

GAME CONNOISSEUR

DIABLO III - FINALLY FIXED

---DR. ANTHONY BETRUS,
THE GAME CONNOISSEUR

A lot has happened since my original love-hate review of Diablo III in July, 2012. In many regards my original review seems to have held up, especially my disapproval of both the auction house and the outrageous difficulty of the final level of difficulty, inferno. Defeating the game on inferno (the highest difficulty level) was virtually impossible, as characters had already reached the maximum level (60 at the time) long before reaching inferno. The only way to get stronger was through item tweaking, and as I said in my previous review, this virtually forced you to the auction house, where Blizzard was siphoning off a healthy commission on each transaction. This one-two punch felt very wrong, so wrong that many players, myself included, left the game altogether. Now in my case, my OCD compelled me to defeat Diablo on inferno difficulty before I left, but it was not at all easy.

To pull off the near impossible trick, I

got to know the auction house intimately. My plan was actually quite simple: farm Whimsyshire. For those of you not familiar with this secret level, its development is quite an interesting story. Here is the one sentence version: the developers at Blizzard released some early colorful screenshots of their in development secret level, which fanboys reacted to with outrage, claiming that they may as well fill it with ponies and rainbows, so that is exactly what Blizzard did. This tongue-in-cheek secret level is a great place to find mob bosses, and farm it I did. I sold the better items I found in the gold (not real money) auction house, and used my returns to purchase special "life-on-hit" and "resist all" items for my barbarian. Once I hit a very high level in these categories I was able to, along with some careful skill tweaking, stay alive through the end of the final act, and to defeat Diablo. And then I put the game down, for about a year and a half, wondering when it would finally be fixed.

I got my answer this past spring, spe-

cifically on March 18, 2014. On this date both auction houses were shut down, permanently. Blizzard acknowledged that the auction house "... ultimately undermines Diablo's core game play: kill monsters to get cool loot." In order to remedy the "Well where am I going to get the good loot now?" question, they simultaneously introduced their "Loot 2.0 System" which drastically increased the frequency of legendary drops. At this point I, admittedly with some hesitation, re-booted the game. It seemed that I had missed multiple incremental patches that attempted to make the game easier (think reasonable), but they were a pale shadow next to the massive changes that the new loot system introduced. Along with the new loot system, the difficulty levels were completely rewritten (for the better). I can not help but conclude that the the first year and a half after the original release was essentially a large scale beta test.

All of these changes laid the foundation for their expansion pack, Reaper of Souls, which released one week later on March

25. This added a sixth character class, the Crusader (think Paladin), and a fifth act. And most importantly the expansion unlocked Adventure Mode. To help you understand how fundamental this set of changes was to the game, think legalization of the forward pass in football, or allowing players to dribble in basketball. While cosmetically the game may look the same, these simple rule changes dramatically altered the game experience. So needless to say I am now back in the game, and I have to say, it absolutely without a doubt a richer, more enjoyable game experience. Finally, for those of you unsure if your computer will be able to play the game, no worries, it is now available for PS3 and Xbox 360, and soon to be out on PS4 and Xbox One.

Finally, I must acknowledge the conclusion from my original article, where I stated "one thing is for certain, the auction house is here to stay." Let me say this about that: I could not be more happy that I was wrong.

June Events At DeKalb Amvets

The second Friday of the month Fish Fry concluded Good Friday and will resume Friday, October 10.

Every Wednesday- Ladies Auxiliary lunch and dinner special from noon to seven.

Every Thursday- Acoustic music jam with Dan Cole from seven till nine. Bring your acoustic instrument and your voice and join in.

Every Friday- Karaoke with Larry from 8-12.

Sunday June 1- Music jam for local youth and parents from 2-5. For information on this event, contact Cameron Hance at 267-6305.

Saturday June 7- Music and dancing with "Amarillo" from 9-1.

Saturday June 14- Music and dancing with "Special Effects" from 9-1.

Saturday June 21- Music and dancing with "Back Country" from 9-1.

Saturday June 28- Music and dancing with "The New Buckskins" from 9-1.

For further information call the club at 347-3099.

8TH karaoke/DJ
with big daddy DJ 8 TO 12
13TH DJ with
big daddy DJ 9:30 TO 2
20TH UNION 9:30 TO 1:30
22ND kareoke/DJ
with big daddy DJ 8 TO 12
28TH DJ with big
daddy DJ 9:30 TO 2

Thursday Night Shows:
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Friday Night Shows:
9pm to 1am

Saturday Night Shows:
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