

ARMA: GOLD EDITION

More map pack than expansion pack

PUBLISHER: Atari DEVELOPER: Bohemia Interactive GENRE: Tactical First-Person Shooter AVAILABILITY: Retail ESRB RATING: Mature
MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: 2.5GHz CPU, 512MB RAM, 6GB hard drive space, 128MB videocard MULTIPLAYER: 2-40 players VERSION REVIEWED: Near-Final Reviewable

REVIEW

 **A grenade launcher.** That's the only new weapon you get in *Queen's Gambit*, the expansion included in the *Gold Edition* of small-squad tactical shooter *ArmA: Armed Assault*. And new vehicles? A pickup truck with a machine gun strapped to it and a Hummer limousine. I don't know about you, but when I watch *Black Hawk Down*, the first thing I think is, "You know what this realistic depiction of modern warfare is sorely lacking? Marines driving luxury SUVs." Considering that *ArmA's* many resourceful modders already created several new weapons and vehicles on their own, developer Bohemia Interactive's got some 'splainin' to do with the paltry offering they've got here. The only really worthwhile goods in this expansion: its two single-player campaigns.

"Rahmadi Conflict" winds up the story from the original *ArmA* in three lengthy, slow-paced missions while "Royal Flush" follows a team of hired guns as they handle seven smaller, more action-packed sorties.

Neither campaign does anything particularly innovative. The same blocky textures and horrible voice acting continually break the illusion that you're in a "real" firefight, while the A.I. carries on its Oscar-worthy stint in the role of Chief Sitting Duck throughout the game.


Sure, it's not all bad: Co-op multiplayer remains a major strong suit, the soundtrack rocks socks, and the new level editor will doubtless spur the robust mod community on to even greater feats of unpaid labor. But when we're asked to shell out 30 bucks for something a bunch of 16-year-olds could've designed for free, we've lost the gambit.


• Eric Neigher



• Here, my A.I. ally lies down in the open with a large bush directly in his line of fire. With friends like these....

VERDICT

 New multiplayer maps are great; level editor; highly realistic depiction of combat.

 Graphics still crappy; acting still crappy; level design even crappier.

C

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