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Wizard Pinball

Conjuring up classic, arcade fun.

Platform: J2ME

Publisher: Mforma

Developer: Morpheme

Genre: Action

Players: Single-Player

WGR SCORECARD

Overall: **7.2/10**

Graphics: 7.0

Sound: n/a

Gameplay: 7.9

Innovation: 7.6

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Review

Conjuring up classic, arcade fun.

by [Avery Score](#) Posted: Thursday, 7 August 2003

Although it is unlikely that anyone will top Sierra's immortal 3D Ultra Pinball, the pinnacle of the virtual 'ball scene, if not of gaming as a whole, I encourage mortals to try (insert evil laugh here)! Despite my obvious loyalty to Sierra's early 1990s creation, I welcome the day that it will be unseated. I've always assumed that only some sort of unclassifiable, genre-bending game could do it, something that blends elements from pinball and dating simulators, or something. Or maybe, like, a pinball-themed, turn-based strategy game.

But when I learned that Mforma had a new game out that combined wizardry with everyone's favorite arcade sport, I was skeptical. It seemed too obvious a move. I mean, didn't the Adams Family Pinball machine, released in 1991, at Loews theaters everywhere, sort of cover that? I mean, I guess the Adamases aren't wizards, per se, but they're kind of creepy and ooky; and I'm more than sure that Fester practices alchemy, which pretty much gets them there. When I played the game, though, I was pleasantly surprised that there's much more too it than simple wizardry. You get to kill ghouls and hit a giant cat, too. I then decided that Wizard Pinball could be a contender, after all.

Although Wizard Pinball only features one table, compared to Sierra 3D Ultra Pinball's excellent three tables, it is quite zippy. The ball rolls along at an energetic clip, caroming off various bouncing pads, scoring you points in the process. Occasionally, you manage to send the ball sailing up one of three ramps. At the end of one, there's a ghoul head you can destroy. Another ramp just brings your ball around the perimeter of the table and back into play. The third ramp, when used, lights up one of the letters of the word "Spells." When all the letters are lit, your ball mutates and wins you bonus points. This is the game's signature move.

Wizard Pinball's greatest weakness is probably its control. The "1" key controls your left flipper; the "3" key controls your right. Unfortunately, the "2" key had to be assigned as the button to activate both flippers because simultaneous button-presses aren't possible on current Vision handsets. This is highly counterintuitive at first and will cost you more than a few games. After 10 minutes or so, though, your pinball instincts should adjust.

Even if it can't replace the pinball games of my Mac IIci days, Wizard Pinball makes a welcome addition to the mobile arena. There's no arcade experience purer than a good game of pinball, and WP delivers. A couple more tables would have garnered it a higher score.

Handset used for review: [Sanyo SCP-8100](#)

Mobile Entertainment Analyst

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