Code Age Commanders : Tsugu Mono Tsuga Reru Mono

Code Age Commanders : Tsugu Mono Tsuga Reru Mono (??? ? ??? ?????? ? ??? ????? ?) is a Japan @-@ exclusive action role @-@ playing game developed and published by Square Enix on October 13 , 2005 for the PlayStation 2 . It is part of the Code Age series , a franchise created by video game artist Yusuke Naora and designed to span different interweaved titles in multiple platforms and media . The series consists of Commanders , the mobile phone game Code Age Brawls , and the manga Code Age Archives .

The story of the game depicts the struggles of people surviving in a fictional " intraglobular world " menaced by an impending destruction , mysterious warped creatures , and different factions warring against each other . The game focuses successively on the viewpoints of four main protagonists . Reviews of the game were relatively positive , with high praises of its graphics and art direction but more mixed feelings for its complex and atypical gameplay .

Gameplay

Code Age Commanders is an action role @-@ playing game divided in missions , in which the goal is to fight enemies called " Coded " to reach a certain area of the map , where a boss must sometimes be defeated . The player controls one character while other allies are computer @-@ controlled and must not die for the mission to be successful . Between two missions , the player can select in a menu numerous optional cut scenes to watch and which reveal the memories of the Coded defeated , while stages already completed can be re @-@ explored . The game features four successive main playable characters , and items and skills learned by one is each time passed to the next .

Weapons are equipped on both hands of the characters and are used with the circle and cross buttons . Pressing both buttons in succession is necessary to execute combos . The other buttons are used to lock focus onto an enemy , guard , dash , or manually change the camera angle . The number of attacks and blocks is limited by an energy meter for each arm , which decreases after each move but replenishes with time .

A third meter increases after each combo and allows when maxed out to perform a " Code Drive " attack . Executed with the triangle button , a Code Drive triggers a brief close @-@ up sequence in which a blue circle appears around the character . If the player presses a second button before the circle shifts to red , a powerful special attack will be unleashed . If the enemy blocks the Code Drive , a second , shorter close @-@ up sequence is triggered . Enemies can also perform Code Drives , in which case the player 's button press allows for protection rather than attack . Executing Code Drives frequently can cause the weapon used to upgrade , or the character to go into a " Code Crisis " ; a mode which reduces speed and renders immune to attack , but slowly drains hit points .

Customization

In addition to Coded , enemy creatures include " Otellos " , which can either be defeated normally or be absorbed , mutating one of the protagonist 's arm into a new form with new abilities . Depending on their types , absorbed Otellos can be used to fight , heal or be shot as a projectile weapon . Multiple Otellos can be absorbed into each arm and switched for usage , although gathering too many may result in an " Overload " mode in which attack power is boosted ; but one Otello must be dropped quickly or the character 's hit points will decrease steadily and continually .

Characters do not level up in a way similar to standard role @-@ playing games ; instead , stats evolve according to two coexistent systems . The " Self Evolution System " alters stats and skills depending on their usage during battle : for instance , a repeated use of left @-@ handed attacks increases the character 's left arm strength , while running around often increases their speed . The second system is the " Code Extension " mode , in which Code Points can be spent on either of the two arms or up to four body slots to increase their stats or acquire new skills . Code Points are earned after each mission in amounts that depend on the quantity of " Dropped Code " collected

from defeated enemies , as well as mission clear time , and damage done and taken . When replaying completed stages , the amount of Code Points earned is the difference between the player 's highest past score for the mission and the new score obtained .

Plot

Setting

Code Age Commanders is set in an " intraglobular world " (???? , kyuunai sekai) , a fictional hollow world similar to a Dyson sphere , with people living on its internal surface . The center of the sphere is occupied by the " Central Code " , a spherical structure which goes through a transformation called " Reborn " about every ten thousand years , destroying all life on the globe and allowing for the birth of a new one .

The game begins near the end of a Central Code cycle , while mankind has learned about the impending disaster and built " Arks " , flying stations intended to float in the sky and house most of them in a deep sleep state for the duration of the Reborn . The operation works for one hundred years before objects falling from the Central Code hit the Arks and cause them to crash to the surface . Its passengers die or awake , now at the mercy of those who remained on the ground as well as the Otellos ; a new , warped species which arose from the dropped pieces of the Central Code . The Otellos seek humans to turn them into mindless puppets named " Coded " , although the mutation fails on people from the Arks and results in free and extremely evolved hybrids called " Warheads " .

Knowing this , several humans seek Otellos voluntarily to become Warheads and try to protect mankind with the powers gained from the mutation . Several armed factions form with differing points of view on the way to save the world , while the Reborn still has not been completed .

Characters

The events of the game unfolds successively from the viewpoints of four different Warhead protagonists . The first one is Gene , a young man who becomes amnesic after the Arks accident . He is the son of professor Alvin , one of the builders of the Arks , who disappeared some time after the accident . While searching for his sister Aliz kidnapped by a strange creature , Gene is mutated into a Warhead and watches his arm turning into a weapon during a battle against some Otellos . He is assisted by a small floating companion named Pake ; and is later joined by the Warhead Kilroy , who was an assistant to professor Alvin ; and Meme , a mysterious but determined , optimistic young female Warhead .

The second protagonist , Fiona , is a soldier of the White Army of Guinevere , who saved her life . Commander Guinevere , a Warhead , was a female scientist who worked in the Arks with professor Alvin . Fiona is initially very loyal to Guinevere , but becomes more reluctant following the death of a friend and the commander 's changing , more dominating behavior .

The third protagonist is Gerald , a member of the Black Army of Sullivan . Also very loyal , Gerald nevertheless wonders why people do not unite to face the common threat represented by the Otellos . Commander Sullivan was another companion of professor Alvin and Guinevere , and also became a Warhead . His divergence of opinions with the White Army forced him to gather his own distinct army . The fourth and final protagonist is Haze Healy , a member of the Keepers ; a faction opposed to both White and Black Armies .

Development

Conceptual work by Yusuke Naora , the producer of the Code Age franchise , began in 2002 ; and Code Age Commanders was officially announced in the April 2005 edition of the Japanese gaming magazine Famitsu . The development team was nicknamed " Warhead " and specifically assembled

for the game , with its lead developers Yusuke Naora and Toshiyuki Itahana belonging to the art field rather than project management . Several connections to the mobile phone game Code Age Brawls and the manga Code Age Archives were put throughout the game , so that information learnt from it could be used by players and readers of the other installments to understand the full picture .
 The focus on customization features in the game was designed by Naora to appeal to the American market . A trailer of the game was featured at the Los Angeles E3 in 2005 , although Naora later commented that a North American release date was not yet set as there were concerns about competing with the soon @-@ to @-@ be @-@ released PlayStation 3 . While the gaming website RPGamer reported at one point a 2006 release in North America , the game was eventually released only in Japan .

= = Audio = =

 The score for the game was composed primarily by Kumi Tanioka , with Yasuhiro Yamanaka penning three tracks and J @-@ Pop singer Kou Shibasaki writing and performing the theme song titled " Memory Pocket -Memopoke- " . The non @-@ optional event scenes of the game are fully voiced . The Code Age Commanders Original Soundtrack , which does not contain " Memory Pocket " , was published by Square Enix on October 19 , 2005 in Japan . It spans two discs and 80 tracks , covering a duration of 2 hours and 28 minutes . " Memory Pocket " was released as the B @-@ side to Shibasaki 's single Sweet Mom by Universal Music Group on October 5 , 2005 in Japan , and was included in her second album Hitori Asobi published by Universal Music Group on 2006 @-@ 12 @-@ 14 in Japan .

= = Reception = =

 Code Age Commanders sold 37 @,@ 000 units in its first week of release in Japan , a strong start for a new franchise ; debuting at number two in the charts behind Dragon Ball Z : Budokai Tenkaichi . It sold over 61 @,@ 000 copies in Japan by the end of 2005 . The game scored 32 out of 40 in the Japanese gaming magazine Famitsu ; 7 @.@ 5 out of 10 in the American Play Magazine ; and 78 out of 100 on the gaming website GameBrink.Com. Nevertheless , the gaming site Siliconera reported overall low sales in Japan and attributed the absence of a North American release to this lukewarm response .
 GameBrink.Com highly praised the quality of the graphics and animation of the game , and compared them to those of the Kingdom Hearts titles . The site greatly lauded the music and sound effects , stating that they set the mood well and tie in with the visuals ; and comparing their style to that of " Final Fantasy and Phantasy Star mixed together " . Siliconera also considered the character design interesting and original , although they felt the textures were " blocky sort " and the environments consisted mostly of wide fields .
 However , GameBrink.Com felt that the gameplay , user @-@ friendly even to non @-@ Japanese players , consists of too much repetitive button mashing despite featuring characters with different abilities . The Code Extension mode was considered imperfectly implemented , seeming as if it were " tacked on [?] late in development " , being totally optional yet difficult not to use to survive in the later missions . Calling the gameplay " shallow " , the site stated that " the soundtrack would probably be a better purchase than the actual game " . On its part , Siliconera noted that while the gameplay may seem complex for using every button on the controller , thirty minutes were enough to grasp how to play the game . The site felt the missions were designed with good pacing and replayability value , but added that hardcore role @-@ playing game fans could dislike the lack of exploration , puzzle , and standard role @-@ playing game principles .
 The storyline was also criticized by GameBrink.Com for feeling secondary to the gameplay yet being told in long and numerous cut scenes ; their amount was compared to that of the Xenosaga series . On the contrary , Siliconera praised the story and did not report any issue concerning it , although it regretted that playing and reading the other installments of the franchise was necessary for a thorough understanding of all plot points .