

Video Game Review: ‘Capcom Arcade Cabinet Pack 1’ is Over Before it Starts

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on March 13, 2013 - 10:50am

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CHICAGO – In theory, retro-game re-releases for modern consoles are great. Between upgrades in hardware architecture and OS, format changes from cartridges, to CDs, to DVDs, to digital, and, sadly, the decay of the American arcade, the ability for gamers with an eye towards history to sit back and enjoy a classic is somewhat tricky these days. The unique problem of retro gaming in particular is that, unlike movies, there isn’t really a way to stumble across a classic on Friday night while channel surfing, like you can with movies and television. How many people have wandered into the basic cable wilds at 1:17am and discovered the magic of “Casino” on TNT, or came in about a quarter of the way through “The Shawshank Redemption” on TBS, becoming amazed by movies they would have otherwise never sought out, or known to exist? Simply put, gaming doesn’t have syndication.



So when you try to extract money from gamers for old, and shallow (by today’s standard) games, you better do it right. Capcom attempts this via its new “Capcom Arcade Cabinet” platform, which is available on XBLA for \$4.99. The first in a series of content packs, this release features the vertically-scrolling airplane shoot em’ up classic “1943: The Battle Of Midway”, “Black Tiger,” which is a deceptively deep platformer with some quality RPG elements, and the disappointingly lacking in superheroes, top-down beat-em-up “Avengers”.



Capcom Arcade Cabinet 1
Photo credit: Capcom

As far as first impressions go, this is sort of like showing up for junior Prom in jorts. I like Capcom; a lot, in fact. In terms of game developers, they’re sort of like that crazy uncle who gives you fireworks for your fifth birthday and lets you shoot them off from one of his (many) empty beer bottles. They have a lot of good ideas, a lot of bad ones, and occasionally stumble across gold simply because they appear to have no fear. Really, can you think of any other game studio that would put together “Dead Rising” in the chaotically beautiful way that they did? This is the studio that gave us “Marvel Vs. Capcom”, “Marvel Vs. Street Fighter”, “Megaman Power Battles”, “Dark Stalkers”, “Power Stone”, and the first “Alien Vs. Predator” game, all of which would have been *far* better choices than what’s presented here.



Capcom Arcade Cabinet 1

Photo credit: Capcom

Of the three games available in the first pack, the only one that's really worth any sort of time investment is "Black Tiger", which is a side-scrolling hack 'n slash platformer. You're a barbarian dude fighting against evil wizards, ogres, and warriors, and along the way amass treasure, weapon upgrades, and gold to upgrade your armor and buy extra lives. Its graphical presentation is about par for the course of the mid-to-late 1980s, but it's colorful and charming in a nostalgic sense - and may evoke feelings of other classics like "Golden Axe" for example. One for one.

1987's "1943: The Battle Of Midway" is a top-down shooter where you pilot a plane against a seemingly insurmountable onslaught of enemy planes, battleships, and gunfire. While quality in the sense that if you enjoy the top-down shoot-em-up genre, this is a game that was primarily designed to eat your quarters and frustrate you into popping more of them in. Like most arcade re-releases, a lot of fun factor is lost once you're devoid of the arcade atmosphere. The XBLA re-release of "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" suffered this same problem. Beating Shredder in that game isn't fun because you technically have unlimited lives, so there's no point in trying to do well. Here, it's the same thing. You deal with increasingly difficult bullet hell, and die, and respawn, and die, and respawn, and eventually you feel like a nincompoop for having wasted your time. One for two.



Capcom Arcade Cabinet 1

Photo credit: Capcom

The last available game is "Avengers". A top-down brawler. Yes. Top-down brawler, probably the worst idea since someone decided to label the Virtual Boy "Portable". In "Avengers" you take control of Ryu or Ko, and fight your way through the mean streets of (I'm not kidding here) Paradise City as you attempt to rescue six girls from the evil clutches of Geshita - who probably has a new LP featuring Rihanna dropping next week. Anyway, this game is truly bizarre, as you're treated to the tops of heads, protruding hands and feet, and just a really strange perspective that makes everything look, well, weird. Also a good deal of the enemies kind of look like Hulk Hogan wearing The Flash's super hero costume. Graphically the game is colorful and distinct, but the top-down perspective does not suit brawling at all, and again, due to a lack of challenge thanks to infinite lives, you'll find yourself bored quickly of your Paradise City "Avengers" adventure. One for three.

So Capcom's arcade cabinet goes a baffling 1 for 3. Don't get me wrong, I have no problem with Capcom, of all studios, failing terrifically, or just making incredibly bizarre choices. it's fun to see what crazy stuff they'll come with next, but here, it's like they didn't even bother. There's no fire or energy or fun or pizazz in *any* of these games. sure, "1942" is technically a classic, but so is the first "Scar Face" and I don't think a lot of people are clamouring to buy that on blu-ray now, are they? "Black Tiger" is a quality adventure mostly because it feels the least "arcadey" of the three, and features some actual depth. And "Avengers" well, "Avengers" is special, ain't she?

So, after doing some quick math, if you play each of these three available games 6.66 times, you'll technically be getting your money's worth, but I'm telling ya, it's not here. If you're looking to get your Arcade gaming fix, let me recommend the "Atari's Greatest Hits" on Mobile Devices. for 9.99 you're getting 100 games, including classics like "Missile Command", "Centipede", "Warlords", "Tempest", and "Tron".

Oh, and by the way, if you want, you can pay by the quarter.

“Capcom Arcade Cabinet” is available on XBox Live Arcade for \$4.99.



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