a modern run-and-gun shooter to create "The

Club."

Unlike the movie "Fight Club," the first rule of "The Club" is to not only talk about "The Club," but to also brag about it. Just make sure that you have a high score to back up your words or your membership will be revoked. Sure "The Club" is an elitist organization that pits modern-day gladiators against each other, but at least they offer a good dental plan.

While the single-player action offers plenty of modes ranging from Sprint (race to the exit) to Siege (defend a control point), game play boils down to combo-kills. Every time an enemy is eliminated, the combo-meter starts counting down, and the player must achieve another kill or shoot hidden icons to continue their combo. As a result, beating each level is rather easy, but doing so with a high score is very challenging.

Compared to other modern shooters like "CoD4," "The Club" offers mediocre visuals and gunplay. This game is more about the pulse-pounding experience of trying to survive wave after wave of mindless enemies while continuing the combo. Needless to say, mastering every level will require countless restarts, which can be frustrating.

A few online-enabled multiplayer modes exist, but they are pretty stale. It's too bad that there is no co-operative online mode where a team of human players has to work together to take out waves of enemies. That would be pretty exciting.

"The Club" isn't for everyone, but it does offer an alternative to modern shooters.

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