Over the last generation of gaming, one genre has popped up that defies all logic and continues to churn out titles. It's the movie-licensed dancing and music genre. You would think the industry would have learned its lesson with the sub-par Alvin and the Chipmunks music game based on a movie that itself was based on a classic cartoon. But thinking isn't something that happens a lot in the games industry. That's been proven by Ubisoft's The Smurfs: Dance Party for the Nintendo Wii – a game that's 25% cute, 25% sickening and 50% cash-in.

Despite lackluster reviews of the movie, there's already a sequel being planned. Taste is something that has never really dictated what gets made. This dancing game based on the movie will entertain just as many adults as the cinematic release did. That's to say probably very few. The music selection in The Smurfs: Dance Party is supposed to be a collection of popular hits done with "smurfy" overtones. There are a few tunes that go unedited, but they are few and far between. The popular songs cover various decades. It's hard to understand why a game targeted at 10 year olds contains tracks from Whitney Houston in the 1980s.

Despite this dancing game being made by the same publisher who released the strangely addictive Just Dance series of games for the Wii, don't expect the same responsiveness or

amusement here. The mechanics in this rushed movie tie-in seem to be a little off. There is no challenge or fun to be had here with the Smurfs. The Just Dance series kept me and my friends playing to master the more challenging moves and beat one another's score. In this Smurfs version, the challenge is gone and replaced with overly simple moves that don't even match the player's movements. Even though the game's mechanics feel somewhat broken, you'd have to walk away from the game for an entire song to fail it.

The graphics are actually pretty nice. The Smurfs animations are all well done and fluid. There is little to no choppiness on screen with the rendered characters matching their movie counterparts pretty closely. It would have been nice if they responded to your movements however. The flashy interface is nice, but all the prettiness on screen can't compensate for the horrible soundtrack. You'd have to be a middle-aged woman to enjoy any of the music and even they'll have a hard time enjoying the "smurfafied" tracks.

Honestly, The Smurfs: Dance Party had the makings of a sleeper hit for the simple fact that it was a dance game being made by the people who brought us Just Dance and Just Dance 2. The lineage means nothing here though because this game couldn't be farther from its successful "smurfless" cousins. Old dance hits that won't appeal to the target audience have become even worse with a touch of Smurf in the edited lyrics. If you're looking for another Just Dance game, you might want to keep looking.

Graphics

7.0

Nice animations and a flashy and clean interface are the only good things.

Audio

2.0

A mishmash of old popular songs that have been ruined by Smurfs.

Single Player

2.5

Unresponsive game mechanics leaves this game falling flat.

Multiplayer

4.0

The only fun thing about this game is looking silly with friends.

Replay

2.0

Unlike the Just Dance games, I had no want to pick this game back up.

Overall

3.0

Smurfs plus dancing equals a dud. This game is confirmation of that.

{gallery}screenshots/Ubisoft/TheSmurfsDanceParty{/gallery}