

DETAILS ■ INDIA'S FIRST 3D FIGHTING GAME.

PUBLISHER
Cyber Multimedia

DEVELOPER
Paradox Studios

DISTRIBUTOR
Cyber Multimedia

REQUIREMENTS
Win98/ME/XP, PIII 800 MHz / AMD Athlon, 128 MB RAM, 16 MB 3D card

GENRE
Third Person 3D Fighting

PLATFORM
PC

PRICE
Rs 399/-

BATTLEDUST: The Championship

Human limits tested by inhuman punishment.



"Make sure to install the demo from the GAME FORCE CD"

ONLINE

www.battledust.com/

Game development studios in India are as rare as good movie-based games. Potential Indian game developers not only face a lack of funding but also face a huge problem while designing games. Since the games will be sold mainly/exclusively in India, they cannot afford to create a highly advanced 3D game as they will not sell enough copies to turn a profit. Nor can they create a completely outdated game as this will lead to bad reviews and worse sales. Due to these problems, we've seen Indian games like Yodhha, Chakravuuuh, Bhagat Singh and Tiger Hills, all of which seemed amateurish and incomplete. Indian gamers had almost lost all hope. Which brings us to Battledust: The Championship, a 3D fighting game created by Paradox studios. The game takes place in 2053, in a world struggling for survival. The full-motion video that introduces you to the eight playable characters is surprisingly well done. The back-story and character history is covered in a 40-page comic book, bundled free with the game (Nice Touch) Basically, the winner of the Battledust Tournament will get to rule the decimated planet.

The visuals of the actual game are decent, with detailed textures and characters. The animation is where this game falls short. The characters don't move smoothly enough, with some moves being decidedly jerky. Combat consists of five basic moves - High / Low Punch, High / Low Kick and Block. Naturally, you can press a combination of these keys to pull off combos and special moves. The controls are a little unresponsive and you'll find yourself being pounded into the dust more than once. While you'll never quite master the controls, you'll get

used to them with practise. The in-game music, created by the Indian band Pentagram, blends in well with the action and sound effects. The only jarring note is the voice of the announcer who tries (and fails) to pull off an American accent.

To start off, you can choose the full Campaign mode where you take part in the tournament, a Quick Fight mode which starts up a ...quick fight, a Practise mode where you can wail on another character and practise your moves and a Versus mode where you can take on (and hopefully beat) a friend. There are also mini-games which can be unlocked. Each character is linked to one of the eight mini-games, which include 'Psimora's Den' which provides you with Slot machines, Video Poker and Black Jack and 'Velocity', a racing game. Finishing the campaign with a character unlocks his/her specific game.

It's clear that the Paradox team had a decent budget to work with. They used this to good effect, creating a solid fighting game with extra content and a free comic book at a very decent price. The only thing that takes away from the game is the slightly flawed controls. While some gamers might find the gameplay antiquated, I believe that this is an outstanding effort.

GAME FORCE RATING

HIGHS
Unlockable extras, Good production values.

LOWS
Dated Graphics, Iffy controls.

NUTSHELL
Best Indian Game Ever.

77%

DETAILS ■ MONTY PYTHON MEETS THE WILD WEST

PUBLISHER
Lucas Arts

DEVELOPER
Planet Moon

DISTRIBUTOR
Gayatri Impex

REQUIREMENTS
Win98/ME/XP, PIII 1 GHz / AMD Athlon, 256 MB RAM, 32 MB 3D card

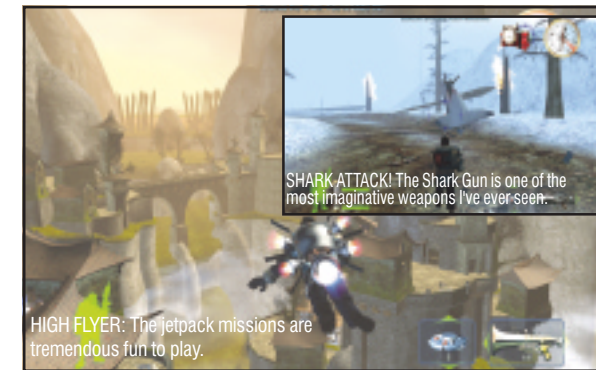
GENRE
Third Person Shooter

PLATFORM
PC, XBOX

PRICE
PC: 999/-

ARMED & DANGEROUS

You just might save the world...if you don't burn it down first.



ONLINE

www.lucasarts.com/products/

Third person shooters are all about fast paced missions brimming with more action than a John Woo film. Think Max Payne, Tombraider, MDK... While **Armed & Dangerous** does have more than it's fair share of action, it also has some of the funniest cut-scenes you'll ever see. More on that later.

A&D follows a ragtag group of bandits called the Lionhearts, made up of explosives expert Jonesy, a tea-loving robot Q and the leader Roman whom you control. As Roman, you can give Q and Jonesy some basic orders (Defend Me, Defend Area, and Return to Me) Don't worry too much if they die during a level, as they return with full health once you complete it. Your first mission is to locate Rexus, a famous prophet who is the last man alive with knowledge of the Book of Rule. You must then set out on an epic quest to recover the fabled Book from the evil King Forge. You'll get to explore five diverse environments including icy regions, breathtaking mountains and rain-spattered cliffs. Initially, you have access to standard weapons like a rifle, machine gun and sniper rifle. In later missions, you can pick up advanced weapons from the local pub. These include the Vindaloo Rocket Launcher which emits two missiles (four once you upgrade it) that

automatically target hostiles in the area and the Gurner Personal Mortar which fires cannon-ball explosives that can destroy groups of enemies. My personal favourite is the Land Shark Gun that fires up to two sharks into the earth, who then proceed to wipe out every enemy in sight. You also have a range of secondary weapons like sticky bombs, the Topsy-Turvy bomb (which turns the world upside-down) and the Worlds Smallest Black Hole (which sucks in nearby enemies) This unique sense of humour can also be seen in the brilliant cut-scenes that play between missions. While the designers have made every effort to be innovative, they failed to create a polished game. Don't get me wrong, A&D is a LOT of fun. However, there are several nagging issues with it that could have easily been fixed. Firstly, while the cut-scenes are hilarious, they are of extremely low quality. The run-n-gun gameplay tends to get repetitive after a

while; the audio is decent, but nothing to write home about. The Artificial Intelligence is similarly hit and miss, with some enemies being too dumb or too smart. With a little extra work, this could easily have been one of the best titles of the year. As it is, A&D is a game you really, really want to like. It has pleasing visuals, decent sound effects, interesting weapons, hilarious cut-scenes and well fleshed out characters. However, it feels incomplete. A&D is fun to play, but once you're done, you won't look back. Except maybe to view one of the cut-scenes.

GAME FORCE RATING

HIGHS
Witty humour, Great weapons

LOWS
No Multiplayer, Unpolished overall

NUTSHELL
Average at best

79%