



fifa 17

THE FORMULA IS ALMOST PERFECT

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Yearly instalments are cursed with the fact that they will always feel similar to their predecessors no matter how many changes were proposed on paper. FIFA 17 is no exception to this rule.

With each year, EA Sports plan to totally revamp everything. Yet, due to the development time crunch, most of the improvements end up in the game untested. This leaves each instalment with a myriad of new problems while most of the old ones are addressed. EA Sports should seriously consider making FIFA a biennial series. The extra development time could do wonders as FIFA already has a very solid base to build on.

Without further ado, let's get into how FIFA 17 fares. Undoubtedly, the most hyped-up feature is The Journey – FIFA's first ever foray into the single player campaign realm which tells the story of young prodigy Alex Hunter and his rise through the ranks in the English Premier League. You get to choose which club is your favourite in the beginning and you will be able to play for them (you can also choose other clubs, if you prefer). The story does a good job of showing how life is for a professional footballer who started off from the Sunday school football turfs in England. The euphoria after you score a goal on your debut, the frustration as your performance dips and you get benched, the drama created by old friends as they turn their backs on you; the Journey has it all. Every match has a post match interview screen where you can choose to be a mature player who makes good comments about his team and manager or you can be extremely arrogant and behave like you're the best thing to ever happen to your club. Based on your choices, you will gain or lose the manager's favour. The choices also affect how many followers

you get on social media. After you finish the Journey, you get to keep Alex Hunter as an FUT player.

When you first start a match in FIFA 17, you will notice that there are a lot of graphical improvements across the board. There's volumetric lighting emanating from the Sun during day time and the stadium floodlights when it's dark. There's global illumination that makes the shading look incredibly realistic. The grass on the pitch is one of the best renditions of grass I have ever seen in any video game. I



can also safely say that, due to sub-scatter surfacing, players actually look like humans as opposed to the plastic, dead, mannequin-esque appearance they used to have in the older games. Player eye movements are eerily realistic as well which gives them an even more life-like feel. Improved tessellation and cloth physics make for smooth geometrical details on stadiums and jerseys. FIFA 17 is truly a visual masterpiece due to the Frostbite engine.

The gameplay in FIFA 17 has made

attacking overpowered and defending is now an absolute mess. Focusing on attacks, players make dangerously aggressive runs when you're charging towards the opposition. This gives you a wide array of options to avail. Crosses are finally a viable option again, through balls are much more sensible and accurate, the driven pass has been taken down a notch (Thank goodness for that), and well timed and placed long shots will reward players with goals more often than not. Creative players will find really crazy ways to score

advances, instead he will lag behind as his opponent darts past him effortlessly. To counteract this, you will have to use the right stick to accurately shift between players and position each of them carefully. This makes defending incredibly hectic and stressful. It sounds pretty fun to get the hang of but the unpredictability of the AI just ruins it immensely.

Speaking of things being ruined, the new set piece system was a step back for penalties and freekicks. Corners are actually good as you have more options to control the placement of the cross. But freekicks now have way too many variables to be considered before you can adjust correctly. Penalties are finicky and the direction and power control is either way too sensitive or less responsive. This is a prime example of a feature that should have been tested more before being implemented.

Sound wise, there is not much to say. The crowds sound more or less the same; the soundtrack is brilliant as usual. The commentary started to feel old from FIFA 14 and it's saddening to see, not much has changed. EA should bring in more commentary teams to the game. It's really annoying hearing the same line from the commentator as he remarks on passed being intercepted in midfield.

Overall, FIFA 17 is probably one of the bigger jumps the series has made over the past few years. Yet, it falls short of being revolutionary with all its kinks. However, FIFA does provide you good value for money as you will inexplicably play this for hours on end with friends, online, or in single player.

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