Video Game Reviews: Latest 'Homecourt' gives a player real advantages

by Jeb_Haught

Game: "NBA Street Homecourt"

Publisher: EA Big

System: Sony PlayStation 3

Cost: $60

ESRB rating: E

Review rating: 3 stars

Grab a water bottle and strap on your "kicks." It's time to find out who's king of the 'hood while playing EA Big's "NBA Street Homecourt."

The latest iteration of the famous underground sports franchise retains the same over-the-top game play of previous versions, but now requires a little more finesse to pull off the really impressive moves.

'NBA STREET HOMECOURT' - Budding b-ballers create their own persona and meld the skills of their favorite real-life players into their virtual creation in 'NBA Street Homecourt.' CNS Photo courtesy of EA Big.

MAKING A MOVE - There is plenty of over-the-top action in 'NBA Street Homecourt.' CNS Photo courtesy of EA Big.

'300: MARCH TO GLORY' - In '300: March to Glory,' players can switch between using sword and spear, and even toss their shield at enemies. CNS Photo courtesy of Warner Bros.

SPARTAN COMBAT - '300' is fun to play, but there's a limit to the number of times that people can press the same three-hit combos before they want to succumb to a real-life volley of arrows. CNS Photo courtesy of Warner Bros.

Budding b-ballers can still create their own persona to take to the court, and now they can meld the skills of their favorite real-life players into their virtual creation. Then it's time to dominate the courts coast-to-coast and become a roundball legend.

The all-new trick system gives players an extra button to customize offensive maneuvers on the court. That makes it easier to make opposing players look foolish by, for example, bouncing the ball off their heads.

In addition, the advanced dunk controls open up new possibilities. If you ever wanted to leap off a teammate's shoulders and spin 360 degrees into a slam-dunk, then "NBA Street Homecourt" is your game.

Sure, you might have the skills to dominate the offline court, but can you do the same online? Players can indulge in casual unranked play or try to climb the ladder to the top in ranked games. This is where the true couch athlete's skills are put to the test. Don't go crying to Mama if you get schooled.

While it doesn't offer anything groundbreaking, "NBA Street Homecourt" is a solid addition to the series that looks great on next-generation systems.

Game: "300: March to Glory"

Publisher: Warner Bros.

System: Sony PSP

Cost: $30

ESRB rating: M

Review rating: 1 1/2 stars

With all the furious bloodletting found in the movie "300," a video game based on the story seems like a no-brainer. Since I enjoyed the movie so much, I was anxious to wield the game "300: March to Glory."

Imagine my disappointment when I found out that this "movie-based" game contains no scenes from the movie, no likenesses of any of the stars, or even their voices. The only thing that "300: March to Glory" has to do with the movie is that it loosely follows the story line.

Sporting hordes of cloned enemies and generic-looking generals, this game has managed to remove every bit of style that made the movie enjoyable. When the developers of a movie-based game aren't willing to foot the bill for voice acting from no-name actors, the phrase "low production values" seems like an understatement.

Even the combat is unfulfilling. Wave after wave of identical-looking soldiers attack, and it's up to you to fend them off with only a handful of moves. Sure, players can switch between using sword and spear, and even toss their shield at enemies, but there's a limit to the amount of times that people can press the same three-hit combos before they want to succumb to a real-life volley of arrows.

Fans of the movie expecting this game to emulate the ultra-stylish fighting experience are in for utter disappointment.

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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