

= Cannon Fodder 2 =

Cannon Fodder 2 : Once More unto the Breach , also known as Cannon Fodder 2 is an action @-@ strategy shoot ' em up game developed by Sensible Software and published by Virgin Interactive for the Amiga and DOS in November 1994 . The game is the sequel to Cannon Fodder , a successful game released for multiple formats in 1993 . The game is a combination of action and strategy involving a small number of soldiers battling through a time @-@ travel scenario . The protagonists are heavily outnumbered and easily killed . The player must rely on strategy and heavy secondary weapons to overcome enemies , their vehicles and installations .

The game retained the mechanics and gameplay of its predecessor but introduced new levels , settings and graphics . Former journalist Stuart Campbell designed the game 's levels , making them harder and more tactically demanding , as well as introducing a multitude of pop culture references in the level titles . The development of the game 's plot was hampered by budget constraints and the resulting lack of explanation confused reviewers . Critics enjoyed the gameplay retained from the original Cannon Fodder but were disappointed at the lack of new mechanics or weapons , comparing the game to a data disk . Reviewers praised the game 's level design , though less so those of its alien planet . Critics gave Cannon Fodder 2 positive reviews but lower scores than its predecessor and gave mixed criticism of the new theme music and increased difficulty .

= = Synopsis = =

Cannon Fodder 2 is a military @-@ themed action game with strategy and shoot ' em up elements . The player controls a small squad of up to four soldiers . These soldiers are armed with machine guns which kill enemy infantry with a single round . The player 's troops are similarly fragile , and while they possess superior fire @-@ power at the game 's outset the enemy infantry becomes more powerful as the game progresses . As well as foot soldiers , the antagonists include vehicles and missile @-@ armed turrets . The player must also destroy buildings which spawn enemy soldiers . For these targets , which are invulnerable to machine gun fire , the player must utilise secondary , explosive weaponry : grenades and rockets . Ammunition for these weapons is limited and the player must find supply crates to replenish his troops . Wasting these weapons can potentially result in the player not having enough to fulfil the mission objectives . The player can opt to shoot crates ? destroying enemy troops and buildings in the ensuing explosion ? at less risk to his soldiers than retrieving them , but again at a greater risk of depleting ammunition .

The player proceeds through 24 missions divided into several " phases " each , making 72 levels in all . There are various settings including medieval , gangster @-@ themed Chicago , an alien spacecraft and an alien planet . The player must also contend with mines and other booby traps . As well as shooting action , the game features strategy elements and employs a point @-@ and @-@ click control system more common to strategy than action games . As the player 's troops are heavily outnumbered and easily killed , he must use caution , as well as careful planning and positioning . To this end , he can split the squad into smaller units to take up separate positions or risk fewer soldiers when moving into dangerous areas . In alternative settings , heavy weapons are replaced graphically by such units as battering rams ( replaces trucks ) and wizards ( replaces rockets ) .

The game 's plot ? minimally expounded in the manual ? concerns soldiers partaking in a Middle Eastern conflict ( which forms the game 's early levels ) abducted by aliens to do battle on an alien world ( which forms the later levels ) . During the process of space travel , the aliens send the soldiers to various times and places , resulting in the intervening medieval and Chicago settings .

= = Development = =

The game is the sequel to Cannon Fodder , which drew criticism for its juxtaposition of war and humour and its use of iconography closely resembling the remembrance poppy . The cover art 's poppy was ultimately replaced with a soldier , in turn replaced by a hand grenade for Cannon

Fodder 2 , regarding which Amiga Power joked : " the great thing about an explosive charge wrapped in hundreds of meters wound @-@ inflicting wire is that it doesn 't have the same child @-@ frightening , ' responsible adult ' freaking , society @-@ disrupting effect as an iddy @-@ biddy flower . " The One felt the new historical and science @-@ fiction themes an attempt to avoid similar controversy as befell Cannon Fodder . Amiga Power itself had become embroiled in the controversy due to its planned use of the poppy on its cover ( also abandoned ) and perceived inflammatory commentary its editor Stuart Campbell . Campbell later left the magazine to join Sensible Software as a programmer and worked on the sequel as his first game .

A small team of " essentially four " people ? among them first @-@ time level @-@ designer Campbell ? created the game , retaining the Cannon Fodder engine . Prior to Campbell 's arrival from a journalism career , Sensible Software had devised the game 's time @-@ travelling theme and decided upon the various settings . However , it had not yet developed a plot to expound these themes . It was not possible to illustrate the story in the game itself ? due to Cannon Fodder 2 's ? simple nature and so Campbell began work on an elaborate " plot @-@ to @-@ be " , partially completing a novella intended to accompany the final product . This version of the story had the time @-@ travelling aliens plotting to intervene in various parts of human history to create chaos , which they intended to exploit to enslave and destroy humanity . The protagonists ' kidnappers were envisioned as sympathisers who would send them through time to defend mankind . However , Virgin vetoed the proposal as too expensive and took charge of the manual 's production . The result was a simplified explanation which described the soldiers as in the employ of the aliens and did not clarify the time @-@ travel element . Campbell later said the loss of the novella was an example of a publisher preferring to maximise profit from a game rather than build intellectual property towards the end of the Amiga 's commercial life .

As the game was to retain the same engine , the developers could not add new gameplay features . Campbell instead set out to make the levels more interesting , creating multiple paths through the missions . More obvious solutions would be more difficult , and the hidden , " proper " paths easier to execute once deduced . While Campbell intended the game to be harder , he also wished to improve the difficulty curve , which he argued was a flaw of its predecessor . He also tended to make the levels smaller and reduced instances of water obstacles , which he regarded as frustrating in the first game . The designer conceded that some levels turned out to be too difficult ? due to his inexperience as a developer and the fact he became so skilled while play testing ? but maintained that level 8 of the original was worse than any of his creations . Campbell named most of the game 's levels after songs titles and lyrics ( prominently The Jesus and Mary Chain ) , but also referenced wider pop culture artifacts such as gameshows and Bugs Bunny cartoons , as well as some original titles . He also referenced classic games in the level design itself .

At the time , Creator Jon Hare said changing the formula would be detrimental , and unnecessary to provide enjoyment and value . He later reflected that Sensible had poorly managed the project in " delegating " the design to newcomer Campbell . He felt this to be a consequence of Sensible Software avariciously spreading itself thin , by that point attempting to exploit its success . Hare sold Sensible to Codemasters in 1999 and consequently worked on an abortive Cannon Fodder 3 , with such a title ultimately published by Russia 's Game Factory Interactive for the PC in 2012 .

= = Reception = =

Cannon Fodder 2 retains the same mechanics and core gameplay of its predecessor , prompting reviewers to say : " It 's still as wonderfully playable as it ever was " , and to acknowledge " all the amazing control and playability " of the original . Reviewers complained about the lack of plot , with Amiga Power stating : " There 's little explanation as to why you 're doing this [ time @-@ travelling ] and absolutely none in the game . As a result , the game doesn 't hang together . " AUI called the plot " pointless " , while Amiga Computing called it a " slight problem " , saying " you have to guess what is going on in the game because there 's no plot explanation [ ... ] it 's all very confusing ! " .

The game is markedly more difficult than its predecessor . Amiga Format called this " good / bad news " , whereas The One directed its " major criticism " at the difficulty level , saying " some of the

levels are quite simply horrendous " , and that the game is " close to being intensely frustrating at times . " Amiga Computing also felt the high difficulty to be the " biggest problem " : " I like a game to get progressively harder rather than getting virtually impossible after just four missions . " Amiga Format also criticised the difficulty and felt " some of the levels are a bit of a drag . " Amiga Power was annoyed at the early tutorial missions , finding them redundant , but otherwise noted the increased challenge as a positive , and said : " The original game went in pulses of fiendishly hard and stupidly simple levels , but in CF2 the difficulty curve 's , well , more of a curve . " The reviewer praised the clever level design , explaining : " The levels penalise you for taking the obvious route and reward you for trying an obscure approach [ ... ] loads of levels make you think before you move , injecting puzzle elements into the killing " , citing the example of traps with empty vehicles as bait . The reviewer praised the smaller , tighter levels with a difficulty curve within those levels : " gung @-@ ho " sections building to tactical play against tougher enemies . He compared this favourably with the first game : " The level design is consistently better " , in particular the " Beirut , Mediaevil and Chicago levels look and play wonderfully . " He nevertheless felt the thematic shifts lacked coherence and atmosphere .

The game 's alien planet levels drew much criticism , on which Amiga Computing opined : " whoever chose the colour schemes should be thrown away in jail . " While he praised their mechanics , Amiga Power 's reviewer said : " I hate the entire look of the alien planet [ ... ] From the disgusting purple pools to the silly flowers . " Some reviewers enjoyed the graphics but felt there was no change between the two games . CU Amiga said " it 's the same game tarted up with new graphics " as well as the new levels . Amiga Computing praised the new main theme music . Amiga Power said it was not as good as its predecessor and also pointed out that the in @-@ game music remained the same as the original Cannon Fodder and had grown tiresome . The magazine questioned the lack of an option to disable it . Critics decried the lack of new weapons , pointing out that the original armaments and vehicles had merely been made to look different in the various settings , while behaving in the same manner .

Reviewers more generally criticised the similarity between Cannon Fodder and Cannon Fodder 2 . The One , AUI , and Amiga Computing compared the new game to a " data disk " rather than a full sequel . Kieron Gillen later reflected that it would be called a " semi @-@ sequel " or " stand @-@ alone add @-@ on pack " if released today . CU Amiga conceded that the designers could have added little new to such a simple game without tampering with the basic , successful mechanics ; Sensible Software was accused of " laziness " by The One , and of " greed " by AUI .

While it awarded 90 % , Amiga Power felt the game was poor value for money compared to the original , while CU Amiga said it was " still worth buying " . AUI said the game was " a must " for those without the original , otherwise Cannon Fodder 2 is " basically exactly the same game as before " , with the " saving grace " of new levels . Amiga Computing enjoyed the game but said it was not as good as expected and that there are " too many similarities and not enough differences to make this sequel a classic . " The One summarised : " If you 've got CF1 , love it , and want seconds , only harder , look no further ? but , if like myself you 've played Cannon Fodder to death and would 've liked to have seen the game developed in some way , I think you 'll be a bit disappointed " .