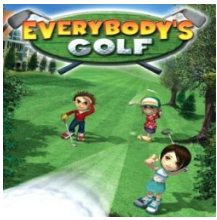


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Everybody's Golf

The Golf War

Golf is a gentlemen sport practiced by rich men and Tiger Woods as far as I know. My last contact with golf was playing the game Actua Golf 3 on the Playstation console. There is a lot of competition nowadays between the golfing games with Tiger Woods series topping them all and Mario Golf being a real hit on the Gameboy Advance and Gamecube. The Golf War is on! What do we have in our hands? A golf game for a portable console, not a simulator, but a fun version of the acclaimed sport. **Story** There is no story. It's just you, the clubs and the golf ball. You might have wanted to see the history of golf here or maybe how does Tiger Woods make those great shots. Sorry, this is a sport game, and an arcade that lacks plot. Let's move on! **Concept** This is not a golf simulator, but a fun arcade designed for kids, but also grown up people that want to have some childish fun. The purpose of the game is to get on the green and get the ball in the hole with as few shots as possible. The action takes place in South Alps described as a gentle course designed for beginners with lots of rocks. Sony targeted a wider audience by not making this game rigid or filled with strict golfing rules and moves. Gameplay is based on long distance action rather than close range putting. You start with two characters, Shin and Yumeri, but you'll be able to unlock more once you'll start winning those trophies. The games will be basically 9 hole or 18 hole competitions with the standard rules you might already know. Birdie might sound funny, but it's a golfing rule. It implies getting the ball inside the hole with one shot less than the standard you have to reach. Par is the standard number of shots needed; bogey is bad, meaning that you exceeded the limit with one shot. You can guess what double bogey is, a double mistake. Each player has stats regarding their power, control, spin, impact and sidespin so you'd better watch it before you choose a dude that can't hit a plane two meters away. If you get bored of normal outfits you can change them, as the game's got even those cool golfing cap we'd all like to have hanging on the walls at home. I suggest you start with a little training, to get to know things a bit. This mode has practice features like undo stroke that will give you a chance to learn before becoming the next Tiger Woods. **Gameplay** I have to tell you right from the start: this game is fun to play. You have lots of varied courses, but they are kind of the same, except for some extra mountains, puddles or marshes. Good old golf is accessible with just a push of the circle button. The power meter gets filled and by pushing circle again you set the accuracy of the shot. By pressing the square you'll get some flames around the ball and get ready for a power strike. You may want to choose a type of game to play after selecting the single player. There's the Stroke Mode, the Challenge Mode, the training and the Putt Golf. By far the most difficult of them is the Putt Mode, because you'll have to get a hole in one in any of the given situations. You'll get points and awards and unlock many costumes and moves by finishing the Putt Mode, that has 9 holes to play on. It's only about keeping your eyes open for the various meters on the screen. There's a power meter, an accuracy meter, there's a wind indicator and one that shows the degree of the slope you're playing on. Let's not forget to mention that there is an indicator that shows the distance from the hole measured in yards while the power meter has marks that show yards if you are far or meters if on the green. You might think that single player will get you bored soon and it will be just a training session for the multiplayer game. Well, it's not quite like that, considering the wider variety of unlockables present in the game. Also lots of variables will affect the way you play and you'll earn new moves and clubs by gaining trophies and increasing your loyalty. It's almost an RPG system! Everybody's Golf is all about nice graphics with exclamation signs on the screen when you hit the ball, a musical note when you got a shot right, giggles and color all around. Back to

the gameplay part, players can choose the shooting mode between auto and normal before they get to the golfing course. Get stuck in the rough or sand, let the ball fall in the water or hit a mountain, hit trees or out of bounds to realize that a golfer's life is never easy. However all these golfing kids have big smiles on their faces and their attitude is optimistic. The smile was present on my face also while playing because I never got as bad as doing a triple bogey and I wouldn't admit any double bogeys even if I did them. **Video** This production looks OK, I mean for an arcade game. Although the mountains and water are almost big cubes put together with virtual glue, the green and trees are fairly good and you'll also find a little bit of quality in character design. They have that cute Japanese-style way of showing their emotions. The boys or girls show the joy of winning or the sorrow of making a triple bogey by jumping up and down or bowing their heads with shame. They can also throw their clubs away in the process of having fun. Sail through the colorful menu in the company of a cute girl that will show you the way to play the game from the desk of the golf club. Not that it matters, but weather effects will be present in the game, and I mean snow, rain, but also the sunny days that every golfer needs to win a tournament. **Sound** Childish sounds will fill the game and it's never boring to hear the giggles and laughs of the characters. Birds sing, the water flows, the sound of the hit ball is there. Listen to the chillout piano music and the funky bass. There are also sounds made by sheep, dogs, even the wind can be heard while putting for the big prize. Aside from the "kplunk" written on the screen, when the ball tumbles down the hole you'll hear that "kplunk" sound (whatever that is). The crowd will be very emotional, cheering for you, and going "ooohhh" when you miss by a millimeter. If you're the winner get ready for tons of cheers and confetti, if you lose then get ready for a big "boo!". That's all you get and the character's sad face to complete it. As a respected golfer you'll have a caddie. I must say that I loved their accents and the way (only audio) that they make their presence felt by saying: "I'm your caddie", "At your service" with the coolest British accent ever. The music is a little bit funeral-like when you enter the table that shows you the scores and resembles the music from the boring episodes of Mr. Bean. **Multiplayer** If I invited my friends over for a golf party they would think I'm crazy. Or maybe I'll call seven of them with their PSP-s to play a multiplayer game. There are the versus mode to be exploited, the tournaments, the hall of fame to be checked out. You'll brag about your achievements till a colleague of yours puts (or maybe putts) shame on you. It might be funny at some point to check up each player's level-ups. Told you that the game has a little RPG evolution system in it! The website of Everybody's golf is way cool containing a mini flash game version of the game and the coolest quiz ever. You'll see what I'm talking about, when some crazy teenage punks start playing golf with cabbages or some angry grandma destroys plates with her golfing abilities. **Conclusion** All in all, the game is not bad, but the animations of the characters and the sounds tend to get repetitive sometimes. I felt like I was in kindergarten again sometimes when playing it, but don't take that as something bad. Unleash the golfer and the child in you with a gaming product that isn't a star, but has the appeal needed to lighten up your day.