

# Game Review: 'Kid Icarus' spreads wings too far

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In this video game image provided by Nintendo, a scene is shown from "Kid Icarus: Uprising." (AP Photo/Nintendo)

(AP) -- After years of heaping attention on Mario, Link, Donkey Kong, Samus Aran and even that fat blob Kirby, Nintendo is finally turning the spotlight back on Pit, the spunky angelic protagonist who wowed players of the original Nintendo system in 1986 in "Kid Icarus," the beloved platforming adventure that never gained the same acclaim as other Nintendo tales.

Pit is back to battle the underworld in "Kid Icarus: Uprising" (Nintendo, for the Nintendo 3DS, \$39.99). This time, he's doing it in [three dimensions](#) while being aided by Palutena, the cheeky Goddess of Light he saved at the end of the first game. That mostly means blasting baddies with various weapons while soaring through the sky and scurrying on the ground.

Pit can only fly for five minutes at a time, so most "Uprising" levels begin in the air before moving to land. The aerial levels are especially wondrous when viewed on the Nintendo 3DS' glasses-free 3-D screen. It's a shame that the heroic Pit cannot keep battling eyeballs while dodging twisters or gliding over erupting volcanoes just a little bit longer.

"Uprising" totally falls apart when Pit's feet hit the ground. The wonky controls require players to move Pit with the analog stick and control the camera and Pit's aim with the stylus. (Lefties either have to deal with using their nondominant hand or purchase the extra Circle Pad Pro analog stick and snap it onto the back of their Nintendo 3DS.)

With such a limiting way to see what's happening while traversing terra firma, Pit is often ambushed off-screen by the game's garish enemies shooting him with lasers or poison or whatever. Angels must be immune to whiplash because the only way to overcome the control scheme is to continually tilt the poor little cherub around the graphically dull landscape.

The controls also make "Uprising" nearly unplayable in 3-D without perching the 3DS on the included black plastic stand. While it's completely possible to navigate in 2-D, flipping the 3-D slider up helps gauge just how far away foes are positioned within the sprawling ground levels and also adds gorgeous depth to the flying portions, which look richer than the ground levels.

Throughout the game, Pit and Palutena - and occasionally their adversaries - chat on the bottom screen. Casual players might find their incessant banter annoying, while die-hard Nintendo devotees will no doubt be delighted with the duo's 8-bit shoutouts and Nintendogs jokes. Their constant chatter isn't just silly fun, it also drives the story forward.

There are enough twists in the game's main plot to keep players engaged

as they battle zany mythology-inspired creatures that wouldn't last 1 minute in a "God of War" game. If that's not enough, there's deep weapon customization as well as a practice range, treasure hunt and "idol toss," which turns discovered eggs into virtual goodies with a tap of the 3DS stylus.

The two frantic multiplayer modes - "free-for-all" and "light vs. dark" - are a particularly chaotic good time, and the points earned when battling five other players near or far online can be used to upgrade the nine different types of weapons that can be equipped in the solo or multiplayer editions. (I grew quite fond of slashing evildoers with the bear claws.)

While this fast-paced 3-D adventure is certainly a hearty reintroduction of Pit, unless you already own Nintendo's latest hand-held gadget or have been anxiously awaiting Pit's return for the past 20 years, there are fundamentally too many flaws with the game's handling to make "Uprising" worth sacrificing any money to buy a 3DS.

Two-and-a-half out of four stars.

**More information:** [kidicarus.nintendo.com](http://kidicarus.nintendo.com)

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