

**TITANFALL 2****THE SLEEPER  
HIT OF 2016**

TAMIM BIN ZAKIR

The slide and shoot in Titanfall 2 is a thing of beauty. Your sprinting, super-powered pilot drops to their knees, whisking along the ground and out of cover, aiming a shotgun towards a group of bewildered foes. Meaty roars from the gun echo as you pick off one, two, three bad guys before your skidding momentum is even checked. Then you are up and into a sprint again, running across walls and bridging gaps with the throaty cough of a double-jumping jet-pack. There is some kind of expert wizardry that goes into the sheer feel of a first-person-shooter like Titanfall 2. It could be clever auto-aim or some barely perceptible tinkering with time. It could be a simple but effective marriage of thumping audio and visual feedback; fizzing laser-fire and disintegrating limbs. Whatever the method, Titanfall 2 feels terrific.

When the original Titanfall was released, it gained a very odd love/hate relationship with a lot of people. While it was fun and innovative, it just always felt like it was missing something. Respawn nearly made the game everyone wanted it to be, but they didn't quite get there. Thus, Titanfall 2 was born...with a kickass campaign.

Here you play as Mr. Generic himself – Jack Cooper, a common rifleman in a rebel militia battling the oppressive rule of the IMC. Cooper has only just begun pilot training, but finds himself thrust into the job and partnered with Titan BT-4247. The narrative is delivered with surprising wit and warmth as Cooper and the Optimus Prime-esque BT build their bond. It is good fun and doesn't take itself seriously. It is entertaining enough to make you care about Cooper and his Iron Giant pal, but brisk enough to keep out of the way of the action.

The action is extremely good, buoyed by forward-momentum and a drip-feed of new gadgets and weaponry. Titanfall 2's central contrasting strengths of pilot mobility and Titan power is more than enough to sustain a decent FPS campaign. That combat, that feel, never loses composure as you sweep over walls and around cover, rattling off fire and grenades, cloaking to reposition before using skidding in to kneecap a platoon of unsuspecting goons or when you board BT and engage in thunderous battles against other Titans, wielding shoulder-mounted rocket launchers, ruddy great swords and incendiary fire-belching grenade launchers.

The most impressive thing about Titanfall 2's campaign is that the combat isn't even the half of it. There is the sense that it doesn't have the eye-watering budget of Call of Duty or stable-mate Battlefield. Its set-pieces aren't as spectacular and, while the game is handsomely designed for the most part, some areas can feel a little generic. But the game's high-points are anything but; utilizing the tremendous traversal system and a sense of creative environmental design to break up the action with smart platforming gameplay.

The surprisingly excellent campaign is also a decent training ground for the mechanics and skills that will serve you in the multiplayer. The core ideas from the first game return: the parkour pilots, the Titans called in from the sky when powered up, the computer-controlled min-

ions you can dispatch for extra points, but Titanfall 2 has seen a significant retooling in several areas of its competitive modes. The most significant of which is in the overhaul of Titan classes. The three variants from the first game – Stryder, Atlas and Ogre (essentially light, medium and heavy) have been modified into six Titans with more specific loadouts and skills. Scorch is a heavy-set pyromaniac, Tone favours lock-on weaponry, Ion uses an energy rifle, Ronin wields a sword and a shotgun, Legion uses a minigun, and Northstar snipes. Each has its own shield or traps and a super-powered 'Core' attack.

Each of these classes is introduced in the campaign and brings variety to the multiplayer battlefield. Pilots also have more customization, from grappling hooks to cloaks, and an ever-growing arsenal that unlocks at a decent rate. The variety in approach means that this is a fast, lethal and highly skilled competitive game. Good players are able to whizz around maps with bewildering pace and accuracy, but what is nice about Titanfall 2 is that its modes are set up to allow players with differing abilities to perform well from match to match.

The audio is superb. The music feels epic but it doesn't hamper the flow of the game, the player's hits sound

meaty and powerful enough to move a truck, the weapons do sound generic, but punchy, and the voice acting is high class. On top of that, it is all mixed together perfectly.

All in all, this is a must for every FPS fanatics. The creative campaign and blistering multiplayer make it one of the best shooters of the generation.

*Tamim Bin Zakir aka Shwag\_Lord (PSN ID) is an enraged individual who seldom thinks of being generous to others. Feel free to devour his tranquility at niloy.tbz@gmail.com*

