Developer's Column #5

Good evening. I'm Tohru Murayama from SEGA-AM2, coming at you once again.

This time I'm going to write a bit about Versus Mode in Virtua Fighter 5.

As its name indicates, Versus Mode specializes in bouts. It's basically the kind of one-on-one encounter system that appears in most popular fighting games.

If you just want a quick fight, this mode would not be necessary as you can break a fight in Arcade mode and simply jump in. The concept here is to let you fight comfortably. That's it. This is really what Versus mode is all about.

We thoroughly investigated points that concerned us as we casually played various VS fighting titles, not limited to VF4 EVO. We all picked up on certain aspects that bothered us, regardless of how small, and discussed how we would create the kind of comfortable fighting environment we wanted.

Had we been seen by others, though, it would have looked like we were just sitting around and having a lot of fun.

Later, this persistence was devoted to the "End menu" that appears after a match ends.
It resulted in what can respond to any needs such as:
- Fight again as soon as possible with shortened load times
- Swap characters and stages
- Watch Replay immediately

These are minute points, but it is the cursor and authority to control it that we especially paid attention to during development.

We came up with various ideas, such as "the two players can control a single cursor in common", and "only the loser or winner can control it", but ended up with the spec that clearly differentiates the cursor for player 1 and player 2, and that "both players can control the cursor and enter a selection". I'm convinced that this is the best choice.

It may be hard to notice because it is seems a little ordinary, even if you are playing the game. However, since the end result satisfies everyone in the PS3 Virtua Fighter 5 project design team – people who fight versus battles millions of times at home and the arcades -- it would be great to have people play with this in mind.

Yes! All members of the Virtua Fighter 5 PS3 project love Virtua Fighter without taking their work into account. For example, there is a guy who has always been playing the series from Virtua Fighter 1, and also another guy who participated in the national tournament before joining SEGA...Since we have such members in the team we have seen things from the standpoint of players throughout development. I bet the end result turned out to be good.

It was of course fun and exciting everyday for us to be involved in the title. We have put much money in video game arcades, but we were under pressure the entire time. The reason it has been so stressful is partly because of the Virtua Fighter franchise itself, but because of the discerning eye of expert players.

Then, see you again next week!
Don't miss it!