

BLACK OPS 3 BETA: TALKING POINTS

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The Call of Duty Black Ops 3 multiplayer beta has hit the PS4 on the 19th of last month and we've played it!

1. The Specialists

Specialists are characters which you can choose before a match begins. Each specialist has their own personality and look. These characters also have their own unique abilities and weapons. However, you may choose either the specialist weapon or the specialist ability. The balancing behind these is a bit off as there are clearly better abilities or weapons. Say, for example, Battery's War Machine, a grenade launcher that deals high AoE damage, is extremely overpowered in objective based game modes like Domination or Hardpoint. Regardless, specialists add a new layer of complexity to the game allowing players to forge new playstyles centred on their specialist of choice.

2. The movement system

Contrary to popular speculation, BO3's movement system is not like Advanced Warfare's one at all. The boost jump has been transformed into a slower arc jump. The boost dodges have been completely removed. This makes the game feel more "grounded" compared to Advanced



Warfare and allows for less frustrating moments resulting from abuse of the extra mobility. The ability to wall-run has been incorporated which allows for some neat shortcuts to certain places on maps. If skilfully used, the new movement system is arguably much more fun and fair.

3. The maps

Advanced Warfare's maps had certain flaws despite being well designed. The exo movements pretty much rendered certain parts of the maps useless as they would become death traps if some poor soul

ever ventured into them. This time around, the maps are designed around the movement system and allow for extremely varied play. Run and gun, long range sniping and other playstyles are viable now. Yet, in objective based modes, most of the objectives are located in claustrophobic spaces which turn these spaces into nade fests with both teams trying to flush the other out.

4. The weapons

Treyarch always made the best weapons in the CoD games. BO3 isn't any differ-

ent. All the weapons are wonderfully balanced and there is no certain "best gun" out of the bunch. My personal favourites are the slow fire-rate assault rifle, the "Man'O'War" and the popular rehash of the M8 known as the "M8A7". Treyarch removed aim-assist on Sniper Rifles this time around and also incorporated relative weapon aiming sensitivity. What this means is that while all other weapon types have their sensitivity slowed down while aiming down the sights, the sniper rifles retain the level of sensitivity which is present while not aiming down the sights. This makes sniping much more difficult and should negate most of the frustration stemming from getting one-shotted frequently by a well-positioned sniper, a problem that commonly plagued most CoD games.

Overall, these impressions lead us to the fact that BO3's multiplayer is going to be one of the best in years. Please note that all the aforementioned things are subject to change as this is a beta.

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SUPERHOT

GAME REVIEW

MASK

Platforms: Windows, OSX, Linux, X1

Superhot is a straightforward first-person shooter on the Unity engine which uses a simple basic premise to create a very addictive formula.

"Time moves only when you do." Any action, from moving to turning your head to causes time to flow. Superhot feels more like a strategy than a shooter. You'll take your sweet time thinking of the best move to make because now you've got time. Much like in Space Invader, you have to learn to shoot where the enemy is going to be, not where they are currently.

Still, each level is technically finished in less than a minute, as you'll see when observing the replay at the end of it. You get thrown into a different environment in each level with little in common and only a few

words to guide you, much like in WarioWare. Scenarios range from bank robberies to fights in parking lots to scuffles in bars.

The game is stylised as a

cracked prototype game, superhot.exe, which you'll hack into a server to play. Between the short episodes you'll be disconnect from the server ("It's

how the crack works") and chat with a friend about it on an MS DOS-like emulated screen.

Other than the regular story mode, you can also play ENDLESS which is a score-based, arcade version of the game. Through ENDLESS, you can then unlock MODS with which you make the game in STORY or ENDLESS either harder or easier.

The graphics are minimalistic. Enemies are red, weapons are black, and the world is white. The audio takes after the graphics and upholds similar values of minimalism. There's nothing in the way of music and not much in the way of sound effects either. After completing each stage, a mechanized voice will repeat SUPERHOT over and over until you decide to move onto the next one.

Verdict: Well, this got me out of my gaming slump. Not entirely sure that's a good thing. For me. The game's great though.

SUPERHOT