

2010 Summer Video Game Round-Up (+ retro bonus!)

With the help and collective expertise of the SUNY Potsdam Video Gaming Club (PVGC), I've put together a round-up of games you may have missed while you were out enjoying the beautiful summer weather.

Starcraft 2 (Windows and Mac)

The sequel to the all time classic *Starcraft*, it has already been picked up by the professional gaming circuit in Korea. In my opinion this is Blizzard's most polished title to date, and when you are talking about Blizzard, that's saying something. A must have for any PC Gamer.

-- Dr. B

Super Mario Galaxy 2 (Nintendo Wii)

Mario returns with a sequel to the Wii classic, this time bringing along more stars, beautiful and unique level design and also Yoshi. Among the best that the Wii has to offer.

-- Adam Wells

Heavy Rain (PS3)

Arguably not a game in the true sense and billed as *Interactive Fiction*, Heavy Rain was a game that I felt emotionally invested in. If something bad happened to one of the people I was playing, I felt like I let him/her down. The characters were nuanced and felt real, and the story was well written and engaging. This type of risky game experiment has to be just what SONY had in mind when they designed their next generation system. In this case this was a risk that paid off.

-- Dr. B.

Pokemon HeartGold/SoulSilver (Nintendo DS)

In 2000, Pokemon made its greatest step forward with Gold and Silver, which included hold items, unique abilities, breeding, and an internal clock that changed the environment between night and day. Now, ten years later, Nintendo has remade these classics with upgraded graphics, encounter animations, and the same great Pokemon training gameplay! A must have for you NDS.

-- Adam Wells

Monday Night Combat (Xbox-360 Live)

A third-person shooter combining elements of Team Fortress 2, Tower Defense, and Defence of the Ancients (DOTA). It ties this together with a campy futuristic sport aesthetic that constantly pokes fun at itself. For \$15 (1200 Live points), the replay value of the multiplayer makes it an absolute steal. Sometimes the best things come in small packages.

-- Bill Kline

More Blasts from the Past

DJ Hero (2009: PS3, Xbox-360, Wii)

Finally Activision expands their musical repertoire beyond rock. DJ Hero ushers us into the realm of mash-ups featuring brilliant blends from Daft Punk, DJ Shadow, the late DJ AM and

many others. The turntable controller is neat and responsive, and with the sequel coming soon the current \$40 price tag is too great a deal to pass up.

-- Adam Wells

Portal (2007: Xbox 360, PS3, Windows)

Portal is a hilarious, action packed puzzle game where a haywire, corrupted AI tries to foil your every attempt to escape. Equipped with your Aperture Science Handheld Portal device, you can place portals (in and out) anywhere you can see. A clever, thinking man's first person shooter.

-- Greg Cross

Mass Effect (2007: Xbox 360, Windows)

Mass Effect is a role playing game with well written, deep, and flawed characters. It has an engaging cinematic storyline that may be the best science fiction story from ANY medium in the past 5 years. Great characters. Great story. Great game!

-- Cody Doyle

Grandia 2 (2000: Dreamcast and PS2)

A Japanese RPG originally that has the best battle system I've ever run into, great magic, awesomely unique special attacks, and an interactive time based move system. The plot is deep and fantastic. And you won't soon forget the main character's snarky talking bird.

-- Bryan Leo

Hexen: Beyond Heretic (1996, Windows, DOS 1996)

Take a ride on the wayback machine and play a classic Doom clone from the 90s, Hexen pits you against the second serpent rider Kortax and his hordes of demons. Choose between a fighter, a cleric, and a mage, each with a unique array of weapons and items. Maximum pseudo-3D carnage for five bucks.

-- Jacob Gray