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Excite Truck - Nintendo Wii

Can The Wii's innovative controller doing racing games?

by Chris Pickering published on 27 February 2007

Though the Wii's initial efforts have worked like a charm with its unique control method, opening a new game always feels like a leap of faith. Can set in stone gaming styles really transfer over? We gamers are pretty set in our ways after all.

So it's with a sharp intake of breath we try out Nintendo's latest - an arcade style racer without an analogue stick to push left and right. We'll eat our hat if they pull it off, that's for damn sure.

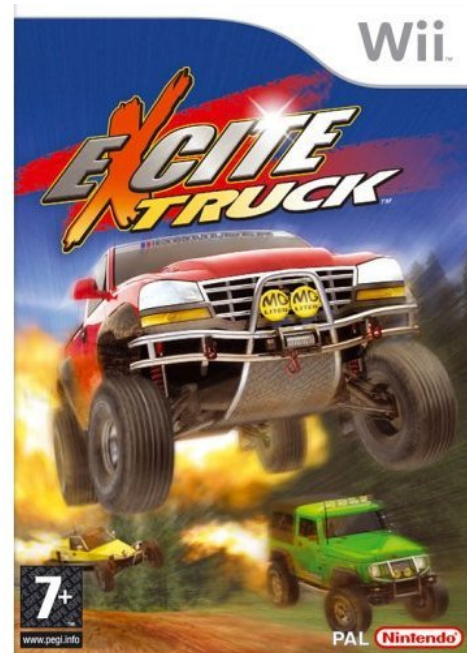
Control method aside, the Wii could do with a few games that last. And it'd be good to see a few titles that offer something you can't get on other consoles. So let's hang out the fluffy dice, don the body kit and find out if this fits the bill.

Initial impressions aren't too good. Have a look at the screenshots and you'll wonder whether you're looking at a game running on what's supposedly a next generation piece of kit or a half decade old Dreamcast title.

Look closer and you'll see dodgy looking textures cropping up with worrying regularity. It's not something you'd expect from a 2007 release and certainly shows up the lack of "oomph" the Wii has compared with, say, the Xbox 360 and Project Gotham Racing. We guess you get what you pay for.

Having said that, Excite Truck runs at a fair old lick so your eyes will be on the road most of the time. And a dirt track is hard to stuff up graphics wise.

The controls are what matters most though and, luckily, this is Excite Truck's main plus point. You hold the Remote between your hands with the "1" button to accelerate and the "2" button to break. To steer, simply twist the remote like a steering wheel. Nice eh?



...cont.

To start with you'll be cursing like Kimi Raikkonen as you grind to another hapless defeat. Once you start to get to grips with the twists and turns needed to keep your truck on the track though, you'll start to fall in love.

But by then it's pretty much over. The single player game will take you a couple of evenings to race through, while leaping through the air in challenge mode adds a few hours here and there. Nintendo are obviously banking on gamers being bothered enough to try for the top rankings, but when you've seen everything there is to see, why bother?

Worse still, there's no online play or four player option. For games of this type, multiplayer is pretty much essential so we're knocking a couple of points off for that straight away.

VERDICT

It's a shame that there's not much to get stuck into. What's here is a lot of fun, but don't expect the muddy thrills to last long.

At a glance

What is it?

Off-road racing game

Good

Hectic pace, controls work relatively well, masses of fun

Bad

Doesn't look too hot, won't last you long, multiplayer lacking in depth

Verdict

What's here is a lot of fun, but don't expect the muddy thrills to last long

Price £35

Our score

6/10

Your score

?/10