GAME REVIEWS

GAME 1 :MAX PAYNE 3

The sharpshooting drunkard Max Payne is back after nearly a decade with a new look altogether in Rockstar’s Max Payne 3. The gaming landscape has undergone a sea change since Max Payne walked the streets of NY, but while the stylized third-person shooter has preferred to overlook a few series mainstays in its latest form, it hasn’t forgotten the precision control and stark realism that made the original games great.

The location is different this time around. MP-3 finds Max at a bar with a drink in his hand and a few more

in his stomach which he already gulped down. He has recently arrived at Sao Paulo, Brazil and within no time really Max finds himself trapped in a war between the south American gangs and political outfits which helps him rediscover his old self, the master of gun slinging tricks. The animate Sao Paulo this time around brings an element of freshness into this latest edition of the blockbuster series replacing the intricately woven series of boxy interior maps. The core cast of the game has been made to deliver convincingly and naturally; good guys respond rashly when they come across difficult situations while

the villains are quite expectedly unpredictable.

On the other hand, the latest installment of the series has a flawed delivery mechanism. The signature

cut-scenes have been replaced in this installment by pacytransitions ;strange blurring;color effects;as well as double vision . The frequent downtime causes you to get distracted. Perhaps the reason those lengthy cut scenes not going down well is that the gameplay in itself is so engaging that you are bound to get engrossed.

Max Payne's trademark time-bending bullet time mechanic is back, once again transforming the gameplay from a typical shooter to the experience unique to the

series. Another interesting aspect of the gameplay is the slow-motion-period that you can impose

on the thugs you are fighting with and the bullets going past, on the command of emptying a

white bar beside the health bar which keeps filling up as you inflict more and more damage.

This slow-motion time can be used either to bail yourself out of a trap or purely for the sake of it

as it makes the fight sequences look cooler.

The game has a newly added cinematic version of bullet time which can be brought into effect once you have sunk the last man standing amongst the thugs across the room. This is solely for providing eye-candies between and after the fights. As you watch your last bullet pierce through the goon standing across the room, you can even adjust the speed of the scene to get it into a standstill so that you can fulfill you sadistic desire of seeing blood sprout out from the wound you just tore open. To top on that, you can even use extra ammo just to bury a few more in even after getting him to fall to the earth .

Bottom Line:

Max Payne 3 is purely a joy to play succeeding far more than it fails. Brilliant gunplay and an interesting storyline teamed up with a classic character make for an exhilarating experience.

Just make sure you have some popcorn with you for the frequent downtime.

GAME 2 : Diablo III

Twelve years have gone passed since Diablo 2 had released . The story of the latest version continues from 20 years later in the town of Tristram, terrorized by the evil incarnate Diablo. If you have played the earlier versions, you will probably feel at home on seeing the familiar characters , scenery and the sweet background score . Since the first version was released in 1998 , a massive and remarkable change has been brought into the graphics of the latest version and it surely deserves a mention.

It begins when Cain and his niece Leah are in the chapel busy reading prophecies , when a fireball from the sky descends and causes the dead to rise. Leah manages to find her way out but her uncle is buried beneath.

You play the hero who chases the falling star and arrives at new Tristram. The dead have risen, villagers are turning into zombies after being bitten by them and soldiers are struggling to keep them out.

You enter into a pact with Leah whom you promise to help and in return she offers to fight alongside you. Leah has the special ability of bringing enemies down using her bow and arrow. She is a ranged fighter. On the way during your journey you’ll become friends with other fighters such as a templar (melee), enchantress (sorcerer), and a scoundrel (ranged). Leah’s equipment and weapons in this game are not customizable but with the other fighters, you can try out new weapons and armours. Finding and trying out better weapons and armor accounts for half of the fun in this game. You can even take help of the town’s blacksmith to forge new weapons and armours using random magical powers.

The remaining part of the game is all about locking horns with every monster or boss that come your way and slaying them. Every character is equipped with special weapons, armours, special abilities and fighting styles that are unique to them. The witch doctor has special summoning powers to call upon zombie dogs tofight alongside them. Their weapons and magic have tribal elements to them. The demon hunter is a ranged fighter who mainly uses the bows and the crossbow. They can throw bombs and set traps to entangle their foes. The wizards have the ability to use ranged attacks that are boosted by arcane magic and their power regenerates quickly. The monks are very powerful and are specialists in close hand to hand combats . It’s a good call to include them in your team in multiplayer showdowns as they have the special ability to heal others.

A good internet connection and a ‘battle.net’ account is very much necessary for Diablo 3 as if the battle.net servers are down you cannot play. Joining your friends’ game is just a matter of a click and adding them to your own game and chatting has been made easy in this latest version. Another insignificant but interesting feature is that whenevera person leaves or joins a game midway, the monster difficulty is set on its own accordingly. You can join a game only if your character has been through the area in which the game is set. In other words, if you’re still on the Normal difficulty level, you cannot join nightmare or hell difficulty games. You have to complete the game on the current difficulty level if you want to unlock harder difficulties. It makes the game not only more challenging but also there is this added incentive of having several heroes. Each of them has to gain their own progression.If one character gains access to higher difficulties, doesn’t necessarily mean that even the others will do so. Every character has to earn it himself. On the other hand, you can join friends online who can take you to later chapters within the same difficulty level.

Bottom Line:

The game is fun on the whole and has controls which are easy to play. Those old enough to be familiar with the originals will feel at home here. The swearing in the game is insignificant in comparison to other M games released recently. If the spiritual elements don’t bother you, you’ll enjoy your trip to New Tristram.

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