

'Sonic Heroes' scores solid zeros

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THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

Anyone itching for a great game by the Sega crew would be wasting time and money by purchasing "Sonic Heroes" for Play Station 2.

"Sonic the Hedgehog" is Sega's flagship character, and, like "Mario," "Link" and "Lara Croft," anything with his name on it is supposed to be good for all ages. However, everything about this game is just annoying.

The title screen features what is perhaps the worst video game music ever, and it isn't even video game music. It is a real band singing about "Sonic" in a style of music that can only be described as disco pop-punk.

The tutorial is horribly annoying, featuring a voice that sounds like a girl on speed who has inhaled copious amounts of helium. The problem is that one needs the tutorial to have a clue



how to play this thing.

After sitting through the mind-numbingly idiotic tutorial, players finally arrive at the first level, featuring more prepubescent, irritating, screechy character voices. Yes, the volume could be turned off, but while still learning to play the game, it is necessary to hear oral instructions as to what on earth is supposed to be done.

Beside the complications of button-mashing, usually reserved for fighting games, there is only one real challenge to this game, and that is running really, really fast without falling off the side of a cliff.

That's it? No real strategic challenges, no real puzzle solving? Just run really fast and don't fall. Now this is all fine when it comes to racing games, but this is hardly a racing game.

To add to the lack-of-a-challenge problem, the player is given an unlimited amount of lives. This only makes me yearn for the days of 16-bit systems, where 2-D ruled the day. Now there is a challenge. Running really fast, and doing it right, was actually fun for the original "Sonic" games. Taking that challenge and making it the central theme to this game was a terrible idea, and whoever made it so hard to control should be taken outside and shot. That is the only reason there is any challenge at all; it's hard to control what a character is doing when running.

Without the anxiety caused by limited lives, the only thing a gamer has to worry about is the God-forsaken controls. There should always be more to a game than pretty colors and button-mashing.

This game does have one



INTERNET PHOTO

Sonic, Tails and Knuckles run for their lives. Apparently, those Idea People at SEGA felt that the children weren't getting enough exercise. Thanks, Sonic, you're a role model!

redeeming factor, and that is the multiplayer mode. The competitive edge brought on by going head-to-head is, admittedly, kind of fun. While it is not fun to run really fast and fall, it is fun to race another opponent who has to do

their best not to fall when they run really fast. Then a person can laugh at opponents for falling.

Anyone yearning for good Sega should bust out the old Genesis and put in "Sonic" 1, 2

or 3, or better yet, "Streets of Rage." Don't have a Genesis? Go to a pawn shop and buy one with a couple decent games and it won't cost a penny more than the price of "Sonic Heroes" for Play Station 2.

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