

■ Game review

'Revenge of the Sith' a button-mashing, diluted version of Lucas' movie

LucasArts' latest game has some good characters and battles but, unlike the film, is ultimately forgettable

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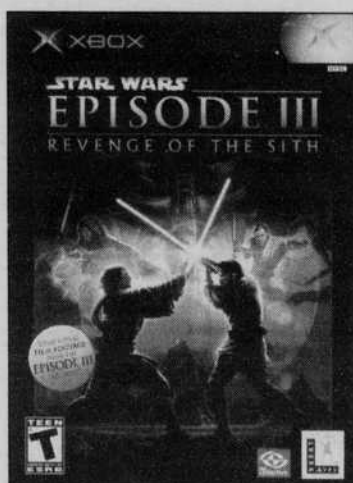
"Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith" is a subpar hack-and-slash action game with a great deal of graphical polish. On the surface it looks like a great game: Players can play as two powerful Jedi, the fight animation look smooth and action-packed and players can use force powers straight from the movies. But once players pick up the controller they will find there is little substance behind LucasArts' most recent "Star Wars" game.

In "Revenge of the Sith" players take control of both Anakin Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi.

The plot of the game comes straight from the upcoming movie and includes scenes from the film. The game plays out as a distilled version of the film by leaving only the action sequences, making it feel disjointed. Still, it does spoil some aspects of the movie, so players who don't want to know what happens in the story should not play.

Gameplay is repetitive and dull. Players will run through boxy levels as they fight their way through an endless amount of droids, and while the game offers a few different combos, players will quickly realize there is no reason to stray from button-mashing. Between levels, players can boost their abilities and gain new moves, but repeatedly tapping Y generally gets the job done.

Occasionally players will be pitted against other Jedi in duels that are interesting but suffer from familiar problems. While it may seem necessary to develop some sort of strategy to take on the bosses, players will realize after dying a few times that button-mashing is the only tactic that works.



COURTESY

"Revenge of the Sith" offers a few multiplayer modes. Cooperative mode allows players to share the monotony with friends, and duel mode lets players pick from nine Jedi and 14 "Star Wars" locales. Duel mode is possibly the most entertaining aspect of the game because button-mashing doesn't work

when playing against a friend. The variety of characters is nice and it is fun to relive both classic "Star Wars" battles and battles that never were, but after a few fights the action becomes stale.

The game is graphically decent, with stages, characters and animations looking on par with recent games. But the voice acting is horrible. As the voice of Anakin, Hayden Christensen sleeps his way through the game, monotonously mumbling his lines. Dialogue meant to be said with urgency or anger comes out bland and uninteresting.

If you are a huge fan of "Star Wars," rent this game but don't buy it. You'll get a little mileage out of the duel mode, but the game can be beaten in less than 10 hours; after that, "Revenge of the Sith" has no replay value and is ultimately forgettable.

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