

## Video Game Review: ‘Heroes Over Europe’ Frustrates More Than Flies

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on October 13, 2009 - 11:21pm

- [Brian Tallerico](#) [2]
- [Heroes Over Europe](#) [3]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [4]
- [PlayStation 3](#) [5]
- [PS3](#) [6]
- [Transmission Games](#) [7]
- [Ubisoft](#) [8]
- [Video Game Review](#) [9]
- [Xbox 360](#) [10]

CHICAGO – The concept of Ubisoft’s “Heroes Over Europe” immediately intrigued this player, one who has grown a bit weary of the onslaught of sports and shooter titles this season. Maybe this game would offer a unique alternative, recreating the experience of WWII over London, Berlin, the French Alps, and more. Sadly, far too many gameplay issues keep this plane grounded.

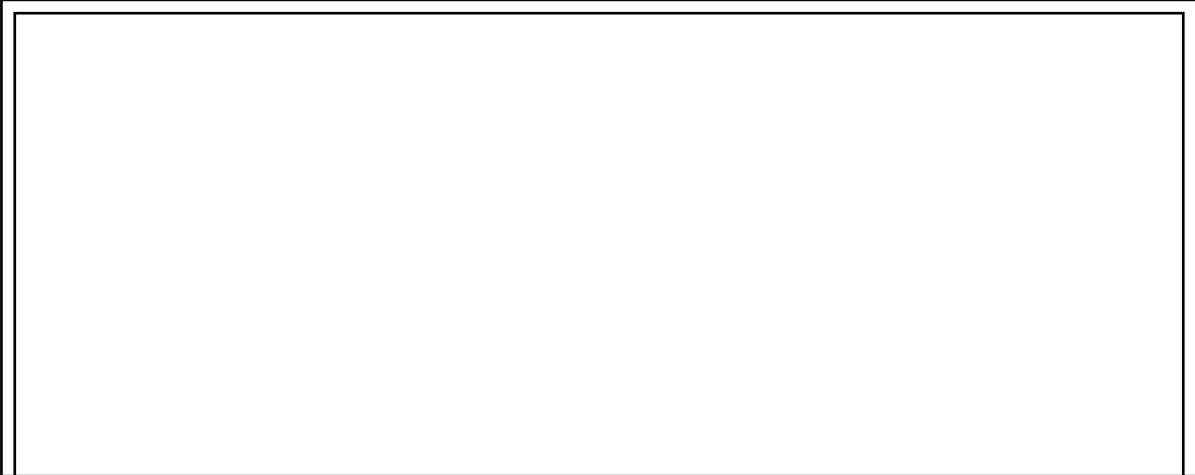


“Heroes Over Europe” follows three heroic pilots from the United States, England, and New Zealand through some of the most decisive air battles of the war against Hitler’s Luftwaffe fighter squadrons. The title is remarkably easy to pick up and play for a flight simulation game, but just because it’s easy to get behind the wheel and get this title airborne doesn’t mean you won’t hit some turbulence along the way.



Heroes Over Europe  
Photo credit: Ubisoft

“Europe” boasts 40 authentic planes from WWII: English, German, or American (although they pretty much all feel the same behind the wheel). Graphically, the plane detail and design is one of the best things about the game and WWII historians will be the most forgiving of the title’s faults. In other words, if you’re not a big flight sim or history buff, this isn’t a title that’s going to convert you and I can’t really lay claim to being either. I often find flight sims dull and have been simply exhausted with the glut of WWII gaming titles out there.





Heroes Over Europe

Photo credit: Ubisoft

"HOE" features a fourteen-mission campaign that plays largely like a hybrid between a very loyal flight sim and something more arcade-based. Chapter images set up missions set during the European theatre of the war and the flow to the storytelling of the game is actually pretty accomplished. The player jumps around chronologically to different air battles, but the sense of depth to the graphics is impressive. You will sometimes feel like you're in the skies over Berlin. You just may wish you were on the ground.

The gameplay is relatively predictable - shoot planes out of the sky, bomb convoys on the ground, take out a few ships at sea, and so on and so on. But it all gets shockingly repetitive. I felt like "Heroes Over Europe" might work as a few well-designed side missions in a more complete game or even as a downloadable game a la the superior "Battlefield 1943," of which I am endlessly addicted, but it's simply not meaty enough to stand on its own.

Almost as if the developers of "Heroes Over Europe" knew that the basic structure of the gameplay and its storytelling would get repetitive, they've thrown in a few bells and whistles that are actually more annoying and distracting than helpful. Take for example the "Ace Kill". If you trail an enemy plane long enough, you'll build up a gauge that allows for a single shot kill with a zoomed in camera. Take out the engine, the pilot, etc. Why is there what is essentially a sniper mechanic in a flight sim game? If it was more completely designed and incorporated into the rest of the title it might have worked, but it seems ill-conceived and incongruous with the overall experience.

Overall, "Heroes Over Europe" is certainly not an awful title. It does enough things right to possibly even warrant a recommendation for a rental, but buyers should beware that it does more than enough things wrong that you could be unhappy paying full price. It's an easy title to play in hour one, but a hard one to still want to be playing in hour four, five, or six. Only hardcore flying or WWII gamers should take this trip.

*'Heroes Over Europe' was released by Ubisoft and developed by Transmission Studios. It is rated T (Teen). The version reviewed was for the PS3, but the title is also available for the XBox 360. It was released on September 15th, 2009.*



[11]

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