

SABERTOOTH 990FX R2.0 BIOS MIA

This piece was originally intended as a forum post, so it doesn't have all the polish, personality, and depth I try to instill in a normal article on the site. Still I felt it was more important that this issue be publicized widely in a timely manner to hopefully save others looking to buy a new AMD 990FX motherboard some of the frustration this subject has caused me. Recently, after several months of saving, I bought an ASUS SABERTOOTH 990FX R2.0 Motherboard and an AMD FX-8350 Vishera CPU to go with it. As you probably would imagine if you are reading this, I felt like a kid on Christmas morning and was eager to get to using my new hardware. The problem is that (at this moment) there is not any (official) way to use a Piledriver CPU with this motherboard. You heard right. Not only does ASUS' latest motherboard the SABERTOOTH 990FX R2.0, which features AMD's newest enthusiast chipset, not support this CPU out of the box there is currently not even a BIOS available from ASUS to support it, either.

There WAS a BIOS that supported Vishera sometime in the recent past but it apparently had at least one bug in it and ASUS removed it from their site (on or around 11-1-12). Now this level of caution and company responsiveness would be applauded if it was not the ONLY BIOS available for this board with Vishera CPU support. Since it is, though, IMO the BIOS should have been left up for download and labeled as BETA, or possibly "unstable--use at your own risk" or something of the sort. As a customer who needs a working computer right now you shouldn't have to resort to searching for the only Vishera compatible BIOS through some unofficial back water channel.

So I sit here still with my new motherboard and CPU hoping that they both work as they are supposed to and wait (not very patiently!) for ASUS to release another BIOS so I can test out my hardware I bought. All the while the clock is ticking on my thirty day retailer return privileges that I might need to utilize should something be broken or incompatible. I don't expect that to happen but I hate to think I may be stuck with my purchases, or forced to seek out the glacially slow manufacturer RMA process, especially since this will likely result in my brand new hardware being replaced with refurbished ones. Personally if I was ASUS I would be embarrassed to continue to sell a product that my customers can not use (if they have a Vishera CPU) anyway.

Again if I was ASUS I would send a note to the retailers stocking this product to please suspend selling this motherboard until this issue was resolved, or at least to label it as not currently Vishera compatible. To my knowledge this has not happened. I am surprised after looking around the internet, as well, that this has not caused more of an ASUS backlash. What is most galling of all is that the original ASUS SABERTOOTH 990FX Motherboard does have Piledriver support. In fact it has TWO BIOS releases that support Vishera CPU, one that offers official support, (1604) and one that offers unofficial support (1503).

Now ASUS deserves mad props for stepping up to the plate and offering Vishera support to owners of the original SABERTOOTH 990FX Motherboard instead of just telling them "buy a new motherboard if you want to use that newly released CPU" as many other motherboard companies have done in the past, some of which are no longer in business today. But, really, should this support have been a priority and have taken precedence over the needs of the SABERTOOTH 990FX R2.0 Motherboard owners sitting at home, many of whom have no working computer despite being out of pocket hundreds of dollars? After all, the original SABERTOOTH 990FX Motherboard is no longer for sale anymore (at least I couldn't find any at NewEgg) and most of its owners presumably already have a working system at their disposal and are just looking to upgrade. By no means is this a bad thing, but should this order of operations really be official ASUS strategy? As always feel free to drop me a line and share your thoughts.

Update: Less than 12 hours after this article went out, the 1006 BIOS has been re-released. Did this piece have anything to do with it? I doubt it. This site is just too small for most hardware manufacturers to take note of us. That being said I can hope that in the future maybe someone sees this and makes note of it the next

time this situation comes around. Me? My parents just got back with the batteries for my gifts, I don't know where they found them on Christmas morning but I am off to play with my new toys.

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