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Donkey Kong: Jet Blast - Nintendo Wii

Can this family racer impress?

by Stuart Miles published on 12 February 2008

Can a game that requires you to wave your arms around the air furiously really work? We get waving to find out.

Donkey Kong Jet Blast or Barrel Blast as it also goes by, is best described as a racing game that sees you play Donkey Kong or a range of other characters round a series of race tracks picking up power-up and trying to look for shortcuts.

On that front it's not very imaginative by any definition of the word. There is nothing new here. Different characters such as Diddy, Dixie, and King K. Rool plus four other new characters offer different skills, while power-ups range from rockets to mines and there are bits of the track that make you go faster or allow you to skip bits out.

We've seen it all before and are likely to see it again in family racing games to come.

As for the race tracks themselves there isn't much imagination here, with the usual array of beachfronts, canyons and jungle landscapes all getting a look in.

To give you something to do you have to collect bananas and these give you a nitro boost allowing you to go faster than your opponents.

Where however Donkey Kong: Jet Blast does differ is the control mechanism - it's the Wii after all - and that means rather than sitting on your arse moving your fingers around a controller, you've got to work it, and work it hard.

Here, using both the Nunchuck and the Wii Remote you have to shake both controllers up and down to gain speed as if you were beating on a pair of bongos.

The more you do it the faster you go. If then you



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want to move right you just shake your right controller while shaking the left controller makes you go left.

Luckily you'll eventually hit maximum speed and can stop shaking, but then there are no real guides to work out whether or not you are still at top speed, until you hit something and then clearly you aren't.

And hit something you will as there are plenty of obstacles in the way and plenty of chances to hit them thanks to the lack of precise controls.

But if the idea of all that exercise sound annoying, it won't be anywhere near as bad as the annoying bongo sound that comes bleating out of the controllers. Worse still, you can't turn it off.

If you're "Mad" enough you can opt to challenge up to three other "Crazy" people via a four-way split screen, something that is very confusing, and the cacophony might push you over the edge.

VERDICT

For the kids, Donkey Kong will probably appeal: there is enough annoyance in it that will get your little ones excited to want to play it over and over again.

However those over 5 years of age looking for some racing fun will be disappointed. It's not that there is anything overtly wrong with Donkey Kong: Jet Blast, it's just that there isn't anything to really write home about.

At a glance

What is it?

Racing game with Donkey Kong

Good

Will give you a good work out

Bad

Annoying controls, unimaginative gameplay

Verdict

One for the kids

Price £35

Our score

6/10

Your score

?/10