

Addition provides detailed continuation of game saga

By Shawn Knepper
Staff reporter

Last year, I reviewed “Kingdom Hearts III” and I mentioned how it’s far from perfect. It serves very well as the final installment of an overarching saga while setting up for the future of the series. However, I did not mention the possibility of additional content that expands more of the base game and what it would do.

This has been a tradition in Kingdom Hearts games in the terms of “Final Mix.” The “Final Mix” is the “director’s cut” of the game that was exclusive in Japan until it finally released worldwide in 2013. It included extra bosses, cut scenes, items and more.

Last June, it was announced that “Kingdom Hearts III: Re.Mind” will expand more of the game’s story and plenty of content for us thirsty after beating the game. This DLC includes an additional scenario, a “limit” episode with new bosses and a secret episode with a secret boss that ties into what the franchise will move into.

This article will contain spoilers for both the ending of the base game and all of the DLC content for “Re.Mind.”

First, the additional scenario, “Re.Mind” takes place both during and after the main climax of the game. It explores Sora’s attempt to save Kairi after being slain by Master Xehanort, but Sora relives the events of the final battle of the Seven Guardians and 13 Darkness while learning more revelations.

This is the meat of the DLC that everyone will enjoy. This scenario brings in the spotlight of characters we get to spend more time to play, such as Riku, Aqua, Roxas and Kairi.

The scenario is about five hours in total, and six if you really spend more time in exploring the final world that was not possible in the base game. Plus, a free update was released alongside the DLC which included fixed and added cut scenes, a spiked difficulty setting based on the “Heaven/Hell” mode from “Devil May Cry,” two extra keyblades and a brand new photo mode that gives the user

creative freedom with all models and settings.

The next portion is the “Limit Episode” which takes place after the main game and the “Re.Mind” scenario.

After Sora saves Kairi, he vanishes, leading Riku to find Soar’s whereabouts by visiting long awaited friends. Testsuya Nomura, director of the “Kingdom Hearts” series, stated that the Final Fantasy characters had no involvement in the final clash, but here, characters like Squall Leonheart, “Final Fantasy VIII,” Yuffie, Cid and Aerith, “Final Fantasy VII” all make a comeback to help Riku in finding Sora.

The limit cut is basically like “Kingdom Hearts II’s” Cavern of Remembrance, in which you can fight beefed-up versions of all Organization XIII members and get your chaps slapped because these bosses do require you to think beyond pressing X to win. Believe me, it took a good three hours to finish them all.

While the “Final Fantasy” characters still feel like they’ve been

put into the sidelines and the Cloud vs. Sephiroth side story being put on hold since 2006, it’s great to see them again and setting up for better rolls in the next installment.

Next comes the secret episode. If you remember before entering the “Toy Story,” there was a made-up trailer of a game called “Verum Rex,” in which Rex the dinosaur confused Sora for being Yozora.

Well, it gets wild.

We see Sora in The Final World where he meets Yozora and the two engage in a battle on top of the 109 Building in what appears to be the Shibuya district in Tokyo. Depending on if you defeat him, the game concludes with Sora back to where he started, waiting for his friends to find him and Yozora waking up in a scene that harkens back to a canceled project.

“Versus XIII” was meant to be Normura’s first time directing a “Final Fantasy” game while borrowing gameplay elements from “Kingdom Hearts” and telling a darker story that mirrors Shake-

peare’s “Romeo and Juliet.”

However, with multiple delays due to a shift in next-generation consoles and Nomura focusing on continuing the “Kingdom Hearts” franchise, “Final Fantasy Versus XIII” was canceled and Nomura was forced out of the project to work on “Kingdom Hearts III,” but the secret episode alludes to Nomura’s project, meaning the spirit of “Versus XIII” will live on the future of “Kingdom Hearts.”

Final verdict: The DLC may be a letdown and a cash grab, but it expands and improves the game’s final moments while giving hints and details of where “Kingdom Hearts” will move forward. It also revives Nomura’s vision of “Final Fantasy Versus XIII.”

The DLC is available now for PS4, while Xbox One users will have to wait later in February. With that, I give “Kingdom Hearts III: Re.Mind” an 8 out of 10.

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New Netflix fantasy adaptation commands audience’s attention

By Drake Vittitow
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When I heard the news that there was going to be a television adaptation of “The Witcher” book series, I was terrified.

Not only was this series being announced right after the disaster that was the final season of “Game of Thrones,” but I thought it impossible for there to be a quality television series that captures the magic of not only the best-selling book series, but the critically acclaimed game series as well.

Thankfully, I was proven wrong.

“The Witcher” follows the story of Geralt, a monster hunter, as he embarks on adventures with his horse, Roach, his bard, Jaskier, Yennefer, a sorceress of the Lodge who comes from humbled and horrible beginnings, to search for beauty and power, and Cirilla, the granddaughter of Queen Calanthe of Cintra and a princess in her own right.



Sound confusing?

People not familiar with the books or games going into this series blind will struggle to follow with the nonlinear storyline. There are so many terms and locations that get thrown out in the first couple of episodes that it may be a turn-off for some people.

To those people, I say pay attention and carry on, because the payoff is worth it.

Since the story is nonlinear, there is a lot of timeline-hopping in each episode. For example, Geralt has a mutation in his body that makes him live significantly

longer than any normal human.

This means that when there is a scene that jumps from Geralt to Cirilla, there might be hundreds of years dividing the two scenes. I know the timeline jumping is not the most appealing feature to any medium, but having to pay attention to every scene and every piece of dialogue is satisfying when it is all said and done.

Having to do your homework and working for your food is ultimately better than watching the same old linear storytelling that packs no surprises.

Henry Cavill, Man of Steel, was born to play Geralt. When he steps into this role, he transforms it in a way that he never could while being Superman or any other character he has ever been.

He just gets Geralt, whether it be his deadpan humor or his swordplay – yes, he did his own stunts – Cavill has never and will never be as close to a character as he is with Geralt. This is due, in part, to his love of the char-

acter before the show was even greenlighted.

Cavill is a big fan of the books and games and actively sought out the role with his casting agency when the decision of who was going to play the monster hunter would be. So, you can say that Geralt will always be in a perfect place if Cavill is at the helm.

I was shocked when reading some initial reviews for this series. An “Entertainment Weekly” reviewer simply watched a couple of episodes before turning a cold shoulder to the series and giving it a horrible review.

As a lover of the small and silver screen, I think it is rubbish that a reviewer would dare to review a piece without completely finishing the product.

As a fellow reviewer, I believe that the job of a reviewer is to inform the people of what to watch and what not to watch. How can I believe an ounce of what you are saying if you do not give me the entire truth?

Just because you do not find something to your liking does not mean you can just give up on the spot. That is not only doing a disservice to the people who read your reviews, but it is also doing a disservice to the journalism world in general.

So, I implore you to push out all the negative things that you have heard about this show from people who didn’t even watch the damn thing, ignore the comparisons from “Game of Thrones” blowhards and sit back and enjoy this fresh fantasy series, even if it means you have to squint a little harder and listen a little more attentively to completely understand the premise. It has work to do to set the standard that the other mediums achieved, but “The Witcher” is a promising series that will have you begging for more after the final credits roll.

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