

I will step out of line here and come out of the gate swinging, as I believe it appropriate for this latest rounds of balance-changes. More specifically, I will be sharing my thoughts on the Deinonychus nerfs.

To say that this patch has done its fair work in all but killing the Deinonychus as a at all viable option would be the most accurate, and frankly somewhat tame, summary I can give.

To begin the Deinonychus has had its stamina recovery reduced from 1.6 to 0.9. This almost cuts it in half, setting the stamina recovery times from empty to approximately 12 seconds while laying down and 30 seconds while sitting (+/- 2 seconds apply due to test environment). This in of itself would be fine, if the Deinonychus had an appropriately large stamina pool or low stamina drain. Previously this was also the case, with Tail Fan only costing 2 stamina and Sever Tendon, while having little viability for combat as it is wildly outclassed by simply latching, had no stamina cost and did grant some momentum, making it viable for longer distance travel.

Had this remained I would consider the change in stamina recovery, while a tad bit extreme, acceptable, even when considering that resting for stamina leaves you highly exposed to threats. A reduction to 1.1 or 1.2 may have been more reasonable (without increasing stamina costs that is), still forcing Deinonychus players to keep their stamina in mind in all situations, without forcing them to have to ALWAYS think about how much stamina they can use before they expose themselves to a prolonged period of significant risk due to other players and critters, resulting in almost certain death if caught making a mistake even just once.

This then however brings us to the point of the stamina cost increases for both Tail Fan and Sever Tendon. In case you are not aware, there is primarily two movement techniques for the Deinonychus, only varying in the momentum retention. The first, more expensive variant, is to use Tail Fan at full sprint and double jump right after to carry the momentum into the air, then double jumping again as soon as you hit the ground to maintain momentum until the next Tail Fan can be used. Sever Tendon could be used in a similar fashion, granting less momentum and being slower but having lower stamina drain. The second variant simply cuts out the second double jump.

With the stamina cost changes, these two techniques allow you ~45 seconds of movement and ~50 seconds of movement respectively, across flat terrain, including the time it takes to accelerate. After that you must recharge your stamina from 0%. As we already know, this can take between 12 – 30 seconds, with some margin of error, likely taking longer to as you won't go into resting immediately. In of itself this is already quite bad. Assuming that you are moving at full speed, using the more expensive variant, you would have to stop for 12 – 30 seconds, every 45 seconds and that is assuming you either found a safe place to rest within those 45 seconds or are accepting the risk of being killed by pretty much anything that can deal damage.

Players should not, under any circumstances, be forced to have to find a safe spot or risk losing growth on their Deinonychus every 45 seconds because they decided that they wanted to utilize the dinosaurs kit to it's proper potential.

Now we must also consider the effect this has on combat. Obviously, raptors are strongest while grouped, that's why Pack Hunter exists after all. Currently you can latch up to 2 Deinonychus onto a dinosaur that you could reasonably kill with a group of 2 – 3 raptors. Anything larger would require a considerably larger group of Deinonychus players, all highly skilled in that dinosaurs combat techniques, and you would still risk loosing at least one or two of them in the fight. With these stamina changes however latching itself is no longer viable. The biggest downside of latching is its high stamina drain, meaning that after latching you would need to safe some stamina to get away and spend some time out of the fight, leaving you vulnerable. With the old stamina recovery of 1.6 you could already fall behind on a running dinosaur, having to expend a decent chunk of stamina to catch up again, which already reduced the amount of time you could latch for. With this sharply cut stamina recovery this gap widens, requiring you to use even more stamina to catch up to your target, meaning you have less stamina to use while latching. Add to this the increased cost of the Tail Fan/Sever Tendon, which is crucial for getting away after latching. You now need to safe up more stamina so you can safely get away after latching, which of course means you have even less time while latched.

To be fair and give all scenarios equal consideration, we must also consider the possibility of the enemy not running away but chasing after the Deinonychus that just latched, they are of course the weakest target in that moment. Walking away from the enemy after the initial Tail Fan/Sever Tendon usage to get away is obviously not sufficient and would not grant enough stamina to run far enough anyway. You also can't use your abilities more because they would run you out of your stamina almost instantly, if that isn't already the case after the initial getaway. Therefor the only viable way to survive is to jump up onto a rock and lay down, near an enemy attempting to kill you.

All of these things combined have the effect that you can't travel with a Deinonychus because it uses so much stamina and recovers so slowly that a significant time would be spent sitting/laying down, but you also can't fight with a Deinonychus because the increased stamina cost of the movement ability as well as the increased time it takes to recover your stamina, which you always need while fighting, cuts down your latch time so significantly that you barely get any chance to deal damage. This means you can't fight anything that flies because it will catch you while running, anything that can climb a rock because it will kill you while resting, anything that runs fast because it will outrun you, anything that does AOE damage because it will kill you while latched, anything with a tail attack because it will kill you while latched, anything with a large enough health pool because you can't deal enough damage, anything that can swim because it will throw you off, anything that is in an open field because you have nowhere to safely rest, anything that is vaguely near water for the same reason as swimming, anything that isn't near tall enough rocks to stay away from it because you still can't safely rest and anything that can turn fast enough to hit you because it will also kill you while latched.

With these changes and the already poor state latching was in Deinonychus is not viable for exploration/travel, nor for combat. It is not viable for group players, nor for solo players. It is not viable for mega packs, for mixed packs, for trophy stealing, for scouting, for hit and runs and pretty much anything else. Deinonychus, in its entirety, is no longer a viable pick because its major strengths have been removed when it already had flaws.

If the development team had the impression that the Deinonychus was in need of a nerf, which I personally do not consider to have been the case, then this was the wrong way to go about it.