

Freestyle Showcase 2021 Round 1 Comments (by led_light)

(Scores for each chart are given in parentheses. Charts were reviewed in reverse order from Challenge to Beginner. Reviews are now shown in that order to match as well.)

Singles Division

Furuchansu - City Pop Funk Mix Original / バーバババ [NOWHERE Dance Club]

- Notes: I don't remember if you mentioned this already, but I agree that ESP should be a 10 and DSP should be an 8.
- ESP 11 (8): I love how the intro section only uses 3 of the 4 arrows, as if it's meant to be a warmup before the real song starts. Some of the tails of the freeze arrows felt off to me could be adjusted, and the 3 doublesteps at beats 180/191/222, while seemingly random, can be resolved with ghost-stepping and/or foot-switching as well. Still, a very fun and cute chart overall!
- DSP 9 (8): Quite a few more doublesteps here compared to ESP, but I think that worked to your advantage here, as this chart in my eyes captures the "freestyle" spirit very well. A large chunk of the chart was copied from the ESP chart, though, which might have been acceptable back in the old DDR days, but even I have a limit to how much I can accept.
- BSP 5 (8): For Basic difficulty, the chart could use quite a bit fewer 8th notes, especially after m48 when the difficulty is bumped up quite a bit, but that's my only complaint as everything else is solid all-around.

GRADIUSIC CYBER -DarkDisco Mix- / TAKA [TonyAkita]

- CSP 15 (7): The chart is technically sound, but man, those crossovers do look pretty rough. Although, as much as the DDR charts for Gradiusic Cyber can be a bit "janky" at times, I still kinda wish that sort of feeling carried over (at least a little bit) to this remix as well. Almost as if this chart has a bit *too much* flow.
- ESP 14 (8): Crossovers are still plentiful and fast, but at the very least varied (if you include the 90-degree variants such as DLULD). Not sure what else to say other than I at least find this a bit more enjoyable to play than the CSP.
- DSP 8 (9): The jumps in this one are excellent, along with the addition of jacks; the style is remarkably different compared to the last two charts. In terms of difficulty, though, this is definitely in the 9 territory due to the jumps and 8th streams.
- BSP 6 (9): This one is pushing it one difficulty higher as well (7), but it's just as much of a standout along with DSP as well.

Hummingbird / Smile.dk [Astroman129]

- ESP 10 (8): I don't really have any complaints about it, although there isn't much that stands out to me either, perhaps due to the over-abundance of staircase patterns. Still a pretty fun chart, though, and it captures the mood of the song pretty well.
- DSP 8 (9): Much better than ESP for sure, especially due to the use of freeze arrows, repeated steps, and jumps.
- BSP 5 (8): The inclusion of the last jump was a bit odd to me, but otherwise, a fairly simple but solid chart that's perfect for newer players.
- BEG 2 (8): (See BSP comments.)

LOST IN PARADISE / ALI feat. AKLO [Daffa212162]

- CSP 11 (10): This chart *could* have been much harder, but I love how chill yet funky this chart is. The placement and execution of the spins, crossovers, jumps, etc. are pretty much spot-on.
- ESP 8 (9): Same deal with CSP, although the patterns are much simpler here (maybe a little *too* simple, probably due to the lack of jumps).
- DSP 6 (9): (See ESP comments.)
- BSP 3 (7): This chart *should* be a 3, although it plays more like a 4. I would remove a couple arrows and place a few in other places.
- BEG 1 (8): This chart *should* be a 1, although it plays more like a 2. On its own, I think the chart is still pretty fun, but I would remove a few unneeded arrows and make it a 1 that is perfect for beginners.

Scheisse / Lady Gaga [Daffa212162]

- Notes: Difficulty-wise, DSP and BSP are bordering on 7 and 4 territory, respectively.
- ESP 11 (8): The gallops along with most of the 16th notes are very fun, although everything else felt more and more repetitive as the song progressed. It feels like it needs something more to spice up the chart, whether it be more jacks, jumps, different rhythms, or another pattern entirely.
- DSP 6 (8): Same deal as ESP, although I don't feel that same sort of repetitiveness as much in this one. Only slightly more fun than ESP as a result.
- BSP 3 (10): Looks simple at first, but the freestyle possibilities were flowing through my head as I played this. Good stuff!
- BEG 1 (8): (See BEG comments for LOST IN PARADISE.)

就寝御礼 (Shuushin orei) / PSYQUI [Lampshade]

- Notes: My suggested ratings are 3/5/7/10.

- ESP 10 (8): The amount of crossovers here could be toned down quite a bit, but the rest work quite well for this song. I'll give you credit for that spin pattern at m39-41, though; very cool and I'm impressed you found a variation that I haven't seen before.
- DSP 6 (9): I like how calm the chart (along with the song) is; it doesn't force you to move around too much, but the freestyle opportunities are still there. Fairly simple patterns all around, but very effective.
- BSP 4 (8): Same deal with DSP, but the crossovers are once again a bit too repetitive like in ESP. I would consider switching up some of the patterns a bit or, in this case, it's okay to reuse a few of the patterns you used in the DSP and ESP charts.
- BEG 2 (6): For a song this slow and calm, I was kinda hoping Beginner would be a nice, calm 1 as well, but what I get are long strings of consecutive 4th notes that I have a bit of trouble figuring out what their purpose is. Switching between long jacks and alternating feet patterns also felt a bit random; the chart feels too hard for a Beginner chart but too easy for a Basic chart as well, so I'm not sure where to rank this.

Steel Edge / Maozon [FoRCeDNaTuRe]

- ESP 14 (7): Quite a twisty and stamina-draining chart here. A lot of the rhythms felt off as well (in this case, though, in a more awkward way). I do like how the jumps and gallops are used here, though; more of those would be nice.
- DSP 11 (7): Same deal with ESP, but not as punishing due to the lower difficulty, of course.
- BSP 8 (9): Perhaps a bit too hard for Basic difficulty (I would maybe re-rate this to a 9 as well), but on its own, I had a lot of fun with this one. I would still take out a few of the 16th notes (especially b167), though.
- BEG 5 (7): Several notes could be moved around here and there, some freeze arrows would be a welcome addition, and that one corner jump really felt out of place too. I still quite like how "experimental" in concept it is, though, and the possibilities for fun routines are still very much there.

たたえよ！絶対覇権アリーシャ帝国 (Tataeyo! Zettai haken Alisha teikoku) / Blanc Bunny Bandit [FoRCeDNaTuRe]

- ESP 14 (10): Absolutely perfect. It feels like it fits just right in with the other Band-meshi songs in A20.
- DSP 11 (8): Those 16th notes are really pushing this chart into 12 territory. I would scale back the amount quite a bit to make it an actual 11. The patterns aren't as memorable compared to ESP, but still perfectly fine regardless.
- BSP 8 (10): (See ESP comments.)
- BEG 4 (9): Good stuff all around. The only 2 things I would change are the addition of at least a few freeze arrows and quantizing the 16th notes to 4ths in some way.

Why Not / Virginelle [Nezemarth]

- ESP 12 (7): The beginning felt iffy to me with all of the karaoke stepping going on, plus I would've started the chart at m4 with offbeat 8th notes for emphasis. Afterwards, the same crossovers appearing over and over again made the chart quite repetitive.
- DSP 10 (7): (See ESP comments.) Also, I'm guessing that freeze arrow at b57.75 is supposed to be an 8th note shorter, because it looks like a mistake compared to the rest of the chart.
- BSP 6 (7): (See ESP comments, but only the part about the crossovers.)

YOU AND ME / airbag [TonyAkita]

- Notes: I don't know if you made the cut, but that fade-out at the end of the song feels a bit abrupt and awkward. I would lengthen the fade out or use a version of the song that doesn't require a fade out at all.
- ESP 11 (10): The usage of jumps is spot-on in this one, and that one doublestep in m26 is unobtrusive and a great cherry on top to a very fun chart.
- DSP 8 (10): This chart feels just like ESP thematically, only with simpler steps. Very well done.
- BSP 4 (10): (See DSP comments.) I think the nonstop streams of 4th notes push this into 5 territory, though.
- BEG 3 (10): Just the right amount of difficulty and just the right steps for this song. Not much else I can say.

Also, congrats on being the first person to receive a perfect score from me in this contest. It would be even more of an achievement if you added a CSP and it also received a 10, but it's still an achievement nevertheless. 🎉

Doubles Division

Lovely Howdy Cowboy!! / まろん feat. キャサリン [FoRCeDNaTuRe]

- EDP 14 (10): This chart *could* have been much harder given how fast-paced and chaotic the song is, but the difficulty is actually just the right amount and the steps are absolutely incredible.
- DDP 11 (10): Interesting choice to include 12th notes here and not in the EDP chart, but I like the decision. This whole chart is just super fun.
- BDP 8 (10): Simple, but very fun chart. I've been struggling to find places where the chart could be improved, but to no avail.

Another perfect 10 already? Granted, there's only 3 charts to worry about instead of 4 or 5, but I'm already impressed by the overall quality of this entire round so far.

Mist Tek / you [FoRCeDNaTuRe]

- EDP 13 (9): Lots of fast figure-8 and crossover patterns here, but much deserved for a fast song. Perhaps I would throw in a few more step-jump or drill patterns for more variety, or create some “negative space” during the quiet section, but that’s just a style difference at the end of the day.
- DDP 11 (9): Unlike EDP, this one has a tad too many drill patterns (why can’t they be in the EDP chart instead? XD). The jacks/step-jump pattern at m38-45 is the highlight of the chart for me as well.
- BDP 8 (9): Solid, well-made chart with good patterns and fun rhythms. Any changes I would make would just be stylistic differences as well.

Nacho Cheese Sauce / Karl with a K [SirDj0nt]

- EDP 13 (9): Very cool mixups with the rhythms and use of freeze arrows. I’m not sure why this song reminds me of Norepinephrine, but this is just as good (if not better).
- DDP 9 (9): The 16th notes here are also very well done, well placed and not overused at all. That freeze arrow pattern at m36-44 is very cool as well.
- BDP 6 (9): The occasional 16th notes and doublesteps tripped me up at first, but they are a welcome addition to what would be a simple, but still fun chart.

Retrograde / Aleyna Tilki [tsugaru7reveng]

- EDP 11 (7): Quite a lot of wide pad transitions in this one, especially for an 11. If used less often, they would certainly be a welcome addition to an otherwise boring chart, but maybe they stand out a bit too much in this case.
- DDP 7 (8): Finally, a chart that is more “normal” (at least compared to EDP). Still, a bit of funkiness going on with the patterns, but I think this is one time where I actually like how they’re used here.
- BDP 4 (8): (See DDP comments.)

Why Not / Virginelle [Nezemarth]

- EDP 13 (7): Geez, at first glance, this is bordering on 14 territory judging by the abundance of fast pad transitions going on here; I’m not sure if this song needs that much movement in the first place.
- DDP 11 (7): Still very twisty, especially for an 11, mostly due to all of those U-shaped pad transitions scattered throughout the entire song. The lower difficulty does bring the intensity down to a level that is more manageable, at least (although not necessarily more fun to play).
- BDP 8 (7): (See DDP comments.)

Winner's Proof ft. KANASA from bless4 / BEMANI Sound Team "HuΣeR" & kors k [tsugaru7reveng]

- EDP 13 (7): Man, those wide crossovers are rude, but they sure do keep you on your toes. Combine that with uncommon pad transitions and “groove radar”-like elements and you have one hell of an experimental chart. Thankfully, the song is only 100 BPM, so the patterns aren't *too* fast to play properly, and the chart surprisingly works with the song to an extent, but this is obviously something that I wouldn't try to attempt again.
- DDP 7 (8): Same wide crossovers and the occasional weird transition here, but they're much more acceptable here since they're much easier to execute (and more fun to play too).
- BDP 5 (8): (See DDP comments.)