
Subject: [REVIEW] "Star Wars: Squadrons" video game
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It's "tedious", yet still gets 8 out of 10. :-\

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Star Wars: Squadrons Review:
Great Graphics Can't Overcome Tedious Gameplay

Rating: 8.0 out of 10

Cast: Peta Sergeant Terisa Kerrill
Phil Morris Lindon Javes
Alistair McKenzie ... LT-514
Noshir Dalal Varko Grey
Helen Sadler Havina Vonreg
Jim Pirri Shen
Sofia Pernas Rela Sol
Rebecca Wisocky Kierah "Gunny" Koovah

Star Wars: Squadrons Review

In EA's Star Wars: Squadrons, players commandeer an assortment of vehicles from that galaxy far far away, including X-Wings, Tie Fighters, Y-Wings, etc. and engage in ferocious dogfights set amidst the backdrop of battles immediately following the events of Return of the Jedi.

The first level plops the player inside a Tie Fighter and then blasts them off into space where the goal is to shoot dozens of X-Wings and zip around giant starships, avoiding an endless barrage of laser fire and missiles. In one of the more inspired aspects of the game, players can redistribute the ship's power to their liking. So, when faced with enemy laser fire, one can choose to divert power to the front shields before redirecting that power to the laser canons when the time comes to retaliate. Or, put all power on the thrusters and outrun enemies long enough to recharge your systems.

All of this is quite thrilling...for the first few levels. After an hour or so of gameplay, each sequence starts blending into the next leaving one longing for a more varied experience.

Sure, there are cool scenarios involving the capturing of a

downed Star Destroyer or the destruction of a rebel space station, but mostly each level features the same basic concept: fly around and shoot waves of enemies. It's basically Space Invaders, just in 3D.

Perhaps that's why EA chose to sell the product at a decidedly marked down \$40 price tag, which is far below the \$60 cost of less-than-stellar offerings like the recent *Fast and Furious: Crossroads* and *Predator: Hunting Grounds*; and, in all fairness, a smart marketing decision.

The plot involves competing squadrons from the flailing Empire and New Republic as they duke it out during the final stages of the original Star Wars trilogy. A fun variety of characters pop up throughout, although neither leaves much of a mark outside of a few stirring cut scenes. In fact, most of the character beats are reserved for skippable exchanges between missions and really don't affect the overarching story or gameplay; and function mostly as bonus footage.

To that end, *Star Wars: Squadrons* feels a tad undercooked. As though the creators came up with a kernel of an idea but weren't quite sure how to extend it in a satisfying manner. As such, the game feels more akin to a simplistic arcade experience rather than anything new or groundbreaking for consoles.

Yet, despite these gripes, the game is fun when played for a few hours at a time. As stated, deploying various strategies to take down squads of enemy craft is thrilling; and the combat is explosive and engaging. Although, at times, being set in space is more of a detriment to the experience as your craft feels more like a floating capsule than a speeding bullet of mass destruction. The only time you truly feel a rush is when you get close enough to the hull of a Star Destroyer or the occasional sequence that forces you to fly through debris or asteroids. It would have been cool for the makers to set a few missions on a planet's surface - a mission equivalent to the battle at the end of *Rogue One*, for example - or create moments like the trench run from *A New Hope* to really emphasize the speed of your ship. Hell, even an option to switch to third person would have provided a welcome change of pace.

As is, *Star Wars: Squadrons* entertains and deserves marks for its well-executed controls and graphics. And, considering the price, it's hard to complain too much about the lack of variety. Overall, this is a nice start to a potential

franchise that will likely soar to greater heights with future entries.

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