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## WWE 2K20 Review: Don't try this at home

By [JOHN POWELL](#) - SLAM! Wrestling



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Even digital Brock Lesnar is not happy about WWE 2K20.

Decisions. Decisions. WWE 2K20 is full of bad development, production decisions.

The first major mistake by 2K Games was not retaining Yuke's to continue developing the franchise.

Starting with WWF SmackDown! in 2000, Yuke's has been the brains behind the WWE games first for the defunct THQ brand and then for 2K Sports beginning with WWE 2K14 in 2013.

Over the years, Yuke's has put out some of the best wrestling games ever created including last year's WWE 2K19. When Yuke's and 2K parted ways, that job was given to Visual Concepts, a development studio owned by 2K.

Yuke's has decided to strike out on their own and create their own wrestling game.



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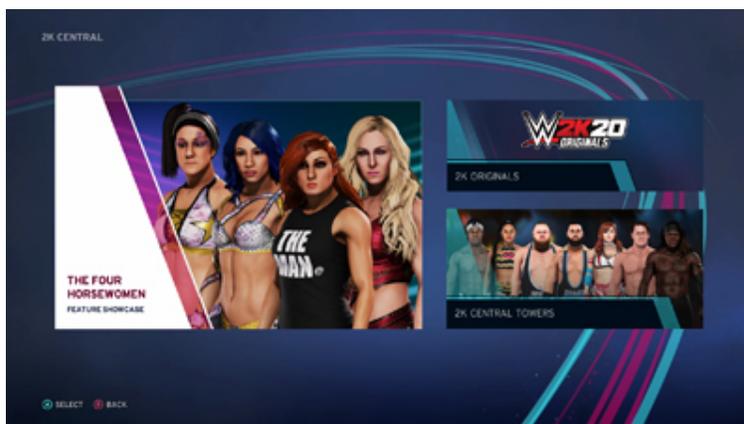


Yuke's not being the architects any longer certainly shows with this year's release which is cluttered with issues. Issues that 2K is promising will be addressed with an upcoming patch.

There are slightly annoying things like name plates appearing over the wrong players, the juke box taking over the audio during the MyCareer campaign, cut-scene inconsistencies, errors in the in-ring commentary, character models floating around during customization and gear not fitting properly, which all happened to me during my playthrough.

Although they should not exist in the final copy, these errors can be overlooked and forgiven.

Then there are the missteps that spoil the gameplay experience. The occasional hit detection, targeting issues can cause you to lose your advantage or even lose a match. I am talking about strikes, running or ranged attacks which should be completely successful, missing. The worst example for me was swinging at a prone rival with a steel chair and not connecting ever no matter where I moved.



The rope shenanigans wreak havoc in matches too. Not all the time, but here and there, the ropes physics will go haywire causing wrestlers to be caught in them as if Doctor Octopus has acquired a new set of arms. If you are lucky, the glitch will be brief and things will go back to normal. If you unlucky, the entire match will break as if the arena all of a sudden became part of the Upside Down.

I have also had MyCareer mode crash, the game flip back and play the previous cut-scene when all I did was restart a match. The list goes on and on.

While they don't spoil the game itself, the PS2 level of graphics including hair that moves as one big clump, faces that look like those you would see on wax figures of WWE personalities at Madame Tussauds and objects which should be flexible like pieces of paper and clothing have no give at all, tarnish the experience too.

Comparing last year's My Career mode and the 2k Showcase to 2k20's, is like taking in a backyard wrestling promotion run by layabouts with no training at all and then watching a WWE pay-per-view live. There is no comparison.

2k Showcase spotlights the rise of the Four Horsewomen. Since I would rather watch Asuka, Kairi Sane, Natalya, Ember Moon, Sonya Deville, Bianca Belair, Io Shirai, Mia Yim or Shayna Baszler than those four clowns, it just isn't the theme for me. Charlotte is only as good as the talent she is in the ring with. Sasha Banks utilizes the same handful of moves and perpetually injured. Becky Lynch is even more limited than Banks and to top it all off oversells and overacts to everything. Bayley is the best technical wrestler of the bunch; however, she cannot cut a convincing promo. They are all bland and emotionless. She should just become ECW Taz, be a badass with a hoodie and towel over her head who just kicks ass and leaves without saying much because she is a prize fighter not a performer.

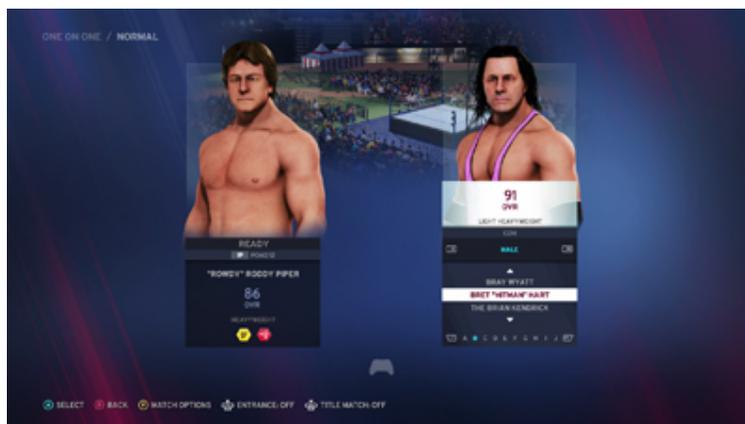


The Four Horsewomen Showcase is burdened by very long matches that are nothing more than a series of necessary, unavoidable objectives. Whatever happened to just beating an opponent and moving onto the next match in the timeline? Playing through this Showcase is too much of a chore especially if you lose a match, fail an objective and are faced with having to replay and repeat all those objectives all over again. It is more like work than fun.

My Career is just as overly complicated. Since you play as a platonic male, female couple, you have to not only create two separate characters but you have to switch between them during the storyline. Of course because of the era Hollywood is in, the male character is the docile goofball sidekick while the female is the assertive personality with her head screwed on straight, the voice of reason. She is always admonishing and chastising the male character like he is a child. Just like much of the entertainment content being produced in America at the present time, I don't understand why both characters cannot be portrayed as strong, colourful personalities. It seems that the notion that you don't bring people up by tearing other people down is just lost on some modern creators.

What really sinks the mode though is the War and Peace style cut-scenes. They go on forever. You will feel like you are playing an interactive movie rather than a wrestling game. It is not uncommon to find yourself staring blankly at the screen for minutes on end while you wait for those verbose cut-scenes and those excruciating load screens to end before you can pick up your controller again and actually play the game.

Just like last year there is still a health meter in a wrestling game that should be all about executing moves not worrying about whether you will run out of energy or not and when you are down, it still takes so long to get back in the game. Nobody expects to pop up like the Undertaker but the amount of time you are stunned is far too long for what should be a fast-paced combat game.



One of the only changes that I actually appreciate is the reversal change. It is no longer the right trigger but the Y button. This should have been altered a long time ago. Triggers take time to depress and when you have seconds to hit the cue, a button is far faster. I am finding I am reversing a lot more that I used to.

Despite a multitude of problems that need to be addressed and fixed as soon as possible, WWE 2K20 is not a lost cause. There is a lot of good here including imaginative DLC content like the Bump in the Night Originals which was released yesterday. The moral of the WWE 2K20 release is that perhaps unlike sports games, we don't need a new WWE game every, single year. Rushing a product to market like this just isn't worth it for the developers, publishers or the fans. 2K should look at how Warner Bros. Interactive Entertainment manages the Mortal Kombat games, how they include imaginative DLC and new characters to keep their last iteration of the game fresh resulting in a thriving, loyal community not a disappointed one.

### **WWE 2K20**

**Format:** Xbox One.

**Publisher:** 2K Sports.

**Developer:** Visual Concepts.

**ESRB Rating:** T for Teen.

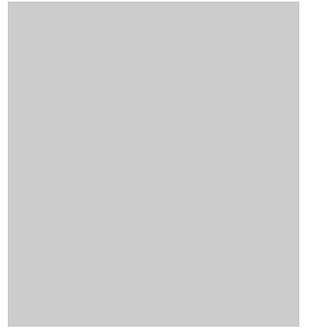
**Rating:** 2 / 5

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**John Powell** is a veteran entertainment journalist, the Editor-in-Chief and one of the founders of SLAM! Wrestling.



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