

Video Game Review: 'Borderlands 2: Sir Hammerlock's Big Game Hunt' is Old Dog with New Tricks

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on January 15, 2013 - 11:13am

- [2K Games](#) [2]
- [Borderlands 2](#) [3]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [4]
- [Paul Meekin](#) [5]
- [PC](#) [6]
- [PlayStation 3](#) [7]
- [PS3](#) [8]
- [Sir Hammerlock's Big Game Hunt](#) [9]
- [Video Game Review](#) [10]
- [Xbox 360](#) [11]

CHICAGO – The odds are if you own a “Borderlands 2” Season Pass, or are a member of its “Premiere Club” you’re very likely very pleased at the constant stream of high quality content being delivered to your Xbox 360. First we had “Captain Scarlet and Her Pirate Captain’s Booty” - a sweeping romp through an ocean of sand populated by pirates, sandworms, two entertaining Johnny Depp homages, new weapons, new loot, and a suitably epic final boss and a reward for beating him that was a literal pyramid of high quality treasure. Then we had the roided up “Mr. Torgue’s Campaign of Carnage” with a “Macho Man” Randy Savage-esque gun manufacturer hilariously MC-ing the proceedings that included a brutal tournament to the death, a mysterious new vault, an entirely new currency (Torgue Tokens), and (yet again) new weapons, and new loot. Couple that with the Mechromancer class (and her adorable golem friend), and I think it’s safe to say 2K games and Gearbox Software has done right by their hardcore fans.



But the over the top, mushroom-trip-on-acid, RPG-meets-FPS, “Borderlands 2” is anything but safe, and it’s released yet another expansion; “Sir Hammerlock’s Big Game Hunt” featuring everyone’s favorite possibly gay, mostly-robot Safariman, Sir Hammerlock. While not as...eccentric as Captain Scarlett, or macho as Mr. Torque, Hammerlock is a serviceable companion throughout the content, and is full of the kind of quips and jokes typically associated with “Borderlands 2” sense of humor.

Humor is a highlight of the entirety of the “Borderlands 2” experience, and is absolutely fundamental to the success of its DLC. If Gearbox released DLC content updates without the same creative energy with which they gave us the chaotically ribald Claptrap or the diabolically satanic Handsome Jack, they would have been D.O.A. simply because after 20-30 hours with the main game, the repetitive-by-design mechanics of “Borderlands 2” start to feel a bit worn.



Borderlands 2: Sir Hammerlock's Big Game Hunt

Photo credit: 2K Games

“Borderlands 2”’s RPG elements, colorful-but-dystopic-setting, loot gathering, and (again) humor, conceals a fairly repetitive-but-enjoyable

"Halo"-esque wide-open battlefield style gameplay engine pretty well - but - save for some vehicle sections, it's **all** the game does. This is great for gamers who consider themselves FPS fanboys, the type who enjoy this sort of thing, as well as for less trigger-happy gamers who are in it for the RPG and Loot, and enjoy games like "Diablo" or "World of Warcraft" and are used to fighting mob after mob after mob with the hopes of acquiring some shiny trinket that boosts their stats. While those two groups very likely make up a significant portion of "Borderlands 2"'s audience, personally I belong to a third group of gamers with relatively short attention spans that want to be entertained in a variety of ways - which is ultimately why humor is so important here. While the game may occasionally become repetitive the characterization and writing ensures it's never boring.



Borderlands 2: Sir Hammerlock's Big Game Hunt

Photo credit: 2K Games

A unique setting doesn't hurt either. "Sir Hammerlock's Big Game Hunt" takes you deep into a jungle environment, where you'll tackle a slew of interesting and fantastical creatures, including a particularly fearsome beast called "The Drifter," whose creepy design will happily remind you of "War Of The Worlds", "Half Life 2," and 2012's "Dishonored" before it mauls you to death. The jungle theme is prevalent throughout the content; you'll hang with Sir Hammerlock in a tropical tree-top bungalow, wade through swamps and omnipresent fog, all the while trying **not** to hum "Ride of The Valkyries" or ponder what the hell gaming's sudden obsession with "Heart Of Darkness" is all about, while hopping into your shiny new water-hovering, flame-thrower equipped fan boat.

Also new is a whole group of enemies that challenge you to out-think and out-gun them. The aforementioned Drifters (who appeared in "Borderlands" the first) require you to flank around their lanky legs and armored body, and if you'll pardon the parlance, put the boots (well, bullets), to their illuminated neon poop shoot. You'll also come across a variety of different Witch Doctors who have a whole slew of unique abilities, including the ability to buff their cohorts and turn invisible and teleport around the map. It's this kind of content that makes a DLC worthwhile - it's easy to have new enemies that you kill like the old enemies, but were stronger or had more HP, but attention was given to making sure that the new baddies had to be combated in new ways, and it breathes fresh air into a "BL2" experience that, as mentioned above, can occasionally feel a little stuffy.



Borderlands 2: Sir Hammerlock's Big Game Hunt

Photo credit: 2K Games

And unless you're an RPG/FPS warrior, you may very well feel stuffy by the time you're able to competently tackle Hammerlock's hunt. The first enemy you encounter hovers around level 30, and the storyline assumed you've felled Handsome Jack in the main campaign. It's cool in the sense that it ties up loose ends (and sets up new ones), but if you're eager to try out a new class, or simply haven't played online enough to get EXP bonuses, you'll have to go through hours and hours and hours of grinding to be a high enough level to endure the jungle and its dangerous inhabitants.

Yet again wowing with writing, atmosphere, and a few new tricks, I was pleasantly surprised by " Sir Hammerlock's Big Game Hunt". The quality of the writing is superb, the new toys and secrets will keep even the most hardcore "Borderlands 2" fan entertained, there's a raid

boss for high-level co-op missions, and the enemies are dastardly enough to make everyone old, feel new again.

“Borderlands 2: Sir Hammerlock’s Big Game Hunt” was released by 2K Games on January 15, 2013. The version reviewed was for the Xbox 360 but the title is also available for the PS3 and PC.



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