

= All Star Pro @-@ Wrestling =

All Star Pro @-@ Wrestling (?????? ? ???????) is a Japan @-@ exclusive professional wrestling video game developed and published by Square on June 8 , 2000 for the PlayStation 2 . It was the first wrestling game published on this platform .

All Star Pro @-@ Wrestling was released in a period in which Square sought to diversify its catalog by producing various non @-@ role @-@ playing games for the PlayStation 2 . The game was notable for its control relying exclusively on the DualShock 2 's analog sticks , although a second mode using the normal buttons was also available .

While the quality of the game 's graphics was lauded and sales were good during its month of release , the control was received negatively by critics , who felt it was awkward and unintuitive . Nevertheless , the game spawned two sequels , released in 2001 and 2003 .

= = Gameplay = =

All Star Pro @-@ Wrestling is based on Japanese wrestling rather than American . The game can be played in several modes selected in the " Match Make " menu ; these include exhibition matches , championships , tournaments , or leagues separated by weight . Depending on the mode chosen , different wrestling rings can be chosen to battle , as well as the referee and the time limit . 26 real @-@ life wrestlers are initially available , notably Jushin Thunder Liger , The Great Muta , Don Frye , Koji Kanemoto , Antonio Inoki , and Masahiro Chono .

Each battle begins with the wrestlers ' entrance sequence . Two types of controls can be chosen to fight . The default one uses the DualShock 2 's analog sticks exclusively ; the left one being pressed for movements and the right one for attacks . Pins are executed by tilting both sticks up ; and pressing both sticks grabs the opponent , who can then be attacked or thrown depending on the way the right stick is tilted . The second type of controls , called " Type B " , is closer to other fighting games and assigns pinning to the triangle button , grabbing to the square button , and punches and moves to the cross button . With Type B , the power of each move is determined by the level of pressure applied on the buttons . In both modes , the precise techniques available depend on the position and distance of the opponent , as well as a personal " tension meter " which builds up during battle . At any time , the D @-@ pad can be used to change the angle of the camera .

Wrestlers return to full health after each match , and the game keeps track of the time of victories and records with the PlayStation 2 internal clock . A memory card can be used to save progress , battle snapshots , and match videos ; the latter of which can either be ten @-@ second long instant replays or up to three entire " Best Bout " matches . Hidden features include collectible autograph pictures of the defeated wrestlers ; and a few unlockable characters , among whom are two female models in bikinis .

= = Development = =

All Star Pro @-@ Wrestling was announced in January 1999 as part of Square 's desire to expand into more diverse game genres on the PlayStation 2 than their usual role @-@ playing games . While DreamFactory developed most of Square 's previous fighting games (namely Tobal No. 1 , Tobal 2 , and Ehrgeiz) , Square decided to develop a wrestling game internally as Dream Factory was already working on The Bouncer , another Square title . The game was produced by Yusuke Hirata of Parasite Eve 2 fame , head of Square 's Osaka @-@ based fifth production team . The score , which was never released in album form , consists mostly of rock music and was composed by Tsuyoshi Sekito , Kenichiro Fukui , and Kumi Tanioka .

Square 's aim with the title was to create some of the most realistic wrestlers seen in video games , with accurate details such as a faithful replication of body @-@ muscle physics and facial expressions . Screenshots of the game were shown during the Square Millennium Event in Japan in 2000 ; and a battle was played in demonstration by Yusuke Hirata and a young Japanese idol later in the same year at the Tokyo Game Show .

== Reception ==

All Star Pro @-@ Wrestling topped the Japanese sale charts in its week of release with 107 @,@ 331 copies sold , and continued to top the charts for the rest of the month of June . It was the 63rd best @-@ selling video game of 2000 in Japan , with 185 @,@ 616 copies . The game scored 31 out of 40 in the Japanese gaming magazine Famitsu , with the four reviewers highly praising the graphics but feeling that the controls , while not bad , could have been better implemented .

The American gaming website GameSpot rated the game 4 out of 10 , and criticized the battle system more severely along with IGN , which stated that the default analog controls are " mind @-@ boggling " ; with pins being very difficult to execute whereas some other maneuvers can be chained with single button presses . The second type of controls was judged easier to play with by IGN , although one reviewer felt that it wears out the thumb quickly . On the contrary , GameSpot felt that the second type is even more difficult to use than the default one . The amount of moves available has been described as low even compared to lackluster titles such as WWF Attitude . Regarding the game 's fluidity , GameSpot and one IGN critic compared it to the speed of an " underwater soccer match " , with smooth moves coexisting with simple , three @-@ second long movements . The second IGN critic noted that the game is more of a wrestling simulation than an arcade title focused on entertainment .

Still , both GameSpot and IGN lauded the realism of the wrestlers ' appearances , their faithfulness to those of their real @-@ life counterparts , and the efficient use of the PlayStation 2 Emotion Engine . The spectacular ring entrance scenes and the amount of blood visible during battles was also appreciated . One IGN critic noted that the referee is always present on @-@ screen , unlike many other wrestling games . However , the other one stated that the outdoor arenas " look like they were ripped out of a [Sega] Saturn game " . He also criticized the presence of only two facial expressions for each wrestler ; and both IGN reviewers criticized the inconsistent collision detection and the lack of diversity in the crowd , who sometimes " look like they were made out of Legos " . GameSpot added that the walking looks particularly unrealistic , in contrast with the other animations .

While both IGN reviewers noted the sparcity of the audio commentary and crowd shouting , one critic felt the sound was adequate albeit less impressive than the graphics . GameSpot called the sound decent and well executed . Finally , the omission of features such as weapons and modes such as " create @-@ a @-@ wrestler " , steel cage match , battle royal , and multiplayer tag team , was felt as a very noticeable weak point compared to American wrestling games present on the market .

== Sequels ==

A sequel titled All Star Pro @-@ Wrestling II was released on November 22 , 2001 for the PlayStation 2 . It addressed the controls issue by replacing it with a new , more standard battle system , and included wrestlers from three real @-@ life Japanese wrestling federations : New Japan Pro Wrestling , Pro Wrestling Noah , and Pro Wrestling Zero @-@ One . The game also scored 31 out of 40 in Famitsu . A third installment , All Star Pro @-@ Wrestling III was released by Square Enix on August 7 , 2003 for the same platform . It included a create @-@ a @-@ wrestler feature .

Both sequels added multiplayer tag team and battle royal modes , playable using a multitap with up to 5 players at a time (4 wrestlers and the referee) . Tsuyoshi Sekito returned to score the two soundtracks . The All Star Pro @-@ Wrestling II Original Soundtrack was published by DigiCube on January 23 , 2002 , while the third game 's soundtrack was not published in album form .