

## GAME REVIEW

# FRIDAY THE 13TH



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Developer: IIFonic  
Publisher: Gun Media  
Genre: Survival Horror

I was pretty skeptical when I first heard that Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> was getting a multiplayer-based survival horror game. The previous entry based on the franchise came in 1989, and it was developed by LJN, who were notorious for craptastic cash-ins disguised as movie licensed games. When *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>-The Game* hit steam last month, the internet exploded with gut-wrenching murder animations featuring everyone's favorite psychopath: Jason Voorhees.

In *Friday the 13th-The Game*, you play as either Jason, or seven other unlucky

'counselors' who try their best to escape the map. The game is about \$40 on Steam, but I was way too excited for it after binge-watching hilarious gameplay videos on YouTube to consider if it was worth it or not. When I first booted up the game, it took me half an hour to find a match. For comparison, I'll tell you that on Valve's worst day, you will still find a Dota 2 match within 7-10 minutes. Even though the server improved over the next week, at the moment it is still very much work in progress. I dealt with around 150-300 ping while I was playing, and I can vouch that it was not an issue regarding my internet.

Coming to the game itself, the roles for the player are selected by the game at random and an online match usually lasts twenty minutes. Essentially, if you're lucky

enough to play as Jason, the game will be a breeze. Jason has supernatural powers which he can unlock over the course of the game: morphing, a heightened sense of locating his victims, invisibility and an ability to stop the music that the players are alerted by when Jason is nearby. It took me eight or so matches to be able to play as Jason, as the rest of the occasions had me haplessly looking for shelter hiding from him. As one of the counselors, the player is supposed to roam around the map scavenging for various pickups, weapons, maps and other items but honestly the game does not implement these rules that well. You will find yourself ignoring all the objectives and hiding for twenty minutes straight. For a game that emphasizes on coordination and teamwork as a requirement to sur-

vive, it does very little to reward those, pushing the players to just hide in a singular spot until he is either found by Jason or the player himself dies of utter boredom. To my utter dismay, as a counselor I had to stay and watch the rest of the match after I died.

A bulk of the enjoyment of the game comes from the gory death animations triggered when Jason finds his unlucky victims. They are consciously over-the-top, but it will get pretty annoying when you're watching him axe a hole in you in the same way he has done for the last 35 times. Essentially, it is way more fun to watch the YouTube videos featuring amusing bugs and glitches that *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>* has to offer. If you're an ardent fan of the franchise and have to buy it, wait until a steam sale where it is sold for like \$5.

## NFS: Payback Wish List

SHAHRUKH IKHTEAR

The reveal trailer for Need for Speed: Payback dropped about two weeks ago and honestly, I am not impressed. We've seen enough The Fast and The Furious movies to be tired of the same old storyline involving a gang of race car fanatics pulling off seemingly impossible heists. The new trailer hinted towards exactly that.

Who knows? Maybe this NFS will be different. That's what we've been telling ourselves for the past seven years. Here are some things that the new entry in the long-standing franchise can do to avoid being another forgettable entry:

### CREATE A COMPELLING STORY

Envision this: you're a hotshot racer from a town far, far away. Somehow, for some unknown reason, you decide to shake things up a bit and go to another town filled to the brim with racers looking to steal your vehicle. No one knows who you are, you challenge the best racer in town and eventually, lose. Now, you have to work your way up because your amazing car is gone. Sound familiar? This core concept has always been at the heart of every single NFS storyline since *Most Wanted* (2005). Now a lot of people might argue "Hey, why are you look-



ing for a story in a racing game?" Well, first of all, video game writing and storytelling has improved a lot from the days of the cheesy Command & Conquer games. Plus, if the single player experience of a game revolves around the story, it is incredibly hard to ignore it. Without the story feeling important, the entirety of the campaign loses its purpose. Why would I care racing against these people

chatting away at each other? What reason do I have to keep on playing missions?

### MEANINGFUL CAR CUSTOMISATION

The Need for Speed reboot (2015) did make customisation a major feature of the game by introducing more depth and better bodykits. But at one point, customisation lost its charm as there was

too much work to actually get your ride to speed. Plus, your car would get outdated by a better one every time you progressed through the story. Forza Horizon 3 does customisation right by giving you the ability to upgrade your car to a superior class with part installations. Also, the livery editor needs to be more user friendly, players should be able to upload their own designs, and get ranked based on number of downloads.

### MORE ENGAGING MULTIPLAYER

What's there to do with racing games and multiplayer, you ask? Well, first of all, NFS: Payback can feature actual crew-on-crew racing. Have an open world map segregated into zones that crews can control by beating everyone else, and you have the recipe for an extremely competitive multiplayer experience. You can level up your crew, donate parts or cars to members, and have crew leaderboards. It makes the game sound more like guilds in MMOs and that's exactly what's needed for NFS to be more compelling in its multiplayer segment.

Need for Speed: Payback is out November 10, 2017.

*Shahrukh Ikhtear is a sub-editor at SHOUT who stresses himself out while trying to learn marketing. Send him pictures of Philip Kotler as blessings at fb.com/sr.ikhtear*