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## [Multiwinia Preview](#)

### *Flat is the new black*

Multiwinia is the upcoming project from Introversion, the guys that brought us the apocalyptic DEFCON and the weird Darwinia. The game is basically a multiplayer component to Darwinia as it takes the same graphical theme and the same universe to offer players a chance to take out friends or the AI in vicious, quick and ultimately gun multiplayer battles. In fact, Darwinia and Multiwinia will make up an Xbox Live Arcade pack called Dariwinia+ while the PC will get a standalone version of the game. The tagline for the game is "Survival of the flattest" and the whole game is very Darwinian. It seems that after defeating the virus that invaded their world, the flat entities decided that a bit of competitive multiplayer which features a high casualty count would be fun so they began to differentiate themselves into red, blue, green and yellow armies that would meet on various battlefields to decide which color would be the last one standing. The game actually needs no back story as the gameplay in itself is more than satisfying. In a way Introversion has managed to create a "game", stripped down of all other elements. There's no pretense of art here, no hint to a higher meaning. It's just a real time strategy, quick, with simple mechanics and with interesting twists. As far as the build I have shows, the game is pretty addictive, even if there are just 2 maps in there and only 2 game modes. I will probably play the final game obsessively. I've mainly played King of the Hill, with the other option being to play a sort of Capture the Flag mode which is based on moving around huge statues. In King of the Hill, which was a variety of rules that you can tweak at will to change the victory conditions, the main concept is to keep control of scoring zones while also making sure you keep getting manpower (or, more correctly, more Darwin power) with which to overwhelm your computer enemies or your human enemies. New Darwinians to use as meat shields are acquired via control of generators that constantly pop up new flat subjects which you can then throw in combat. *Game modes* *In the middle of the fight* In the preview build I played there are two maps you can try, which are small enough to make every move count. That turret that just dropped from the sky can save your chances of winning if you deploy it right and guard it as much as you can. That group of laser firing commandos can take one of the crucial positions for you, so put together small groups of Darwinians ready to go out and pick up any crate that you can see. Also be on the lookout for enemy movement, most tellingly for the arrows that show you where their people are heading. This can offer important information regarding the next move of the computer player and will often save your game. The AI is actually pretty good, trying to flank on your weakest side and often sending in air strikes and strike squads to punch a hole through your line and then make a beeline to the areas of the maps that bring the points in. The pace is frantic in Multiwinia and you need to use a power as soon as you get it. Turrets are great on the defensive, but make sure that they do not fall into the hands of the enemy. The AI once managed to get one of mine and then added one of his own to protect one of the flanks while he massed Darwinians on the other flank to break through my line and basically make sure I could not get another victory point for the remainder of the game. The look of the game is pretty much a carbon copy of Darwinia, with a bit of sparkle added here and there. It looks good, in a very square and pixelish sort of way. Anyway, if you get Multiwinia you will not get it for the graphics, but for the chance of playing commander/God for the colored Darwinians. The only issue I have with the game is that, coming from playing Command & Conquer 3 on the PC before I played this one, the control scheme, although simple and clearly presented, seems a bit bizarre. I will adapt to it eventually, but at the moment I seem to always right click for movement, when I should only use the left mouse button for that. It would be perfect if you

could redefine the action of each mouse button. Let's hope that there will be some tweaks before the final version of the game comes out. Multiwinia is due to come out sometime in September, on both the Xbox 360, as part of Darwinia+, and on the PC.