

Video Game Reviews: There be dragons! But how boring can you get?

by Jeb Haught

Game: "Eragon"

Publisher: Vivendi Universal

System: Sony PlayStation

Cost: \$40

ESRB Rating: T

Review rating: 2 stars

Thanks to an award-winning book and a recent movie of the same name, it seems like everyone's talking about the fantastical dragon-riding epic, "Eragon." I didn't read the book, but decided to see the film before playing the video game.

'ERAGON' - 'Eragon' has attack moves and limited magical abilities, and can team up with a partner for special attacks. CNS Photo courtesy of Vivendi. DRAGON TALES - Unlike his meek movie persona, Eragon of the game is pretty tough and knows a lot of attack moves and combos. CNS Photo courtesy of Vivendi. 'METAL SLUG: ANTHOLOGY' - You will find six Metal Slug arcade classics and one new game on 'Metal Slug: Anthology' for the Wii. CNS Photo courtesy of SNK Playmore. 'ERAGON' - 'Eragon' has

attack moves and limited magical abilities, and can team up with a partner for special attacks. CNS Photo courtesy of Vivendi."Eragon" the game closely resembles "Eragon" the movie, and I found the latter shallow and unexciting. The virtual version follows the story line of the film, but tells it in such a haphazard way that newcomers will be lost the whole way through.

Where's the great storytelling the book is known for? Who are these people, and why do I care if they ride dragons?

Unlike his meek movie persona, Eragon of the game is pretty tough and knows a lot of attack moves and combos. He also has access to limited magical abilities and can team up with a partner for special attacks. Too bad he never learns any new melee attack maneuvers, which limits him to performing the same three-hit combos throughout the entire adventure.

Players would assume that the dragon-riding levels would make up for the tedious game play, but the absence of camera control frequently sends the player crashing into objects, taking unnecessary damage. However, it's very cool to fry the enemy with Saphira's fire breath, as well as attack enemies with magic arrows while mounted.

In the end, "Eragon" does absolutely nothing to break the mediocre-movie-based-game stereotype, and is a rental at best.

Game: "Metal Slug: Anthology"

Publisher: SNK Playmore

System: Nintendo Wii

Cost: \$40

ESRB Rating: T

Review rating: 3 stars

No matter how hard you try to forget it, the Metal Slug series will never go away. What started out as a coin-fed arcade classic subsequently has hit nearly every console, and now all six Metal Slug games are available on one Wii disc.

That's right, with "Metal Slug: Anthology," you, too, can strain your eyes at the pixelated ugliness of the original "Metal Slug" and curse the screen while taking a cheap shot in "Metal Slug 6."

Six games are arcade-perfect ports, one is new and all feature the same maddening "avoid two dozen on-screen bullets at once" game play that the series is known for. Each version has its own story line, but they are just excuses to annihilate everything on-screen.

What makes the Wii version of the game collection special is the availability of six control schemes, so one is bound to fit your style of play. I found the remote-held-sideways controls to be awkward, and the nunchuk-only scheme was next to impossible to use. After settling on a setup that uses both the remote and the nunchuk, I found myself enjoying the game and playing well.

The funny thing is, the setup that I enjoyed the most is the one that closely resembles a regular controller setup.

"Metal Slug: Anthology" on the Wii is not much different than earlier versions of the series, but having so many games on one disc is enough to keep any gamer busy.

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RATING KEY

4 stars - Must have

3 stars - Pretty good

2 stars - So-so

1 star - Don't waste your time

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Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB)

E: Everyone

T: Teen (13 and older)

E10-plus: (Everyone 10 and older)

M: Mature (17 and older)

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