

Killzone 2 Flash & Thunder Map Pack Review

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It's not really possible to say that Guerrilla Games have done it again with their new map pack for Killzone 2. While the first set of downloadable Killzone 2 maps were good, they did little to truly expand on the original set of multiplayer maps. Now with a second set of maps released, will Guerrilla Games give fans what they need to keep playing online or is this map pack something everyone could do without?

Before this review goes any further, a few problems must be addressed. Map Packs really have two main purposes, give the hardcore fans something new to play and get new players interested in the game. While these map packs can give current players something new to play, the game isn't setup to allow new players to easily jump in and start playing these new maps online. So if a new player wants to check out these new maps they'll be stuck with only being able to play it in a LAN game. This problem hasn't effected the review but it needed to be mentioned.

In the past my biggest problem with some of the maps in Killzone 2 has always been the color scheme. At times it's almost impossible to tell who or what you're shooting at, and at other times one faction will have a clear advantage because of the colors and lighting of the map. In Beach Head this isn't a problem. The map is colored perfectly to contrast both factions so no side has any advantage. Also the bottlenecks in the map are a perfect size based on the game's style of movement. I never felt cramped in smaller areas and I never felt the map was too large or that I was taking a hike to find the action. This map isn't just accessible, it's one of the few maps that I can honestly call a must have. Beach Head might be a rehash of an original map but it's a tournament grade map and should have shipped with the game.

Southern Hills, is a solid map but it's not Beach Head. While this might not be fair to the map, I tend to think of Southern Hills as filler. It doesn't expand on the game and it feels very generic. It doesn't hurt the map pack or the game but it's by no means the reason to purchase the map pack. It would have been better if I played this map first and then moved onto Beach Head because I didn't start with Southern Hills and as you can see, I'd rather be at the beach.

When I look at the 2 map packs, this new pack is clearly the better of the two. Both maps are easy to memorize and a

breeze to built a cohesive strategy in team games as well as free-for-all scenarios. Unlike the first map pack where it felt more like a brute fight, these new maps have been put together with as much care as the games original maps. As new maps continue to get released for Killzone 2 I hope this becomes the rule rather than the exception. While I've been giving a slightly bashing the first map pack, I have to make it clear that I loved the first map pack and I still find them very playable to this day. It was only after seeing and playing this new map pack that I found myself in less favor of the first map pack. I can only hope this properly translates how much I love these new maps. They play well and even with the set backs of Killzone 2's multiplayer ladder system I would recommend this map pack to old players as well as new players. As I stated before, a map pack not only needs to please the veterans of a game but it must entice new players. This map pack does both wonderfully, which is why it gets an 8 out of 10.