

Battlefield 3 Reality Mod shows muscle as a military sim game

Frostbite 2 and Destruction 3.0 add much needed deconstruction options to military sims
by Shane Moyer

in 2011, Electronic Art's Battlefield 3 debuted to mostly positive review scores, an angry press release from PETA (for killing a rat that was attacking you), and according to EA sold ~5 million units in its first week of being available. Many criticized its solo campaign, with bad AI and not enough co-op missions, but it's multiplayer was lauded for the FrostBite 2's destructiveness, character animations, and pure enjoyment. Destruction 3.0 was dialed back a bit from Bad Company 2's tendency to have everything destroyed completely by the end of matches, a positive or negative aspect of the new BF depending on how you felt about less cover over the course of a match. BF3 soon faded into gaming history, it's destruction only viewed by a few die-hard faithful as the world moved on.

Now, a new mod has made a splash and brought back thousands of gamers in droves to undergo BF3 in a very different way than originally experienced.

Battlefield 3: Reality Mod has turned BF3 into an almost entirely new game. Changes to the user-interface, large changes to gameplay in general, new game modes and even 24-hour day/night cycles, have changed the way BF3 is played into a much, much more tactical style of shooter while keeping the Frostbite 2 engine's destruction at the forefront.



<A decade old and still looking pretty.>

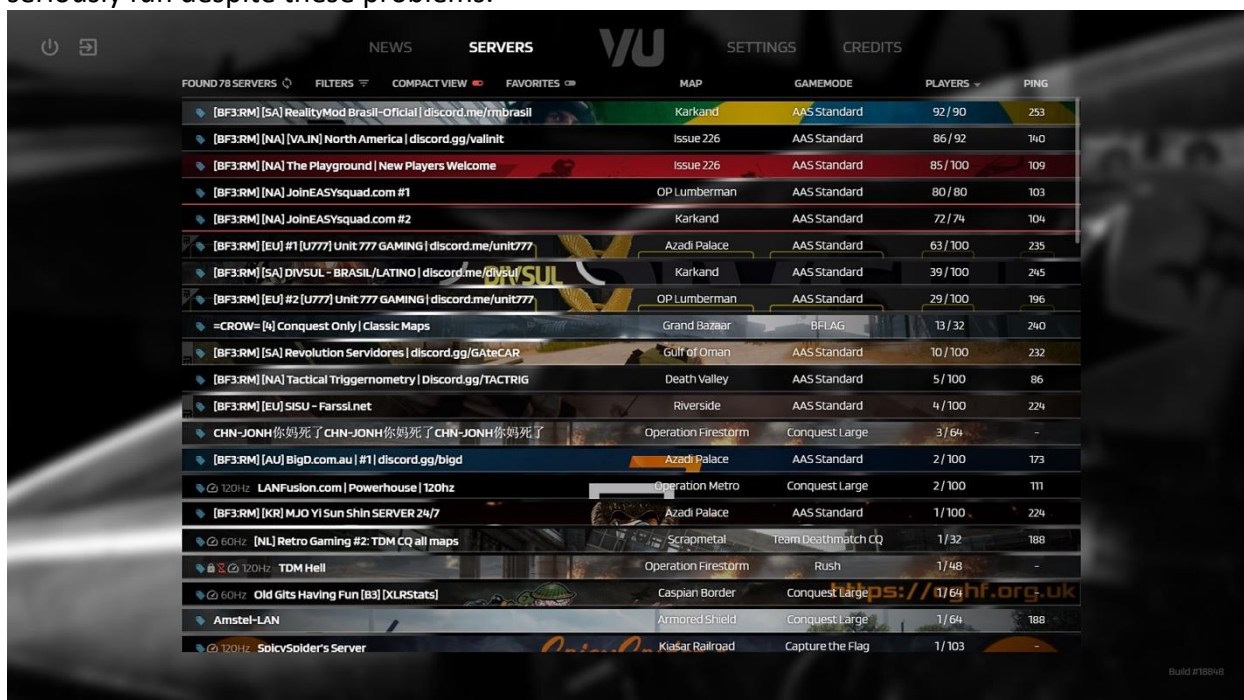
The Good so far

The Bad so Far

Everything in-between

Conceived by Co-founder/Project Lead/Lead-Dev Stefan Roos, a fan of Battlefield 2's 'Project Reality' mod back when he was younger, it took almost six years for the mod to come to fruition according to bf3reality.com. According to Roos, he was introduced to a BF3 modding platform in 2015 called Venice Unleashed. Around this time Roos (aka 3ti65), met fellow Co-founder and Lead-Dev Mats Bakken (aka Powback) and they began tinkering with Venice Unleashed to see if it would even be possible to create something like BF2's Project Reality in BF3. They added one more player to their small project management team, Project Lead/Lead Dev Fulgen "FoolHen" Ruiz, and they continued to work on changing the game. In total, the team would end up being 32 members strong from 14 countries, with an additional 62 contributors to the project that was entirely volunteer. According to their website, the invested 500,000+ lines of code, as well as 40,000+ hours of work invested by the team into the project.

After a little over a week of being released, excitement has waxed and waned due to some latency issues, bugs, and missing quality of life features... but most have found the game seriously fun despite these problems.



FOUND 78 SERVERS	FILTERS	COMPACT VIEW	FAVORITES	MAP	GAMEMODE	PLAYERS	PING
[BF3:RM] [SA] RealityMod Brasil-Oficial discord.me/rmbrasil				Karkand	AAS Standard	92 / 90	253
[BF3:RM] [NA] [VALIN] North America discord.gg/valinit				Issue 226	AAS Standard	86 / 92	140
[BF3:RM] [NA] The Playground New Players Welcome				Issue 226	AAS Standard	85 / 100	109
[BF3:RM] [NA] JoinEASYSquad.com #1				OP Lumberman	AAS Standard	80 / 80	103
[BF3:RM] [NA] JoinEASYSquad.com #2				Karkand	AAS Standard	72 / 74	104
[BF3:RM] [EU] #1 [U777] Unit 777 GAMING discord.me/unit777				Azadi Palace	AAS Standard	63 / 100	235
[BF3:RM] [SA] DIVSUL - BRASIL/LATINO discord.me/divsul				Karkand	AAS Standard	39 / 100	245
[BF3:RM] [EU] #2 [U777] Unit 777 GAMING discord.me/unit777				OP Lumberman	AAS Standard	29 / 100	196
[CROW= [4] Conquest Only Classic Maps				Grand Bazaar	BF:LAG	13 / 32	240
[BF3:RM] [SA] Revolution Servidores discord.gg/GateCAR				Gulf of Oman	AAS Standard	10 / 100	232
[BF3:RM] [NA] Tactical Triggernometry Discord.gg/TACTRIG				Death Valley	AAS Standard	5 / 100	86
[BF3:RM] [EU] SISU - Farsst.net				Riverside	AAS Standard	4 / 100	224
CHN-JONH你妈死了CHN-JONH你妈死了CHN-JONH你妈死了				Operation Firestorm	Conquest Large	3 / 64	-
[BF3:RM] [AU] BigD.com.au #1 discord.gg/bigd				Azadi Palace	AAS Standard	2 / 100	173
[120Hz] LANFusion.com Powerhouse 120hz				Operation Metro	Conquest Large	2 / 100	111
[BF3:RM] [KR] MUO YISun Shin SERVER 24/7				Azadi Palace	AAS Standard	1 / 100	224
[60Hz] [NL] Retro Gaming #2: TDM CQ all maps				Scrapmetal	Team Deathmatch CQ	1 / 32	188
[120Hz] TDM Hell				Operation Firestorm	Rush	1 / 48	-
[60Hz] Old Gits Having Fun [B3] [XLRStats]				Caspian Border	Conquest Large	1 / 64	188
Amstel-LAN				Armored Shield	Conquest Large	1 / 64	188
[120Hz] SolcySolder's Server				KiaSar Railroad	Capture the Flag	1 / 103	-

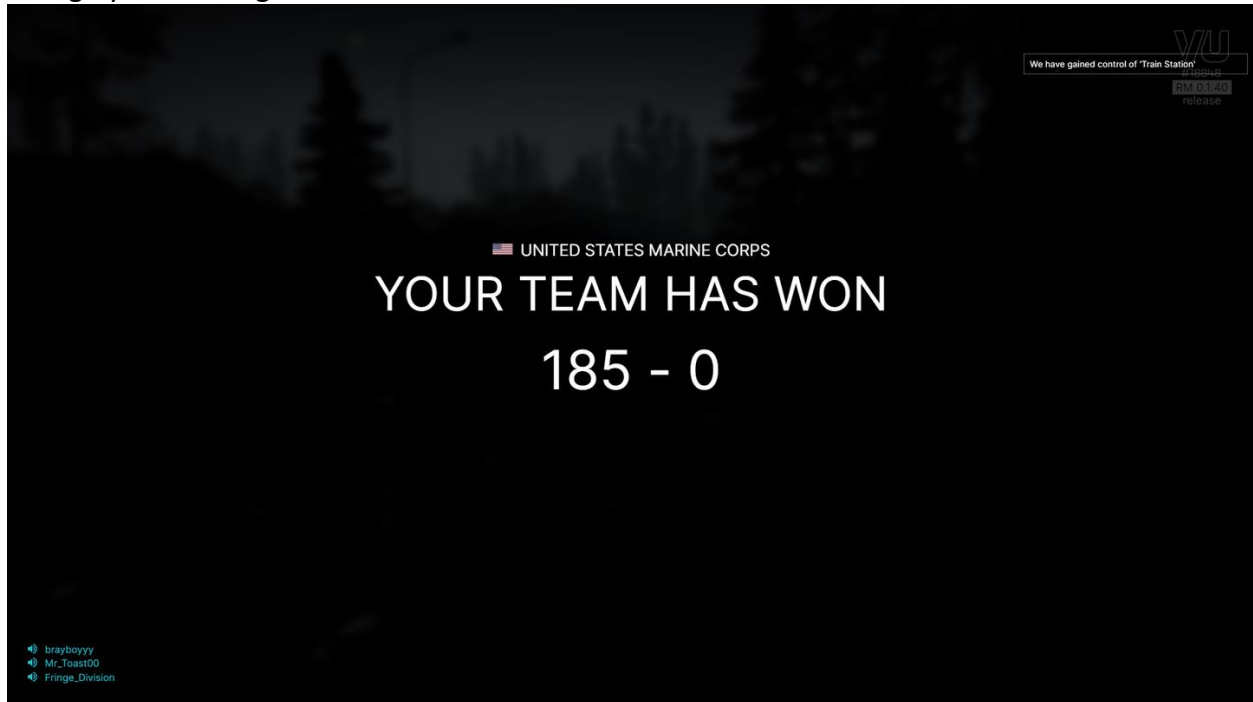
<Finding Reality Mod games is easy in Venice Unleashed with ~30 servers currently hosting it.>

The Frostbite 2 engine still looks good from a distance but it does show its age when up close. The sounds of battle, something EA always seemed to do an excellent job of back in the earlier battlefield days, still cracks and explodes with the best audio of any modern-day shooter. The destructible environments are still smashable, though with less to no tanks around, walls and everything else must be destroyed by infantry.

Some may find the ease at picking up and playing BF3: RM much less intimidating than say SQUAD or other military sim games. Joining an in-game squad, picking your kit and spawning in

are easy for anyone who has played a BF game or any shooter that required picking spawn spots. For those already in the know for military sims, the ease at placing FOB's (forward operating bases where players can spawn) is either a step up, or a step down depending on if you like the resource management of games like SQUAD.

The mod uses the ticket counter for each side to determine a winner much like all BF games, though you do not get to see the enemies ticket count.



<Murica.>

During play, there were a few observed and heard negatives that the community has made the development team aware of already, such as when zooming in down your scope (ADS) the brightness can sometimes be overwhelming and make it hard to actually see anything. Usually only an issue when playing on super well-lit maps, and some have switched to using only iron sights until it is fixed. There have been complaints about the shock from explosions, where your screen blurs a little to mimic the effect of large explosions going off nearby, can stick around a little too long. More complaints were simple things, such as there being no medic indicator to tell you if a medic is nearby before respawning, and the prevalence of team-killing is still an issue. During play, it was observed a few times that friendly names wouldn't pop up when aiming at the heads of other players. Since they only seemed to pop-up when aiming at a player's core if they're friendly, it can lead to quite a few team-kills during a match.



<Not a place for itchy trigger fingers.>

There are many other aspects to the game that could be good or bad based on individual preferences... such as maps being much smaller than those in SQUAD or even in 64-player BF conquest maps. With servers topping out at 100 users, this can feel claustrophobic for some players, while others enjoy not having to sprint for 20 minutes to find the fight. There are also less weapon choices and customizations at this point with users have three or two different scope options and the ability to swap out the MG's tripod for a vertical handle. Some feel it adds to the authenticity of a mil-sim if everyone is issued the same standard equipment, but it feels odd in a Battlefield game to not allow more extensive customizations.



<Karkand might be showing its age, but the nostalgia factor is off the charts.>

Is it fun? If you enjoy more tactical gameplay, with the threat of death around every destructible corner, you will probably enjoy stepping into BF3: Reality Mod. Though still in its infancy, the game has already show it has teeth in the mil-sim category of mods. It shows that an old engine can still be viable in creating an amazingly fun gameplay experience.

Bf3reality.com