

BATTLEFIELD V

WHAT A TURNAROUND

**GAME REVIEW****SHAHRUKH IKHTEAR**

Nowadays in the world of video games, betas are pretty much fully representative of the final product. Battlefield V turned out to be an exception. Once I got into my first multiplayer match, things felt really different. But did it change for the better? Or did DICE track back on some good gameplay mechanics?

Fortunately, BFV has brought in some welcome changes to its formula. Remember the lack of recoil on the guns during the beta? Well, they have significantly increased recoil now which is a staple of the Battlefield series. The maps that were in the beta are two of the worst maps in the entire game. The progression system feels more rewarding in the sense that you get a lot of in-game currency as you keep playing. On the plus side, there are no microtransactions that allow you to

purchase the aforementioned upgrades, so you don't have to worry about getting killed by noobs with insane limits on their parent's credit card.

The premise of the game is World War II and DICE has really nailed the atmosphere here, as usual. Their games are never short of flashy explosions, unbelievably good audio that tingle your aural senses, and lifelike lighting. Visually and audibly, this is one of the best games you can play right now. On the PC, if you have an NVIDIA RTX series graphics card, you can bump up the eye candy so that you can see your own reflection on the bullet heading towards you.

Battlefield V successfully recaptures that feeling of rolling down large swathes of war-torn land in tanks and airplanes. The gunplay is satisfying for the most part with some awkward balancing marring an almost perfect experience. The Medic class

is equipped with SMGs that feel more like pea-shooters than actual weapons. The Support class LMGs and MMGs are shredding machines.

The singleplayer mode feels less tacked-on when compared to the one in BF1. Seriously, these stories are very well-fleshed out. It's the execution that hurts the whole thing. DICE are not exactly the pioneers of great FPS singleplayer modes and it shows here. While they have some great tales to tell, the bland and uninspiring mission design undermines everything.

Of course, I cannot but talk about the stark contrast to the singleplayer that is the multiplayer. The same emergent gameplay is still here. Describing one Battlefield V match will be like describing the most insanely directed WWII movie. I piloted a bomber over three points and got 15 kills from two bombing runs, I was promptly taken down by an enemy fighter but I

spawned back on a tank, proceeded to blitz through all enemy fortifications and helped secure a crucial objective for my team. At the end of it all, the once proud town in objective A was completely flattened. These are the moments you play the games for.

Battlefield V was not devoid of controversy, however, as the developers initially wanted to add a lot of niche cosmetic items that broke the historical accuracy of the game. I'm happy to say that DICE has backtracked on a lot of those decisions so it's now more authentic.

BFV is definitely one of the best entries in the series. If you're a fan of Battlefield, this is a must-buy.

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FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Adventures of Appalachia

WASIQUE HASAN

Fans of one of the oldest RPG franchises were taken by surprise when Bethesda capped off their E3 presentation by announcing Fallout 76. This multiplayer-only game is set in Appalachia shortly after the bombs fell, and it promised an experience unlike any other. I got the opportunity to try out the not-so-public beta this past week and here are some of the takeaways from that.

Firstly, one thing you will have to acknowledge right away is how beautiful Appalachia is. From the sprawling lush forests to the many sites of old civilisation, this is probably the biggest Fallout map with the most to see and experience. Even though the engine is old and some of the textures are outdated, walking through the forest while beams of light split through the canopy is something you won't get tired of. Bethesda makes the best environments, and this is the best example of that. What you will get tired of, however, is how the game is

being compromised to make the always-multiplayer aspect work. The FPS is going to be fixed at 63, and the FOV cannot be adjusted. Bethesda claims that these are there to prevent cheating but an AAA title having FPS restrictions is just ridiculous.

Speaking of ridiculous, it wouldn't be a Bethesda game without bugs. And oh boy, were there many. Sometimes the ghouls get stuck without any obstacles being present or fail to detect you when you are 2 inches from their face. Another time, I got killed by a couple of them because



they disappeared below the ground while still being able to attack me. As amusing as it was, that's not the kind of thing you want to remember the game for. While you might think I'm being especially harsh on these, let's not forget that this

wasn't an actual beta but just a server test for Bethesda.

Even though I've been mostly negative, I did enjoy the game. The gameplay itself is like Fallout 4, with a big focus on the run-and-gun aspect along with some scavenging and crafting on the side, craft-

ing meaning both items and structures, which you can carry with you to set up a home base anywhere empty with your C.A.M.P. On my journey to Level 13 in the beta, I enjoyed the scavenging and gunplay. As a fast run-and-gun MMO this

game is quite fun. There are also a good number of quests scattered around, accessed by holotapes and terminals, which give you something to do.

One thing old Fallout fans will dearly miss, however, are the NPCs. Some may be quick to point out that there are robot and super mutant traders, but that's clearly not what I'm referring to. The lack of other NPCs to talk to, get quests from and learn about the world makes the world feel empty. Nor do the quests seem very significant. In short, the storyline (or the lack of it) makes the game less like a traditional Fallout game and more like your everyday action MMO.

That doesn't mean the game is all bad. By the last beta session I was beginning to get addicted to the gameplay, especially when I started interacting with the other players. PVP and PVE was equally fun, and having people around makes it less lonely, but they still don't fill the void of NPCs. Even though Fallout 76 isn't the typical RPG, it's still fun. If you can accept that Bethesda has taken the RPG series you used to love and made it into an FPS, the game is quite palatable. Your best bet might be to wait till it's on sale, though.

Wasique Hasan sheds a tear in Fallout's memory. Press F at: fb.com/hasique.wasan