

Throwback Thursday: Spyro the Dragon for Playstation

Originally published on 24 November 2013 at Stetson.edu/reporter

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Ah, Spyro. Nice to see you again. A game so popular it was released three separate times over the last 15 years. We all remember early 3D animation in games. Super Mario 64, Crash Bandicoot, and Spyro the Dragon all wanted one thing: a third dimension. While retaining the styles of the late 80s and early 90s platformers, these games brought the genre onto fifth generation systems like the Nintendo 64, the Sega Saturn, and the original PlayStation, the platform carrying Spyro with a grand total of 32 bits worth of processing power.

Isn't it strange? The XBOX One and the PlayStation 4, systems so advanced that we don't even speak of them in terms of mere 'bits' anymore, are about to come out. Yet, here we are, remembering where it all began.

For its time, Spyro the Dragon was one of PlayStation's best and most played games. The titular character, Spyro, was charged with saving his people when his world's most pressing danger rises, wreaking havoc during a time of peace.

Beginning the game, the controls are intuitive and simple for even the youngest gamers to use: simple D-Pad directions, a few command combos, and an easy to follow tutorial done through releasing dragons and listening to their advice, which is often played for laughs and can be accessed at any time by revisiting that dragon. Spyro is broken into more than 30 levels where you can run, fly, roll and even glide forever to reach your goal of freeing all the dragons, finding the kingdom's treasure, and recovering all the dragon eggs. Fire-breathing can be used on tougher enemies and for sheep that turn into butterflies for health bonuses.

I have to praise the game for using the PlayStation hardware to its utmost ability. You could run, jump from place to place, and even change game maps repeatedly all without forcing your PlayStation into catatonia, which plagued seventh generation systems for most of their run. If there is one thing to complain about, it was the camera's inability to

whip around at a sharp turn successfully (not unlike the sharp turn needed for the 100% completion bonus, which I won't ruin).

Overall, Spyro was a good game when it was released in 1998, and remains so today. It has stood against time and three more advanced PlayStation models, and is still currently sold on the PlayStation Network. I'd recommend picking it up, if only to prove you can complete it 100% again like you did at eight years old. For fantastic game play, a fun story, and for aging as well as a fine inexpensive wine, I give Spyro the Dragon for the PlayStation 4.5/5 Hats.