

## Video Game Review: ‘Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit’ Connects Racing Fans

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on December 1, 2010 - 5:45pm

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CHICAGO – After a few missteps, EA has handed the development reins for the new “Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit” to Criterion Games, the company who hit racing gold with the great “Burnout Paradise” and they’ve delivered an addictive, expertly-designed game that should captivate car fans not entrenched in “Gran Turismo 5” through the holiday season and beyond.



Video Game Rating: **4.0/5.0**

With the number of racing games on the market, how does a developer release a title that feels fresh? After players have sped through “Split/Second,” “Blur,” and even “ModNation Racers,” what could “Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit” offer? Despite having dozens of cars, it’s not going to match the notorious depth of “Gran Turismo 5,” and so the developers of “Hot Pursuit” have crafted a game that, like “Burnout Paradise” focuses more on fun than reality. And it encourages the player to share their fun with friends.



Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit

*Photo credit: EA*

“Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit” is built around a feature called the Autolog, in which your friends drive your gameplay experience. Think of it like Facebook for your racing game. Friends can post challenges, times for you to beat, and even photos of their greatest achievements. The Autolog not only provides sharing opportunities but pushes you and your friends to the same challenges. In other words, if your friends are participating in a certain part of the game, you will be encouraged to as well. It’s fascinating to watch how developers are trying to blend the sharing aspects of social media with the world of video games and this is one of the most accomplished attempts to date.



Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit

Photo credit: EA

Of course, what if you have no friends who like to race? Naturally, “Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit” needs to play well on its own. And it does. The career portion of the game follows two tracks, that of a high-speed racer and a police officer who patrols the streets on which the drag races take place. You alternate from trying to outrun the cops to trying to catch the bad guys. And both sections of the game naturally feature deep points systems that allow for new cars, races, etc. to be unlocked. Cool cars in the game include the Lamborghini Reventon, Pagani Zonda Cinque, and Porsche Boxter Spyder.

The success of a game like “Hot Pursuit” for this player comes down to control. I need to feel the weight of the car around a tough corner but no one likes a game that feels too clunky. Criterion has found a perfect balance with “Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit.” The best racing games are easy to learn and tough to master and that’s exactly what you’ll think about “Hot Pursuit.” You’ll likely scorch the competition in the first few events but it will take practice to get the gold as the game moves along.

“Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit” does fall into a bit of repetition. Too many of the tracks look and feel nearly identical and while the police weapons like EMP and spike strips add a nice variety to the title, they get old themselves. I’m not that deep into cars that just unlocking a new ride can keep a game fresh for me. After awhile I longed for a new landscape more than a new automobile.

Racing games can be a tough nut to crack for a critic. Like getting behind the wheel, it’s more about feel than anything else. You know when you test drive a car if it feels right or not. “Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit” feels right.

*‘Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit’ was developed by Criterion Games and released by EA. It is rated E (Everyone). The version reviewed was for the PS3, but the title is also available for the XBox 360, PC, and Nintendo Wii. It was released on November 16th, 2010.*



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