

GameSpy Battlefield 2 Interview

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GameSpy: Will Battlefield 2 retain the same core gameplay as the previous Battlefield titles, i.e. "Conquest" capture-and-hold? What can you tell us about the new Commander mode?

Scott Evans: Our goal with BF2 is to deliver a mix of what people loved about previous BF titles, what they felt should be improved, and a large injection of completely new features and technology. Conquest mode is one of those features that people really loved that will be carried forward to BF2. The Commander mode is an example of a new feature that expands on the Battlefield experience. The battlefield commander can play the battlefield experience in a different way ... he has the ability to see the game map top down and do such things as issue orders to squads, call in artillery strikes, order satellite sweeps, and communicate with his forces via VOIP. All of these activities support a greater set of teamplay activities that players can engage in. The player with the highest rank can be the commander, or teams can decide who will be the commander before the round starts.

GameSpy: How will the three different "sides" differ in terms of weaponry and vehicles? Will players be able to vote on which two sides play a particular map, or will each setting have two specific sides attached to it?

Scott Evans: Each side will bring military hardware to the battle appropriate to their nationality. For example, the Chinese forces have a really cool mix of Soviet and homebrew technology that much of the world knows nothing about. Naturally, each side will have a rock-paper-scissors balance relationship to one another, which is a Battlefield franchise value.

GameSpy: Will the "U.S." side consist of strictly American forces, or will other allies be included? Will there be several subsets of the U.S. armed forces included (Delta Force, Marines, etc)?

Scott Evans: BF2 will be focused on the soldiers and equipment of the U.S. Marines. Expansion packs and post-release content downloads (which Battlefield is famous for) provide the opportunity to include a wide variety of armed forces and their respective equipment.

GameSpy: What kinds of technical advancements is the team looking to make with the new engine? Are there any specific new technologies or new video cards you are looking to take advantage of?

Scott Evans: Battlefield 2 is powered by a completely new and cutting edge engine. It simply looks amazing. The new engine brings the battlefield to life like never before with dynamic lighting effects, high detail multi-texturing processes, greater ambient physics modeling, material penetration properties, normal mapping, ragdoll physics, etc., etc. We'll be releasing screen shoots soon to show off the new engine. Also new to BF2 is a high performance audio engine. The audio team at DICE is doing outstanding job with their work. When I play BF2 I feel the urge to actually duck when I'm in a firefight. Those guys are intent on bringing the battlefield to life with a rich and detailed audio experience and they are delivering in spades. We'll also be innovating on the number of players supported at any one time in the battlefield. More details on that to come.

GameSpy: We've heard that Battlefield 2 will feature scalable maps that change size according to the number of players. Can you elaborate on this?

Scott Evans: That's correct. Ever joined a Gazala server to find 16 people running around looking for action? As a server option, the maps in BF2 will dynamically expand and contract to concentrate the players and vehicles to help ensure the action is always hot.

GameSpy: How similar / different will Battlefield 2 be from the console games currently in development (Battlefield: Modern Combat)? Will there be any compatibility between the different platforms?

Scott Evans: The games are completely separate and are being built by two different teams within DICE in different locations. Both are set in the modern era and employ the gameplay principles that made Battlefield the Game of the Year but that's about where the similarities end. Each product uses different equipment lists, soldier types, and maps. Because we believe that Battlefield: Modern Combat will revolutionize online play for console players in the same way Battlefield 1942 did for PC players, our philosophy was to think of these games as two separate, full blown productions aimed at the highest possible result.

GameSpy: Are there any plans to added improved single-player support in Battlefield 2 over the bots from previous releases?

Scott Evans: Yes. But that's all I will say right now

GameSpy: There have been some criticisms leveled at Battlefield Vietnam, that it's simply too controversial and recent a conflict to be making much videogames about. Considering today's political climate, how would you respond to similar criticisms directed at a title that feature the U.S. and a Middle East coalition as opposing sides?

Scott Evans: The majority of the feedback on Battlefield Vietnam has been very positive. The overall feedback has been that DICE and EA treated the topic with respect. It's important to remember that Battlefield is politically neutral. We create a balanced battlefield and allow players to go online and play against each other. We'll do our best to capture the feel of the location and era as we did in BFV and will do in BF2, but that's as far as we need to go to deliver a great experience. It's also important to remember that there are other theatres of conflict within Battlefield 2. It's not just a game about the U.S. versus a Middle Eastern coalition.

GameSpy: Is there any target release date for Battlefield 2? Would you expect this to make 2004, or is a 2005 release more likely?

Scott Evans: Look for Battlefield 2 in the Spring of 2005.

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