



The Legend Of Spyro A New Beginning



He breathes fire, but Spyro still leaves us cold

And so returns one of PS2 platforming's least memorable characters. Yes, more forgettable than Tak. Anyway, although this latest instalment comes eight years after his first outing, *A New Beginning* attempts to rewrite Spyro's history – with the voices of Elijah Wood, David Spade and Gary Oldman.

When calamity befalls the Dragon Realms, Spyro's egg is saved from certain destruction by the wise dragon elder Ignitus who sent it floating down the river. When he is found by a family of dragonflies, Spyro grows up believing himself to be a rather large dragonfly. When he starts breathing fire, his adoptive parents tell all and Spyro promptly sets off on a trek across different lands to find his true home, showing a distinct lack of gratitude to the flies that brought him up. Kids, eh?

Spyro battles enemies using a mixture of his flame-breathing abilities and melee attacks, both allowing the Purple One to perform complex combos (including a time-slowing Matrix move). Jewel-collecting also returns, complete with classic side effects. Each colour of jewel corresponds to a different aspect: red jewels restore health, green replenishes Spyro's fire-breathing – and the gems also serve to boost his attacks or unlock new powers.

Spyro naff

While some aspects of the game are obsessively detailed, such as the individual names given to all the enemies, other areas are lacking. Sparx, Spyro's 'comedy' sidekick, is a pointless annoyance and the boss battles quickly become frustratingly hard and repetitive. On the plus side, you finally learn Spyro's origins (well, we're sure *some* of you care) and the Hollywood cast are given a good script. The between-world flight stages are genuinely engaging, too, and make a welcome change from

Fan the flames
Dragons don't just breathe fire, you know. Spyro can exhale electricity and zap anything in range. Look, just go with it OK?



the repetitive 'fight, kill, move on' strategy of the main game.

A New Beginning tries to redeem the franchise from past failures while also trying to recapture what made the games such a success on PSone. It succeeds in part, but doesn't invoke the necessary nostalgia and the difficulty level can be off-putting. Still, this is pitched at the right level to excite existing fans, may entice newbies to the series and, while it's hardly awe-inspiring, it's passably entertaining. But why settle for that when you could be playing *Ratchet 3* instead? **Lesley Smith**



Dragon on Spyro looks suitably attractive, but it's all a bit dull. Ho hum.



The bigger they are... There are loads of huge enemies, but they're not exciting to fight.

PSM3 Verdict



The Legend Of Spyro contains...
Gorgeous in-flight levels | Stunning slo-mo combo attacks | Names for every enemy

Overall The franchise is somewhat redeemed – sadly the levels are repetitive and some bosses just too hard.

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