

SBK 2011

Back on track

Choosing your favourite superbike racing simulator these days can be tricky. With two major players in the market, it really is a case of "either or", but both Capcom's *MotoGP* and Black Beans' *SBK* franchises offer the player a lot. And both have improved by leaps and bounds over the last few years.

Take this latest iteration of the *SBK* franchise as an example. Here is a game that shows numerous improvements over its predecessor, and allows the player to experience a better level of motorbike racing simulation than before – from improved handling through to a more sensible camera.

But, at the same time, the developers have made some choices here that are a little odd; most notably, the assist system. Where the previous

[details]

Platforms: 360 / PC / PS3
Genre: Racing
Age restriction: 3+
DRM: Disc-based
Multiplayer: Local: None Online: 16 players
Developer: Milestone
Website: www.sbkthegame.com
Publisher: Black Bean
Distributor: Ster Kinekor Entertainment



/1/ Wet track conditions are a little less challenging than they should be.

/2/ Pulling off stunts can get you extra rewards in the SBK Tour mode.



title allowed the player to make use of assists as they saw fit, this time around the player pretty much only has three choices – low, medium and full simulation. This means that it is much more difficult for the player to tweak their experience this time around, and getting used to the new handling may be a bit more of a challenge.

The handling is far better this time around, and includes better implementation of slides, as well as a greater likelihood to come off of the bike when bumping an opponent. Speaking of opponents, the AI riders are a little more prone to making mistakes in this version, adding some more realism in that sense.

Where realism does take a bit of a dip is in wet riding. Riding a race in rain is far too similar to riding in dry conditions to be comfortable – the only real difference between the two here are braking distances, with a wet track demanding a slightly longer stopping distance.

The career mode is also largely unchanged in this version. The player

will get to create a character, using a rather limited character creation system, and will then work their way through several seasons, earning reputation and graduating up through the various racing classes.

A great new addition to the official riders and tracks is the inclusion of 17 "classics"; legendary racers who made a name for themselves in the sport. This addition really does appeal more to enthusiasts than weekend racers, but it is a very good inclusion nonetheless.

On the whole, this outing is a better experience than the previous one, but some of the tweaks and changes are a little less obvious than before. The new *SBK Tour* mode is very obvious, though, and will allow the player to participate in challenges that are a little out of the ordinary.

On the whole, it's a good addition to the franchise, and yet another step in the right direction for a challenging game genre. **NAG**

Ramjet

/ PLUS / Improvements / Classic riders
/ MINUS / Assist tweaking / Wet conditions

A GOOD ADDITION TO THE SERIES, YET NOT WITHOUT ITS PROBLEMS.

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NAG



PS Vita

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BATTLEFIELD 3

Two words, Hands-on multiplayer! Or is that three words?

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