

DON BRADMAN CRICKET 17 ANNOUNCED SLATED FOR DECEMBER

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Don Bradman Cricket 14 ended cricket fans' wait for a decent video game of the sport. However, the question of whether DBC will be a long-lasting franchise still remained. Even though Big Ant Studios did port the game to current-gen consoles and has been regularly dispatching fixes and improvements, there was no sight of a new installment.

Fortunately (and quite surprisingly), Big Ant CEO Ross Symons announced the next installment of the franchise titled "Don Bradman Cricket 17" on May 27. "The first Don Bradman Cricket got us off to a great start, providing players with an authentic, exciting game of cricket that allowed them to feel like they were standing in the middle of the oval, right on the pitch. Now, we're taking that realism further with the advanced new engine we have developed this year." Symons added to the announcement.

Not much has been revealed yet about what changes to expect. Big Ant Studios claims that their effort has been concentrated on creating an improved lighting system, photo-realistic skin tones, more



detailed player customization and better gameplay. The game is expected to release this December on PC, PS4 and Xbox One. No confirmation about the previous generation consoles has been made yet. The teams are still unlicensed but the developers expect to tackle this with an improved version of Don Bradman Cricket Academy, the creation tool that lets players create and share authentic players and umpires

without any legal trouble. Players created in DBC14 can be imported to DBC17.

A demo of the game has been released on Steam. The current version of the demo does not show much more than the depth of player customization, the new character models and the graphic options. Developers have said that they will be regularly releasing updates for the demo, including some playable content, leading

up to the final release.

My reaction to the demo based on my short time playing it is mostly positive. The lighting and skin tones have vastly improved from the predecessor. The player customization, which was already pretty deep in DBC14, is now even more detailed. An interesting addition and definitely a first for cricket games is the ability to add tattoos to the player's arms. The physique of the players can now be tweaked from a lot aspects starting from the player height to his lankiness and even the size of his gut! I noticed frequent freezes and frame rate drops during my playtime but hopefully this is just a beta and the final product will be a lot more polished.

In a very insignificant and piracy-prone market, Big Ant has been doing a commendable job of providing a definitive cricket experience. I am truly excited to see what they have up their sleeves!

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FIFA 17 Expectations

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Have you seen the new FIFA 17 trailer? You probably have. That Frostbite Engine looks very promising, doesn't it? Having watched the trailer, we have decided to compile a list of features that we really want to see in EA Sports' next installment in the iconic FIFA franchise.

First and foremost, FIFA lags behind its other sports franchise counterparts when it comes to graphics. Be it the textures or the player faces or the stadiums, FIFA needs to come up with a new game plan if it wants to capture fans in the long run. But the menu's color palette from FIFA 16 is a step towards the right path.

Next up, the Career Mode. EA Sports' biggest problem lies in the fact that their sports franchises are never really pushed to the limit.

The amounts of risks taken are usually zero and thus, the product seems a more polished version of the installment before. The Career Mode has not been properly revamped since FIFA 10 (Yes, 2009 was the last year of a major change) with the introduction of the feature of being able to manage an international team

being the only new addition since 2009. If you remember, there used to be a time when you would have to answer to the press in FIFA which would lead to your popularity increasing and hence, better teams would ask you to be their manager. And where did the option of joining another team at the end of the season go? EA should take a look at 2K Sports' NBA franchise to see how a proper manager mode works. The press and the fans should be an important feature again. Rivalry games should be given a rise in the difficulty level and most importantly, the option of joining a new team at the end of the season should be brought back.

At last, the game play needs to be tinkered a little. FIFA 16's emphasis on passing was good but the downside was



the constant interceptions. Tempo should be a major focus like it was in FIFA 13. The passing ability of the CMs should play a vital role in the overall attacking prospects of the team while the wideback and the winger's pace should be important when scoring a goal. In FIFA 15, pace became an OP factor. But it was too overwhelming. The right balance needs to be found.

Nevertheless, FIFA 17 looks promising with that first look only. Let's hope that the final product really does live up to all the hype.

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