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ANOTHER CODE: TWO MEMORIES!

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ISSUE 155 JULY 2005 E3 2005

I WAS

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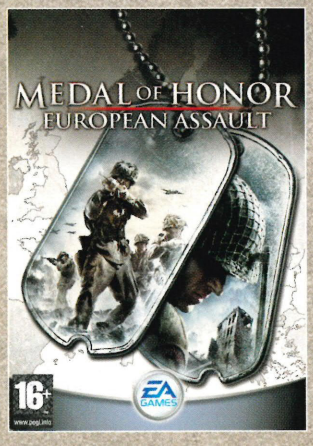

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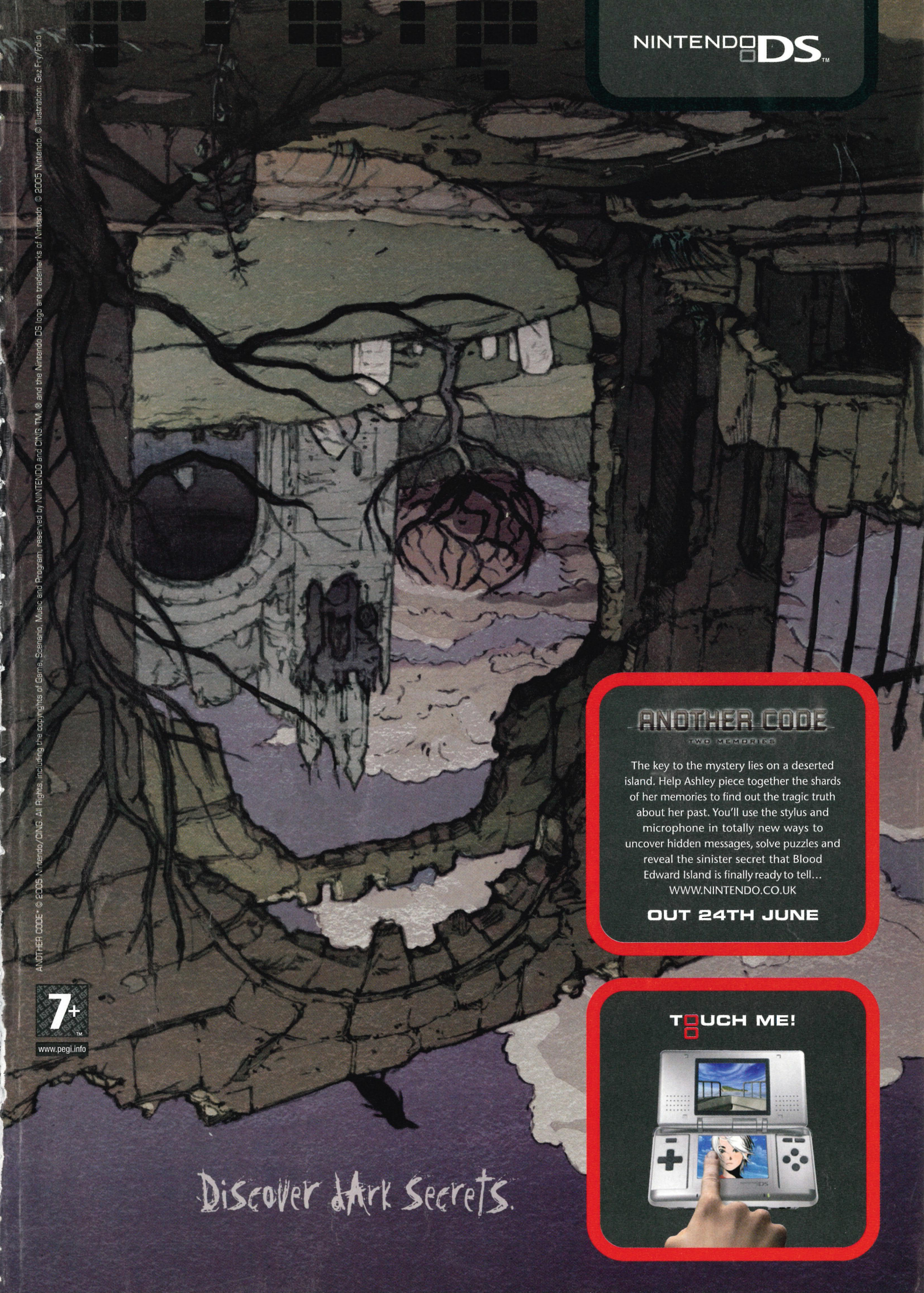

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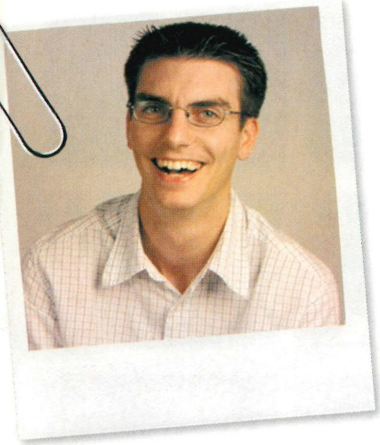

70 games, THAT *Zelda* stand, the Revolution in our hands and nearly getting killed in a 4x4 – this was an E3 to remember.

This month we open the doors on E3, the biggest games show on Earth, and go hands-on with the 'Cube, DS and GBA games you'll be playing before Christmas, and beyond.

The list reads like a galaxy of Nintendo all-stars – eight new *Mario* games, *Zelda*, *Pokémon* and *Metroid*, plus there were meaty offerings from *Viewtiful Joe*, *King Kong* and *Castlevania* to bring the house down.

As for the 4x4 of death, Kingsley was so busy talking about *Nanostray* he jumped a red light and swerved to miss a turning Buick, Jack Bauer-style. We nearly died, but we're here to report the story and the show. Now let the games begin!

Enjoy the mag!

Tim Street

Editor

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(and the E3 game they need NOW!)

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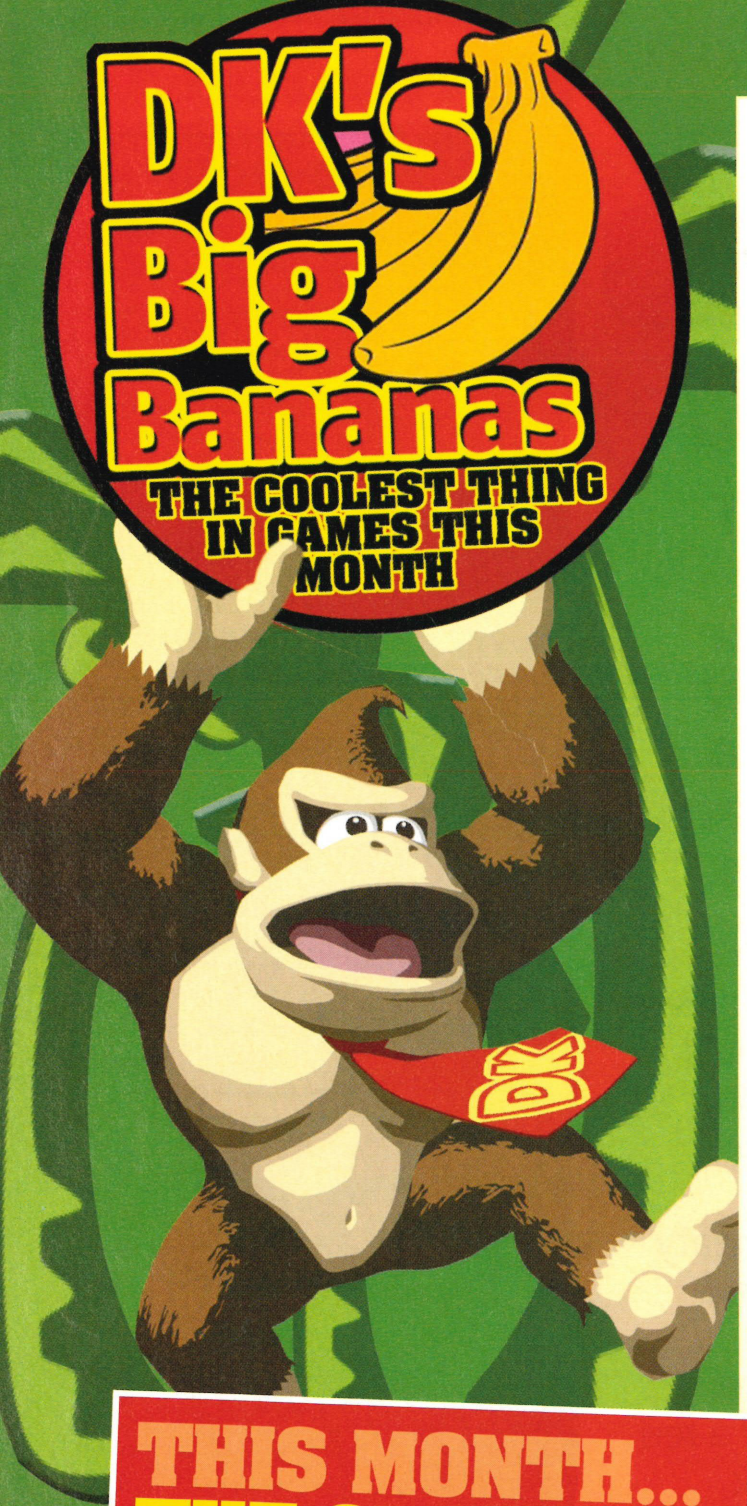
DK's Big Bananas

THE COOLEST THING IN GAMES THIS MONTH



THIS MONTH... THE CLASSICS YOU'LL BE PLAYING ON REVOLUTION!

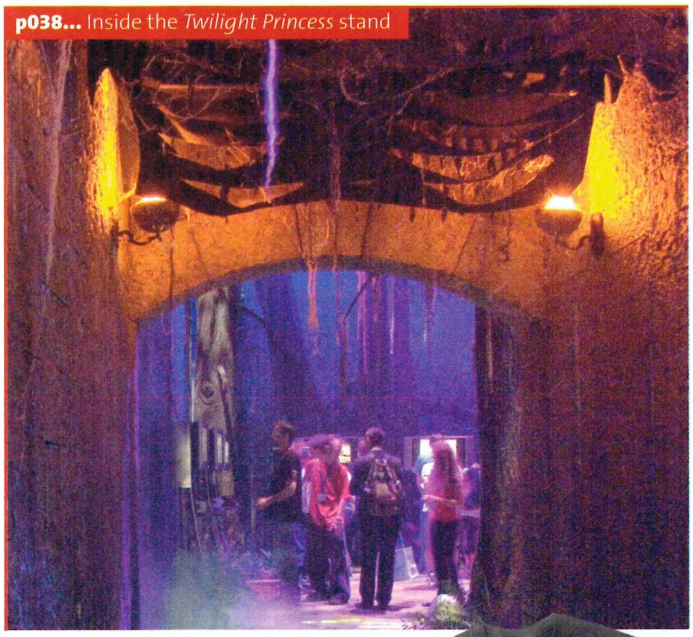
Every Nintendo home console game ever. We thought that sounded cool enough at the E3 press conference, but then we thought about it even harder when we got home. Potentially, EVERY home console game Nintendo ever published is going to be playable on that new machine. That's well in excess of 200 games, even before Nintendo has twisted the arms of third parties to get them on board.

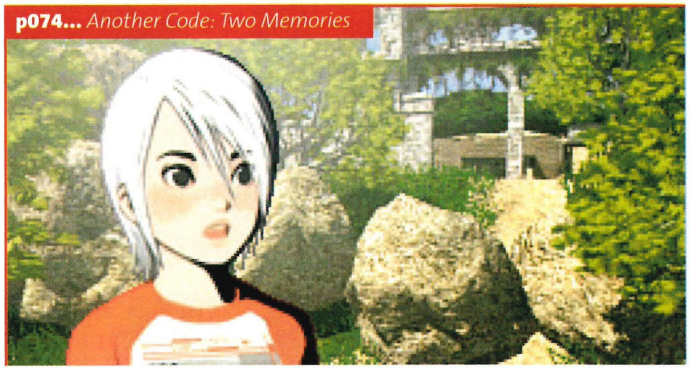
See something in that wodge of games over there that you'd love to play again? Of course you can, stupid! And how much will it cost you? "If there is a fee involved, I can tell you that it will be MINIMAL" said Shigeru Miyamoto. Good lad.

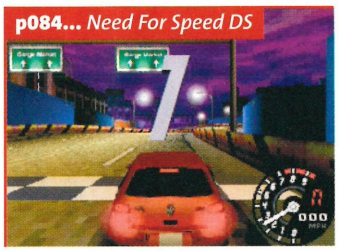
PUNCH-OUT!!
BANJO-TOOIE
DUCK HUNT
SUPER MARIO WORLD
POKÉMON SNAP
STAR WARS EPISODE I RACER
POKÉMON PUZZLE LEAGUE
KILLER INSTINCT
DONKEY KONG COUNTRY
KID ICARUS
YOSHI'S ISLAND
TETRISPHERE
MARIO TENNIS
LINK
MARIO PARTY
MARIO PARTY 2
TETRIS
F-ZERO X
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA A LINK TO THE PAST
CLU CLU LAND
MARIO BROS.
SUPER TENNIS
MARIO GOLF
PRO-AM II
KILLER INSTINCT GOLD
YOSHI'S STORY
POKÉMON STADIUM
BALLOON FIGHT
SUPER MARIO KART
KIRBY'S DREAM COURSE
DONKEY KONG 3
PINBALL
SUPER MARIO RPG LEGEND OF THE SEVEN STARS
FINAL FANTASY
SNAKE'N ROLL
BAD FUR DAY
PILOTWINGS 64
DONKEY KONG 64
STAR WARS ROGUE SQUADRON
SUPER METROID
WILD GUNMAN
MARIO KART 64
SUPER MARIO 64
WRECKING CREW
WORLD CUP
NINTENDO64 RR64 RIDGE RACER 64
THE LEGEND OF ZELDA
USA
DONKEY KONG LAND 3 DIXIE KONG'S Double Trouble!
STARFOX 64
MICKEY'S SPEEDWAY USA
FIRE EMBLEM
STAR WARS EPISODE I BATTLE FOR NABOO
PUNCHOUT!!
Stunt Race FX
KIRBY'S AVALANCHE
DR. MARIO
MACH RIDER
STARFOX FX
MARIO TENNIS
MARIO PAINT
HEY YOU PIKACHU!
UNIRACERS
GOLDENEYE 007
GUMSHOE
SUPER MARIO 2 MARIO MADNESS

Contents

July 2005


p038... Inside the *Twilight Princess* stand


p074... *Another Code: Two Memories*


p084... *Need For Speed DS*

p016... Marko Hein

p106... Win all this cool stuff

p040... *Mario Kart DS*

REGULARS...

Welcome to *NOM* p005
DK's Big Bananas p006
World of Nintendo p010
Club Seal p019
Big in Japan p020
Shop Nintendo p072
Mario's World p091
Toad's Tips p092
Wario's Cheats p096
Subscriptions p100
Peach and Bowser's Royal Mail p102
Chain Chomp's Challenges p108
Boo's Brainers p110
Next month p112
Nintendo Classic p114

REVIEWS...

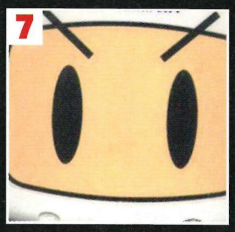
Another Code: Two Memories p074
Bomberman p086
Donkey Konga 2 ..... p078
Medal of Honor: European Assault p082
Madagascar p088
Need For Speed Underground 2 ..... p084
Pac-Man Pinball p089
Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory p080

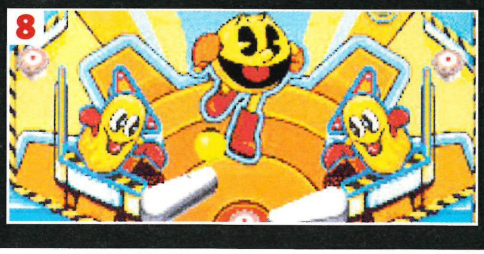
THE COVER STORY!

E3 Special ____ p030

10 THINGS WE DIDN'T KNOW LAST MONTH...

1. Lard-ass Seal could fit into Mike's suitcase unnoticed (Club Seal, p019) **2.** There'll be Limited Edition DSs selling for a MILLION quid on eBay, roughly (Big in Japan, p020) **3.** Video game shop owners around Kyoto would bolt their doors in fear of a delirious British journalist sprinting ecstatically around the streets (*Another Code* Interview, p024) **4.** The lack of a *PictoChat* booth this year prevented Mike from being lobbed out of E3 for drawing genitals (E3 Special, p030) **5.** Kingsley would almost get his pointy nose sliced off by an ACTUAL Stalfos (Hyrule in your Hands, p038)... **6.** ... and we'd almost be killed in a crash because he finds 2D shooters more interesting than traffic lights (*Nanostray*, p064) **7.** In his old age, Bomberman has developed Walk Stupid-Slow Like a Grandad syndrome (*Bomberman*, p086) **8.** Wait... what did we learn about round things in games, again? (Pac-Man Pinball, p089) **9.** A game about drawing pictures would be tough enough to drive you to sobbing and hystericsl self-harm in the corner of the room (Toad's Tips, p092) **10.** Hak still can't execute a Tiger Uppercut (Nintendo Classic, p114)





E3 PREVIEWS...

Advance Wars: Dual Strike ____ p048
Animal Crossing DS ____ p046
Battalion Wars ____ p049
Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow ____ p063
Chibi-Robo ____ p048
Dancing Stage: Mario Mix ____ p050
From Russia With Love ____ p061
Geist ____ p047
Harry Potter and The Goblet of Fire ____ p060
The Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction ____ p071
The Incredibles: Rise of the Underminer ____ p067
King Kong ____ p069
The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess ____ p034
The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe ____ p056
Lost In Blue ____ p062
Mario and Luigi 2 ____ p052
Mario Baseball ____ p050
Mario Kart DS ____ p040
Metroid Prime Hunters ____ p044
Metroid Prime Pinball ____ p051
Nanostray ____ p064
New Super Mario Bros. ____ p043
Odama ____ p047
Pac n' Roll ____ p057
Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney ____ p059
Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness ____ p042
Prince of Persia: Kindred Blades ____ p070
Shadow the Hedgehog ____ p066
Sonic Rush ____ p065
SpongeBob SquarePants: Lights, Camera, PANTS! ____ p068
Super Mario Strikers ____ p042
Ultimate Spider-Man ____ p054
Viewtiful Joe DS ____ p058
X-Men Legends II: Rise of Apocalypse ____ p055

World of Nintendo

INSIDE World of Nintendo

WORLD-WIDE WARRIORS
Online play is getting closer... and cheaper. 10

ALIEN RESURRECTION?
The *Hominid* could be heading to your DS soon. 11

METROID MEN MOUTH OFF
I scream, you scream, we all scream for Ice Beam. 12

ROLLING WHAT?!
Get a Namco history lesson on your GBA. 13

THE WORD OF DOG
Nintendogs and more at The Big N's E3 conference. 14

GERMAN SHEPHERD
Nintendo's Marko Hein is all about *Nintendogs*. 16

MY MEW-TIFUL DS
The latest limited-edition DS is a must for *Poké*-fans. 17

ALL-STAR INVASION
Find out where YOU can play *Zelda* in the UK. 18

ONLINE: FREE AND EASY

Nintendo outlines its bold vision for the future of gaming over the internet.

Nintendo is going online and it's not going to cost you a penny. That was the real big story of the E3 press conference, but was almost forgotten in the excitement of Nintendo President, Satoru Iwata waving around a sexy black box on the stage.

"It's no secret that we didn't invent the concept of online gaming", admitted Executive VP Reggie Fils-Aime, "but we do intend to reinvent it. More people means more fun, especially if you're connecting with them around the world".

Fils-Aime revealed that experienced online games firm GameSpy would be powering the new Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection system and that two killer apps for the system would be available from Nintendo before the end of the year: *Mario Kart DS* and *Animal Crossing DS*. Nintendo also says it has "many more" titles in development.

Online gaming can be a complex affair and that can put less-experienced players off. The percentage of Xbox and PS2 owners playing online games is less than 10%, but Nintendo is aiming far higher than that. "We expect the participation rate to reflect a clear majority of owners - as high as 90%", said Fils-Aime.

Part of the key to making this happen is to remove the barriers to entry. Not only will the system be free, Nintendo is also catering to people who don't have wireless broadband at home by setting up at least 1,000 DS gaming 'hotspots' around the globe. You walk into range with your DS and you can play online. Simple.

"The interface will be as simple and intuitive as every other aspect of DS play", explained Fils-Aime, removing another significant entry barrier. There will be no fiddling about with network settings and the like, as PC owners have had to endure for years to play their friends online.

Online, on the way

The games confirmed so far...

ACTIVISION
- *Tony Hawk's*

BANDAI
- *Mobile Suit Gundam*
- *Digimon World*

FROM SOFTWARE
- *Tenchu DS*

HUDSON SOFT
- *Bomberman*
- *Momotaro Dentetsu World*

KOEI
- *Dynasty Warriors DS*

KONAMI
- *World Soccer Winning Eleven*
- *Jikkyo Powerful Baseball*
- *Castlevania*

MARVELOUS INTERACTIVE
- *Bokujou-Monogatari*
- *Rune Factory*
- *Contact*
- "Real-time-strategy"

NAMCO
- "New RPG"

NINTENDO
- *Animal Crossing DS*
- *Mario Kart DS*

SPIKE
- *Professional Wrestling*

SQUARE-ENIX
- *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles*

The following companies are committed to DS online, but the games are still TBA: Atari, Banpresto, Buena Vista, Capcom, Electronic Arts, Majesco, Mastiff, Sega, Taito, Take 2, Telegames, THQ, Ubisoft and Vivendi.

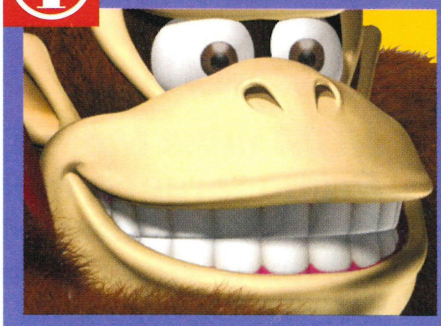
■ **Get your DS hooked up with online gameplay and you'll never need to go near another human again**

The Nintendo Wi-Fi Connection works on two levels. You can either play against people you already know around the world, or have the system match you up with players of a similar ability. Traditional online gaming is a nightmare for the new player, with online veterans using them as cannon fodder at every opportunity.

Fils-Aime made a point of saying every first-party game would be free to play online, suggesting arrangements with third-parties have yet to be made. It's clearly an attractive system to develop for though, with 25 game makers already signed up. Big names like Capcom, Konami and Sega are onboard and Activision is promising an online *Tony Hawk's* title by the year's end.

With Nintendo so committed to getting online gaming right at the first attempt with DS, the future looks bright for Revolution. The internet is a key part of the Revolution proposition and Nintendo is insuring it has the expertise upfront so it knows it can pull it off.

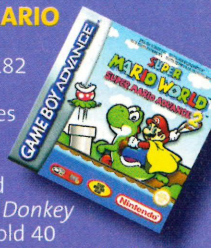
TOO MUCH INFO



MORE MONKEY?

Reputable Japanese games magazine *Famitsu* is claiming that there's a brand-new *Donkey Kong* game in development for Revolution. Nintendo itself has already confirmed that *Mario*, *Zelda* and *Smash Bros.* titles are underway, so we'll see if the ape gets added to the list in the coming months.

NOBODY BOUGHT MARIO



The latest figures are in. Nintendo has only sold 182 MILLION Mario games worldwide. *Pokémon* sales are similarly disastrous, with only a meagre 140 million units sold around the globe. The *Zelda* and *Donkey Kong* series have so far sold 40 million copies each. We may as well all give up and go home.

DOUBLE THE ALIENS?

It was a sad day when we realised that *Alien Hominid* wasn't getting a European release on 'Cube. We howled like burning cats at the thought of yanks laughing in our faces while they blasted the FBI into smithereens. But now there are rumblings that Zoo Digital (who released the game on Xbox and PS2) is planning to publish a version for DS. As we went to press, no more details were available, but we'll keep you posted.

PET YOUR DS

Way before *Nintendogs*, the virtual pet sim that owned your spare time was *Tamagotchi*. After a few years' hiatus, the digital creature is making a comeback on DS. Although details are sketchy at the moment, the game is scheduled for a Japanese release in August, from Bandai. More news about how you'll be stroking the Tamagotchi with your stylus to follow.

Metroid Two

NOM talks Morph Balls with the *Prime* targets: manager of Software Planning, Kensuke Tanabe and Richard Vorodi, Game Designer for *Prime Hunters*.

NOM: **We've heard about a new 2D *Metroid* game in development for DS called *Metroid Dread*. What can you tell us about that?**

KENSUKE TANABE: <laughs> Yoshio Sakamoto is the original creator of *Metroid*. I am in charge of the 3D *Metroid Prime* game, so unfortunately I can't talk about that game. He's hanging around here somewhere so maybe you can speak to him about it!

NOM: **Okay, let's talk about *Prime Hunters*. Where does this adventure fit in the chronological order of the *Metroid* series?**

KT: It's set between *Metroid Prime* on 'Cube and *Metroid 2* on Game Boy.

NOM: **How much is the *First Hunt* demo a taster of what's to come?**

RICHARD VORODI: You might want to look at *First Hunt* as providing more of a tutorial role. We wanted to teach people the morph ball function so we had a race. Regulator taught about moving through the environment and jumping. Survivor taught you how to attack enemies.

NOM: **Not sure about tapping the screen to fire, though...**

VORODI: We've removed that mode now. We just wanted to demonstrate a little of what the DS can do. We've settled on a single play mode now, so we can make the game that we wanted to – it's very fast and very reliant upon precision. The final *Metroid Prime Hunters* game will actually play out like a normal *Metroid* game, where Samus will start an adventure and have to travel to new locations in order to accomplish objectives, power-up and save the day.

NOM: **So there's a single-player adventure as well now?**

VORODI: Absolutely. We've just not shown it yet. Multiplayer has been the focus on *Metroid Prime Hunters*. But we will have a very rich single-player game with a very deep back-story as well. It's been top secret, but I will tell you a little about it.

We're going to change the rules of *Metroid* a little bit with this game. We have added six new bounty hunters to the *Metroid* world. These new guys all have a purpose and a back-story. The story to the game is that there's a new race of creatures, kind of similar to the Chozo and the Luminoth that you've seen in the *Prime* games They're known as the Alimbics.

Now, the Alimbics were ultra-powerful. They were very intelligent and they prospered for many years. But all of a sudden they disappeared and nobody knows why. But the technology they left behind is starting to come alive again and it's very deadly. On top of that there was a mysterious ESP message sent out across the galaxy and seven parties have picked up this message, six bounty hunters and the Galactic Federation. This message tells of an ultimate power or weapon that exists within the Alimbics system, that can be acquired by the first being to reach the Alimbics habitat.

So, the Galactic Federation send Samus over there to check it out, but when she gets there she realises she's not alone. And that's where the game starts to change. For the first time she's not by herself and the game's not so claustrophobic.

■ **One new female-friendly mode has a non-violent approach. It's called kiss-chase**

■ **Celebrate the other bounty hunters' unique alien beauty by making them die**

■ Kensuke Tanabe and Richard Vorodi. One of them was so excited to meet *NOM* he couldn't sit still. Can you tell which?

NOM: **So she has to go up against these six other bounty hunters?**
VORODI: Yes, those guys will do everything they can to steal the power from Samus.

NOM: **Let's talk some more about those bounty hunters. What are their names and where are they from?**
VORODI: Yeah, we can tell you about three of them. Their names are Kanden, Noxus and Spire. All of the hunters have really rich back-stories, but a lot of what we know about them we're actually keeping it as a surprise for the player.

NOM: **Oh, come on!**
VORODI: Okay, okay! Kanden was a failed experiment to create an indestructible warrior, who broke free and is surviving as a bounty hunter.

Noxus is actually a very spiritual character and his mission is to track down all the evil beings in the galaxy. But he has his own perspective on what's good and evil, which may be different to Samus's view.

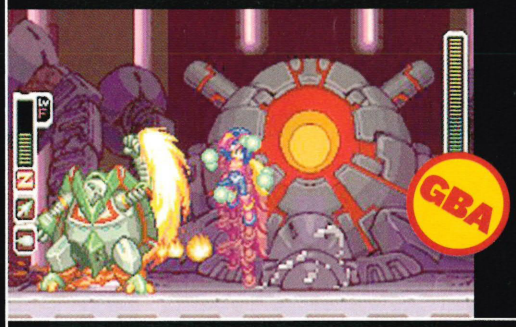
Spire comes from a race of creatures that are now extinct. So part of the reason that he is coming to the Alimbics system is because he is looking for his ancestors.

NOM: **These guys will also be in the multiplayer mode each having their own attributes. How will their skills affect the way they play?**
VORODI: Each one of these guys has an alternate form, like Samus has her Morph Ball. These guys can actually turn into something unique as well. Also, there's a broad weapon system in the game and most of the weapons will have secondary shots like charge shots that shoot alternative projectiles. Each hunter has an affinity with each weapon, so players will have to learn which character is best for each weapon and how to use the weapons in different scenarios.

NOM: **So why have you chosen not to show or even speak of the single-player adventure before now?**
VORODI: The single-player game has a lot of surprises in it and we want to try to keep as many of them secret as we can. You need to play it to understand, but it's better for us to show the multiplayer at a show like E3.

■ Christmas Tree Decoration Beam GO!

We Can't Wait For...

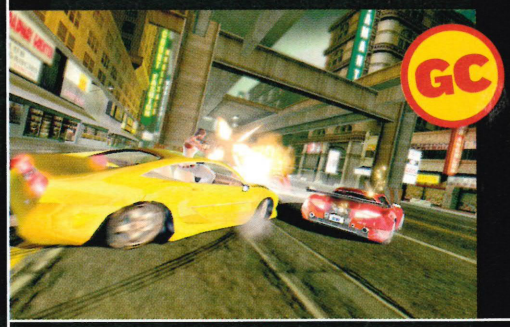


MEGA MAN ZERO 4

■ Because the last three were only about as hard as granite, Capcom is trying again. Going for DIAMOND.

NAMCO 50th ANNIVERSARY

■ 14 retro arcade classics compiled for rich old people. *Pac-Man*? Bored. *Rolling Thunder*?! Get in!



187: RIDE OR DIE

■ Ubisoft's attempt to milk the *Grand Theft Auto* cash cow. At least it doesn't star 50 Cent, thank God.

PAC-MAN WORLD 3

■ Pac-Man bounces back from his pinball shame to go 3D again. Will he still eat pills? Spoiler: yes he will.

A Revolution on stage

Live out an hour of Nintendo glory as we take you through Nintendo's media briefing, minute-by-minute.

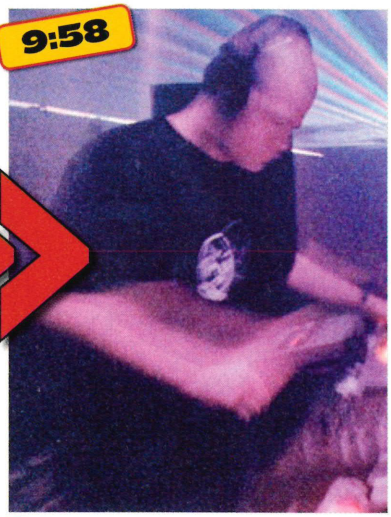
9:15

The fire marshall delayed the show by 30 minutes over safety concerns. Can you see a fire in here? Dumbass...

9:45

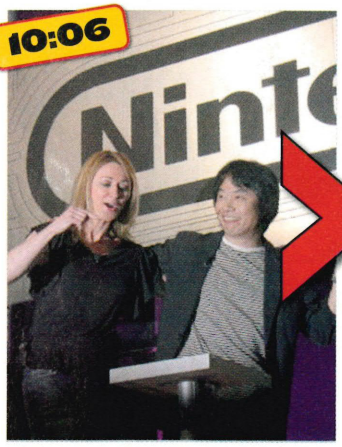
Finally, the marshall quits moaning and the show is on. Mr Iwata gets things moving, followed by Reggie Fils-Aime who shouts about Nintendo's awesome sales history. He rocks!

9:58



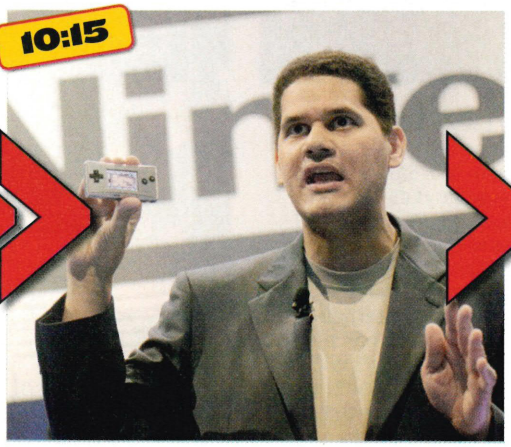
It's *Electroplankton*! No, hang on, that's DJ David Hollands. He shows off a tune he made on the DS 'game'

10:06



Tina Wood of games network G4 is all over Shigsy's Nintendog. It's called Mario and it does handstands

10:15



Reggie whips out a GBA Micro and shows off its top-quality screen and interchangeable faceplates. People were so excited bad smells filled the air

10:20

Iwata-san returns! "You want a Revolution. We've got one". He thrusts the prototype into the air and talks next-gen *Mario*, *Zelda* and *Metroid*... YES!

10:34

George Harrison of Nintendo America arrives to tell us about Mario sports titles, *Pokémon XD* and the Beatles splitting up

10:39

Link's turn! The Hyrule hero stuns us again with an amazing new trailer. The sinister tone and captivating soundtrack filled the room. It was beautiful. And chilling. And OMGZOR!

10:42

The show ends on a high as *Zelda* creator Eiji Aonuma reveals a special gift for all attendees – the *Zelda* trailer on DS!

LOTS OF THIS
PAN!
PAN!
DONKEY KONGA 2
OUT 03.06.05
NINTENDO GAMECUBE
LEADS TO THIS
BONGO-BANGO-HANDO
JUNGLE BOOGIE
PUMPING ON YOUR STEREO
MAN SIZE ROOSTER
SECRET EXTRA SONG
BREAKFAST AT TIFFANYS
ARE YOU READY FOR LOVE
I'M A SLAVE 4 YOU
POKEMON THEME
DON'T LET ME GET ME
LA BAMBA
LA CUCARACHA
BOOMBASTIC
SHINY HAPPY PEOPLE
EINE KLEINE NACHTMUSIK
LOSING MY RELIGION
32 NEW SONGS
GREAT! RED HANDS!
NEED NEW ONES?
Hands R Us
I ROCK
JAM ON THE MULTIPLAY MAN!
I LIKE FISHING BUT I'D RATHER BE KING OF
DONKEY KONGA 2
Nintendo
DRUM STICKS ARE FOR WIMPS. USE YOUR HANDS
www.nintendo.co.uk
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The Kaiser Chief

"Oh my God, I can't believe it!" Marko Hein spills the beans to *NOM*.

Marko Hein, Manager of European Product Analysis and Online. And President of Eyes That Follow You Around The Room

NOM: **Nintendo's E3 press conference started with *Electroplankton* and *Nintendogs*. What's the plan for releasing these ground-breaking titles in the UK?**
MARKO HEIN: We will be releasing both games. *Nintendogs* is out for October, *Electroplankton* we haven't set a date for yet. With *Nintendogs*, Mr Miyamoto had a good feeling about what the market wants. You put your machine on the table and talk to it – I've never talked to my Game Boy before! Have you?

NOM: **Yeah. We've said some bad things to it in our time. So, alongside *Zelda* will it be the big one for Christmas?**
MH: Yes, and *Mario Kart DS*. We received the latest version three weeks ago. The speed has changed and the controls make it feel more like a traditional *Mario Kart* game. We have old tracks and they've made the right decision not to implement any touch screen functionality that would get in the way.

NOM: **A big part of the conference was a wealth of new *Mario* games. Do you think giving sports the *Mario* treatment works?**
MH: Mario is one of the few characters where it works; I couldn't imagine Lara Croft on a kart. I'm not sure why it works, but it does. Nintendo fans are still very interested in Mario because he is always high quality.

NOM: **The Mario dance mat at the show is pretty standard, with blue arrows. Will it be given the Nintendo treatment with mushrooms and other Nintendo icons?**
MH: That's exactly the dance mat I have seen so far. I'm not sure what the final product will look like, but I like your idea.

NOM: **A lot of fans love the whole merchandise thing associated with Nintendo, not just the games. Take the Pepsi bottlecaps – *NOM* readers would love to see those in the UK.**
MH: Whenever we do a T-Shirt or a cap that is Mario branded on the website they are gone within seconds. They are really hungry for the Nintendo franchise.

NOM: **There was a massive delay in getting *Animal Crossing* to market in the UK. Will there be such a long delay this time?**
MH: It's not on our release schedule this year, but we don't have a huge delay this time. It was the biggest localisation project in our history and this is always a nightmare as we are working with six different languages, especially *Zelda* where the text is like a Bible. It will be a big one for early next year.

NOM: **We saw the *Superstar Saga* sequel, *Mario and Luigi 2*, along with *New Super Mario Bros.* on the show floor. But the big question is where's *Mario 128*?**
MH: Everybody is asking the same question right now. It's not currently on any release schedule and is currently not planned.

NOM: **At the Nintendo press conference, Mr Iwata said *Mario* and *Zelda* were well underway [for Revolution]. Will they be sitting alongside Revolution on day one or will there be a Space World show to unveil it?**
MH: We'll make a big boom, probably at E3 next year. They're deciding what games we need, how the system will look and the final specs. We deliberately haven't shown the controller, as this will be one of its most revolutionary aspects.

NOM: **So we'll be playing *Smash Bros.* next year?**
MH: I'm pretty sure!

NOM: **Have you seen anything running on Revolution yet?**
MH: No. We're secretive to the outside, but also secretive on the inside.

NOM: **Micro's not down on any release schedule. Will it be out this year?**
MH: Yes, the second half of this year. We currently have to see about the faceplates, the price and how we bring it to market, because the release schedule is crammed.

NOM: **Have you seen any more of *Zelda* than what's on the show floor?**
MH: Yes! I can't reveal the details, but they've tried to implement many new aspects. There are many references to old games.

NOM: **Like *Zelda* on the Super NES or NES?**
MH: <laughs> Hang on for it! Mr Aonuma mentioned *Ocarina of Time*. That's very close. When you play, it becomes quite logical where it's set and why things happen like that. There are many surprises and *Zelda* fans will love it.

Commander of the Revolution

The main man loves to tantalise us.

Nintendo's E3 press conference unveiled the Revolution prototype to the world, yet one thing remains under lock and key – its controller.

As Marko Hein says on the previous page, the way you'll play games with Revolution will be one of the – s'cuse the pun – most revolutionary aspects of the new console.

But how will it change the way you play and what does it look like? To be honest, only those at Nintendo HQ know, but safe to say work is well underway on the controller. That's what Mr Miyamoto tells us anyway.

At a post-E3 event for Japanese media on June 7th, Nintendo's great games creator declared, "We're at a stage where we're adding and removing various kinds of functions, which has been very fun". According to the great man a lot of money has been spent in making the new controller, with Mr Iwata adding, "I think you will be surprised by Revolution's controller".

So there you have it. A little bit of detail, but with a long way to go until Revolution appears in stores we'll be on the edge of our seats until the controller is unveiled. First pics and details when we get them.

Industry insiders* have likened Revolution's shape to a big, black shark fin of death

*that's us, by the way

Welcome to Animal Crossing Guardian

July Edition, 2005

SPARKS FLY IN JULY

The fireworks display is in town and police are warning all villagers that any animal seen taping rockets to a human will be severely dealt with.

July 14th – Graduation Day
Visit the lake from 7-9pm for a sparkling fireworks display. Want a little windmill to hold? Speak to Redd. Tortimer will give you a rocket.

July 25th – Father's Day
Grab an event card from Tortimer and take part in the morning aerobics sessions to get it stamped. Fourteen stamps gets you an aerobics radio.

Random Day – Your Hometown Day
Catch up with Tortimer on this day to get one of 15 train station models. You'll have to find out the date for this occasion on your calendar.

Pokémon Center

This is when *NOM*'s pet Lugia drops slippery news nuggets into our pages. This month, a brand-new DS and *Pokémon XD*. Activating pant-wetting protocols... Engage!

DARKNESS REIGNS

To be honest, game logos don't usually get our tiny, pixellated hearts beating, but just look at this one for *Pokémon XD*, the GameCube sequel to *Colosseum* that will smack us in the chops this November. It's awesome.

We first set eyes on this game back in *NOM* #150, but this E3 saw *Gale of Darkness* unleashed on the masses, complete with a dark Lugia staring menacingly at us with its glowing red eye.

You'll be able to read our hands-on report of *XD* in our enormous E3 preview special, starting over on p30. Better jump aboard the S.S. Anne and see what all the fuss is about.

WILD MEW CAUGHT!

It seems the power of *Pokémon* has no end over in the Far East with the news that a brand-new DS model will be shipping to stores just as you're reading these very words.

Starring the once top-secret Pokémon Mew, this Nintendo DS comes in a tasty shade of pink, complete with two Mew silhouettes – one sitting proudly on the top, with the other in the left corner next to the top screen.

Limited-edition DSs like this usually go for mega bucks on eBay, but will sell for the same price as a normal DS unit at Pokémon Centers across Japan for about ¥15,000 – that's 75 of your English pounds.

We Can't Wait For...

BLACK AND WHITE

■ The odd PC game where you could create a giant cow god comes to DS. We never saw this coming.

MIDWAY TREASURES 3

■ Yet more grave robbing by Midway. *Super Off-Road* (above) is the star of an all-racing game line-up.

SHOGUN EMPIRES

■ Get feudal on Japan's ass in this touch-controlled RTS. Can YOU be bothered to PLAN OUT A WAR?

ZOO TYCOON

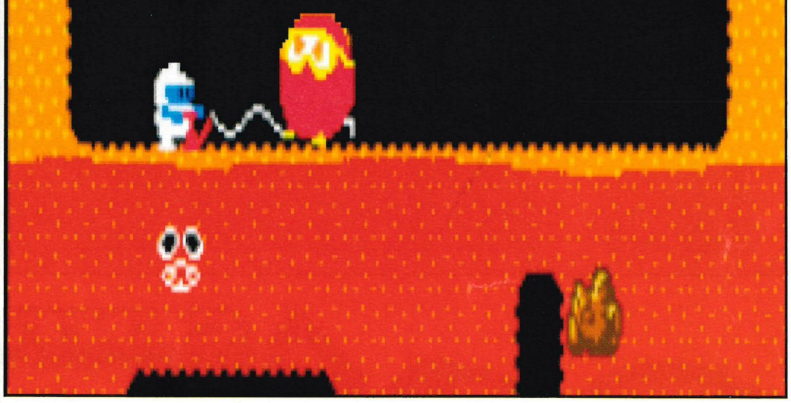
■ Electrocute the bear so he dances! Starve the pitbulls so they fight to the death! Zoos are ace.

Can you dig it?

Underground classic heading to DS.

Namco has just announced a brand new version of *Dig Dug*, starring Mr. Driller's dad, will be released in Japan on DS in August. Tentatively titled *Dig Dug Digging Strike*, the game will be a combination of *Dig Dug I* and *II*. The bottom screen will feature the more traditional view with the top showing an overhead view of the stage – like *Dig Dug II*.

The 1982 classic will be given a make-over and you'll be able to collect all manner of different power-ups, like magnets and bombs, while drilling. There will also be a wi-fi two-player mode in which you need to collect more coins than your opponent. Pray for a UK release. Do it now.



Play all-new Zelda first

Follow the All-Stars 05 tour to Hyrule.

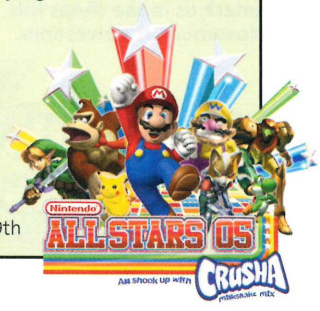
Next month Nintendo is hitting the road with some of its best-know characters as part of the All-Stars 05 tour. The event will be spreading its love at seven locations across the UK and will feature 20 awesome new games for GameCube, GBA and DS.

Perhaps the most exciting prospect of the tour is the chance to play an exclusive demo of *The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess* for the first time anywhere in the UK. Even we haven't had chance to play the game in the UK yet. As well as your replica Master Sword, you might need to take your pooper-scoop along because *Nintendogs* will be playable, too.

As well as the games, there will also be a bunch of other stuff to do. A seven metre high Pikachu bouncy castle will be the perfect distraction for your little brother or sister, so they don't get in the way of you playing *Zelda*. Plus there will be a Star Dash bungee run game.

THE TOUR WILL APPEAR AT THE FOLLOWING EVENTS

Guilfest, Guildford – July 15th to 17th
Royal Lancashire Agricultural Show – July 26th to 28th
Sunderland Air Show – July 30th to 31st
Nottingham Riverside Festival – August 5th to 7th
Eastbourne Air Show – August 11th to 14th
Northampton Balloon Festival – August 18th to 21st
Town and Country Festival, Warwickshire – August 27th to 29th



If you think Crazy Frog is the worst thing since hot-spike bum-torture, wait 'til you hear the Angry Seal single. Here's an exclusive taste of the hit you'll spend eternity listening to: "Hate hate hate haaaate <gasp> hatehatehate haaattte".

SEAL GOES TO JAPAN

Of course I went to Japan with Mike. Do you really need to question that statement? Actually it provided a handy excuse for me to leave the country and avoid some nasty rumours about spearing some *Big Brother* contestants with an explosive harpoon.

Each one of those morons signifies what I hate about this world.

So, I spent some time checking out the sushi bars and hanging with geisha seals. But the weirdest thing was the amount of vending machines, man they were everywhere. EVERYWHERE.

Fish

On every street corner is a vending machine with live fish in. Japanese school children are paid to walk past the fish and fire Super Soakers at 'em every ten minutes to keep them wet. If the fish dehydrate they explode. Every year in Japan over one person is killed due to fish explosions. True fact, right there.

Bird

I think this stupid bird got stuck in the machine. Or maybe birds are used for operating the vending machines. They could push items out with their tiny beaks and cool the drinks by fluttering their wings. It's not a stupid idea! Have you even BEEN to Japan?! Shut up, that's obviously how it works.

Game

All Japanese games are great, right? Wrong. Not everything's *Kururin Paradise*, you know. I bought this expecting a racing game, but I got a frog who spies on people taking off their dressing gowns. I later found out the game name translates as *Toggle Watcher 7: Panty Drop*. I've kept it anyway... for research.

TOTAL SPENT ¥45,600

ACTUAL VALUE £0.23129

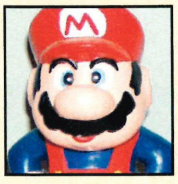
Pants

My mate Dewgong told me you could buy girl seals' knickers from machines. I didn't want to sniff them or anything. I wanted them for my sister... Jeez, what's it got to do with you anyway? I tried to buy some and ended up with bloke's pants. Have they been used? I'll get some work-experience kid to find out.

Head

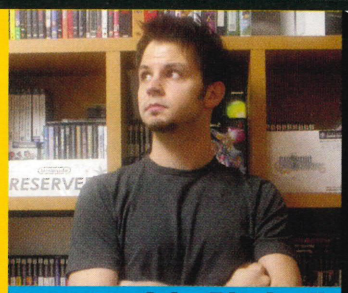
This just scared me. I have no idea what it was for or where it came from. No other machine featured this kind of thing. It was supposed to say comforting phrases of encouragement, but just kept whispering "You're gonna die". I've since set fire to it and launched it into space.

Junk



Ka-ching! That's the sound of me selling gormless idiots loads of Japanese tat they think is cool. This kind of thing is everywhere in Japan and only costs three tiny Yen. Now I'm going to sell it on eBay at bumped up prices. Look out for world_h8r666 if you want quality products, kids.

6 IN JAPAN



reporter John Ricciardi

● DS giveaway ● Fantastic plastic ● Nintendo nap-time

IT'S HOT STUFF

Club Nintendo is back with yet another rockin' members-only promo in Japan. This time, they're giving away 1,000 exclusive Nintendo DS systems as part of their "Hot Summer Campaign", which runs from July 1st to August 31st. All you have to do is either buy a DS or two games from any Nintendo platform (GC, GBA, DS) within those two months and register them on the Club Nintendo website for a chance to win.

The prizes are HOT: Five flavours of DS, each with a different Nintendo mainstay on the cover (200 each of Mario, Wario, Peach, Yoshi and Bowser). Winners will be able to get a custom engraving on their hardware as well.

Back-up prizes include limited-edition DS carrying cases and a Panasonic SD Audio Player, complete with an SD card full of the sweetest Nintendo music.

◀ A sixth, even-pinker variant, featuring Tingle was shelved

▼ Some of the Panasonic Audios played nothing but Luigi screaming. Fact (ish)

TOY STORY

We interrupt this broadcast to remind you that Japan has the COOLEST TOYS IN THE WORLD, as evidenced by...

1. This 1/100 scale master-grade ZGMF-X10A Freedom Gundam robot and his universe-saving, ass-kicking pals.

2. These Kirby figures, showcasing several of his alter-egos in astonishing detail. The giant golden Mario is just a bonus.

3. Pikmin and Kirby plushes, for when you need to win back your woman's heart after playing *Resident Evil 4* all night.

4. Replica old-skool consoles! You might not get it from the pic, but none of these are bigger than a regular GBA cart. OMG!

POWER NAP!

What better way to nap away those lazy summer afternoons than with a Super Mushroom pillow from *Super Mario Bros.* tucked under your noggin? Besides looking totally awesome, this new cushion has a nice bonus: flip it over and it turns into a 1-UP! They also make a "?" Block version, if you've got a problem with fungi.

DS BATTLE ARMOUR

If you're the type who likes to take every precaution imaginable to protect your gear, then the new Protect Armour DS is for you. Slap on the pads and you'll turn your DS into something straight out of a *Gundam* movie. What more could you ask for? To buy them in the UK? Maybe one day!

FAMICOM KEYCHAIN ACTION

There's a bazillion different keychains and phone straps available in Japan, but when it came time to choose one for OUR keys, we went with this: the Famicom controller, symbol of freedom and hope, and arguably the most important icon in the world aside from maybe the Pope. It even lights up if you press the Ⓐ or Ⓑ buttons! Let's see the Pope do that!

BLOOD RED DS

To celebrate the August 8th release of *Jump Super Stars*, the blockbuster collaboration between Nintendo and Shonen Jump, a new DS is to be released, known simply as "Red" (we threw in the "blood" part ourselves). Expect more on the game soon. Goku vs Naruto? Bring it on.

THE AD GALLERY

FEAST YOUR EYEBALLS ON THE LATEST JAPANESE GAMING ADS. YUM.

Akihabara WATCH

How can you not love Japan? Where else would you find a group of chicks in military gear standing out on the street on a random weekday morning to promote the launch of a new game? Only in your dreams, that's where.

In other news, after three long years of delays, Capcom's *Killer 7* is finally here. At last, the "Big Five" (which turned out to be the "Big Four" after *Dead Phoenix* was cancelled) is now complete!

JAPAN TOP TEN

The current best-selling games on Nintendo platforms in Japan

1	*SD GUNDAM G-GENERATION DS*	(BANDAI, DS)
2	*NOU WO KITAERU OTONA NO DS TRAINING*	(NINTENDO, DS)
3	*METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES*	(NINTENDO, GC)
4	*NINTENDOGS: SHIBA & FRIENDS*	(NINTENDO, DS)
5	*NBA STREET V3*	(ELECTRONIC ARTS, GC)
6	*NINTENDOGS: DACHS & FRIENDS*	(NINTENDO, DS)
7	*NINTENDOGS: CHIHUAUA & FRIENDS*	(NINTENDO, DS)
8	*DK: KING OF SWING*	(NINTENDO, GBA)
9	*NARUTO: SAIKYO NINJA DAIKESSHU 3 FOR DS*	(TOMY, DS)
10	*BOMBERMAN*	(HUDSON SOFT, DS)

Source: Mediacreate, week ending May 29th

THE BARK SIDE

Kawai Koinu Wonderful

Nintendogs has taken Japan by storm. Real dogs line the streets, desperate for attention as their owners spend time throwing Frisbees for virtual puppies and entering digital behaviour classes. Well, sorry mutts, the situation's even worse now that _Kawai Koinu_ has hit the shops.

Basically it's a poor man's _Nintendogs_ for the GBA. You're either a little boy or girl who has to adopt and look after a puppy. Unfortunately there are no voice commands or touch controls and your dog has the nerve to crap in his bed the first time you play. We told 大会 (our dog) off and he sulked for the rest of the day. What did he expect? A reward?

It also took 大会 (we think that means Twit) absolutely ages to learn his name. It seemed like we were pressing A for weeks before he realised what his stupid name was. That didn't stop us telling him off though. Every time he failed to recognise 大会 we severely scolded him. Actually, perhaps that's why he crapped on the bed.

The problem is that while you're trying to train your pup, you still have to do all the things that a ten-year-old boy/girl has to do, like go to school. Look, it's been quite a long time since we were at school, but we're pretty sure that a game about just playing fun games with a dog is better than one in which you need to go learn stuff. They should have sent 大会 there because he certainly didn't learn anything at home.

You even have to stop to eat dinner. We looked for the option to shout "Mum! I'm trying to teach my dog to break dance", but it couldn't be found anywhere. Anyway, Twit would have probably just crapped himself in confusion. We did try putting a panda puppet on our hand to see if he'd be happier taking commands from a fellow animal, but he just tried to chew it. We've since set our Alsatian from _Nintendogs_ on little 大会 and let's just say that he was much more responsive to the "kill" command than 大会 ever was.

PIRATE GAMES FOR SALE

PLAYED!

One Piece: Dragon Dream

Pirates still exist. They might not have peg legs, parrots or cannons, but they can still be found terrorising the high seas. It's just now they favour shotguns and speedboats to sails and cutlasses – some probably don't even have the honour to sport a beard. Thankfully Monkey D. Luffy, the star of *One Piece*, is a far more traditional pirate. Oh, apart from the fact he's got rubber arms.

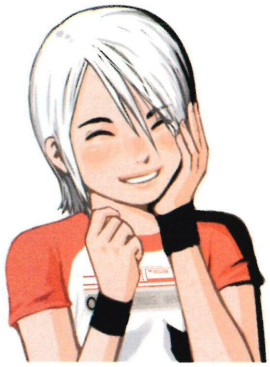
We all know that *Naruto* is MASSIVE in Japan. Every four seconds a child is named Naruto or Sasuke in the Land of the Rising Sun. But nipping at the child ninja's heels is rubbery *One Piece*. There have been plenty of games released starring the rubber one and his pals – *Dragon Dream* is just the latest.

It's a weird hybrid of *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance* and a real-time beat-'em-up. You've got to sail around and team up with weird characters (including something that looks like the love child of a bear and a moose) and collect items like swords, ships and fridges.

To get these items you've got to defeat enemy pirates and bosses. You can control either one character or a team. Each of your pirates has different abilities. Monkey can extend his arms and the bemoose just headbutts stuff. As you go along the pirates learn new and more spectacular attacks – like stabbing enemies with their cutlasses and bashing them over the head with peg legs.

One Piece is currently on Sky TV, so this game could one day grace the shelves of Woolworths. Is that a good thing? Er... umm...

Another interview



NOM flew to Nintendo's headquarters in Japan for an exclusive chat with Cing, creators of *Another Code*, and a crazy sprint around the centre of the gaming universe.

It's not everyday you get to go to Japan. The crazy land of games, animé and insanely cool merchandise is like heaven for us gamer types. For Mike J, that dream became a reality this month, when he jetted off to the East to meet the dudes who brought you the super-innovative adventure game, *Another Code*.

What's it like to make a game for a console you've never seen? How do you dream up original puzzles for that machine, that are different from anything in games before? CEO/President, Takuya Miyagawa, Executive Vice President Rika Suzuki and Department Manager, Taisuke Kanasaki, from Cing reveal all this and more on the making of *Another Code*.

NOM: When did development on _Another Code_ begin?
Rika Suzuki: At the time when we first proposed our idea to Nintendo we only knew a few things about the DS. We were aware that it would have two screens, a touch panel and voice recognition. We presented this proposal to Nintendo based upon this information alone [shows us the proposal sheets].

NOM: So this was put together before you even knew what the DS looked like?
RS: Yes. These were our conceived images of the Nintendo DS. Not Nintendo's. This proposal is dated February 25th 2004, and the final agreement between Cing and Nintendo was reached two months later in April. Only after E3 in 2004 were we given the opportunity to take a look at the DS hardware, so it was only a year ago.

NOM: When drafting your original proposal, which part of the game did you focus on first: the plot or the puzzle-rich gameplay?
RS: The gameplay concept of the game came first, which was to create a launch adventure title for the Nintendo DS. We were aware that Nintendo had not done a game like this since the days of the NES in Japan so, to tell the truth, when we first approached Nintendo we had completely different proposals and none of them were adventure games. I believe there were about three different proposals that we made, but knowing that Cing is a company that's very strong in the adventure game field, Nintendo made a counterproposal that we should come up with an adventure game.

NOM: Once you had come up with the concept for the gameplay, how did you go about making a plot?
RS: What we were given was the opportunity to work on an unprecedented handheld platform, with the two screens, touch panel and microphone. Our original agreement was to make use of these three main features. The other aspect of this contract was that this was our first time to work with Nintendo and we were aware that it focuses on family entertainment, so we really wanted to make the story easily understood yet as innovative as possible. And we wanted the game to be widely accepted.

Originally, when I first started working with Nintendo, I had the impression that it was a child-orientated games company. I still remember speaking with some of the Nintendo staff members about what kind of limitations we had to abide by. That was one of the first questions I asked them. But to my surprise they said there were no limitations. So, for example, they said they didn't care if our hero was to be an elderly person, like a grandfather or something like that. They simply said that we could think as freely as we liked.

That response triggered us to explore many kinds of ideas and at the same time I remembered having a personal aspiration to make a game starring a 14-year-old girl. Fourteen is the age where a girl is still a child, but is trying to become an adult. I had this idea for a long time and I saw this as my opportunity to make this dream come true, and at the time I had many more ideas come to me.

NOM: When pulling together all your ideas, what was the key experience you aimed to create with _Another Code_?
RS: What we really wanted to realise was a situation where the player felt really glad that they purchased the DS. We primarily wanted to use the unique functions of the machine as this was going to be one of the first titles for the DS and we really wanted people to feel that they had got something different from any other game on any other platform. So the number of unique experiences we could incorporate into this title was very important to us.

WALLET PAIN

Mike J visits the shops of your dreams (and his).

You go out in Japan with a wallet the same weight as an anchor. Two-hundred quid translates into a ridiculous 40,000 Yen or so. It's crazy money. It makes you feel rich.

But within an hour or two your wallet will be thinner than Starvin' Marvin' because awesomeness covers the walls of every video game and toy shop you enter. We're talking about a whole new level of awesomeness, here.

■ This shop has Mario pipes round the door. SA-WEET. We need shops like this

■ Millions of the WICKEDEST little figures! We spent 'nuff coin in here

NOM: So what was your strategy behind making the game relatively short? And does this relate to Nintendo's past talk of games not needing to be too long to be enjoyable?

Takuya Miyagawa: When I myself look around at the games that people are playing, I must admit that I think most of them are too time-consuming. They are putting so much information into one game that it is taking people too much time to play. This is far away from the past, when people used to be relaxed and enjoy simpler video games. Relaxed gaming is declining in terms of the number of simple games out there. I don't agree with the theory that a player's enjoyment of a game is equal to the length of time it takes to finish it. As long as we can put enough joy into each play, I believe that time is not the primary element for people to decide which games they play.

We had this discussion with Nintendo and they agreed that it is not the length of time it takes, but the degree of interest in the game. We finally decided that *Another Code* may only last around five hours but we believed we could incorporate enough entertainment within those five hours. I like to play games for about one hour per day. So if within a week I can reach the end. I think this appeals to many gamers.

RS: These sort of [point and click] adventure games have always been played on PCs with the mouse. But now we have the touch screen and stylus as an alternative, which actually works better than the mouse. I have to confess that users are actually finishing the puzzles much quicker than we thought. Having said that, when we say that it has a five-hour completion time, this is for people who are just concentrating on reaching the end as quickly as they can. If you take your time and explore the game you can enjoy it for much longer.

NOM: You said that point-and-click-style games were previously best suited to the PC format. Do you think there should be more point-and-click games on DS and Nintendo consoles in the future?

TM: We really hope to make more games like *Another Code* and also that we can take advantage of the DS hardware from now on.

Being as *Another Code* has attracted so much attention within the industry, we are hopeful that other companies will make similar types of games for the DS. Many Nintendo console and handheld players have not played this [point and click] style of game before so we really hope they will become more interested in the genre.

NOM: So will you be working on a sequel to *Another Code*?
TM: We are hopeful that we can work on a sequel. We could use Ashley once again as the starring character. We especially hope that *Another Code* will be popular in Europe and America because then the possibility of us doing a sequel will be greater.

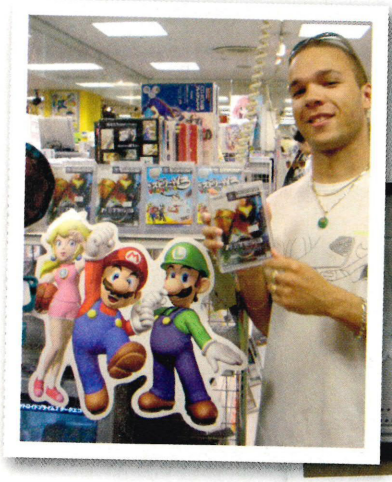
We are intrigued by the DS's capabilities. It's a great portable device, but it often seems more like a home console. People try to enjoy reading electronic books, we can make a lot out of the story line in games rather than speed and action in games.

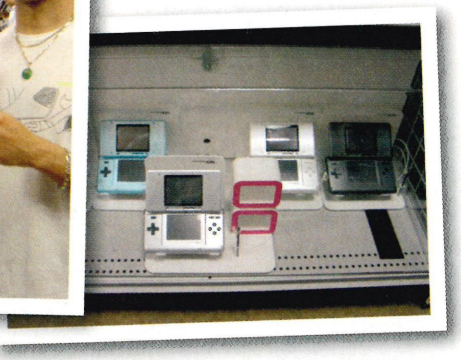
For a long time the games industry has had a challenge making interactive novels and comics, but so far, almost all efforts have failed. I believe that with the DS, we may be able to successfully explore that area of entertainment.

NOM: *Another Code* features some of the most original puzzles we have ever seen in a game. How difficult is it to create original and innovative puzzles on a platform such as the DS?
TM: Because we knew that puzzle solving was going to be an integral part of the game, we actually designed 100 puzzle ideas first. We created some very elaborate ideas [shows us a riddle concept sheet].

At the time, we weren't sure what the DS would be like, only knowing about its two screens, touch and mic features. We had to pick the best ideas we had – the ones that were most interesting and most feasible to make.

Our aim was to make puzzles that took advantage of the DS's hardware. Of course, this was difficult without knowing exactly what the hardware would be like. We tested many of the puzzles and using a process of elimination we were left with only the best ideas to incorporate.
RS: We can talk about this in a relaxed way now, but during the process it was very hectic, I was like a child. But then, it was like the whole team had returned to their childhood. We didn't like to just sit in front of our PCs – we wanted to do so many different things.





NOM: It sounds just like a day at *NOM* Towers. But playing the final result is not crazy at all. It's actually quite relaxing, due in part to a tranquil soundtrack. How do you go about creating music like this?
Taisuke Kanasaki: It was not easy for the soundtrack creator to make the music simply because we initially had little to no idea what the hardware was capable of. When asking the composer to work on the music, we could only explain verbally what the game might be like and how the music might sound. We showed him some concept pictures.

We explained that this would not be a fast-paced game like many other genres and that players should be able to sit back and relax while playing *Another Code*. That is reflected in the final game.

NOM: The sound also changes as the action shifts on-screen. How have you used this to enhance the experience?
RS: The main theme of the game is based around a murder case. What we really wanted to emphasise is the drama of the plot in the mind of 14-year-old Ashley with the changing music.

NOM: You described the game to the composer as one of calmness and relaxation, without fast-paced actions scenes. Was making a game without speed and action an objective from the start of the project, or were action scenes removed during development?
TM: From the beginning of the project, we had decided to concentrate on presenting a strong story line and an atmosphere that's unlike most other games – games that feature guns and combat.

INSERT COIN(S)

Here, small change is king.

The arcade scene in Japan is massive. In the UK, you've got to trek to a pier, or shove your way through groups of moody teenagers to get into The Trocadero in central London to see some decent games. But they're everywhere in Japan. Six-storey buildings full of them.

■ You don't mind playing on thieving claw machines when they're full of *Pac-Man*, *Mario* and other awesome games stuff

■ This was the best claw machine. Up for (unlikely) grabs were some cool Famicom bath towels. 2,000 Yen later, we left, crying

■ The super-awesome drum game, *Taiko no Tatsujin*, took a pounding when we caught sight of it. Passersby were afraid

RS: In the original proposal we had presented some ideas on potential ways of incorporating action scenes into *Another Code*'s puzzle solving. But the more we thought about it, the more similar *Another Code* began to seem to other games, so we aborted all these ideas before development had even begun.

***NOM*: Were there any other major changes to the concept of the game during its development?**

RS: There were many changes we had to make because of the limited memory capacity of the DS game carts. For example, we were thinking of including many more puzzles and the mansion the game mostly takes place in was bigger. At first we were thinking about incorporating some voice-recording functions to the game, but limited memory forced us to abandon that, too.

***NOM*: Are you finding the memory capacity of DS carts a burden for development?**

TM: I don't think that the memory capacity is a problem. We just have to think about which features and experiences will go into the game. Looking at *Another Code*, we are satisfied with the balance of the game.

***NOM*: Being a plot-orientated game, do you think players will return to experience the story again like people do with their favourite books and films?**

RS: We have incorporated many ideas that will hopefully stick in players' memory that they will, from time to time, come back to experience over and over again. Nowadays we see many classic games being remade and re-released, which appeal to people that were emotionally captivated by them as children. We hope there's that special something in *Another Code* to capture players' emotions.

***NOM*: How far do you plan to take *Another Code* as a franchise? Will Ashley join superstars like Mario, Link, Samus or Kirby?**

TM: I really don't know if there will be an *Another* franchise, but I hope to make a sequel to this game featuring Ashley, with an innovative plot and similar gameplay. This is something I'm determined to explore.

Ashley is now 14. Maybe we should wait until she's 16 for a sequel, to see how she grows. For Nintendo, she is an unprecedented type of character. It's not like a *Mario* game. Ashley can be conceived as more of a real life character. If we can have this kind of positioning alongside Nintendo's existing franchises, the opportunity for Ashley to become a big-time franchise will be widened.

THE NINTENDO PALACE

NOM pokes around the HQ of gaming joy.

We got in a taxi and told the driver to head towards the giant shining star in the sky. The one with the eyes, sitting on top of a floating '?' block.

He knew exactly where we were going. It could only lead to one place: the Nintendo headquarters. The holy structure itself. We half expected there to be a gap in the clouds that lets a constant beam of sunlight shine down on the building. Or the entrance to be a giant green pipe.

It wasn't. Actually the Nintendo HQ was surprisingly normal. A Mario clock and a few Pokémon models in the security booth was the only hint at the presence of a building full of gaming masterminds. We didn't stumble on any whiteboards with secret details for *Mario 128*, either. But at least we can say we've stomped our grubby feet all over the place. That's exclusive. Mike resisted the urge to scratch "*NOM* woz ere" into the door of a Nintendo toilet cubicle.

It's the front! No Chain Chomp guarding it. No Pikmin in the grass. They must be round the back

This is Yasuhiro Minagawa, Head of Corporate Comms – he turned Japanese words into sounds we knew

These bland walls stretch through the whole building. That's Mike in a white pillar suit

Security! It's full of Nintendo toys for the guard to play with when he gets bored. His fave toy is Jigglypuff

NOW TURN TO P. 74 FOR THE FULL OFFICIAL REVIEW

What if a simple algorithmic code could crash the Asian stock-market, blackout New York or take control of ballistic missiles?

THIS IS 2007. THIS IS REALITY.

The only programmer who has the key to this algorithm, just disappeared.

Find him at any cost, or the chain of chaos will become unstoppable.

You are Sam Fisher, you are a Splinter Cell.

AS THE ENEMY EVOLVES, SO MUST YOU.

- Fully 3D, 3rd person stealth action
- New moves, stealth skills & cutting-edge weaponry
- Interact with Touch Screen for lock-picking, hacking, etc...
- Wi-Fi Multiplayer Spies versus Mercenaries mode for 2 to 4 players
- Wi-Fi Cooperative campaign mode - perform dual manoeuvres with a friend

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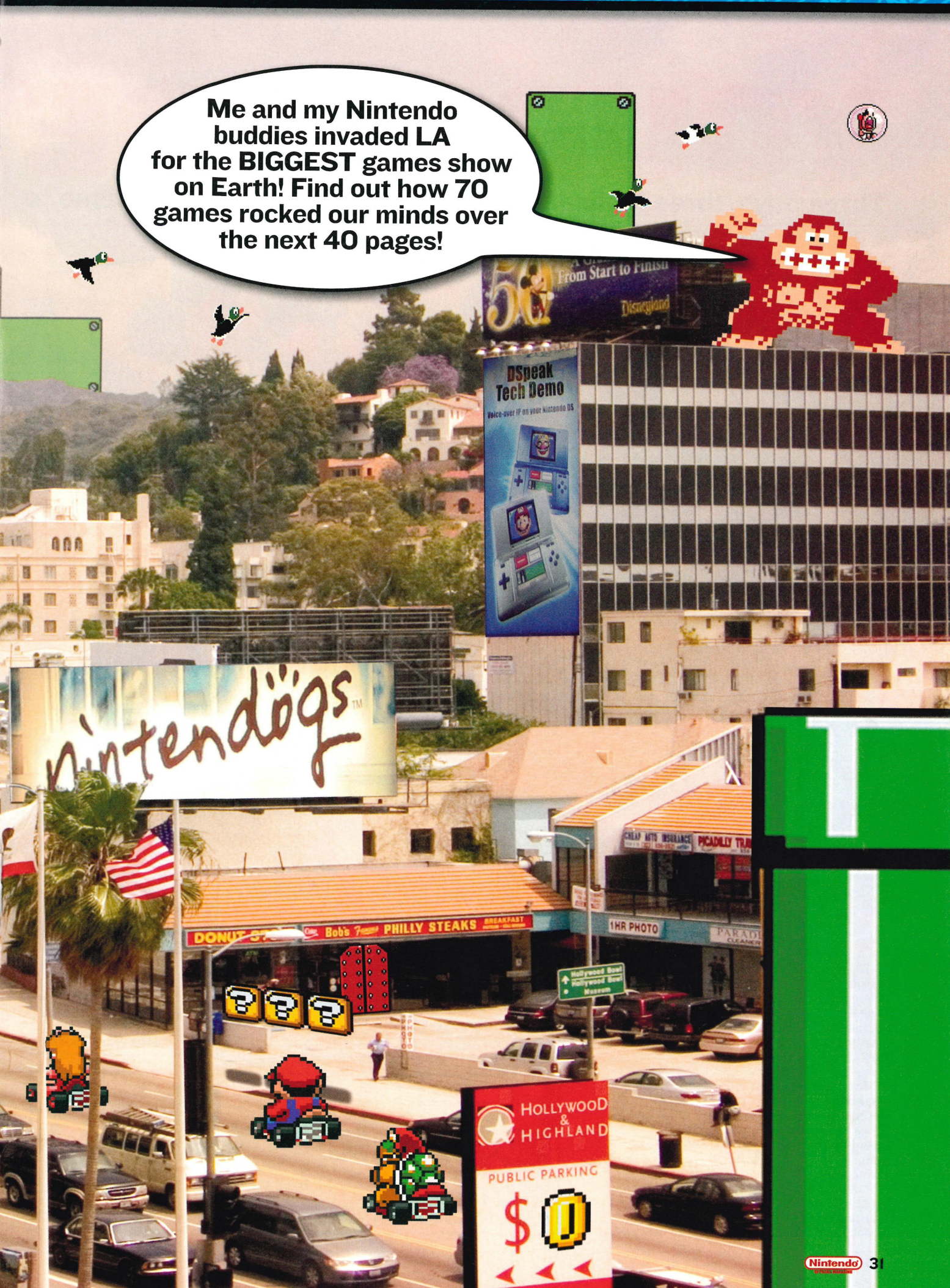
TOM CLANCY'S
SPLINTER CELL
CHAOS THEORY
UBISOFT

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

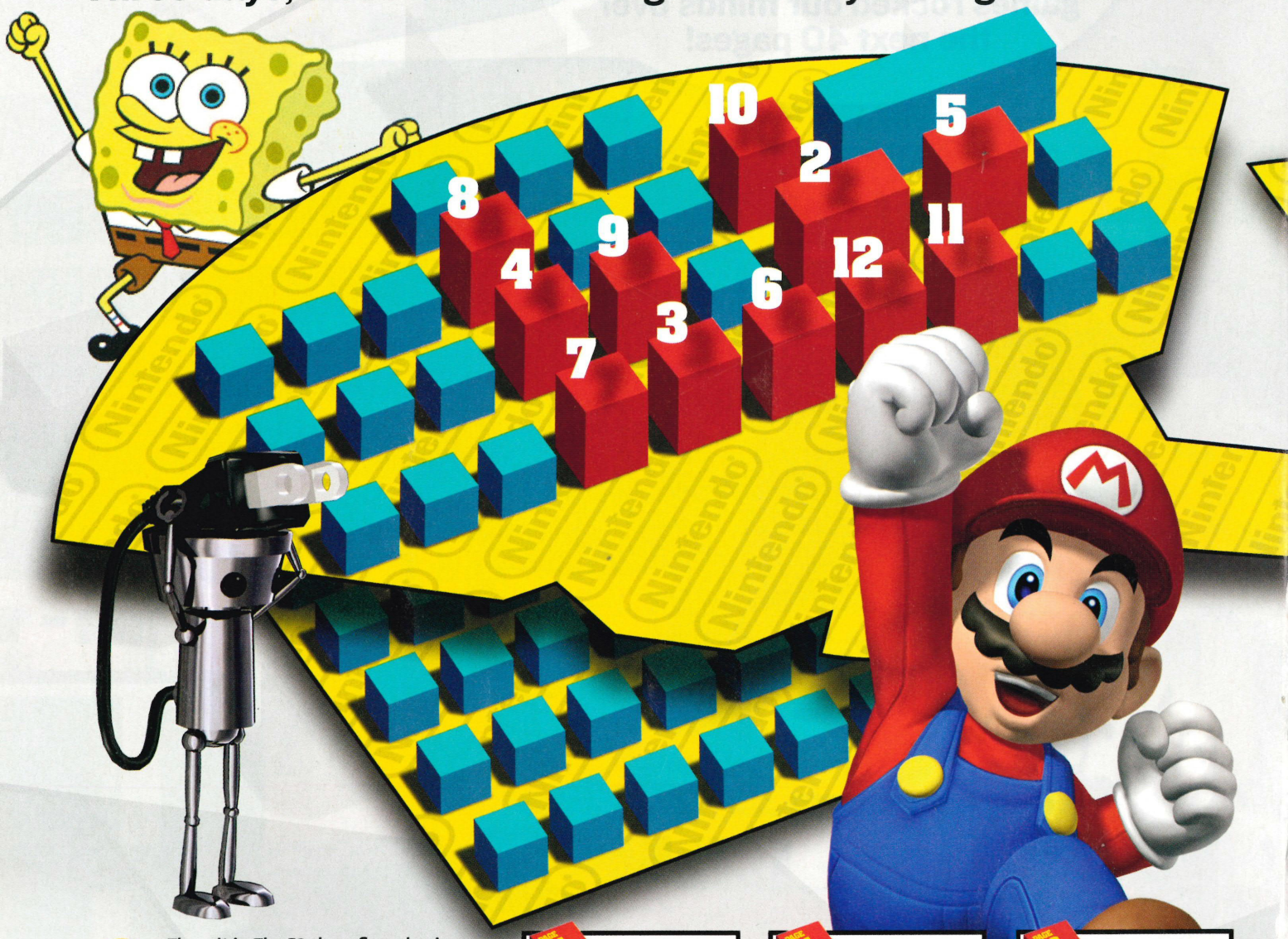
ALWAYS FIRST WITH THE BIGGEST GAMES

E3 Previews


Me and my Nintendo buddies invaded LA for the BIGGEST games show on Earth! Find out how 70 games rocked our minds over the next 40 pages!
From Start to Finish
Disneyland
DSpeak Tech Demo
Voice-over IP on your Nintendo DS
Nintendogs
PHILLY STEAKS
1HR PHOTO
HOLLYWOOD & HIGHLAND
PUBLIC PARKING

YOUR GUIDE

Three days, three halls and 70 games to fly through. Welcome to



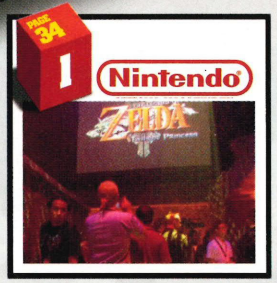
There it is. The E3 show floorplan in a convenient, shrunk-to-fit-on-*NOM*'s pages kind of way. This is where the games happen every year.

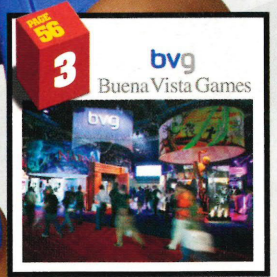
E3, or the Electronic Entertainment Expo to use its God-of-Games-given name, takes place in the smoggy downtown centre of LA at the vast Los Angeles Convention Center.

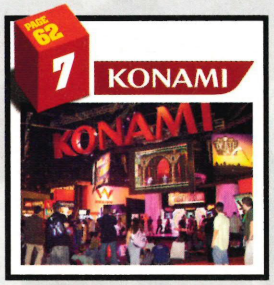
The show takes place over three days, this year starting on Wednesday, May 18th and ending the following Friday. The day before is traditionally when the Nintendo press conference takes place.

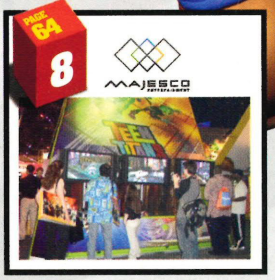
The Convention Center is enormous and is the annual gaming mecca for thousands of journalists, exhibitors and attendees. It's not open to the general public though, it's a trade-only event for over 18s, so you'll have to disguise yourself as Mike and doctor your passport if you think you're getting in.

Over the next 38 pages you can read our reports on the 70 games we played over the three days, starting with the mighty *Zelda*. For a quick guide to what we've got, check out the list on the far side.







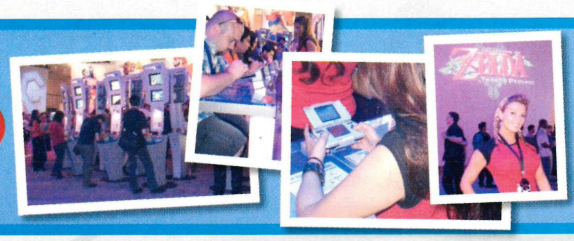


TO E3

THE gaming mecca, E3 2005.

IT'S YOUR E3 CHECKLIST

THE GAME	THE PAGE
A Boy and His Blob	p64
Advance Wars: Dual Strike	p48
Age of Empires: The Age of Kings	p64
Animal Crossing DS	p46
Batman Begins	p61
Battalion Wars	p49
Bratz: Rock Angelz	p68
Bust-A-Move DS	p64
Call of Duty: Big Red One	p55
Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow	p63
Chibi-Robo	p48
Chicken Little	p56
Crash Tag Team Racing	p71
Dancing Stage Mario Mix	p50
Donkey Kong Country 3	p53
Dragon Booster	p63
Dynasty Warriors Advance	p53
Fantastic Four	p54
Frogger Helmet Chaos	p63
From Russia With Love	p61
Geist	p47
GoldenEye Rogue Agent	p61
Guilty Gear Dust Strikers	p64
Gunstar Super Heroes	p66
Harry Potter and The Goblet of Fire	p60
The Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction	p71
The Incredibles: Rise of the Underminer	p67
King Kong	p69
The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess	p34
The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe	p56
Lost In Blue	p62
Mario and Luigi 2	p52
Mario Baseball	p50
Mario Kart DS	p40
Mario Party 7	p52
Mario Tennis Advance	p52
Marvel Nemesis: Rise of the Imperfects	p60
Metroid Prime Hunters	p44
Metroid Prime Pinball	p51
Nanostray	p64
New Super Mario Bros.	p43
Odama	p47
Pac N' Roll	p57
Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney	p59
Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness	p42
Prince of Persia: Kindred Blades	p70
Rebel Star Tactical Command	p57
Scooby-Doo! Unmasked	p68
Screw Breaker	p52
Shadow The Hedgehog	p66
Shrek Superslam	p54
The Sims 2	p60
Snowboard Kids	p53
Sonic Gems Collection	p66
Sonic Rush	p65
Spartan: Total Warrior	p66
SpongeBob SquarePants	p68
Starcraft Ghost	p71
Super Mario Strikers	p42
Tak: The Great Juju Challenge	p68
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 3	p62
Tony Hawk's American Wasteland	p55
Touch Golf	p52
Trauma Center: Under the Knife	p53
Ultimate Spider-Man	p54
Viewtiful Joe DS	p58
WWE: Day of Reckoning 2	p68
X-Men Legends II: Rise of Apocalypse	p55
Yu-Gi-Oh! Nightmare Troubadour	p62



STAND 2816: NINTENDO

You're not thick, you know gaming masters when you see them. Their first party games made a lot of people excited – one bloke even proposed on the stand!

Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess

Eiji Aonuma's head is the treasure chest and this is the ultimate treasure. People stared as we screamed "NA NA NA NAAA".

We're not violent people (honest) but we were so eager to get our hands on *Zelda* we almost resorted to TIGER UPPERCUTS when waiting for some geezer to get off the *Zelda* pod.

Seriously, this is *Zelda* we're talking about. The game of games. We were looking at the first playable version of *Twilight Princess*, so excited our vital organs were seizing up. Our pupils were locked onto the screen. Forget blinking or breathing – they're mere reflexes, secondary in importance to *Zelda*. One punk was all that stood between our itchy fingers and the pad of gaming heaven. In five of the longest minutes of our lives, we could have flipped at any second and ruined him to get the pad.

Then he handed it over. We swiped it away and stood inches from the screen. GLORY! You don't have your first go on a new Zelda game every day. But this time it was extra special. Just look at this game – it's the most beautiful thing you've ever seen in your life. No exceptions.

There were two different demos, each with two levels. The first level we played was Toaru Village. No tutorial needed, we've hammered *Wind Waker* – this basically plays the same, which is great. You can't better perfection. You start off in a small field with some goats.

This guy next to you tells you to call Epona using Horse Grass (there's no Ocarina here). Then, once on horseback, you have to herd the goats into a barn. This version of Link is no big hero to begin with - he's just a shepherd on a farm with no idea of the epic fate that awaits him.

After all the goats are safely in the barn you leap a fence and head off into Toaru Village. It's here where you see how alive this game is. Toaru Village, apparently situated just outside of Hyrule, is a tranquil place with picturesque cottages and a beautiful flowing stream – like Kakariko Village, only ten times prettier.

Lia, the mayor's daughter and close friend of Link, stops Link in his tracks and yells at him for jumping

❑ Link explores a dense forest

❑ You want some, 'eh BAT?

❑ Reality looks crap in comparison

❑ Link goes to extreme lengths to avoid the smell of his own farts

GAMECUBE UPDATE

❑ Stone vs flesh. In real life our money would be on the killer statue

Aonuma speaks #1

Q: With the feedback you got from Wind Waker, how have you moved into the more realistic approach of the new game?

A: *Opinions of Wind Waker's style were evenly split. With feedback we got from that, and looking back at Ocarina of Time, we decided that the more realistic Zelda was the best of the Zelda series and so wanted to make an adult Link.*

Aonuma speaks #2

Q: Why does Link start out in the game as a cowboy?
A: *The Hyrule in this realistic representation is so big, the idea of Link having to walk across it is not realistic. So Link was obviously going to need his horse. For it to be realistic that Link is a good horseman, we wanted it to start with him as this cowboy Link. He's not really a cowboy, he's more of a Shepherd but most Japanese don't understand the word "Shepherd" so the development team decided to use the word "Cowboy" to describe him. Although he is not a western-style cowboy. Another bonus is that you'll also be able to name the horse yourself this time.*

fences on Epona and hurting the horse's foot. All of the speech is still done through on-screen text but the words come to life with more characteristic animations than ever before. Link hangs his head in shame, only peaking up briefly as he gets a scolding from Llia – the amount of personality in this game is stunning.

Llia heads off to treat Epona's sore foot at the Water Springs, which leaves you with full roaming privileges in Toaru. You could just go straight on to find Llia and Epona but exploring the town further, you will encounter many side tasks and quirky little events. There's so much to see and do in the relatively small Toaru Village, we can only imagine the endless amount of interactivity that'll be in the rest of the game.

Speak to a distressed-looking woman and she'll ask you to chase after her baby's cot that's, somehow, ended up in the stream and is drifting away. You can jump in a little boat and paddle after it. If you paddle the opposite way up stream, you'll find a secret enclosed area with a little dog that'll jump into your boat.

Go back to the main area and the little fellow will hop out and follow you about. Wander to another area and you'll see a bloke throwing stones at a beehive. Then the bees wake up and swarm him as he tries to escape. It's little touches like these that gives *Twilight Princess* more life than we've seen in any previous *Zelda* game.

Moving on, the next area has a huge tree house where it seems the kids of the village go to play. One of the boys, Colin, says he'll show you to Llia but the other boys won't let you pass until you teach them some sword skills. The little punks are every bit as feisty yet charming as the Killer Bees gang in *Wind Waker* who demand you play hide and seek with them. So you get a big stick and hammer a scarecrow a few times. They are wowed and they let you pass. »»

❑ **There's no jousting ref. Why doesn't Link just use his ARROWS?**

You find Llia with Epona in a natural spring. It's stunning. The soft haze of light from the sun shines through the trees making sparkles on the rippling water. The water looks too awesome, by the way. That's your GameCube running in HYPER GRAPHICS mode, it seems.

But the tranquil tone set by the game so far is soon put to an end when a brute riding a giant boar smashes onto the scene and knocks Link unconscious. When Link awakens, Colin and Llia are gone. Link explores the path the boar escaped down. He sees a door engulfed in a strange dark energy, but as he peers in, a hideous hand lunges out and pulls him in. That's the end of the Toaru demo level and the beginning to a dark and sinister plot. A plot that could make for a *Zelda* experience that's equally as sinister as *Majora's Mask*, if not even more so.

❑ Friends for now, food for later

Just like in *Ocarina of Time* and *A Link to the Past*, there will be light and dark versions of Hyrule in Link's latest adventure. Plot details are still limited but what is known is that the dark world, termed the Twilight Realm, is a colourless and dead looking place – hence the grey monotone screens you saw in the last issue. As we understand, the darkness of the Twilight Realm is engulfing light Hyrule as evil creatures use portals to enter the light world. This no doubt spells doom for all of Hyrule.

As we revealed last month, Link turns into a wolf. Exact details about the reasons for his transformation are sketchy, but it would seem from screens that it is strongly related to Link's travels into the Twilight Realm. The trailer from this year's E3 shows Link's transformation. He walks down a dark, overshadowed pathway as he suddenly shrieks and falls to his knees. Focusing on his face, you see his appearance begin to morph as his face stretches and a snout appears with sharp teeth. It's spine tingling stuff, like when you first saw Link put on the cursed Deku Mask in *Majora's Mask*.

❑ Monkeys pick their bums, btw

❑ Link's brave. We'd be sprinting

We can't wait to see how the plot unfolds, but we know it all kicks off with the brutal kidnapping of Colin and Llia. That's where the second demo level at the show starts.

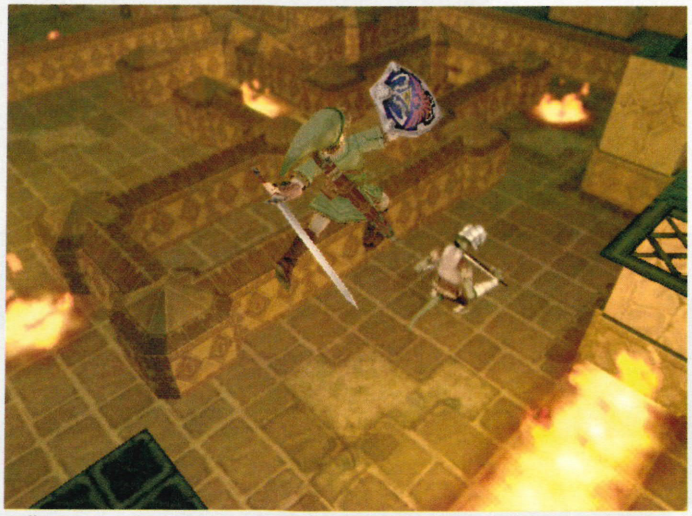
The Marauder Battle stage puts you on horseback in the far-reaching Hyrule Field. Again, it looks too good to be true. The boar-riding enemy that kidnapped Colin and Llia appears. He yells, then holds up a huge pole with a lifeless Colin tied to the top. It's time to whack this dude. As you give chase you are forced to fend off smaller enemies that are firing arrows at Link. The weather changes during the battle from a beautiful sunny day to a raging thunderstorm. It's tense, as you

Aonuma speaks #3

Q: Where does *Twilight Princess* fit in the chronology of the *Zelda* series?
A: *It takes place a few decades after Wind Waker.*

Aonuma speaks #4

Q: Animals seem to play a strong role in the game. How much of this will we see in the E3 demo of the game?
A: *As you saw, Link can transform into a wolf when he is pulled into the Twilight Realm. When Link becomes the wolf he'll be able to speak to other animals. He'll then be able to learn things that he wouldn't be able to in his original human form. Using the wolf's abilities to progress through the game was one of the big themes of this project.*



❑ "Whoops. I accidentally fell off that ledge and stabbed your head."

use Link's shield for protection, and lunge in to take out the boss dude. The main guy takes quite a beating, but he soon falls and the game cuts to a completely different scene.

This scene, another demonstration of horseback battle, is a jousting challenge that takes place in a spectacular castle's grounds. The whole place is on fire as you and the Marauder charge at each other on a long stone bridge over a deep chasm. You ready your sword and at the last moment, dodge Epona to the side and slash the goon on the hog. Time your dodge wrong and you'll be slammed off the bridge to your death. But we made short work of him with our king jousting skills, to complete the Marauder Battle level.

Next up was the Forest Temple. Just like in previous *Zelda* games, each temple will have a theme. The Forest Temple is a beautifully constructed green temple, similar to the one out of *Ocarina of Time*, but looks a millions times better.

This stage shows that dungeons crammed with classically cunning *Zelda*-style puzzles will remain a big part of *Twilight Princess*. It also shows that even small, claustrophobic rooms and corridors will look equally as mind-blowing as the huge Hyrule Field. The atmosphere is eerie as literally thousands of little spores hover around in hazy forest rooms, and foliage kicks up under Link's feet as he scuffles with enemies.

Aonuma speaks #5

Q: We have seen Link using a boomerang once again. But this one is different. What's the new element there?
A: *As you can see, when Link throws the Gale Boomerang it makes small whirlwinds. The item is familiar but we wanted to revitalise it with new gameplay for the new game. We've done this throughout the game and Zelda fans will recognise many other familiar items with new features, as well as some all-new items.*

❑ There's a horse tail thief about

❑ Link needs a flea-picker now

The temple used to be the home of a friendly monkey tribe when evil creatures invaded and imprisoned the tame and defenceless primates. As you work your way through the temple, you encounter a monkey being chased by an evil baboon. After taking out a rope bridge, he scoots off leaving Link and the monkey without a path forward.

But the monkey has a plan. He leaps up and grabs a pole that stretches across the gap ahead. Clutching the pole with his feet, he hold his hands out for Link. We were nervous. He wanted us to JUMP? We took the leap of faith, Link grabbed on to the monkey and swung across safely. Win.

Throughout the temple you will encounter more of his monkey friends, trapped in various different ways. Rescuing them allows you to swing across bigger gaps. But as with every Zelda temple – the key to completing the puzzles usually involves the main item found in that temple. Enter, the Gale Boomerang.

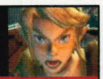
Just like the old boomerang, you can lock on to a number of targets for the boomerang to hit on it's round trip back to your hands. But the Gale Boomerang also creates small cyclones as it travels through the air. You don't get to see how this new power comes into play in the demo but Nintendo says it'll be vital to solving number of new puzzles.

You make plentiful use of the Gale Boomerang's lock-on feature in the final of the four levels, Temple Boss, the end fight in the Forest Temple. You battle this giant and fearsome-looking piranha plant in a dark and dank cave. The snappy plant is perched in a pool of poisonous liquid so you can't get near. In one throw, you must latch the Gale Boomerang to an explosive pod and smash it into the boss' head. BANG! Down he goes and in traditional *Zelda* fashion, you get a few seconds to swipe at a revealed weak spot. A few rounds of that and the final stage of the demo was over.

Are we satisfied? Hell no. We need this now. It takes the familiar mechanics and traditions we all love, and carries the *Zelda* series into an unparalleled level of genius. Nintendo is determined to make the best *Zelda* ever. It seems they're well on their way to succeeding. This game is going to be legendary.

❑ Link runs out of arrows so Epona rears up to her hyper nostril-kicking stance. POW!

E3SENTIALS



MULTIPLAYER: NO
RELEASE: NOVEMBER
REVIEW: IN THE AUTUMN

PREDICTED SCORE

Twilight Princess lives up to the hype. It looks stunning and plays flawlessly. There's not a more important game in the world right now.

95% PLUS

TURN OVER TO SEE INSIDE THE ZELDA HYRULE STAND

Hyrule in your

NINTENDO PULLED OUT ALL THE STOPS TO SHOW OFF MY LATEST QUEST, TURNING A LITTLE BIT OF LA INTO HYRULE.

ARRIVING IN THE FOREST TEMPLE, FANS WERE AMAZED!

BAD SHIRT, MATE, YOU'VE NOT EVEN MADE AN EFFORT FOR *ZELDA*!

WE TRIED NOT TO LET UGLY PEOPLE IN, BUT WE MISSED THIS ONE.

THIS IS AN INTERACTIVE STREAM! HOW COOL IS THAT?

OH NO! BATS! AH-HEM, I MEAN, I SHALL SMITE YOU, WINGED FOES.

THIS WOLF DID A LOT OF CHARGING AROUND AND GROWLING.

hands

As if being able to play the new *Zelda* adventure wasn't enough – look at WHERE we played it.

The queue to play *Zelda* went on for the best part of half a mile. We think. We're not sure because by the time we'd tracked back to the sign that said "minimum wait THREE HOURS" our feet were hurting too much to go on.

We pitied the people at the back. But we knew the wait was worth every ankle-cramping minute. A wait that brought not just a go on The Game of the Show™, but a passport to Hyrule itself.

We knew what awaited, because *NOM* had slipped on its Pegasus Boots and sprinted in the back way hours earlier, beating the queues to bring you this amazing guide to the *Twilight Princess* stand.

We stepped in. Thunder rolled. Lightning flashed, illuminating a leafy forest temple straight out of *Ocarina of Time* and 30 GameCube pods already besieged by rabid *Zelda* fans. Strains of Epona's Theme floated around in the twinkling lights, echoing from ancient tree trunks. You could breathe the Hyrule magic.

Further into the stand, flickering torchlight picked out the cobweb-draped walls of a sinister dungeon. We nearly lost our head to a murderous Stalfos. Ghosts crawled the walls. And a HUGE screen endlessly played the best game trailer ever. We wanted to stay there forever. But we HAD to come back and tell EVERYONE about it.

A MASSIVE SCREEN SHOWED FOOTAGE NOT IN THE NEW TRAILER.

THIS STALFOS SMASHED AT HIS CELL BARS AND HOWLED.

THREE HOURS?! YOU HAD TO BE HARDCORE IF YOU WANTED A GO.

GAMECUBES WERE WELDED IN AND COULDN'T BE NICKED.

IT'S SO GOOD THIS GUY IS ACTUALLY VIBRATING.

GHOSTS FLITTED OVER THE WALLS LIKE... ER, GHOSTS AN' THAT.

PUNTERS JOSTLED FOR A FEW MINUTES ON THE GAME.

FISH DIVED AWAY FROM YOUR SPLASHING FOOTSTEPS!

I TRIED TO HAVE THIS ONE KILLED, BUT HE ESCAPED.

YOU COULD GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO SMELL HIS ROTTEN BREATH.

AMBIENT LIGHTING MADE YOU FEEL YOU WERE *IN* THE GAME.

THIS GUY GLUED HIS FACE TO THE SCREEN. HE'S STILL THERE NOW.

❑ Are we mad? Keep staring at Bowser's kart and it looks like a face

❑ Are tiny heads replacing karts?

❑ No! Look at the top screen, fool

Mario Kart DS

Retro tracks, lush 3D graphics and wireless internet multiplayer. In our world that makes this the *Mario Kart* game of justice.

Rushing over to play *Mario Kart DS* at E3, we had just one objective – to ruin EVERYONE. We don't like being defeated because we've been playing *Mario Kart* since the Super NES version. And we're the kings of it. FACT.

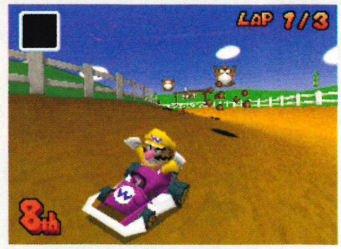
Slumped over the awkwardly-positioned DS unit, we had no time for the killer neck pain. All we cared about was that seeing shiny number one on our screen. We let off Red Shells and dropped Bananas using every strategic trick in the book. And they all worked. If you're a fan of *Mario Kart* games, your bond with *Mario Kart DS* will be instantaneous.

There are no pointlessly forced touch-screen innovations to ruin the game here – this is proper *Mario Kart*. You bang the A button to floor it and zing round courses with wicked power-sliding skills. You grab items and unleash them to batter opponents and cruise to the front with a big grin on your face.

Fans will even recognise the tracks – all the best ones from past games in the series have been remodelled for the DS. In the E3 demo we saw ultra-classics like Mario Circuit 1 from *Super Mario Kart* on the Super NES, Moo Moo Farm from *Mario Kart 64*, Peach Circuit from the GBA version, and Luigi Circuit from *Double Dash*.

The GBA and Super NES courses, which were originally 2D, have been remodelled in full 3D, with retro-style backgrounds. It looks so cool. The 3D tracks from the N64 and GameCube are pretty much identical to the originals and look great on the small screen. These tracks were all in a suitably named Retro Cup.

Of course, *Mario Kart DS* will not only feature recycled tracks – it'll also have loads of brand-new courses made specifically for the DS version. On the E3 demo, the Nitro Cup featured four new tracks. The Figure-Eight Circuit is the basic tarmac track



❑ Skid marks? Leave them all the way through Luigi's pad. We dare ya

❑ Aerial view? It shows the power of DS. You ain't getting this on a GBA

we've seen in the numerous early screenshots released by Nintendo to whet our appetites.

Yoshi Falls is one of the best looking tracks we've seen in *MKDS* so far. You race in a massive canyon with huge waterfalls flowing down the cliff faces around the course, forming streams of water that cross the race track. This water pushes the carts sideways towards a massive chasm on the inside of the course, mixing up the action as racers steer frantically to compensate for the sliding. Even cooler, daring racers can take a shorter path on the inside of the course near the chasm. The issue is that these parts of the track have quite a steep gradient, making precise steering crucial and crossing waters an even bigger threat. This track will separate the men from the boys.

Cheep Cheep Beach is a bright and colourful race along a sandy course with the classic Cheep Cheep fish hopping around in the water. The shallow water that laps against the sand as you race makes for some cunning and cheeky short-cuts, if you've got the skills.

The final course is called Luigi's Mansion, obviously based on the spooky residence of Luigi's ghost-busting GameCube debut. It's cool because you actually get to speed down the path outside the mansion and in through the front door, where a row of item blocks are located. Then you cruise through some rooms and corridors, skid down some stairs and out the back of the mansion again into the eerie gardens. Jagged trees and transparent Boos floating around capture the same spooky atmosphere of the GameCube adventure.

Nintendo has announced that *Mario Kart DS* will pack more tracks than in any previous Mario Kart game. Well, there's *Mario Kart Super Circuit*'s 20 original courses as well as all 20 courses from *Super Mario Kart*. That makes 40, kids. If *Mario Kart DS* really does have more than 40 tracks, all in luscious 3D graphics this will surely be THE *Mario Kart* game to own.

But it isn't the number of tracks that really excites us – it's multiplayer races over a wireless internet connection. Oh. My. God. That WILL be the coolest thing on your DS when it hits the shelves. It has been confirmed that up to four players will be able to connect over the internet for crazy, shell-lobbing action with players miles away. That basically spells the end of our social lives.

Imagine being able to seek out all of your mates on the network and have furious *Mario Kart* tournaments without needing to trek round to their house. What about challenging random players from around the world? Or even facing-off with the *NOM* boys on occassional *Mario Kart* challenges. This is going to be too ace.

And even if you haven't got a wireless internet set up, *Mario Kart DS* still serves up plenty of multiplayer treats, with up to eight players facing off over local connections. And yes, that works with just one cart, too. It doesn't get much better than that.

Don't even worry about frame rates. *Mario Kart DS* gets the portable beauty displaying some of the sweetest 3D graphics we've seen on its dual screens, and it does it with silky-smooth ease. There's not an ounce of judder, even with all seven other racers on the screen at once, running eight players wirelessly OR over the internet.

We didn't have to take Nintendo's word for it – it had LAN and internet connections set up for everyone to try. It was flawless. Nintendo has got it covered, kids.

Already, *Mario Kart DS* is looking like the tastiest package of *Mario Kart* goodness you could possibly imagine. And with Director Hideki Konno also confirming that there will be other carts in the game, some new and some from *Double Dash*, the list of reasons why you need this just gets longer and longer.

Check out our interview with Konno-san next month for more details. Then start the countdown to the arrival of this game and the end of homework as we know it.

❑ Are you mad? Stop driving on the gravel. That's why you're 4th, snake-breath

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-8
RELEASE: NOVEMBER
REVIEW: AROUND *NOM* #159

PREDICTED SCORE

Mario Kart DS plays great, looks superb and with tons of tracks and online play, this is the *Mario Kart* game we've all dreamed of. Bring. It. On.

90% PLUS

Super Mario Strikers

Nintendo's star player prepares to go one better than the last time he played with a ball.

Mario and balls, eh? At last year's E3 we loved his pinball game, but the feelings we once had vanished quicker than Kamek when it came to reviewing the thing.

For starters, thank God this isn't called *Mario Soccer*. Nope, *Super Mario Strikers* it is and once again The Big N has dropped a sport into its vat of super ingredients to create the kind of break-neck gameplay you've come to expect from previous instalments like *Tennis* and *Golf*.

Picture this – a pitch ringed by an electric fence, the ball never running out of play. Touch the perimeter and you're fried – cue comical sizzling. We laughed at some American who told us he "loved this kinda soccer". Sorry mate, it's called football where we come from. You can stick your *Madden* rubbish.

Triple green shells and blues ping around the pitch just as you're winding up a shot into the top corner. Passes are reminiscent of the forgotten *Disney Soccer* – they go to feet and players, from DK to Koopas, knock the ball slightly in front of their comical boots. It's not *FIFA* or *Pro Evo*, but it's end-to-end and a multiplayer laugh. Then a giant Bob-Omb hammers Mario into the air just as you wind up a beauty to wipe the smug grin off your face. Steer clear of the Chomp though – it'll have the ball off you quicker than Wayne Rooney after you've just mouthed off at him.

There's no penalty spot or refs – it's anything goes in the land of Mario. Oh, and Shy Guys are here, filming from behind the TV camera, to record your goal of the month. It's footy as you'd expect in the Mushroom Kingdom and we like it.

❑ We're trying to give up making fart gags about screenshots. But it's hard...

❑ ... especially when EVERY screen has some character with smoke by its ass

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4 PLAYERS
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: NOT FOR AGES

PREDICTED SCORE

Take Monkey Soccer from *Super Monkey Ball* and crank up the Insane-o-Meter. As you do, pray that the weapons don't totally ruin it. Time will tell.

75% PLUS

Pokémon XD: Gale of Darkness

Meet a sinister big bird. No, not that yellow thing off Sesame Street. This one's called Lugia and it's got an attitude.

If there was a game that required an effort to play, it was this. There weren't just a couple of people waiting, it was more like a crowd. Of a few hundred. But one flash of the media badge and we were in.

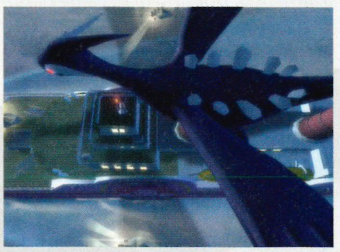
Essentially *XD* is *Colosseum 2*. We've no idea if you can razz around on that wicked bike or if you'll be able to snatch wild Pokémon in long grass, but what we do know is that you'll be snagging dark creatures. Again.

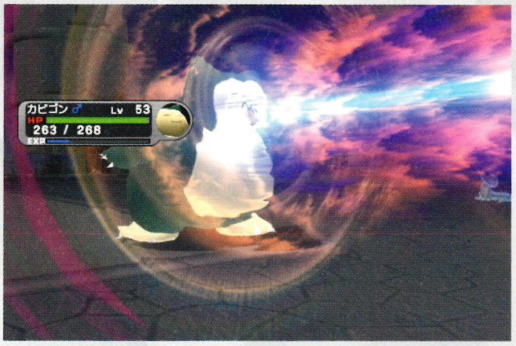
XD looks pretty similar to *Colosseum* with areas you've become accustomed to in *Pokémon* games. The first is set inside a pyramid factory – with similar colour schemes to the regions in Oore and a bizarre variety of Trainers.

Snagging and purifying Dark Pokémon is your role. From the first battle we had with a burly body builder it was all about scanning Pokémon for their dark side. Even Pikachu isn't safe and can't hide from the dark as it was thrown into battle alongside Beefy Bloke's Zubat. We didn't see Lugia though. Check out that sweet artwork for now.

The Trainer in the game's changed. You've still got spiky hair but, you no longer charge around in a blue coat more suitable to a WWII general. It's all about the blue trackies and yellow body warmer from now on.

The demo was brief, so it's depth is still to be confirmed, but imagine Deoxys or Rayquaza in sweet 3D. That's gonna be worth it we can tell you.





❑ Attacks will seem more powerful than ever before

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: NOVEMBER
REVIEW: AROUND *NOM* #160

PREDICTED SCORE

Graphically it's just been uprooted from *Colosseum*. Fingers crossed Story mode will have more original features than just snagging.

75% PLUS

New Super Mario Bros.

Before the coming of polygons, Mario could only run in two directions. Mario respects his roots. You should, too.

***New Super Mario Bros.* is not about to revolutionise 2D platformers. But that's because it's not trying to. This is good old-skool jumping action and that's cool.**

The demo on show allowed you to blast through three different levels in both single and multiplayer modes. That's right, *New Super Mario Bros.* allows two players to play at the SAME TIME, in a head-to-head race to the end of the level.

To spice up the action a little, *Mario Kart*-style weapons have been added to the levels. In the E3 demo, we were able to get Lightning Bolts to shrink the other player, which makes them slow and crap at jumping. We hope that the final game will have more items to blast at your opponent – like a spiky Blue Shell to seek out Luigi, wrecking him just before he reaches the flagpole. Or the giant hammer Mario uses in the classic *Donkey Kong* games. That'd be sweet.

There are also teleport blocks that when hit, warp your opponent to that spot. Obviously, you don't want to be hitting it if you're ahead, but if you're lagging behind it will drag the other player right back to your position, giving you back the lead. This block keeps races going for ages – we raced one dude on the Fortress stage for over five minutes.

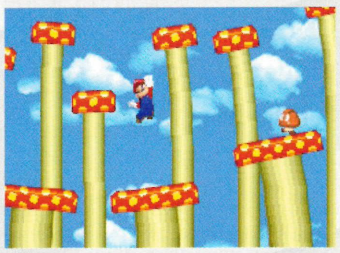
Fortress, Field and Desert were the only playable stages in this version, but all three were cool. The Field stage is an overworld level with green hills, moving mushroom platforms and plenty of Goombas and Koopas to stomp on. This stage also introduced us to Super SUPER Mario, when we collected a giant mushroom and battered our way through the level like King Kong. It was more satisfying than stamping on an army of ants when you were five years old.

The Desert stage was wicked, too. It has that tornado from *Super Mario Bros. 3* that spins you into the air. There's no kamikaze sun with eyes, but he was a pain in the ass anyway. The Fortress stage has those walking Whomps from *Super Mario 64* that try to squash you like a pizza.

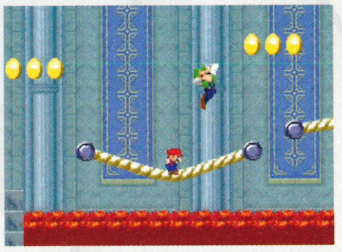
Those aren't the only elements Mario's latest 2D adventure borrows from his 3D titles. Some of the green pipes will shoot Mario into the air, like in *Mario 64*. You don't get to aim the shot, but finding the right pipes will get you up to all kinds of crazy coin stashes in the sky. The porky plumber can also wall-jump like in *SM64*, allowing him to bounce up adjacent walls like a ninja, and this is the first time he can butt-stomp and swing on ropes in 2D, too.

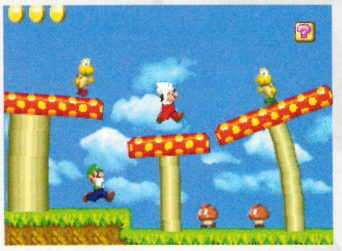
Also for the first time, you will be able to store up to three items, which appear on the touch screen. A simple tap on the screen will drop them into play for Mario to grab.

The game makes further use of the bottom screen for all its underworld areas. Drop down a pipe on the top screen and Mario will fall to the bottom one, playing out underworld stages down there. Dual-screen gaming is the future.



❑ Mushroomed-up and loving it, Mario batters through all in his path





E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

Every Mario fan is praying that this will be awesome. It's the first original 2D Mario platformer we've had in years. For hardcore Mario nuts, it's a special event.

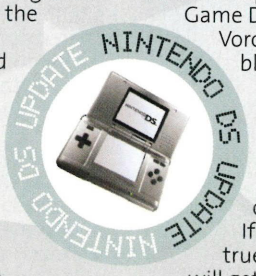
85%
PLUS

Metroid Prime Hunters

Travel to a new galaxy and blast more filthy aliens. If this game doesn't blow your Mother Brain, we'll put our head in a Metroid's mouth.

The *Metroid Prime Hunters: First Hunt* demo that comes packaged with all DS systems is still one of the most impressive examples of what your new handheld can do. And when the final game is unleashed it's going to blow you away. Fact.

The version of *Hunters* on show at this year's E3 was once again, a dedicated multiplayer game. But *NOM* can officially reveal that the final game will feature a full-on single player adventure like the GameCube *Prime* games. Nintendo and developers, NST, are holding back on showing it for now. However, we were given loads of cool details about the new quest in a juicy interview with Kensuke Tanabe, Manager of Software Planning and Development Division, and Game Designer, Richard Vorodi. Both are top blokes, we can tell you.



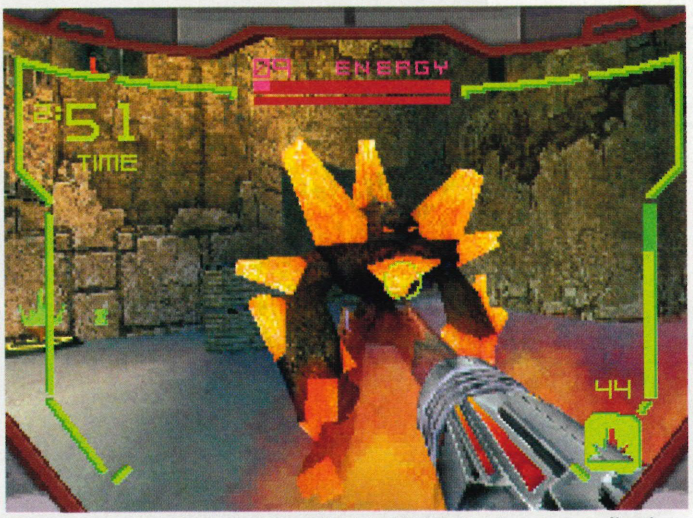
They were willing to reveal some exclusive info on the plot of the adventure, new characters and more. If you're any kind of true Nintendo fan, you will get your ass over to the full interview on p12 right after you've read this and lap it all up like a Nintendog that hasn't had a drink in a month.

Even though there was no sign of the single-player game in the latest E3 demo, there was still plenty to see. A number of DS units were connected together for players to challenge each other. The first new thing we were faced with was a character-select screen. What, what WHAT? And they aren't just different

❑ Deceit: masquerade as a football and explode when people kick you

❑ Versus: make friends wirelessly...

❑ ... then shoot the hell out of 'em



❑ Lumps: this guy has got the well-bad skin innit? Dispense medication

❑ Silhouette: more difficult to spell than 'eat this, black insect thing!'

coloured versions of Samus – they are actually new bounty hunters known as Kanden, Noxus and Spire. Each has its own attributes and weapon preferences that effect the way they need to be used.

But what's really special about the characters is their equivalent of the Morph Ball ability. Spire, the rock-like creature, rolls up into a ball that has SPIKES. You don't want to be in the path of that ball once it gets rolling. As well as causing major damage to other players, these spikes also give him the ability to roll up walls too, although not nearly as easily as the Spider Ball.

Noxus is even more intriguing. He morphs into a fast-moving slug-like creature that can slither through small gaps in the environment. With different players using different abilities, the gameplay is far more varied and tactical than in *First Hunt*, where everyone was the same.

The levels on show were completely different to those included in the *First Hunt* demo. There was a mix of small, claustrophobic arenas that forced players to engage in frantic close-combat gunfights. Larger levels spread things out a little and further showed how capable the DS is of producing large 3D worlds with a high level of detail.

One of the larger stages seemed a bit like an open-roofed Aztec temple. It looked so good we got our ass blasted while gawping. It had to be one of the largest levels we've seen in *Hunters* so far. It has intertwining corridors that spread out around a large central opening. Small spring pads shoot you up to the risen corridor openings, where you can tool up with some hefty rockets and stuff. Then you drop back into the main area and get gangsta on all the mothers that dare to mess with you. It's awesome fun.

Deathmatch wasn't the only mode available. The demo also packed a king-of-the-hill-style mode where players had to stand in a particular spot for a set amount of time to capture that area. This meant having to adopt defensive as well as offensive techniques. The radar has been improved too, making it easier to track down foes and keeping the frantic pace of the game constant.

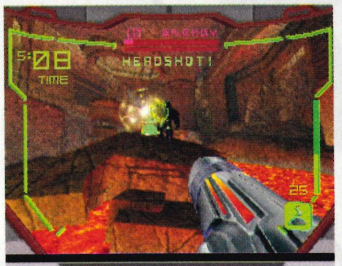
We really enjoyed playing both modes, but it can't go without saying that the game suffered from very noticeable slowdown when the on-screen action got a little too hectic. Three players on screen all popping off crazy rockets dragged the game to a painfully jerky pace, which really disrupted play.

But we're not crying about it yet. NST is still hard at work on *Metroid Prime Hunters* and dirty slowdown is something that can be ironed out. We already know that it plans to further improve the control system, with a few refinements and an option to set the stylus-look sensitivity waiting to be added. This, among other improvements will mean the final product will be far better than anything we've seen so far.

Even though the multiplayer will be a major aspect of the final game, we just can't wait to get our teeth into the single-player adventure. Samus will apparently make far more use of her trusty ship in the new quest, hopping in the cockpit to reach distant lands faster.

Game Designer, Richard Vorodi has also revealed that, unlike in other *Metroid* games, Samus will not be forced to explore the early stages of the game without any of her weapons – she will already be tooled up. As she progresses, she will simply make her weapons stronger to match the increasing threat of the enemy. He also says the game will be far less linear than the GameCube games, so it would seem *Hunters* will have more of a focus on action, as well as puzzle-solving and exploration. It sounds awesome to us.

If this quest is anywhere near as good as the *Prime* games on GameCube this will be one of the best handheld games ever made. And even without online play, the multiplayer is shaping up to be brilliant fun.



❑ Retreat: there's no Geneva Convention in space. Just shoot him in the back

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: OCTOBER
REVIEW: AROUND *NOM* #158

PREDICTED SCORE

Hunters is the most anticipated game on the DS right now. All eyes are on NST to show off some of the inevitably amazing single-player quest.

90% PLUS

Animal Crossing DS

Internet compatible. Portable. And looking as sweet as ever. If this isn't on your list, your brain is broken.

We don't think the DS could be any more ideal for an *Animal Crossing* game than it already is. Apart from the fact that a life sim works better on a portable because you can take it everywhere, everything about *Animal Crossing* suits the machine perfectly. You'll never look back at your GameCube version again.

Getting by in an *Animal Crossing* life involves loads of menu navigation. Obviously, the touch screen makes this whole affair so much easier. Writing and sending letters is easier with the on-screen keyboard.

Equipping items like the shovel or axe, or changing your outfit is even simpler – you just drag and drop the item icon onto your character and you're done.

In fact, you can play the game completely using the stylus if you want to. The buttons work too, but you'll look far cooler on the bus using the stylus so you won't be needing buttons. Buttons are so yesterday. We're already part of the anti-button club. We chew up buttons and spit them onto fires.

When you're not using the menus, the in-game action flicks to the bottom screen where you can control all character movement with touch alone. Placing your stylus anywhere on the screen will make your character run in that direction. The further away from the centre of the screen you place the stylus, the faster your character will run.

To talk to the other townsfolk you just stand next to them and tap them with the stylus. You enter and exit doors in the same way. This takes a little getting used to but as there's no fast-paced action or platforming in *Animal Crossing*, it's a great control mechanic.

Controls aside, Nintendo have made a whole load of other enhancements to make *Animal Crossing* fans go bananas for the DS version. Look at the world – not only does the simple graphical style look awesome on the small screen; you also view the world from a lower camera angle. The land is a curved shape so now you can actually see into the distance. It looks great.

You can make your little character look like a dude too, with far more customisable options and items than on the GC. You can slip on a pair of shades and wear hats with many variations of each, as well as change your top and bottoms. And obviously, customising your own shirt designs is a cinch on the touch screen.

Once you've got on your fly garments and you're rocking your favourite pair of shades, what better to do than to hit the road and go exploring other towns. *Animal Crossing* will not only connect to other DSs locally, but over the Internet, too. In REAL TIME. That means you and up to three other players will be able to run about in one town at the same time. Nintendo had this feature set up at the show and it was awesome.

Basically, the *Animal Crossing DS* is everything the 'Cube version was and a whole lot more. Even though the main house-buying, mortgage-paying premise remains, there's enough in this version to make it essential to any *Animal Crossing* fan.

❑ You can't play as an albino, but it WOULD be cool

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: 2006
REVIEW: AFTER SANTA'S BEEN

PREDICTED SCORE

A portable *Animal Crossing* game had us sold, but with awesome internet connectivity and brilliant gameplay tweaks, this is going to own us.

90%
PLUS

Geist

We cussed it last year, but now it's come back to haunt us like a pack of giant Boos.

To be honest, after last year we didn't hold out much hope for *Geist*. It played like a dog. But it scuttled away, licked its wounds and came back stronger. As this year's First Person Shooters went, we preferred *StarCraft Ghost*, but at least *Geist* provides us with another to keep our trigger finger from that itchy feeling.

The Volks Corp, the secret lab where you start, now feels much more uneasy. In fact it's bordering on the fear factor we've seen with Umbrella. You'll begin by learning the ropes – using a PDA, learning to shoot and dodging enemy fire – as a warm up to the night's first big act.

Stepping onto a broken bridge, a fellow agent is suddenly cut down by a huge plant-cum-insectoid. This mutant Piranha Plant isn't going to stop and ask questions – within seconds your mate's head has been sliced clean off. Just what is that thing?

You'll soon bite the dust and that's when an experiment rips the spirit from your body. You appear in a computerised, multicoloured paradise of rolling meadows and simulated trees. A rabbit bounds about and you must possess it. Now for the head scramble, even though you are dead you've still got to stay alive. Don't ask why, just find plants and eat, just like *Resi*, to keep your spirit level alive.

Look out for Gigi too, the Navi of *Geist* who offers some ghostly advice.

Possession is the key to success. Jump into guards to use computers or open doors, pick up guns and let rip. It still feels clunky to play and we're worried that it's too late to fix 'cos it's not long until it's out in the US. Expect a full preview in a couple of issues' time.

❑ Are you really small? Or is he really big? All will be revealed if *Geist* really comes out

❑ Somehow that flimsy shield protects him. Solution: get a bigger gun

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NONE
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

It's taken ages to get this far and sadly it looks like *Geist* might fall at the final hurdle. An original idea sadly let down by control issues.

70%
PLUS

Odama

Pinball your way to glory in this real-time strategy. Ready, aim, FIRE!

"More men!", "MORE MEN!", "Where are those men! I'm being INVADED!" Seconds later we were being over run and no amount of barking into the microphone was going to help us out.

Odama has changed. Not the idea, but how you play it. It's still set in an ancient Japan, but you hold X to shout orders to get the bell carried to the far side of a battlefield – whether it be a plain, by a mountain stream or inside a castle filled with seige machines.

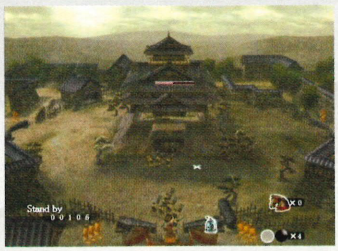
Bellowing makes your men move forward, back, left or right - just avoid the onrushing enemy. Demand more men and you'll strengthen your back line, all while flipping the giant Odama ball to make it roll around the battle, smashing enemy hideouts, flattening troops and revealing some bizarre power-ups, like burgers, to shore up your defences.

Destroy dams, close floodgates, smash up wooden bridges – just do anything to put the enemy out of action and get the bell to the other side.

Confusion will reign as you try to highlight the bell, defences or enemy to stop impending doom and with the Odama to flip around too it's as crazy as hell.

Keep a clear mind though and you'll be over the other side in no time. You'll need quick reactions and compared to last year's control surprise *Jungle Beat* this is something we'll be keeping an eye on – not for the graphics – but just to have some off-beat craziness in our collection.

❑ War pinball – expect the US Army to use it any time soon



❑ As the tribes went home they left the buried treasure behind

❑ Somehow the Red Switch from *Mario* made it in

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NONE
RELEASE: LATER THIS YEAR
REVIEW: NOTHING SET

PREDICTED SCORE

Talking to the game is a surprising twist, one that makes our brain hurt, but the gameplay parts makes out heart skip a beat.

75%
PLUS

Dancing Stage Mario Mix

Mario's multi-genre onslaught takes him to the arrow-stomping world of *Dancing Stage*.

Mike thought he could use his crazy (and somewhat disturbing) *Dancing Stage* skills to impress the pretty booth babe. But she just laughed at him like he was a clown, then ran from the smell when Mike's hardcore steps made him sweat like a fat man in a marathon.

The embarrassment of a dance game is something real life players have to take on the chin. *Mario Mix* will definitely not make you a hit with the ladies. But everyone who enjoys power-dancing sessions will know that *Dancing Stage* games are the kings of the rhythm-action arcade scene. And if the tunes on *Mario Mix* are good, this will easily be the best rhythm-action game on 'Cube.

Every song in the game will be taken from the many Mario games over the years, all remixed into pumping house choons. We could barely hear the music through the overwhelming noise of Nintendo's stand, but we definitely recognised tracks from *Super Mario 64*. No doubt there'll be loads taken from *Mario Kart* and some old-time classics as well.

Konami is awesome at making dance routines that force you to think of an actual dance strategy – it's had years of practice in *Dancing Stage*. *Mario Mix* sports routines every bit as cool as the arcade games, varying between high-speed steps and slower, more technical moves.

Konami is even mixing up the action with Mush mode – a two-player dance-off with Goomba icons that, when hit, screw up the arrows for the other player. This is going to absolutely ruin *Donkey Konga* in the fun stakes. Easily.

❑ Only one of the Koopa could be 'perfect' the others were executed soon after

❑ That's Mario's house. Looks kind of smaller than it did in *Superstar Saga*

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2
RELEASE: OCTOBER
REVIEW: *NOM* #158 OR #159

PREDICTED SCORE

We love *Dancing Stage* games, and *Mario Mix* looks great. If the remixed *Mario* tunes are done well, this will show *Konga* what true rhythm is all about.

80% PLUS

Mario Baseball

Last time we saw Kamek making a cameo he was in a kart.

Poor Kamek the Magikoopa. At one time he could have been a Nintendo star, making a fleeting appearance in *Mario Kart R* before getting the boot for the final version. Now he's back, glove in hand and in the outfield along with Dry Bones, Baby Bowser, Diddy – even the tree-head dude from *Sunshine* is here – as well as all the usual big-hitting lads and lasses on the roster.

As you'd expect *Mario Baseball* is as Nintendo as you want it to be. Games take place in Peach's castle courtyard or Mario Stadium with teams like Luigi Gentlemen, Yoshi Eggs and DK Explorers. You couldn't make it up.

As you've come to expect from the Big N's sports sims, attention to detail is everywhere – curve balls charge and glow as you throw them to the plate, batters disguise the ball with a special hit, causing all manner of fielding problems as you try and cover a catch, only for it to swerve madly and drop away. Boo's serves in *Mario Tennis* were nothing compared to this!

Mario Baseball certainly raises a smile. One minute Goomba's on the plate 'holding' a bat with no hands, then it's a *Sunshine* Pianta with a palm tree ready to smash it into the cheering crowd. Donkey Kong even walks up with a boxing glove. It's madness, but Nintendo madness.

From time to time, we noticed some slowdown as the bases were loaded, but as baseball games go this is sweet. Like *Strikers*, we hope it doesn't ruin the actual sport. Time will tell how this batters up.

❑ Baseball at the castle. It's like they saw our dreams

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

Baseball is as popular here as other US sports like lacrosse and water polo. That shouldn't detract from a solid, fun sports sim, though.

80% PLUS

❑ If we were in the army, we'd go for a green tank. Salmon's not cool

❑ The small sprite man got caught in the afterburner and incinerated

Battalion Wars

We keep telling ourselves it's not the 'Cube *Advance Wars*, but will run-and-gun still spoil the fun?

At E3 2004, Nintendo announced that the handheld heroes of *Advance Wars* were about to invade GameCube and a million weekend warriors swung their air-AK47s around in an arc of delight. The queue for the *Advance Wars: Under Fire* pod was as chaotic as a First World War trench, with rows of battle-hungry gamers jostling for their chance to go over the top.

But coming away from the screen people looked strange. Shell shocked. What had happened out there? Why the thousand-yard stare? One delegate's unearthly shriek will stick with us forever: "Where are the %$&!ing squares?!"

This year there was no such ambush of the senses. We'd already come to terms with the game's shift to real-time strategy and only the name change caught us out (a wise transition, but one born of a need to distance the game from its turn-based legacy). There were three large levels on offer and we were rude enough to play each one twice, even when some bloke in camouflage trousers started crying to the booth babe.

The first is basic training. You lock-on to targets with the shoulder buttons and strafe around, holding down A until your quarry's life bar is a memory. The C-stick and X and Y buttons command other units. You follow an objective marker on your compass, moving around basic-looking landscapes. You wonder why your soldier jogs along like a cross between Road Runner and one of those pink, snake-like things from *Worms*... can't remember what they're called. Your buddies follow you around and shoot what you shoot. There's a nagging suspicion it's not going to be as good as you hoped.

Level two has different things to shoot and more buddies to help you. There are vehicles, too. Your soldier's still flopping around like a cartoon bird. The vehicles skid around and go roughly where you want. Everything has that cartoon elastic quality, making you feel like you're not in complete control (like you were when the 2D war was going on in the palm of your hand). That nagging is getting louder.

By the third level you're knee-deep in Xylvanian enemies. Xyla-what? It doesn't matter. Apparently there's a plot, but if that's important to you you're on the wrong page. All that matters here is killing more of their boys than they do of yours. Get to an enemy base and your troops will raise the flag in real time. That was cool. We imagined fighting off attackers against the odds while the flag slowly inched its way to salvation. *Battalion Wars* certainly promises that kind of action, but, in the hour or so we had in its company, promise was all it did. You have tanks and flamethrowers and rockets at your disposal, and after a while the explosions start drowning out the dissenting voices in your head. *Battalion Wars* isn't winning the gaming argument, it's just shouting so loud you can't hear yourself think.

What worries us is the level of control. In the heat of battle will you be able to fling your units around with as much tactical skill as a turn-based system allows? Perhaps it's the over-the-shoulder view that's put us off. Zooming the camera out helps a lot.

Enemy units drop health when killed. Is that allowed in strategy games? Is this EVEN such a thing? It's the crossing of elements that makes us feel uncomfortable, but if they gel *Battalion Wars* could still be something special.

❑ The people in the house wondered if they should call the cops

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: LIKELY
RELEASE: AUTUMN
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

This moves further from *Advance Wars* each day, elegant simplicity replaced by wacky mayhem. Soon 'toon tanks will be all they have in common.

70% PLUS

Advance Wars: Dual Strike

It's time to push that button as the DS armies go to war.

Intelligent Systems hasn't put a foot wrong recently and its winning run looks set to continue on Nintendo DS.

Tucked away on the Nintendo stand, next to the thronging crowds of the *Mario Kart* battles sat two DSs playing one of the highlights of the show. As you'd expect the stylus controls unit movement. Just tap the one you want to shift, click where you want to go, job done.

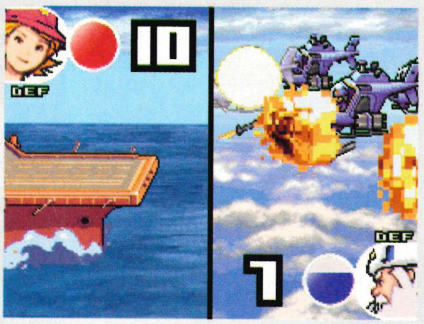
Using two screens gives you control over air and land attacks from the different screens. *AWDS* now incorporates an isometric viewpoint giving battlefields more depth, and when the action switches to close-up battles you'll swing across the terrain to the units, rather than watch them roll up from off screen.

The style hasn't changed dramatically. War still feels fun as you roll up in an armoured Mega Tank, watch as a stealth unleashes hell or bombard from an aircraft carrier. Plus now you can have two COs running the show, from nine new ones and all the old ranks, so you can call upon their strengths to create one helluva firework show as you call upon your specials.

Deploying troops and watching them ack-ack soldiers into the air is now even more satisfying in the new Combat mode. Touch control fires, D-pad moves, so it's fire and move as you try taking an entire army or capture HQ before they do it to you. It's war over in seconds. War can be good.

❑ It's you versus the world, soldier

❑ We can't decide which one to have. Which is sweet and sour chicken again?



❑ The enemy decided to take out the Allied diving board. That's wrong

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 30TH
REVIEW: FOUR ISSUES' TIME

PREDICTED SCORE

We love Combat mode and with the added strategy needed for two screens this will own your DS. Well, you own your DS, but you know what we mean.

85% PLUS

Chibi-Robo

Pick up litter? Clean floors? Aren't they mum-type jobs?

When your dad tells you to do house chores, you're like "BUZZ OFF, Dad". Then you might punch him in the face shouting SHORYUKEN, but that would get you grounded for life.

But Nintendo presents a game about doing chores, and people were actually queuing to play it. WHAT? Surely that's just an overflow of the queue for *Zelda*. But a quick investigation lead to a pleasant surprise – *Chibi-Robo* is actually quite cool, in a strange sort of way.

You play as a tiny mechanical fellow with one mission – to make the residents of the house happy. To do this he simply has to keep the house clean which is quite a job – there's litter and all manner of brown mush (don't ask) all over the floor.

In the E3 demo, we got to run around the giant's living room, picking up junk and scrubbing muck off the deck with Chibi's little toothbrush. He has other neat tools too, including a shovel (for digging, probably) and a Popper gun that shoots little balls of energy. You'll need that to shoot away these little robo-insects that attack Chibi.

We leapt up on ledges and fed the fish too which was kinda neat, then used Chibi's wicked helicopter head to hover back down to the floor. Then he started to flash red. We'd ran his battery down and lil' Chibi needed a charge. We ran over to a socket and within seconds we were ready to go again.

The demo was quite limited, and it's not clear what the point is to the game, but it did have a night and day mechanic, so maybe there's a time limit to get everything done. It gets top marks for originality, and we're intrigued to see what the full game will be like.

❑ He'd do anything. But not that

❑ Your energy is dropping. Plug into something NOW!

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NO
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

Chibi-Robo is an original and quirky game. Its concept sounds naff but it somehow has us intrigued. We'll be keeping a close eye on this one.

75% PLUS

Metroid Prime Pinball

Because Samus can roll into a ball. My God, it MAKES PERFECT SENSE NOW.

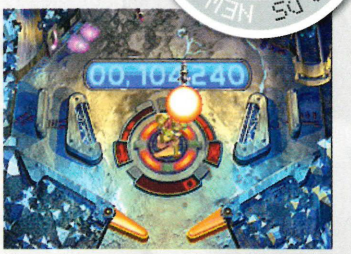
Mario Pinball Land on the GBA wasn't fun, and we think it's because Mario isn't spherical. He's fat, but not that fat. But _Metroid Prime Pinball_ is different. Samus doesn't mind rolling into a ball. She likes it. Hit her with flippers and she just laughs. We would probably be too scared to go on a date with her, but that doesn't mean she can't star in a fun pinball game.

Metroid Prime Pinball uses pre-rendered graphics to recreate a standard-sized pinball table across the DS screens. As you might imagine, crazy stuff happens when you hit the targets, bumpers and flippers. In addition to the standard multiball bonus, enemies – from standard bats to Metroids – will enter the playfield and you can smack them for extra points. Sometimes the entire board will be cleared off as a giant Omega Pirate stomps his way onto the top screen. You'll have to crash Samus into him to defeat him, racking up major bonus points and extra balls as you do.

Samus also has some of her special powers at her disposal. At any time, you can drop bombs on the playfield with B – we assume these will come in handy if a Metroid grabs her, and she can also use them inside energy generators to make more high-scoring bonus events happen.

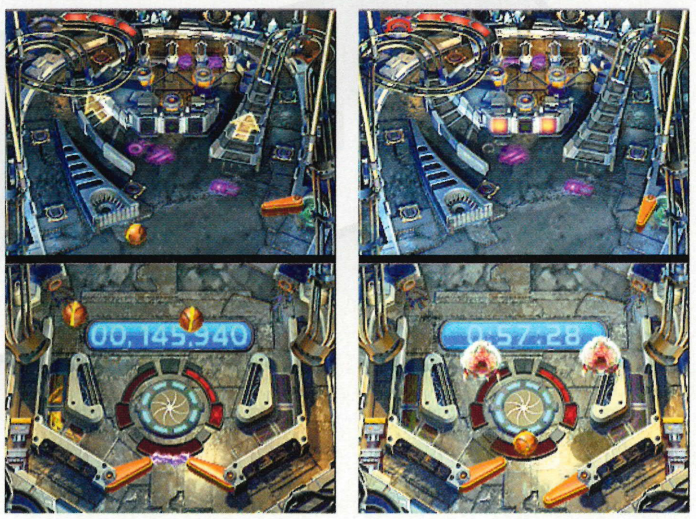
One other event that we saw featured Space Pirates that jumped onto the board; Samus got out of the ball shape and blasted them into green bits.

❑ Space Pirate! Run... soz, ROLL!



❑ That's our score. Yes, we're bad

❑ It's like the installations of SR 388. Except smaller and... er, a table



❑ Look at those Metroids closing in for the kill. Fans will love this

And what's a pinball game without the ability to tilt the machine? Not much fun. So if you touch the lower DS screen, you'll be able to shake up the playfield. Use this technique wisely and you'll be able to nudge Samus exactly where you want her to go.

Our only complaint is that it's a bit of a pain to reach over and whack the touch screen if you're using the D-pad and A button for the flippers. There doesn't seem to be an alternate tilt control option. Still, you could always just use the L and R buttons to work the flippers.

Oh, and when we first started playing *Metroid Prime Pinball*, something happened that shocked us. Literally. The DS was rumbling. Sneakily, we rebooted it and saw that, on the boot-up screen, where it would normally show a GBA cartridge, it said "DS Option Pak Inserted." We thought hard about this and realised that the rumble pak must be in a GBA cart-shaped device that will probably be included with the game. Genius.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NONE
RELEASE: LATE 2005
REVIEW: NEAR CHRISTMAS

PREDICTED SCORE

Mario Pinball Land wasn't too hot, but this left us begging for more. Let's hope the final version will keep us hooked for longer than 15 minutes.

80% PLUS

Mario and Luigi 2

Did you play *Superstar Saga* on GBA? If not, punch yourself in the face now. When you come around you may appreciate good games.

Quick. Think of the best idea you can for a *Mario and Luigi: Superstar Saga* sequel on the DS. Did you think of "Mario on one screen and Luigi on the other"? So did we. And we're both wrong. This is why Nintendo designers are rich and famous and we're not. This is why Miyamoto craps on a toilet of solid gold and we use the row of bushes out back.

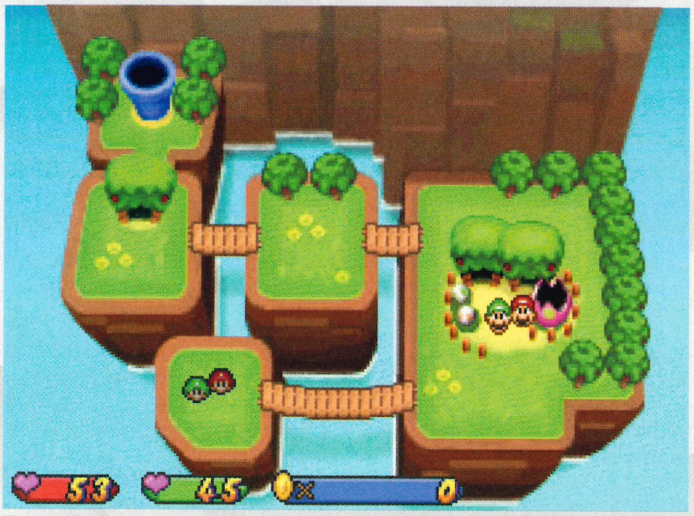
Specifically, for *Mario and Luigi 2* on the DS, somebody had the amazing idea of putting Baby Mario and Baby Luigi in there. "But wait", you say, "how could the babies exist in the same world as the older brothers?" And the answer is simple: Mario and Luigi had to go back in time to save Princess Peach. Oh, and they run into baby versions of Peach and Bowser while they're back there.

Anyway, all four have to work together to save Peach. So now instead of pressing L to switch between Mario and Luigi, you press it to swap between the sets of plumbers. The X and Y buttons make the babies jump, the A and B control the brothers. Can you imagine the incredible puzzle possibilities? Here's one: there's a map screen full of hollow tree trunks. But nobody can jump high enough to get in. So the babies ride piggyback on Mario and Luigi, who throw them in.

Piggyback riding – which is done simply by moving the sets of brothers together – is a vital tactic, as it allows you to move everyone at the same time. Until you run into some obstacle or another, of course, and then it's head-scratchin' time. If everyone is piggybacking when they encounter an enemy, they'll stay that way in battle. We didn't see any special moves in

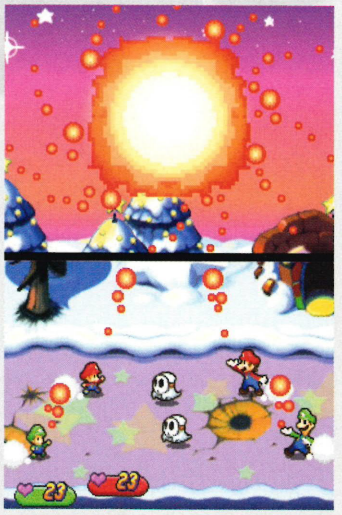
❑ Deep! Investigate Bowser's nose

❑ Spikes! Not for sitting on



❑ Map! Now you can see where you are all the time. Thank you, God

❑ Daisy! Ignore it and bash Kamek



❑ Dual duelling on dual screens!

Mario Party 7

Hammer a towering Pokey or leaping hurdles on a treadmill – the Mother Brain is somehow still churning out the mushroom-flavoured mini-games. We played a few, but left our excitement with *Mario Party 5*.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: DUNNO YET

75% PLUS

Mario Tennis Advance

It's got the same power moves as its 'Cube brother, but they've thrown in the Story mode from the GBC original to spice things up and make us love it.

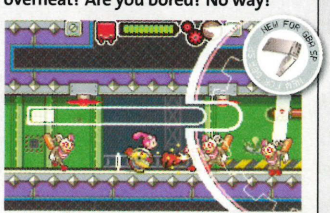
E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: DECEMBER
REVIEW: IN THE WINTER

80% PLUS

Screw Breaker

Pokémon's makers have stolen Mr. Driller's skills in this platformer. When do you charge up? When will the drill overheat? Are you bored? No way!



E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: SOON WE HOPE
REVIEW: WHEN IT'S READY

80% PLUS

Touch Golf

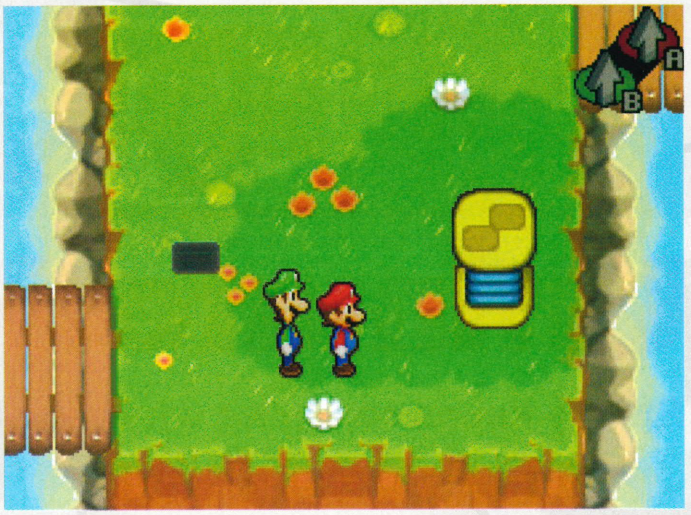
This is how *Tiger Woods* should have played, using the stylus to decide power for a swing or putt. The courses lack detail at the moment, but this is just how a DS golf game should be.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: A WHILE OFF
REVIEW: AT TEE TIME! HA HA!

80% PLUS

❑ Clouds! And you can walk on them. Jeez, this is SO unrealistic



❑ Spring! With room for two plumbers. Better leave it then, yeah?

the E3 demo that showed off all four brothers' combined powers (mostly the babies just rode shotgun while Mario and Luigi did all the work), but one of the screenshots shows all four combining their fireballs into one massive orb of death. Hot.

The DS's dual screens get a lot of varied, creative use. In battle they extend the playfield upward and enemy attacks will sometimes come from that second screen, which means you'll need to be even better at timing Mario and Luigi's dodging and counterattacks.

During cinematic scenes, the upper screen will show an alternate view of the action. In dungeons, the upper screens will serve as a map screen letting you know where the other pair of brothers is. And when you're solving a puzzle that requires both sets of plumbers, the screens will each show the location of one pair.

And of course, all the great features you come to expect from a *Mario* RPG are back in full force. The dialogue is as hilarious as ever. The battle scenes are as action-packed as before. And there are all the goofy references to classic *Mario* titles you could wish for. One of the levels seems to be based on the classic NES puzzler *Yoshi's Cookie*. Pressing R during play will let you switch to the brothers' super-powers: Mario will be able to use his hammer to break objects and Luigi has his tornado-jump ability.

In fact the only thing about *Mario and Luigi 2* that hurts us was that we'll apparently be waiting a while before it's out – the release date is a long way off. Hopefully we'll be seeing some sweet screens of this over the coming months. This is going to rule you life from the moment you switch it on.

❑ Shell! Have that in your pipe! Oh no! It's coming back fast

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: NOT FOR AGES

PREDICTED SCORE

If we gave this double the score we gave *Superstar Saga* it'd get 184%. That's impossible. Just know that it'll make the quality centre of your brain explode.

90% PLUS

Trauma Center

We've spent years breaking heads on GBA. Now it's payback time on DS. Will touch-surgery against the clock see a UK release? We hope so!

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: IF WE'RE LUCKY
REVIEW: WE'LL LET YOU KNOW

75% PLUS

Donkey Kong Country 3

Rare's been faithful to the original. Enguarde's here and the bosses are screen-fillers. If this was original it'd be great. But it isn't. So it won't be.

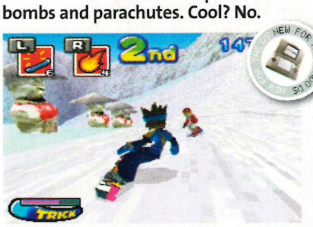
E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: MAYBE
REVIEW: WHEN DIXIE'S READY

70% PLUS

Snowboard Kids

The kids have grown up from the N64 original. Two girls, two boys, a proper mountain course and weapons like ice bombs and parachutes. Cool? No.



E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: WHEN IT SNOWS
REVIEW: SO, NOT SOON

50% PLUS

Dynasty Warriors Adv.

Kingdoms clash in the mini version of the PS2 battler. Command armies and win territory in 2D *Risk*-style battles. Looks bad. Plays worse. Oops.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: A LONG WAY OFF
REVIEW: WHEN WAR IS ON

50% PLUS

ACTIVISION®

STAND 1224: ACTIVISION

They shredded our nerves with *Quake II* on N64 and we loved swinging around in *Spider-Man 2*. They've also delivered *Tony Hawk* and GTA clone, *True Crime*.

Ultimate Spider-Man

Spidey keeps swinging where he left off last summer. Go Parker!

Spider-Man rules. Everybody knows that. Hulk may have arms of ultimate destruction, but Spidey is the king and Activision has busted loose to give us a game rich in comic book style, plus all the moves, enemies and Parker one-liners you could ever need.

Ultimate Spider-Man follows the plot of the comic, but actually gives you the feel of playing IN one. As you swoop across the New York skyline, the art style famous from those inky pages is ever present. Throw in speech bubbles and it gives a different taste to the world of Spidey. It's the world where he originated. We've had cel-shaded graphics before, but this is a new level.

Set at the time of the first movie when Peter is young and his spider-senses are just starting to tingle, it's Manhattan you must save. In the demo we played, citizens needed saving from under trapped cars by hammering away on the controller, while at times we played as the dark side of Spidey, a character called Venom, grabbing crims to keep your energy topped up and leaping from building to building. You'll play half the game as each character, so there's plenty of fun to be had as hero and villain.

Basically it's shaping up to fill the gap from now until the next Spidey film perfectly. There's still a little slowdown as the man behind the mask performs trademark stunts and occasionally there wasn't the fluidity you'd want as you swing high above the rooftops, but there's still time to sort all that.

It won't please all those who want an ultra-realistic New York, but we don't care. This is the nuts and we love it.

NEW FOR GAMECUBE

❑ Ice-Man?! What are you doing here? Stay on the next page...

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NO
RELEASE: SEPTEMBER
REVIEW: IN TWO MONTHS

PREDICTED SCORE

This is how spin-offs and sequels of games should be done. Taking Spidey in a whole new direction, this is going to be a must-have.

80% PLUS

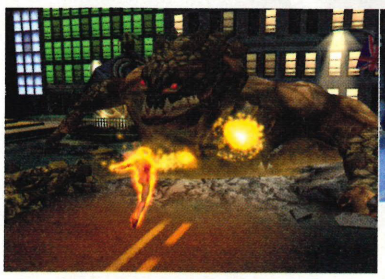
Fantastic Four

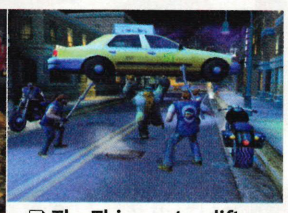
Dr. Doom is certainly a boss we want to meet in this destruct-'em-up. It should feature well in the glut of superhero games coming out of E3.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2
RELEASE: JULY 15TH
REVIEW: NEXT ISSUE

80% PLUS





❑ The Thing gets a lift. Lift? Geddit? Ha-HAAA!

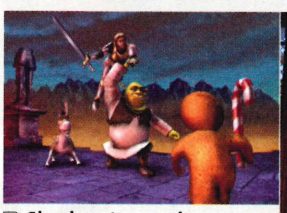
Shrek Superslam

Take *Smash Bros.* and stir in Donkey, Shrek and the rest of the crew. What do you get? *Superslam*. Cool destructible levels, but a bit of a clone.

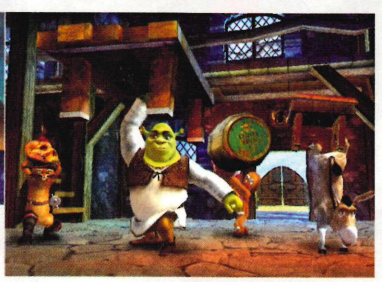
E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: YES
RELEASE: AUTUMN
REVIEW: AROUND THEN

60% PLUS



❑ Shrek gets a... oh, we've done that one. Bah!



X-Men Legends II: Rise of Apocalypse

FINALLY, Wolverine gets a game that we won't claw to death.

There's never been a decent *X-Men* game on ANY Nintendo machine. *Legends* was weak, *Wolverine's Revenge* was painful. But now watch *X-Men Legends II* rise from the ashes of that burnt pile of crap.

The maker, Raven, has gone back to the drawing board with this one, but kept some of the original's better ideas intact. The X-Men have joined forces with the Brotherhood to stop Apocalypse – the latest threat to our beleaguered planet.

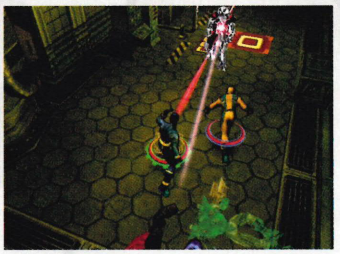
It's four-player from the off as you build your team from a 16-strong line-up and with the likes of Wolverine, Magneto and Storm joining forces this is a super-game that was up their with Spidey and the Hulk as the cream of this year's show.

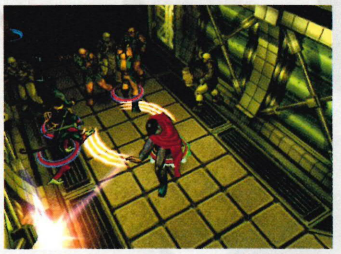
Would you have ever thought that Wolverine would team up with Magneto? Who cares? This is a game and they're meant to be fun. Bring it on is what we say.

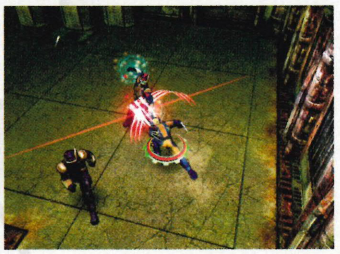
The game takes you to some of the most famous locations in the *X-Men* universe and many of them are exteriors this time, so you get jungle levels (The Savage Land), a temple (Madripoor) and desert (Egypt).

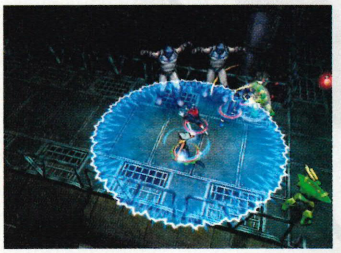
You'll also get to master even more powers (you can team-up with any one of your fellow fighters to pull off some devastating combo-hits) and there's no need to wade through endless menus – it's now all done on the fly this time.

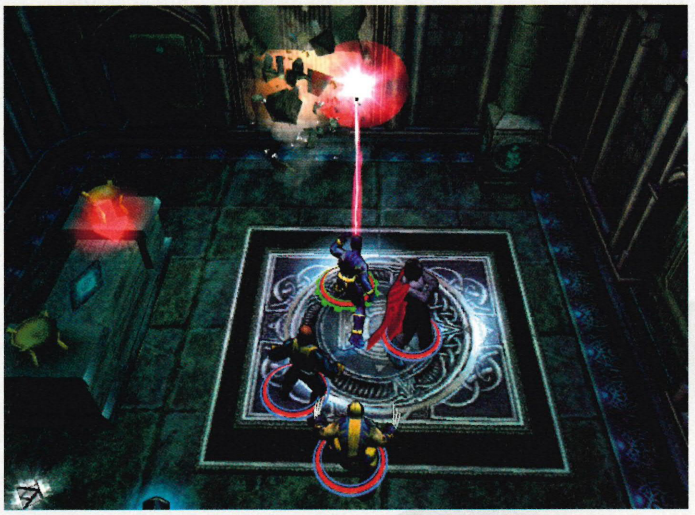
From what we saw there'll also be a heap of bosses to take down, and being a four-player quest you can bitch about who's going to play Wolverine. Until you realise that Magneto is cooler and can fire electricity, or whatever. KER-ZAPP!!











❑ What's up with Magneto? There's no need to sulk, compass boy

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: OCTOBER
REVIEW: IN THREE MONTHS

PREDICTED SCORE

Luckily it seems the *X* doesn't mean *C* any more in this awesome new *Men* title. All looks good with saving the planet this time around.

80% PLUS

Call of Duty: Big Red One

Bombs fall, machine guns rake bullets towards you and you try and stay alive in this harrowing portrayal of WWII. Better than the new *MoH* we reckon.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: MAYBE, SOLDIER
RELEASE: LATE 2005
REVIEW: ZERO HOUR

85% PLUS

❑ War is Hell, especially if you get shot and stuff

Tony Hawk's American Wasteland

Only shown as a trailer, but this time you can BMX and skateboard to your heart's content. LA is the place this time round. Will the bike gamble pay off though?

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2
RELEASE: LATE 2005
REVIEW: WHEN HAWK'S READY

85% PLUS

bvg
Buena Vista Games

STAND 203: BUENA VISTA

This bunch of Yanks make games for Disney. Not much has been seen by this lot on Nintendo, before this year's E3 show, that is.

The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe

Could this be bigger than *Potter* come Christmas time?

Remember the slaughter that you saw first hand in *Lord of the Rings*? There was tons wasn't there? Well, exchange Orcs for boar-warriors and you'll know where this game-of-the-film-of-the-book is headed.

Narnia is this year's mix of *Rings* swashbuckling and easy-on-the-brain gameplay that you've experienced with Harry and Hermione. As the four heroes of the book/film – Edmund, Peter, Susan and Lucy – you get to team up and use your skills in a kind of 3D *Gauntlet*. One has a sword, another is good at healing, one hits from a distance and one shoots a bow and arrow.

The animation is so far looking very impressive. Minotaurs, cyclops and werewolves charge onto the screen, slashing and biting as they come. Although mindless, your job is just to hit back and keep the four kids away from harm. Just like in the new *Potter* game you'll also have to team up and use your combined power to clear a path of any dangers, whether it be fallen trees in some spectacular looking forests or dodging objects hurled at you when out on a frozen lake.

Hack, slash and build up your power meters. Hack and slash some more. It's pretty brainless stuff, but then it IS a film tie-in. The guy we spoke to described it as "a *Melee* of sorts". Hmm, not so sure about that mate, we haven't seen many extra moves and Narnia isn't exactly Hyrule Castle is it?

On the handhelds, it sure isn't ground breaking – see the map and read books by tapping the screen with the stylus. We were trudging around a frozen wasteland throwing snowballs at a boar-man. There was no way out, except back through the wardrobe. Sorry, Mr Tumnus, but this is a game by numbers so far.

❑ Narnia is different from Middle Earth in SO many ways... like the way it's spelt for a start

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: NOVEMBER
REVIEW: AROUND THEN, ALRIGHT?

PREDICTED SCORE

It's going to need the roar of Aslan to wake up this potential hit. We've seen a lot of this stuff before and it's going to take a lot of spicing up.

65% PLUS

Chicken Little

When we were shown this, the guy doing the talking was wearing green specs. Chicken Little wears green specs, too. In fact, everyone on the *Chicken Little* stand was wearing them. It was meant to be funny, but they just looked like those clowns your Mum gets round on your ninth birthday. Still it's a game for kids and what it does is fun (if you've got a kid sister who'll get a few belly laughs out of it).

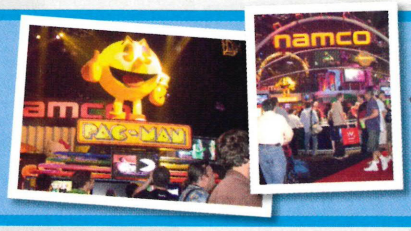
You charge around the levels of Oakey Oak, battering enemies (mostly robots), with a swipe of your yo-yo. You finish each level by finding the acorns scattered around. Yes it's a boring collect-'em-up for those bred on a diet of *Zelda* and hardcore *Mario*, but for someone's first Nintendo game it might satisfy. Character names like Fish-Out-Of-Water, raised half a smile for a second. The end.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: AUTUMN
REVIEW: FOUR ISSUES' TIME

50% PLUS

namco



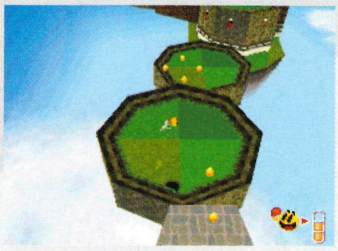
STAND 203: NAMCO

Famous for reviving *Pac-Man* on DS and bringing us the rip-roaring delights of *Ridge Racer*. Part of the fabled Triforce with Sega and Nintendo. *F-Zero AX*, anyone?

Pac n' Roll

Pac-Man's rolling into town. Run, ghosts, RUN!

We first saw *Pan n' Roll* in a basic form at last year's E3, when the DS was unveiled. That's because it demonstrates perfectly why the touch-screen is such a wonderful thing. Rolling a ball around in a game has never been easier than this.



You roll around levels using the stylus to spin the giant smiley Pac-Man on the bottom screen. You can't get a more precise control method than that, unless you were in the ball yourself, of course. Maybe they'll make a giant ball controller for the Revolution. Or not.

Pac-Man's rolling adventure has you carefully nudging him along thin pathways and scrambling over moving platforms, just like a *Super Monkey Ball* game without the bare-bottom primates. However, instead of short, single-platform levels, *Pac n' Roll*'s stages are huge, with multiple areas that need exploring for yellow pills.

Yes, the dots are still in there and it's essential that you get them because they're used to open checkpoint gates. Each gate you pass demands a higher number of dots and if you haven't got the goods, you have to backtrack to find them all.

But even with the touch-screen control, grabbing dots was a challenge when small shifting platforms moved through gusts of wind that blow you about. And those evil ghosts make a return to end Pac-Man's life on contact. It's harsh.

To make like easier, you can grab items that will give Pac-Man special abilities. The only item we saw in the demo was a metal helmet which allowed him to attack ghosts. But it also made him heavier and harder to control, so using it at the right time is a tactical decision you have to make.

Pac n' Roll is basic, but has the potential to be good fun. All it needs is a wider variety of original levels, and maybe a cool multiplayer race mode or something and we'll have a winner on our hands.

❑ **Imagine how perfect this could be. It probably won't be though, worst luck...**

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NO
RELEASE: LATE 2005
REVIEW: AROUND *NOM* #160

PREDICTED SCORE

***Pac n' Roll*'s simple controls make it easy to pick up and play, but it'll need to have some really cool levels to stay entertaining for any length of time.**

70% PLUS

Rebel Star Tactical Command

The future isn't going to be nice. There won't be an ozone layer and *EastEnders* will STILL be on. Dirty Den will be making his fifth comeback and an evil alien race will have taken over the planet.

As Joral, you command a rebel army putting an end to these aliens' tyranny. It's not an original plot. In fact it's the 326th time we've heard it, but then this did originally come out in the 80s on the old 8-bit home computers.

You play in a grided-up world and blow stuff apart with all manner of weapons which explode with as much realism as your GBA can muster.

It uses a system whereby you can only shoot what Joral can see. Line of sight they call it and it's the same rules your *Advance Wars*-style enemies use. You've also got to decide how you kill. More bullets means more action points and when you're running low you've got to decide how best to survive. That's being a tactical commander and we love it.

❑ **Grids, you beautiful grids...**

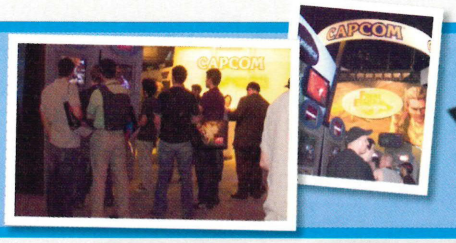
❑ **... you make everything okay**

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NONE
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

75% PLUS

CAPCOM®



STAND 203: CAPCOM

Beloved for bringing *Resi* back from the dead on 'Cube, Capcom also dazzled us with *Viewtiful Joe* and *Killer 7*. The least said about *P.N03* the better.

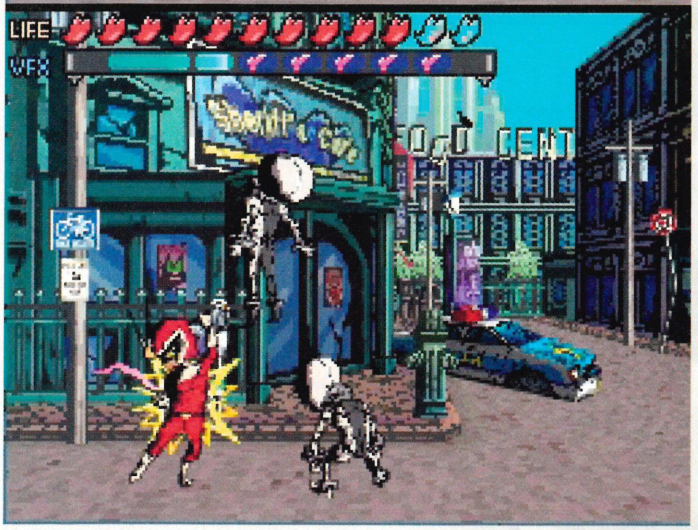
Viewtiful Joe DS

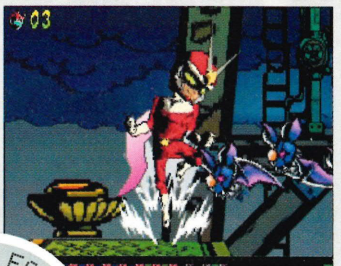
It was the first game we played at E3 and one of the best in all three days. What does the DS stand for? Double-slap!

There's no way you're going to be able to squeeze the look and style of the GameCube beat-'em-up onto the DS is there Mr Capcom? You mean to say you have? Get outta town! No way!

It's true, Mr Capcom has delivered. In a back room at the Capcom stand we had our first glimpse of *Viewtiful Joe DS* and believe us when we say it was one of the most startling examples of pushing the DS's technology at E3.

The look of the GameCube originals has been squeezed right down your sleek, silver handheld and all that awesome gameplay remains intact. The cartoon time of the 'Cube versions is still here too, with scenery scrolling as you go and the camera swinging around so you can see Joe somersault up into the air and grab those precious VFX powers.





Those robots are still being smashed to bits and parts thrown in all directions. There's your Viewtiful meter to build up so you can unleash some of those sweet, sweet attacks. But not the ones you remember from GameCube. Hell, those slow down, speed-up powers are great, but this is the Nintendo DS we're talking about and there's a whole lot of fun where that's concerned.

Now you use the stylus as it was meant to be used. Thank God you have control over your moves and aren't just tapping the icon of an uppercut or duck on the bottom screen. You have seen sense, Mr Capcom. Forget *Spider-Man 2* or *Star Wars* on DS, this time you get involved with the action first hand. You actually feel like you're punching.

Instead the stylus is used when the screen splits – this is your new VFX power. You've got control of one half while the action remains static on the bottom half of the lower screen. Slide over water to put out a fire, drag over a battery to get past a force field, we've also heard that there's some giant magnet pulling to be had and a bomb you can boot, but have to pull away the scenery around, getting it to the desired height.

The double screen enjoyment even works when you need to get up close and personal with those robots. Switch the screens around (so the close view is on the bottom) and you can tap away at the scum, bash, bash, metal everywhere. A smile spreads across our chops. In your face, mate.

❑ For *VJ DS*, the touch screen is to be renamed "BASH screen"

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NONE
RELEASE: NEXT YEAR
REVIEW: EARLY 2006

PREDICTED SCORE

Somehow they've done it and we're not quite sure how. *Viewtiful Joe DS* is going to be a must buy when this super hero rolls into town.

90% PLUS

Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney

God's truth yer 'onour this game ain't no criminal.

NEW FOR THE DS

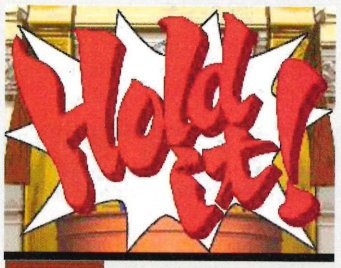
Let's examine the evidence, shall we? Firstly, *Phoenix Wright* doesn't look especially good, even for a DS text adventure. We've only got one game to go on as proof, that being *Sprung*, the pointless love-'em-up that arrived on launch day. The plot of that one was crap and the script was a snooze-a-thon.

Okay, so what do we need to keep this genre alive on DS? A game where you get the chance to play the courtroom hero and save your mate's skin? He's in the dock charged with a woman's bloody murder. Hmm... throw in some tongue-in-cheek humour and striking animé characters and we could be looking at the strangest hit of the year.

Like *Sprung* and quite a few more of these RPGs popular in Japan, you tap the dialogue you want to say from a list that appears on screen. This decides your route in the game. It's all about convincing the judge that you know what you're doing.

It's your first day in court and you're breaking a sweat. It starts with the basics – trying to remember the victim's name, fumbling your way through court records all with the manga style reminiscent of so many cartoons like *Pokémon* and *Yu-Gi-Oh!*.

Your sexy assistant is there to help and, as time goes by, you'll get to cross examine witnesses. What stops this nose diving into a sea of boredom is that you have to react to what the other side is arguing. You actually have to jump in and object – do it at the wrong time and the judge will start to get lippy. You'll certainly have to know this case inside out when it's up in court in a few months. We hope.

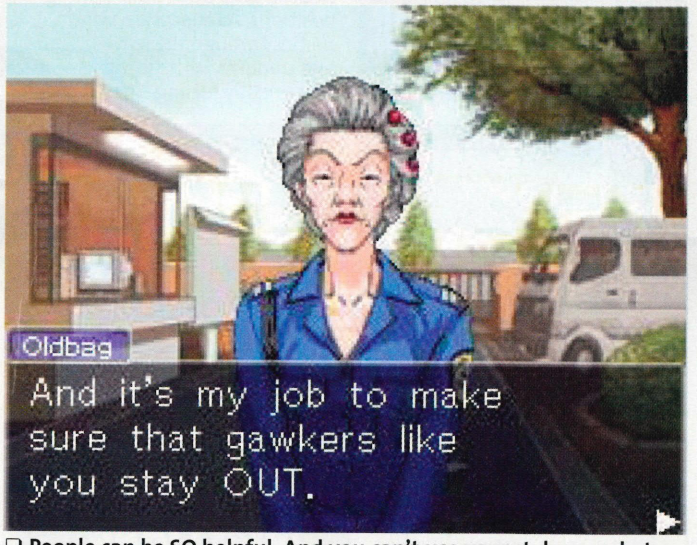


❑ Pointing is punishable by death

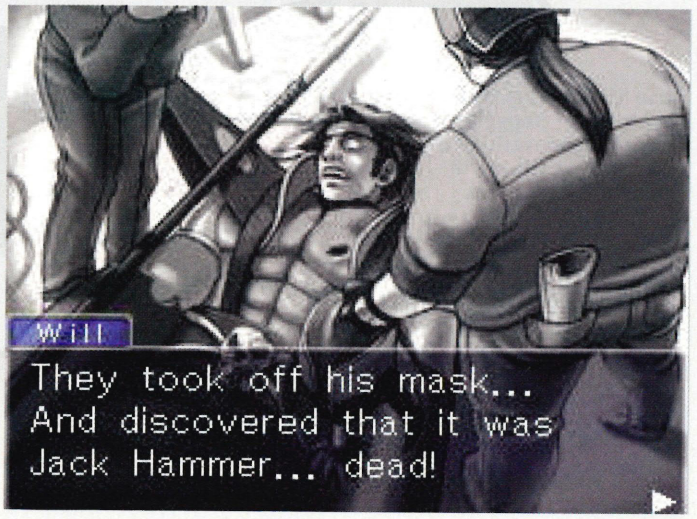
❑ Poke at their blocky faces with your plastic stick. Just for fun, like

❑ She's here to help you. Score!

❑ Prove the judge is incontinent and you'll win a fiver. Bonus!



❑ People can be SO helpful. And you can't use your stylus as a baton



❑ Notice it's in black and white. What's that oozing out of the page? Pure DRAMA, that's what

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NOWT
RELEASE: LATE 2005, IF EVER
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

Forget the image of old men with bladder problems and wigs, this is bizarre yet entertaining enough to be well worth a look.

70% PLUS

STAND 203: ELECTRONIC ARTS

One of the biggest games companies in the galaxy, it makes tons of your favourite sports games and like to "challenge everything" on a regular basis.

Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire

We put all EA's games in our Sorting Hat. This came out first.

Photos of E3 just don't do the place justice 'cos they're silent. Give them sound and they'd be pumping out the bass, giving your brain a mind-blowing cocktail of tunes and mayhem. Put the loudest E3 stand next to a jumbo jet taking off and the 747 loses. The noisiest of all was EA, with enough sports sims and movie-tie-ins to deafen you. *Potter* battled *Bond* for ear space.

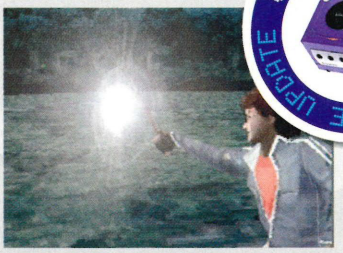
❑ One of Harry's nightly eruptions

❑ Nice textures. It's a carpet, yeah?

Two levels were playable, a battle against the Deatheaters to get out of the Quidditch World Cup campsite and a mission to out-run a dragon on your broomstick. Both times we played as Harry, but the final version will give you control over all three wiz-kids.

At the campsite, all hell breaks loose as the hooded wizards throw spells in all directions. To get out alive we followed a path through a forest and alongside a ravine – there's much more to this campsite than we remember from the book.

Harry's world tingles with magic. We joined forces with Ron and Hermione to move fallen tree trunks, lift rocks and knock Deatheaters from their sniping positions. All the while, wind rustles through the leaves and undergrowth, giving us a ghostly feeling. The Deatheaters didn't seem very scary though. Not like the Dementors.



❑ Will your stylus be Harry's wand?

There's a variety of creatures, all of which can be defeated with a range of jinxes to make them harmless. Team up with the gang and you'll turn them into some fun creations from flowers to birds.

Once out of the woods we were flying around Hogwarts on a broomstick with a time to beat and an enormous dragon dying to gulp us down. Was this an extension of Harry's first challenge in the Triwizard Tournament or a mini-game? Either way it feels much faster than *Azkaban*.

Broomstick flight controls remain the same, but now there are speed rings that send Harry fuzzing along when you hit them.

❑ Shift rocks with blue pipecleaners

Like *Azkaban* you'll get to soar over Hogwarts' lake and turrets, through its archways and narrow, rocky gorges which requires precise handling at speed.

That's all. Not much to go on yet, but there's ages 'til it's out. Enhancing the way the trio interact will help, but so far so good.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-3
RELEASE: NOVEMBER
REVIEW: IN SIX MONTHS

PREDICTED SCORE

We wanted more levels. Only the campsite seemed like a true insight into the final game and we've done broomsticks before. Shaping up nicely though.

80% PLUS

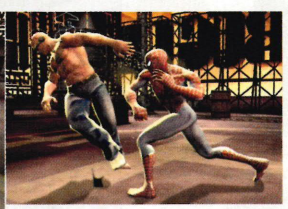
Marvel Nemesis

It's Wolverine versus Spidey in a giant arena with weapons to fuzz at each other. The EA creations' powers were a bit unoriginal though.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2
RELEASE: AUTUMN
REVIEW: MAYBE OCTOBER

75% PLUS



❑ Spidey lamps an EA dude for being rubbish

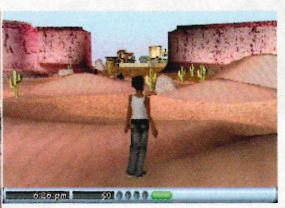
The Sims 2

Live life like a *Big Brother* contestant – snogging birds, forgetting to wash for days and making out you're someone you're not.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2
RELEASE: AUTUMN
REVIEW: OKAY THEN

70% PLUS



❑ No! We said "dessert". Like ice cream, yeah?

From Russia With Love

Bond + guns × bird to save. Did anyone say *GoldenEye*?

A year ago we came away from E3 having played *Rogue Agent*. What a waste of time that was. *GoldenEye* in name, but a knife in the heart for all followers of the N64 faith. It was nowhere near as good as that or *Everything Or Nothing*. We cried like a bus killed our dog.

This year it's out with the spin-offs and in with a real Bond game. Just picture *Rogue Agent* as a Q gadget gone wrong.

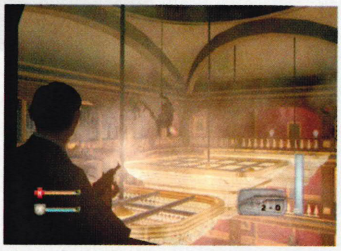
Following the plot of the old Sean Connery classic, EA is promising much and is so far delivering. It's action in the third person, just as in *EoN*, so that's alright by us and as with any *Bond* game you get to play with some sweet toys.

Jetpacks is first up on the menu and there are squadrons of other jetpackers plus a helicopter blasting at you above the streets of Westminster. Big Ben takes a hit as smoke, fire and glass burst into the sky and plummet to the ground. It's impressive stuff so far – this is the Bond we like.

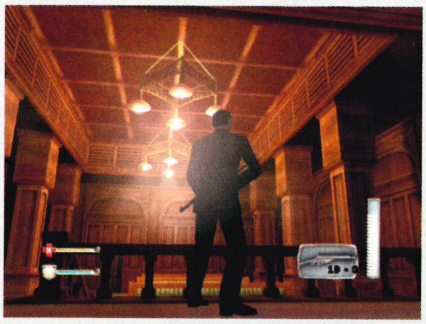
Another level and Bond is wearing a tux, running around a mansion taking down enemies with his PPK. A lock-on like *EoN*'s gives you time to aim and take down multiple enemies, close quarter punch ups are also here and there's the usual Bond moments such as leaping to catch chandeliers and other such derring-do. We're even promised full-on car and boat chases. Game on.

But it's another *Bond* game. How can they change the way it plays – it's just shooting goons and saving the girl surely? Well yes, but they've added a heap of stuff. Now you get to choose your weapons before heading out on a top-secret assignment – want rapid-fire or silenced handgun, Mr. Bond? You've got them. And you can upgrade by earning dollars during a mission.

You can also target different areas of a person's body – wanna go for the head or knee instead? It's your decision. Oh and before we sign off, there's multiplayer too; four-player.



❑ Look at those ears. It's Connery!



❑ Locations like this feel more 'Bond' than the usual (boring) space-oil-rig-hide-outs

❑ This'll be the deathmatch mode then. Better start making some friends

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: LATE 2005
REVIEW: WHEN ASSIGNED

PREDICTED SCORE

We'll give you a phrase you've never heard before: "Bond is back". We're not yet sure if he's "better than ever". But it MUST be better than *Rogue Agent*.

80% PLUS

GoldenEye Rogue Agent

This potted DS version of the 'Cube game is a nightmare to control and the plot is as hideous as last year. Sorry James, your licence to thrill is revoked.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: YES
RELEASE: JULY 1ST
REVIEW: NEXT ISSUE

60% PLUS

❑ That's not you stood by a mirror – it's TWO guns!

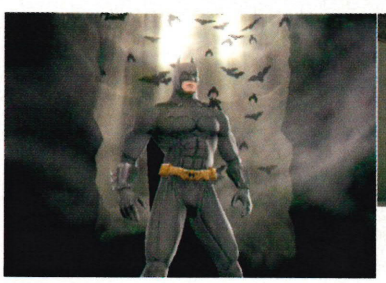
Batman Begins

Is the film crap? We don't know 'cos we're writing this a month before it's out. The game? It's leaning towards *Catwoman*, rather than this year's *Spidey*.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: YES
RELEASE: OUT NOW
REVIEW: NEXT ISSUE

60% PLUS



❑ Villains: take on Master MRSA at the NHS hospital

KONAMI

STAND 800: KONAMI

It's been around forever and created some blinding titles – *Metal Gear Solid*, *Castlevania* and *ISS*. It's also these boys that bring *Yu-Gi-Oh!* to your GBA.

Lost In Blue

Stranded on an island without celebs. Rejoice!

Back in the days of Game Boy Color you may remember *Stranded Kids*, a 90%-er that everyone forgot about. Except us. You played two kids, stranded on a desert island after being shipwrecked and had to stay alive Boy Scout-style – building fires, killing to eat, fishing and so on.

Now a DS update is heading your way. The idea remains the same – you're one of two stranded kids and must survive the harsh realities of living on an island in the middle of nowhere.

Food needs finding, shelter needs building. To fill your stomach there's fruit and berries to be found all over the island. Shaking trees to dislodge the fruit is done using the stylus – much like the *Wario Ware* mini-game.

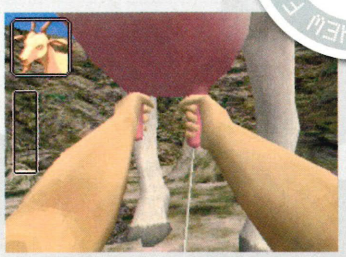
The best bit sees you lighting a fire with two twigs. By tapping the shoulder buttons in succession you'll rub the wood together. Blow on the mic and you'll provide the oxygen needed to spark a fire. Amazing.

Throughout the game you'll need to chat to your fellow survivor and Konami promises loads of different endings depending on what you do.

We don't know yet whether there's a time limit on the island or how the hell you get off, but you'll get to play mini-games. Herding goats is mint and you can squeeze their udders using the stylus to fill a bucket with milk. If it doesn't like it the bleeder will kick out, so make sure you keep yanking just to see the expression on Billy's face.

The original offered a different style of RPG and this looks set to do it again. If this is just a taste of the DS in action we can't wait to get shipwrecked!

❑ Take it down with a minimum of suffering or shoot it in the ass?



❑ Milking mini-games: that's what touch screens are for

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NONE
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

Konami is mastering the DS more than most and *Lost In Blue* is looking a winner already with some genius gameplay ideas.

85% PLUS

Yu-Gi-Oh! Nightmare Troubadour

Yet more cardzzzzzz... we were bored with the first one, but they sell by the lorry load. This is like *Pokémon TCG* on GBC, but with more spiky haired kids.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: YOU CAN BET ON IT

60% PLUS

❑ Tell us what this means and you'll win a prize

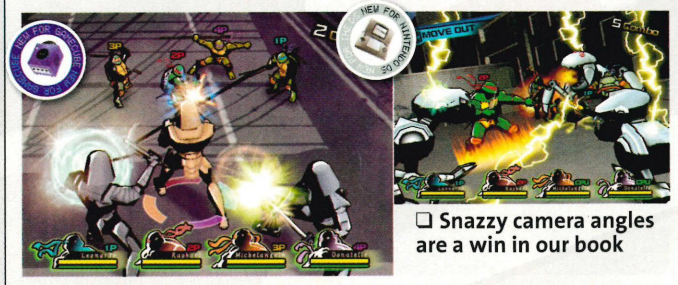
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 3

The heroes in a half shell won't take no for an answer. Special power upgrades could be a winning ticket for the rucking reptiles this time.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: THAT'S OUR JOB

65% PLUS



❑ Snazzy camera angles are a win in our book

Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow

The stumbling creatures of the night are attacking again. Welcome to 50p a shot night in Peterborough town centre.

***Aria of Sorrow, Harmony of Dissonance* – two of the most bizarre game names on GBA. Yet their crazy names disguise deep, 2D side-scrolling adventures against the dark creatures of the night and possibly even Dracula himself.**

As game names go at least *Dawn of Sorrow* is understandable. The controls are dead easy to pick up, using the DS's touch control to great effect. Want to break down a wall or cast a spell by drawing the symbols? Just tap the right sequence on the bottom screen and you're away. Simple yet perfect for a game like this.

Once again you play as Soma Cruz, on a mission to stop a clan of meddling devils who want to resurrect Dracula and wreck the world as you know it. You jump in just as they're midway through their plans.

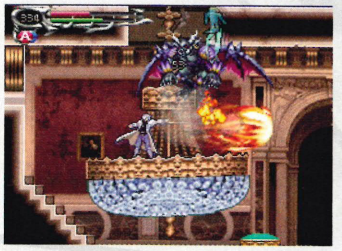
As you wander the map, mutants appear on each screen – giant glaring eyeballs, razor-toothed werewolves and knights decked out in full armour. You'll also find that you can teleport between areas on the map just by tapping the screen. As long as you've found the portals first.

It's silky smooth animation all the way, whether Soma or enemy, and we're loving some of the special moves on offer. Even the basic attacks, like slicing bodies in half or lopping a head off features squirts of blood. It's touches like these that make us love *Castlevania*. Forget 3D, when it's done like this 2D can't be faulted.

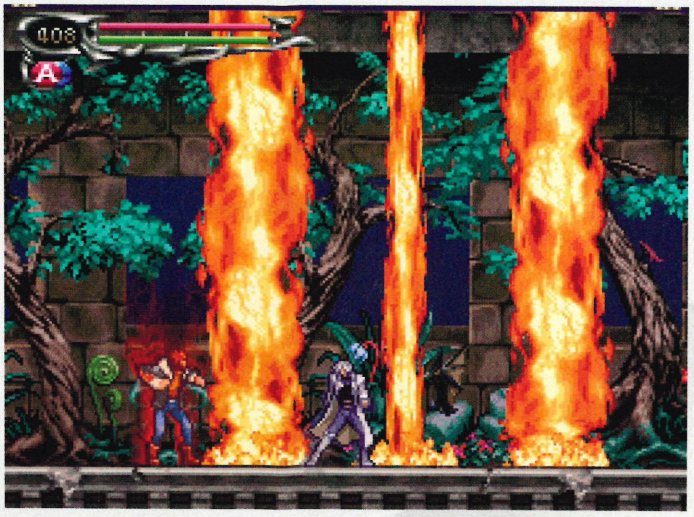
If you've not sampled *Aria or Dissonance* yet, you need to get motoring. It'll set you up perfectly for what awaits on DS.

❑ Fish: angrier than you'd think

❑ That's you. Look at your hair!



❑ File this screen under How Games Are Meant To Be



❑ Looks like God's been on the chicken phall again

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NEGATIVE
RELEASE: AUTUMN
REVIEW: AROUND HALLOWEEN

PREDICTED SCORE

There aren't many must-haves for the DS yet, but later this year there will be a glut of them. Konami for one have another classic on their hands.

90% PLUS

Frogger Helmet Chaos

Master Frogger's *Chameleon Twist*-style moves in the main game, or play a two-screen update of the arcade original. Your choice, mate.

NEW FOR NINTENDO DS UPDATE

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NOPE
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: IF YOU WANT

60% PLUS

❑ Isn't it time for *Frogger* to rest in peace?

Dragon Booster

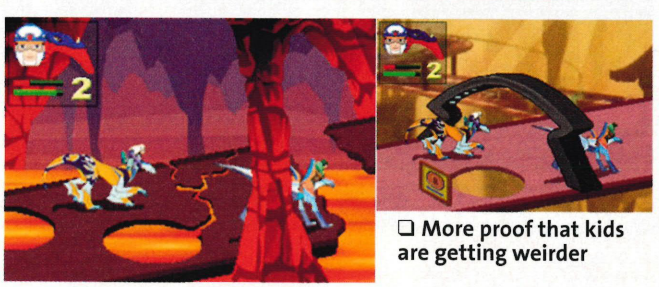
This is MASSIVE Stateside and was only available in trailer form at the show. What do you do? Er, race dragons? Looks wicked so far.

NEW FOR NINTENDO DS UPDATE

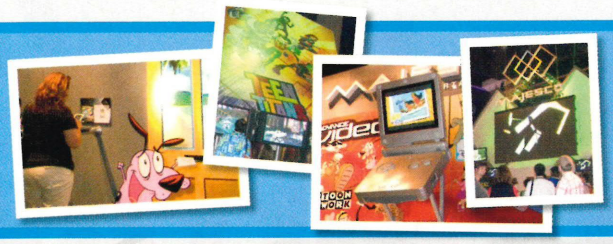
E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: SOON

65% PLUS



❑ More proof that kids are getting weirder



STAND 846: MAJESCO

It brought *Bomberman* to your GameCube and GBA, along with various flight sims on GBA, but no sweet shooters ever before.

Nanostray

Keep it cool, Iceman! Furious blasting hits DS, but is it any good?

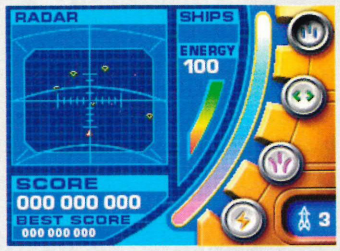
How many awesome blasters can you name on Nintendo in recent years? We reckon you'd be hard pushed to find five. They just don't exist. The days of *R-Type* and *Super Parodius* are just a distant memory. Only *Ikaruga* is allowed to cough and put its hardcore hand up.

One of the less well-remembered blasters on GBA is *Iridion*, the average shooter that arrived just after launch with a fanfare of graphical tricks that gave the illusion of 3D. Now the makers of that, Shi'nen, are back in the cockpit with *Nanostray*. It's time to eat white-hot death, aliens.

The idea is simple. The action takes place on the top screen. Weapon select is down below with the stylus. You get an inventory of blasters to pick from: double the standard peashooters; charges of electricity; and a limited number of bombs which will take out an entire screen of enemy craft or wipe the smug grin from one of the game's ENORMOUS bosses. These bad boys are massive. In fact they will fill the screen and where you decide to go is your idea. You can't hide, just dodge and fire back. You should know the drill by now.

Your missions will fly you over some impressive places – through narrow gorges filled with rocky outcrops, enemy space stations and the like. Each one is filled with murderous spacecraft hammering their rockets of death at you, but to help an angled view from behind the ship has been used so you can see where fire is coming from and deal with it.

From the screens it looks impressive, but playing it just becomes more frustrating. Switching weapons with the stylus as the screen fills with scum isn't healthy for the heart. You need three eyes just so you can spot any danger on the top screen while choosing your rockets on the bottom. The idea is straightforward enough, but it just doesn't lend itself to the frantic world of space shooters. Nice try though.



❑ Radar and... oh no! You've been shot 'cos you weren't concentrating

❑ Massive explosions with numbers in them. Just like when you blow up stuff in real life

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: YES
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

It's a potential hit, let down by a fiddly control method. Still there's not a lot of red-hot shooting action out there on DS at the moment.

75% PLUS

A Boy And His Blob

Very early days for this NES dream team. Feeding the blob jellybeans hasn't changed. That was all we could decipher.

E3SENTIALS
MULTIPLAYER: NOWT
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: WHEN THEY'RE READY
70% PLUS

Guilty Gear Dust Strikers

Two-screen 2D fighting on DS. Wireless battling with up to four scrappers is promised. Fact: it doesn't use the touch screen or mic. Yet.

E3SENTIALS
MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: WHEN THE DUST SETTLES
55% PLUS

Age of Empires

The PC game has been reworked and shrunk to DS size. Be a Briton and take over the world in this turn-based empire-building sim. Tiresome stuff.

E3SENTIALS
MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: WHEN BATTLE STARTS
70% PLUS

Bust-A-Move DS

Like the catapult game on *Super Mario 64 DS*, you fire the coloured balls at the pack above. It's still *Bust-A-Move* though.

E3SENTIALS
MULTIPLAYER: 1-5
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: WHEN BUB LETS RIP
60% PLUS

STAND 924: SEGA

They've dropped hardware and ploughed into games for Nintendo. *Sonic*, *Billy Hatcher*, even the forgettable *Worms 3D*, along with *Project Rub* on DS launch day.

Sonic Rush

Sonic Team is back on form with one of the best *Sonic* games yet.

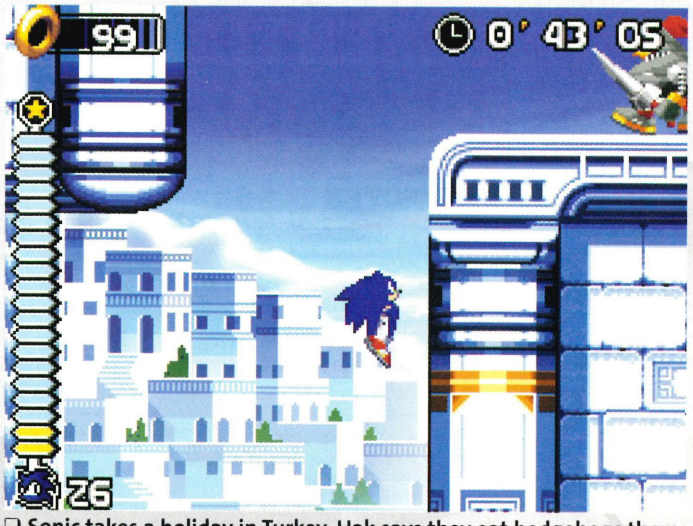
With Sonic's first DS appearance featuring lush 3D graphics, we were as surprised as anyone when Sonic Team revealed this 2D beauty. It looked cool in the shots we printed last month, but now we've played it we can say without hesitation that *Sonic Rush* could be the best Sonic game ever made.

When Sonic is running at full-pelt, most of the time it's impossible to tell where he's going. That's why he basically belongs on a two-screen console. The combined view gives you a much wider picture of the stage. Seeing him fly round giant loops that span the entire two screens is one of the best things ever. Suddenly, his immense speed doesn't leave you so dumbfounded because your double-sized view gives you a better idea of where to send him.

Sonic has always been fast, but he's also always needed time to get up to speed. For the first time, players can send Sonic shooting off at top-speed at any point (including in mid-air) with the touch of the boost button.

Pressing and holding the boost button makes Sonic blaze along at a blinding rate, with blue flames trailing behind him. In this state, Sonic can smash right through enemies without taking damage, but there's a catch: boosting is limited by a bar that needs recharging.

❑ With his boost bar almost full, Sonic can be up this screw in seconds

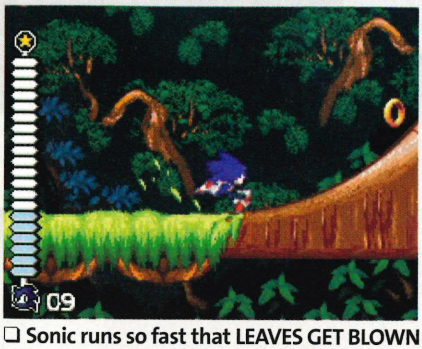


❑ Sonic takes a holiday in Turkey. Hak says they eat hedgehogs there

The boost energy is recharged when you run, so you'll use the boost to fizz Sonic on his way, then run normally to recharge. Thanks to this system, there is NEVER a slow moment. Whenever you hit a rock or enemy you just hit the boost and you're gone in a flash. That's what Sonic is about.

We were enjoying the demo so much, we were gutted that it was only one level long. It was an awesome level though. There were bungy ropes that slowed Sonic's fall and flicked him back up to the top screen. Coil-like paths had Sonic spinning in circles as he fuzzed along. There was even a giant wheel near the end, that crashed down a steep hill behind Sonic as you griped the D-pad hard with the tension.

Then, after the stage, we got to fight a giant boss who looked like a hammer. Here, the graphics switch to 3D, although they still worked on a 2D plane. The boss slams down on Sonic and you need a boost to escape. Then he rolls his head at you. The camera swings to an isometric view for a better angle. We leapt his roll attack and ruined his face. The end. Of an awesome demo. We need this NOW!



❑ Sonic runs so fast that LEAVES GET BLOWN AROUND. Can you run that fast? Liar!

❑ Don't fall down there, Sonic. It's where the Devil lives. And Bill Gates

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

We all expected a 3D adventure. Thank God we were wrong. *Rush* is so awesome you can't afford to miss it. This one sits very high on our Most Wanted games list.

90% PLUS

Shadow The Hedgehog

Blink and you'll miss this preview. Did you blink? You did didn't you...

Following our cover story a couple of issues ago we managed to give *Shadow The Hedgehog* another blast on the Sega stand, this year complete with a giant-sized model of Shadow in one corner, looking menacing as he toted his guns. The big question as we stepped up to the pads was whether this was just a Sonic clone in Shadow's clothing.

We took control of Shadow as he was hammering along a rocky world complete with all manner of *Sonic*-esque moments. You can probably guess what they are, but we encountered corkscrews, banked walls and jumps. Controlling the dark one wasn't quite as we expected. It felt a little loose as we skated through the levels, the sense of speed was certainly impressive, but with Shadow fuzzing along this fast, we just couldn't keep him on the straight and narrow and had to restart a number of times.

❑ Running with a knife is dangerous. This is just stupid

He wasn't just hammering along on his own though. Packing a sidearm for the ride meant Shadow was blasting all before him, offering a different spin on the hell-for-leather speeds we've become accustomed to in recent *Sonic* titles. Move the camera with the C-Stick and Shadow with the 3D Stick. It was pretty simple stuff.

From what we could tell, Shadow is neither good nor evil, it's up to you to choose the path he takes and decide his destiny. All you've got to remember is to grab the Chaos Emeralds found on each of the levels. There are 50 stages in total we're told, so that's plenty of gem collecting. Whether the cute Chaos will make an appearance we couldn't tell, but Sonic will show his face at some stage. He couldn't resist could he?

The simple gameplay on offer certainly left us wanting more and with Sonic doing the business on DS it's looking good for Sega. The dodgy days of *Worms 3D* are long gone, we're happy to say, and we'll have loads more news on *Shadow* in future issues, just so long as we can catch him up.

❑ Want to make something look cool? Paint it black and give it a piece

❑ Sticks versus guns. It's like *Zulu* all over again. But with a cartoon hedgehog

❑ Shadow loves to run. We can't stop him. We haven't tried though, to be honest

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NONE
RELEASE: LATE 2005
REVIEW: 5-6 MONTHS

PREDICTED SCORE

So far we like what we see. Sort the controls out, give us a taste of more levels and we might forget about Sonic forever. Maybe.

80% PLUS

Gunstar Super Heroes

The more we see, the more we love it. Treasure's return to form packs plenty of old-skool blasting fun and enemies packing heat. One of the best GBA games at E3.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: MAYBE
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: JUST TRY AND STOP US!

85% PLUS

Spartan: Total Warrior

This plays like *Lord of the Rings* in an ancient Greek setting: hack 'n' slash madness to make your brain hurt with swarms of blood thirsty enemies at every turn.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NEGATIVE
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: WHEN WE GET OUR SPEAR

70% PLUS

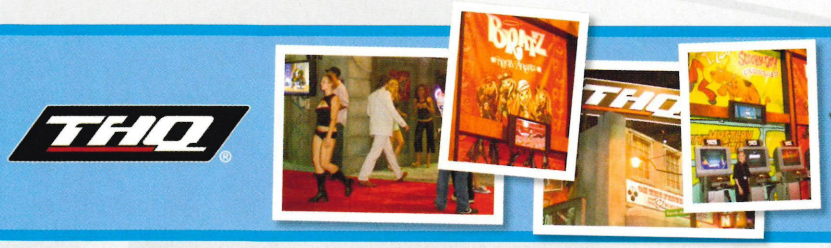
Sonic Gems Collection

All the oldies from a time when Sonic on Nintendo was met with cries of "to the nut-house you go!". The Game Gear stuff was a bit ropey, but the rest might save Sonic's ass.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: A FEW
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: WHEN IT'S OFF AND RUNNING

75% PLUS



STAND 1046: THQ

This lot have been churning out wrestling games since *WWF No Mercy* and cartoon tie-ins of varying quality with the likes of *Rugrats* and *SpongeBob*.

The Incredibles: Rise of the Underminer

E3 was a show for superheroes, none more recognisable than this lot.

We loved the film, but the game that arrived on its back last year was a little rough around the edges. Still, that hasn't stopped a spin-off sequel from Pixar's block-busting animated adventure and the plot goes a little something like this.

You step into the HUGE boots of Mr Incredible, teaming up with your pal Frozone in a crime-fighting co-op quest, either with a fellow human, or the computer helping you out. Earth is once again under attack by a demon hellbent on having it for themselves. What does this demon want with the Earth? Maybe it's going to turn all women into Kelly Brook clones? Nope, soz. It's called the Underminer and it wants to make the world sick on pollution from deep below the Earth's surface. BOO! But have no fear, you're on a mission to stop it.

This sequel once again incorporates some fantastic cartoon worlds for you to battle through. Using your brute strength again you smash your way around each stage, with Frozone on the side dealing out icy punches.

❑ STOP PRESS! The graphics will be NOWHERE near as good as in the film, but look pretty good anyway

The simple gameplay will certainly appeal to the younger end of the GameCube market, just like the original, and with a DS version in the pipeline we can expect this to be flying high later in the year. Time will tell if it's as good as the other superhero games on offer at this year's show.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

We weren't disappointed by this at all – but then our movie game expectations are set low. As it stands, we're looking forward to a feast of superhero fun.

75% PLUS

SpongeBob SquarePants: Lights, Camera, PANTS!

The funniest cartoon on any channel gets its own party game.

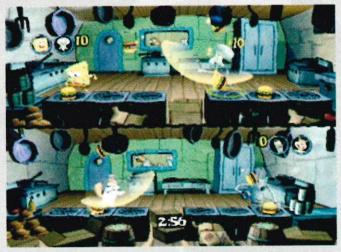
Over on the Nintendo stand there were plenty of party games on show – *Donkey Konga 2*, *Mario Mix*, even *Mario Party 7*. Yet one character was also looking to get in on the party act on the other side of the show. A certain Mr. SquarePants and his underwater buddies were certainly raising a smile.

Okay, so this isn't going to win any awards for originality, but the typical *SpongeBob* humour is clear from the start. Even if it only keeps your kid brother or sister quiet for a few hours, bring it on is what we say.

Like the *Mario Party* series, *LCP* sees you battling your mates in various mental mini-games down in Bikini Bottom. Two-player co-op or four player head-to-head are here and a total of 30 games are promised in the final version. Here's just a sample of the ones we played.

❑ Who's king of the sand castle? (It's us in case you don't know)

Gooladiators was reminiscent of *Monkey Ball*'s Fight game. Four characters sit on unicycles and it's up to you to try and squirt each other off tiny circular platforms. Tyres are dropped onto the arena to make dodging even more frantic – as expected, if you're hit you'll fly right off the stage. We did it more than once.



❑ Flip those burgers. If you're any good, McD's are recruiting

A musical mini-game will see you jamming with your mates, playing on instruments like a guitar, with Patrick on drums and Squidward on clarinet. Just keep in time with the tune and try not to laugh too much when Patrick slams the drums with his head.

❑ How strong are these two? Fishy or really fishy? Pee-uw!

You'll also have to do some work, in the form of a mini-game of course. 'Bob's house is under attack from aquatic invaders and it's up to you to scrape them off with a spatula, winching up and down on a platform to get at them. Prepare yourself to start screaming at your mates when they wind it the wrong way!

It's not exactly a revolution, but we're big *SpongeBob* fans and this is hilarious in short bursts.

❑ SpongeBob Marley rocks out at Bikini Bottom. We love da choons

NEW FOR GAMECUBE

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4
RELEASE: 2006
REVIEW: EARLY NEXT YEAR

PREDICTED SCORE

Don't expect it to blow you away, but fans should be happy when Bob arrives. At least it's a future birthday present for your little brother.

65% PLUS

WWE Day of Reckoning 2

Even better character models and all your faves as expected. Could be the best wrestler on GameCube. We'll know in the Autumn.

E3SENTIALS
MULTIPLAYER: YES
RELEASE: SEPTEMBER
REVIEW: *NOM* #158, MAYBE
80% PLUS

Scooby-Doo Unmasked

It's just Scoob and Shaggy in this 3D platform adventure that will take you to a crazy circus and beyond. Run of the mill so far.

E3SENTIALS
MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: SEPTEMBER
REVIEW: *NOM* #158-ISH
60% PLUS

Tak: The Great Juju Challenge

Oh dear. Jump platforms, fight enemies with giant hammers and other wacky inventions. That was it. Tak's got some growing up to do.

E3SENTIALS
MULTIPLAYER: UNLIKELY
RELEASE: 2006
REVIEW: DO WE HAVE TO?
40% PLUS

Bratz: Rock Angelz

Well, your sister's gonna be happy about this one and the likes of *More!* could be out of a job as the girls set about creating a fashion mag.

E3SENTIALS
MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: LATE 2005
REVIEW: AROUND *NOM* #160
55% PLUS

STAND 1300: UBISOFT

Our friends from across the Channel have brought us 'armless action in *Rayman* and sword fights with a prince. Not Charles, though, that would be stupid.

King Kong

For once, give a monkeys about a film tie-in. It's going to be awesome.

There we were cowering in front of Ubisoft's *King Kong* as an ENORMOUS T-Rex crashed through the undergrowth. In the distance other dinosaurs were trying to eat each other and stomped around being mean. We knew because we could feel their feet thudding on the ground and making Earth wince.

King Kong is the business and we know we're going to be saying that when the game rolls round in time for the film's release. It combines the shrieking dinosaur beasts of past *Turok* games with an edge-of-your-seat thrill ride.

You play as one of a group of humans, on assignment on Skull Island. The action kicks off with us as a human sacrifice. A hot blonde is tied up ready to be burnt at the stake by the tribe that worships the beasts living on the island. Within seconds, Kong lumbers into view. The ape's body is a mountain of muscle and as he beats his chest you can feel it – birds scatter into the sky, but it's just a fleeting glimpse as seconds later he's gone.

We escaped and were bombarded by tribesmen's arrows in a claustrophobic chase from the sacrificial pit. Along corridors, up stairs, ducking out of sight from humans and reptiles. It's a constant game of hide 'n' seek and we were crapping it 'cos we had no weapons. Just to make matters worse a 60-tooth, bone-crushing T-Rex lumbers into view. It's time to get the hell outta there.

❑ Scaly bats don't scare us. Much

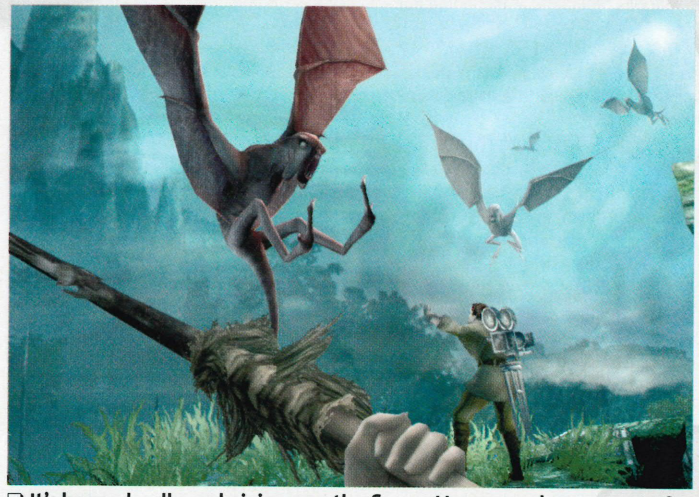
❑ Prehistoric dentistry: hazardous

You find a camp and a set of spears just as you're confronted by another T-Rex. We chucked them in the vain hope they might do something. Then a giant millipede scuttled into view and took out the beast. IT TOOK OUT A T-REX AND NOW IT'S COMING FOR US?! A few direct hits and it was down. We couldn't quite believe our luck.

Then it was onto a rampaging river. Churning waters carry you downstream. All you can do is steer clear of the dinosaurs and try taking them down with spears and, by now, a gun. Against huge monsters, bullets hardly registered, but this is early days.

At the other end we found ourselves in a clearing, cornered by a T-Rex. Suddenly Kong marches into view, beats his enormous chest and starts to knock the hell out of the dinosaur. You aren't just seeing this. You actually get to play as King Kong, switching from human to powerhouse primate so you can smash its face with fists the size of Greenland.

It's surprising twists like this that make *King Kong* stand out against other movie licenses. *Lord of the Rings* seems a very long way away.



❑ It's huge, deadly and giving you the finger. How scared are you now?

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NONE
RELEASE: LATE 2005
REVIEW: IN SIX MONTHS

PREDICTED SCORE

Terrifying monsters, staggering environments and must-have gameplay. For a change this is a movie game we can't wait to play.

85%
PLUS

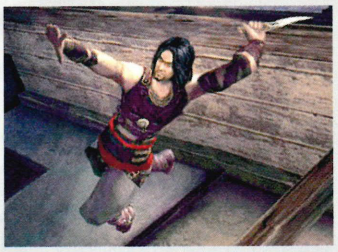
Prince of Persia: Kindred Blades

The final part of the trilogy and it looks like Mr Baggy Pants is going to go out with a bang.

The HUGE burning city of Babylon is stretching out before our eyes. It sprawls out towards the horizon, eating everything in its path. You can see the alleyways snaking their way through the smoke and fire. Buildings are crammed within touching distance of each other. Not a spare piece of land is left untouched by the metropolis.

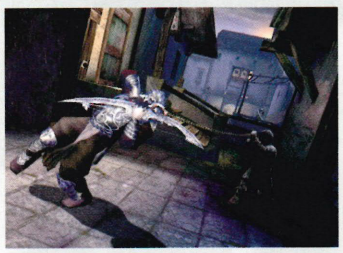
We're standing what appears to be miles up in the air. It's a long way down as the camera goes third person. We stand there working out our next move, but we know there are many routes through this city. We can choose any of them. There are going to be literally hundreds of walls to run along. Oh yes.

The third and final game in the new-look *Prince of Persia* series is nearly upon us and it's looking the business. The awesome running along walls and incredible death-defying leaps into thin air are back. They've taken the fun of the first game and mixed it with the maturity of the second. It's moody and we're all over it, especially when we first gain control of the hero whose mission it is to save the city. It feels as though we've never been away.

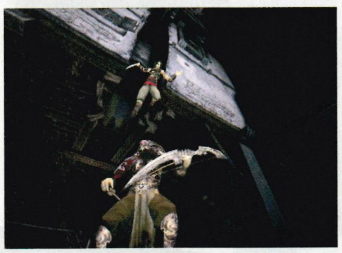


❑ **Buy the game or the Prince is joining The Rasmus. We mean it**

❑ **We loved *Ultimate Shaving Champ*. Prince of what?**



❑ **Serves him right for wearing that big metal tie really**



❑ **Wait! He's clearly on a tea break. Where are your manners?**

But it isn't as easy as that. When you play you'll start to get consumed by a darker form of the prince. Dressed in black you'll get to master new skills such as using a chain around a pole to literally knock someone's head off or slicing and dicing with a sword. It's incredibly dark stuff and claret spills everywhere, splattering the floor.

To spice up the action, you'll now get the chance to ride a chariot through the twisting alleyways of Babylon, racing mercenaries through the narrowest of gaps. You clatter over bridges and slice heads off as you hack along at high speed; just watching those buildings fuzz by at chariot speed is enough to make our head spin.

The last in the series even sees the kill factor being upped – although the open, engaging battles you take part in haven't changed. It's just that you can slice heads off, stab and maim a lot quicker this time. It's more satisfying than anything seen in the last two games.

❑ **There'll be OTHER baddies in the finished game we're told**

The demo didn't end without giving us a look at one of the game's gigantic, monstrous mutants you'll have to defeat. The one we saw was terrifying. It had its jaw bone ripped away, leaving a bloody, gory hole where its teeth, lips and chin once were. It's tiny human warrior against enormous beast and quite how you're meant to take handsome down we'll leave for another day. 'Til then fellow adventurers!

❑ **Sneaking up when they're not looking used to be called 'cowardice'. Now it's 'stealth'**

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NONE
RELEASE: LATE 2005
REVIEW: BEFORE CHRISTMAS

PREDICTED SCORE

The chariot racing gives this latest instalment a change of pace and the wall running and good old-fashioned killing is just as satisfying as ever.

85%
PLUS

VIVENDI UNIVERSAL games

STAND 1200: VIVENDI

Hi! I'm Vivendi Universal! You may remember me from such games as that crap *Hulk* one a while back and some cheeky *Spyro* and *Crash* GBA titles. But things are changing.

The Incredible Hulk: Ultimate Destruction

The mean, green machine is back to avenge his last crappy game.

The film was crap, the game was crap. The End? No! The Hulk has had enough of you mocking him. He gets madder and greener every time you mention his failures, so this year he has decided to stop moaning and groaning about it and unleash hell in a brand-new adventure. Surprise! It's quite good.

The opening level we played saw us charging around a city at night. Cops are trying to bring down the Hulk, but with his power they're no match. You can crush a cop car in two and use each half as steel boxing gloves to smash up buildings and more cars.

The Hulk doesn't have to stop there. Towering skyscrapers can be battered to the floor, cars can be chucked about if you're feeling angry, city dwellers, too, unless you want to be nice for a change and place them back on the ground with a friendly pat on the head.

The city is as free roaming as you want it to be – clamber up tower blocks and you can run, jump and dash across the skyline to your next port of call. Try piledriving off the top too for a massive, nuke-sized earth tremor that will ruin complete city blocks. Not satisfied? Why not turn around and wreck a petrol station? Ka-Blammo!

Just like *Spider-Man 2* the city is your baby. You can lash out wherever you want. It isn't all just smash, smash, smash, though, you can choose to be good or bad Hulk. You'll actually get to complete missions against something called the Abomination, too. Boss battles take place against some screen-filling mechs that'd make Transformers drop metal eggs. Out in the Badlands these boys need taking down a peg of two. They've got rockets, but Hulk's quick. Sneak in and slam them.

It's pretty mindless stuff, but we don't care. Trashing entire cities is good for your health and it's good to see Hulk back on form. After all things could only get better after the last game.

GAMECUBE UPDATE

❑ Nuts! You should see the size of the thing he's torn them off

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: NONE
RELEASE: AUGUST
REVIEW: IN A COUPLE OF MONTHS

PREDICTED SCORE

Games based on popular comic books were all the rage at this year's E3. Alongside the new 'toon-tastic *Spider-Man*, we've got high hopes for this.

80% PLUS

Crash Tag Team Racing

Another year, another *Mario Kart* rip-off. Drive and shoot things in a confusing muddle. We love *Crash*, but can't we have a decent platformer?

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: OBVIOUSLY
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

60% PLUS

❑ Bandicoot! Even the name is fun to say

Starcraft Ghost

For its THIRD E3, *Ghost* has been ripped up and started again. Bullet time slowdown is used to kill and the alien scum look very impressive. Keep an eye on it.

E3SENTIALS

MULTIPLAYER: TBC
RELEASE: LATE 2005
REVIEW: EVENTUALLY

75% PLUS

❑ All aliens are evil. Even ET. He just hid it well

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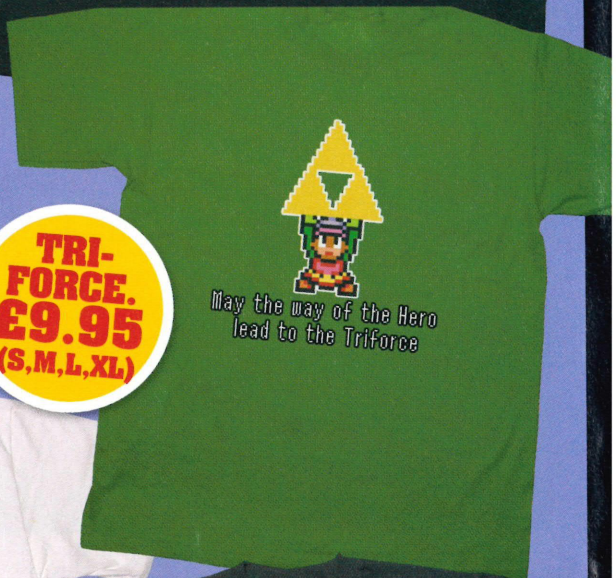

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Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE

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Reviews

DS

» Another Code: Two Memories » P.74

DS

» Need for Speed Underground 2 » P.84

GBA

» Pac-Man Pinball » P.89

DS

» Bomberman » P.86

MEET THE TEAM

Pray this is the closest you'll ever get...

Tim Street

Tested out his big video game concept on Dan, Kingsley and Mike: look for the lost hire car in a giant car park for 90 minutes.

Dean Scott

Got hysterical doing an E3 all-nighter. Bought a Seafood Medley from Tesco at 3am and vomited prawns on Hak's desk.

Kingsley Singleton

Spent an entire week in the glorious California sun, but came back whiter than he left. AND with skin cancer! Skillz.

Mike Jackson

Lost his UK passport after spending so much time out of the country. Now has an American accent and eats sushi for breakfast.

Rob Burman

Failed to solve *Another Code*'s final puzzle: why HE completed the game, but MIKE went to Japan to interview people about it.

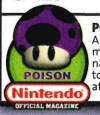
SPECIAL THANKS TO

FRANK CIFALDI
Powered out his review while driving to Sheri's Ranch in Pahrump, Nevada.

CHRIS KOHLER
Already lives in California, so E3 disrupts his weekly *Final Fantasy* cos-play evenings.

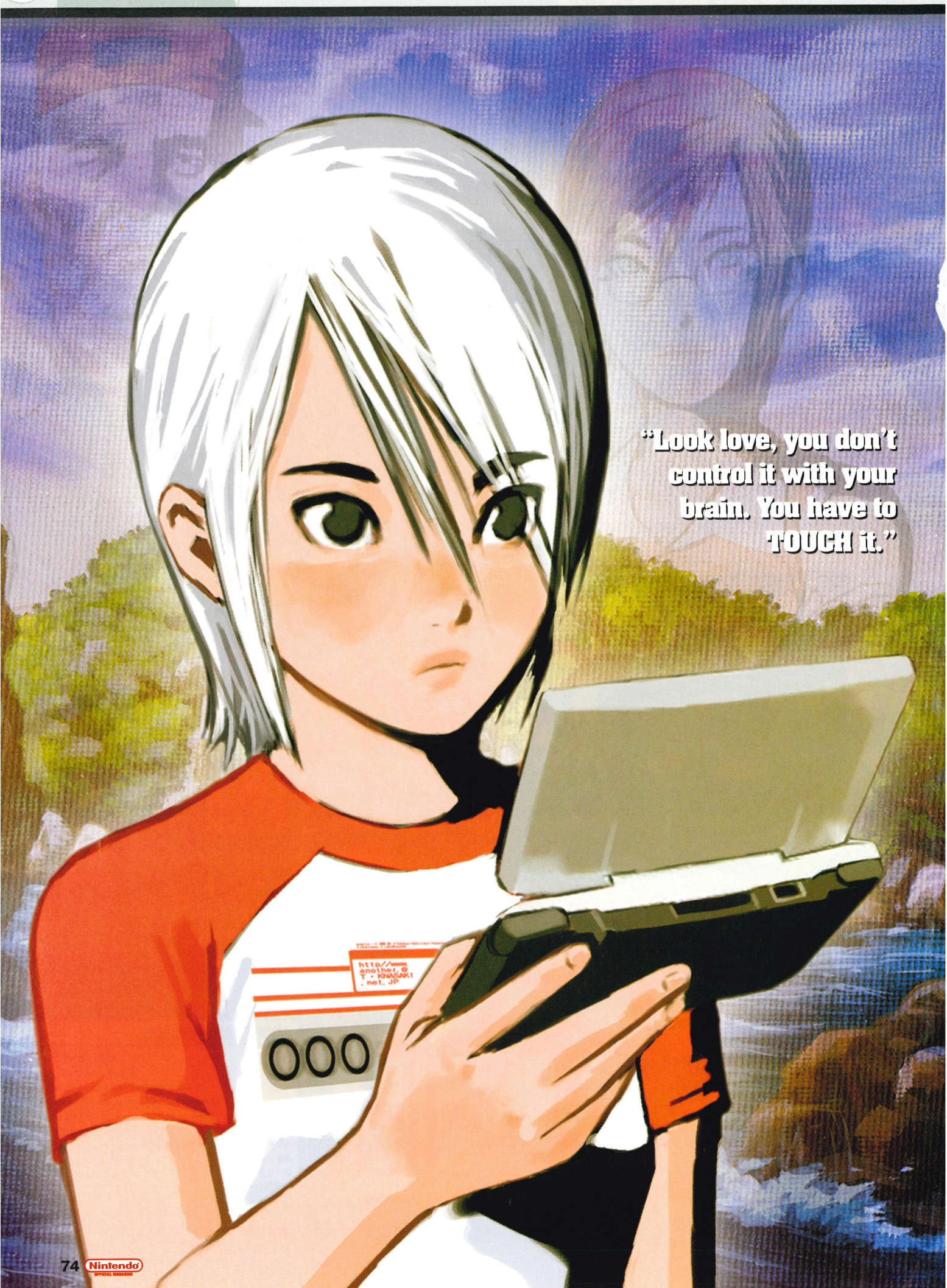
SCORES AND AWARDS

90+	A Nintendo Classic
85 - 89	Exceptional in its class
80 - 84	Great fun, but not ground-breaking
70 - 79	Some nice ideas, but lacks Nintendo magic
60 - 69	Few classic moments – for die hards only
50 - 59	Been there, seen it, played it. Yawn!
40 - 49	No ideas, no gameplay, no way
30 - 39	Poison to your console
0 - 29	Not worth stealing



POISON
A real minger that might give you a nasty disease just by touching it. Steer clear at all costs.

SUPERSTAR
Only dished out to truly great games. There can be more than one in a month, but they have to be special.


"Look love, you don't control it with your brain. You have to TOUCH it."
http://www.another.@T-KNASAKI.net.JP

Get drunk and smash up the tourist signs

Light bulbs, invented by Thomas Edison, share a bat's view of the world, but can't fly or suck blood

Another Code: Two Memories

Sherlock Holmes, hang your head in shame. A 13-year-old girl has managed to solve and deduce more than you ever did. You berk.

GAME INFO

Out: **NOW!**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1**
Publisher: **NINTENDO**

Point-and-click adventures are normally the staple diet of PC freaks. Browse through their collection of games and amongst the flight sims, silly wizard shenanigans and theme park creators, lurk quality adventures like *Monkey Island*, *Day of the Tentacle* or the *Discworld* titles. Now the DS wants to get in on the PC action and luckily it's avoided the flight sim route.

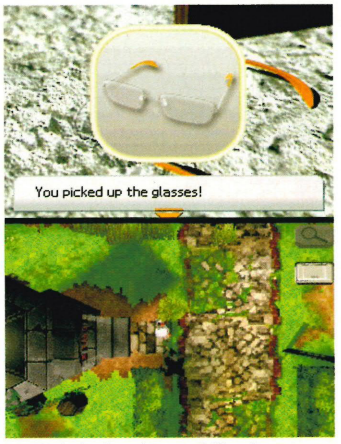
One thing that all point and clickers have in common is a strong story and *Another Code* is no different. Although there isn't a pirate, wizard or alien in sight, the tale of a 13-year-old girl's attempts to find her father is surprisingly engaging. The day before her 14th birthday, star of the show Ashley receives a letter from her dad. This is a surprise because her parents are DEAD. It says: a) he's not dead and b) he wants her to visit him on an island. And no, he hasn't been partying in Ibiza for the last ten years – this island fits into the category marked Weird and Deserted, a bit like Jurassic Park, but with no dinosaurs.

So begins Ashley's strange tale and as you progress the story starts branching off into all kinds of twisty sub-plots. For a 13-year-old girl, Ashley manages to untangle a very tangled web of intrigue and suspense, particularly regarding the background of her mum's death and her dad's disappearance. In fact the story is so engrossing, it's fair to say this is more like an interactive book than a typical DS game. Most other titles, particularly games like *Yoshi Touch & Go* and *Pac-Pix*, have dispensed with stories in favour of simple gameplay. But *Another Code*'s got enough going on to compensate for ten *Touch & Go*s and it's certainly an absorbing tale.

The way you interact with the game is also a refreshing change of pace for the DS. Exploring the abandoned mansion on Blood Edward Island and solving mysteries is a relaxing experience. In many ways, it's similar to the *Resident Evil* series, but without the zombies, guns and potential heart attacks. You guide Ashley about on the bottom screen, using either the stylus or D-pad. We tended to use the stylus control more because you need to use the touch screen when having conversations or investigating rooms – using the stylus all the time stops you having to swap controls too often.

The scenes are viewed from a top-down perspective, making it very easy to see what features in a room or environment you think need to be carefully inspected. Once you near something that can be looked at closely, a magnifying glass appears on the bottom screen and the image on the top screen will zoom into your location. This makes it simple to clearly see which areas need to be investigated.

Once you've clicked onto the magnifying glass, the image from the top screen appears on the bottom. Now you can touch any features that take your interest. Typically, these will be things like books on desks, cupboards and other items that could provide clues to your absent father's whereabouts.



Bad choice: it would've been funnier to stamp on them, laughing

The touch screen is the perfect interface for this kind of game and to bring up more information about a particular feature you just have to tap the screen twice. Obviously it's not ground-breaking control because it's basically like a PC's mouse, but the flawless interaction still needs to be noted.

As you're pointing and clicking your way through the game, you'll also come across various people to speak to. Conversations are always vital to the story, as each character reveals more about Ashley's past and the history of Blood Edward Island. Talking works pretty much the same way as investigating. When Ashley speaks to characters, dialogue appears on the top screen and conversation options are on the bottom.

Although you can't choose exactly what Ashley says, chatting is mildly interactive. When someone mentions something important, the text will appear in red and the option to follow up this topic flashes up on the bottom screen. This means you'll pay attention to what's being said, but it would've been nice to have more interaction and conversations that branched around the subject.

Obviously chats take a back seat to the main aspect of play, which is puzzles. To begin with they're extremely simple and the first two, raising a bridge and fixing a sign, aren't really a good example of what's to come later in the game. The puzzles use the touch screen well though, sometimes you'll be cleaning rusty signs, moving stone slabs or pressing the numbers on a keypad. But although these tasks work well on the touch screen it's really nothing that hasn't been done before in other point-and-click games.

The puzzles that work best and will have you scratching your head are those that use Ashley's specially modified DS. Yeah, it's called a Dual Another System in the game, but it's basically a DS with a camera attached (hmm, a clue for the future perhaps)?

While exploring the mysterious island you can take pictures of anything you see. Mainly this can be used to catalogue anything you think may provide clues to later puzzles, but there are some problems that specifically require photos to be taken.

In these puzzles you have to blend two pictures with one another to view a hidden code. One photo appears on the top screen and the other is then laid over the top. You then need to manipulate the picture by turning it round with touch screen controls. Although this method is only needed for a couple of puzzles, they're definitely some of the best in the game and it's a shame there aren't others with the same ingenuity. However, there is one more puzzle, which we won't

What happened in this room? Maybe the BOOKS killed someone. Quick! Arrest the books!

Dirty D: mind the ectoplasm

The ghost called D follows you around like an annoying little brother who's dead

Pikachu! Use Rock Smash! Rock Smash! Why isn't this working?

From zero to hero

Even you could be a game star one day.

Now and again you may hear English Literature nuts banging on about anti-heroes and the like. "Oh Hamlet", they'll whimper, "he's the perfect epiphany of an anti-hero". Your response should immediately be this "Whatever, four-eyes, Hamlet's got nothing on Doshin the Giant." This will bamboozle those book-loving fools and might even make their brain fall out of their nose. Ashley's also a pretty decent example of an anti-hero, but she's only the latest in a long line.

Doshin

A smiling giant who helps people? Aren't giants supposed to smell Englishmen's blood and eat bones? Doshin must be the laughing stock of his huge pals.

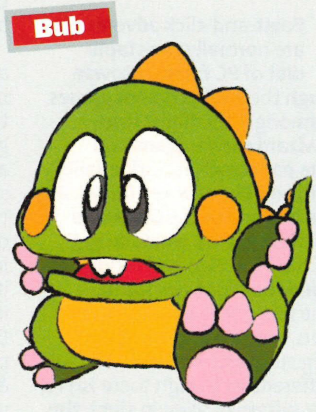
Wario

Hatred, greed and eating garlic should have confined Wario to the world of evil. But, thanks to a tear in the fabric of the universe, he became a hero.

Kirby

A pink ball? Oh come on, you're taking the Mickey. Kirby's basically a glorified Hoover. You should be using him to clean up your house not helping him to save worlds.

Bub



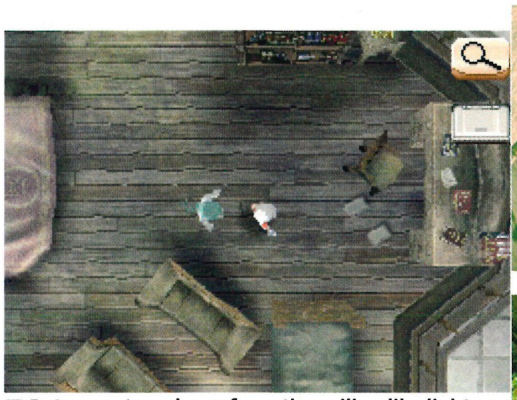
Dinosaurs were big, scary and roared. They didn't blow bubbles, fly in space or collect umbrellas. Taito lied in *Bubble Bobble* – we'll never trust them again.

I see dead people

It's not only Casper who's a friendly ghost.

Ashley may seem like an unlikely hero for an adventure game, but D the ghost is an even more unlikely sidekick. Poor old D has been knocking about on Blood Edward Island for more than 50 years and has only ever been spotted by innocent little Ashley.

As the story unfolds you learn more about D's past and why he turned into a little blue ghost with a handprint on his chest. At first he's a little shy, vanishing as he remembers stuff and reappearing in the most unlikely of places – like the toilet – but soon you can't shut him up. He's always yapping on. Be warned though, it's a sad tale... so get the hankies ready for those tears of sadness.

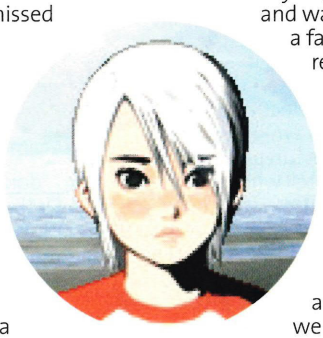


Bats can stare down from the ceiling like light bulbs, but can't glow and weren't invented by Thomas Edison, or so they tell us

"Point-and-click quests are supposed to be massive. This is over too soon."

reveal here, that's startlingly original. In our opinion, no other game has managed to use the dual screens as effectively and we'd have liked more puzzles like it. You've almost got to buy the game, JUST for that puzzle.

In fact one of the biggest letdowns for *Another Code*, is a massive missed opportunity for ingenious puzzles. In the first chapter of the game, Ashley meets a blue ghost called D. To begin with they just have a few conversations about D's past, but then he starts to follow Ashley about. Unfortunately that's all he does, now and again he'll chat about the island, but generally he just mooches behind Ashley like a blue shadow. It would have been great to use D as part of the game and even control him in some sections. That could've been a really original approach and led to some great puzzles.



The main problem is that *Another Code* is too short. At the start of the game, the boat captain who brings you to the island says he must leave before nightfall and you could actually play it in real-time, finishing the whole thing in an afternoon. It could be argued that the game just seems short because you get so engaged in the story and want to keep playing, but it's a fact that there aren't enough really tricky puzzles and the mansion you explore simply isn't big enough to keep you going for long.

We completed it in under five hours and were left wanting more. Point-and-click adventures are supposed to be absolutely massive and when the game ended we expected to be only halfway through. But for those fleeting hours, we enjoyed solving puzzles, talking to a ghost and uncovering mysteries. Be warned though, this is only a game for those who enjoy cerebral experiences. If you prefer a gun to a book, it's best avoided.

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAG SAYS...

GRAPHICS 8

A lot of the graphics are stationary, but the animé style and the overhead view give it a lot of charisma.

SOUND 8

Excellent Japanese music that responds well to what's happening on screen. It adds atmosphere to the spooky mansion.

INNOVATION 7

Our favourite puzzle scores ten, but generally this is stuff that's being done in all PC point-and-click adventures.

VALUE 4

Five hours just isn't enough. In theory you could finish it in one sitting. We wanted more puzzles and adventure.

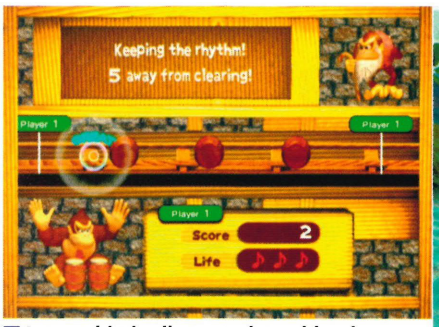
MARIOS AND WARIOS

- THE STORY IS BRILLIANT. AGATHA CHRISTIE WOULD BE PROUD.
- IT'S ANOTHER DS GAME WITH GOOD TOUCH SCREEN CONTROLS.
- THAT PUZZLE WE CAN'T TELL YOU ABOUT – IT'S ONE OF THE BEST EVER.
- THE MUSIC AND GRAPHICS HAVE A LOT OF STYLE. YOU'LL LOVE THEM.
- IT'S WAY TOO SHORT FOR A POINT-AND-CLICK ADVENTURE.
- SOME OF THE PUZZLES COULD HAVE BEEN MORE CREATIVE.

THE VERDICT

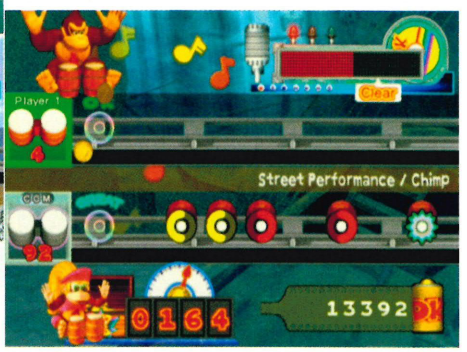
Rob This definitely needed to be at least twice the length. In the few short hours of play you're engrossed by the plot and characters and just want it to carry on. A longer sequel would be great.

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE JUDGEMENT **75%**



■ In a padded cell somewhere, bloody stumps slap together through the tears

■ If you squint it looks like a shooting range... mmm, guns...



GAME INFO

Out: **NOW!**
Price: **£39.99**
Players: **1-4**
Publisher: **NINTENDO**

Donkey Konga 2

Only one man is rhythmic enough to review this. Fresh from a UK tour, it's *Konga*-king Rob Burman.

The windows of music shops are full of all the popular instruments like guitars, keyboards, flutes and perhaps the odd trumpet. Bongos, on the other hand, with their obscure noise of, er... 'bong' basically, will be collecting dust in a box somewhere at the back, just behind the toilet. *Donkey Konga 2* wants to change that. It wants to rocket bongos to the top of the charts, but we're not holding our breath.

It's only been a few months since the original, DK's back with an all-new selection of tracks and a couple of mini-games. He's even moved out of the jungle, but poor old Kong's tiny monkey brain has forgotten to make any improvements on the original and in many ways it fairs even worse.

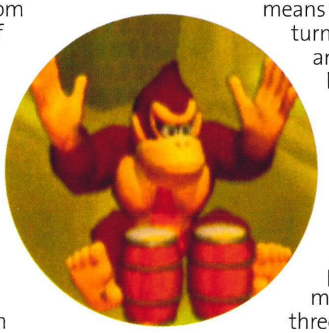
Konga 2's main problem is that it tries too hard to be cool. The track selection stinks of hits that were good a few years ago and may have been considered cool, but now lurk somewhere in the depths on *NOW 28* – or whatever number it was on two years ago. Britney Spears – washed up and preggers. Good Charlotte – a poor man's Blink 182, who are crap anyway. Pink – genuinely terrifying and mental. It's not the kind of line-up that'll be headlining festivals this summer, is it?

But the main problem isn't that these songs aren't cool, it's the fact that they're not designed to be accompanied by bongos. Obviously, the aim of the game is the same as it was in the original. As symbols run across the screen you have to bang the left or right bongo, smack both pads together or clap your excited and clammy drum-hands in time to the music.

Because you're using your hands you should be able to FEEL the rhythm. Your whole body should start to move to the music and your natural reaction should be to let your hands fly across the bongos in time to the music.

However, this isn't the case for most songs, many seem stilted and your movements are too jerky to ever get in the zone. They're also way too slow. Watch someone playing real bongos – actually, scour the globe for a professional bongo player, then watch them play – and their hands are a blur. Watch someone playing *Donkey Konga* and it looks like they're working on a musical fish finger production line pressing giant white buttons of mind-numbing tedium.

However, when it works, *Donkey Konga* can be fun and the best songs come from the most unlikely of places. Instead of tracks by Pink or R.E.M., it's songs you'd normally run a mile from, like the William Tell Overture or Jungle Boogie, that are brilliant. These fit bongo rhythms perfectly and they're a million times more fun to play.



You can tell when a track is working better with the bongos because you'll naturally be getting 'greats' rather than struggling to hit the beats. You'll get into the rhythm-zone and the points will zoom up.

Even the Nintendo tracks don't alleviate the sadness. Apart from the *Donkey Konga 2* theme, they're all songs from *Super Smash Bros. Melee*. Although this may sound good, it's actually not because they're not suited for bongos either. You can't help but feel that someone got it the wrong way round when making the decisions. Instead of selecting songs that fit bongo rhythms, they've picked tracks they thought sounded good and then tried to fit the bongos beats around them. This means you can actually turn the music off and still hit the beats, which is a fairly ridiculous concept for a rhythm-action game, we think.

Konga 2's saving grace, just like its predecessor, is multiplayer. Get three mates round, and who cares if beats don't match up particularly well? Or that Donkey Kong drums a bit like he's got arthritis? It's a fun multi-gamer experience because it's relatively unique. Even people with delusions of living the rock 'n' roll lifestyle can pretend they've got a mediocre level of musical talent by drumming along in Concert mode with up to four players. It may lack the genuine mind-blowing musical multiplayer experience of *Daigasso! Band Brothers*, but it's pretty good.

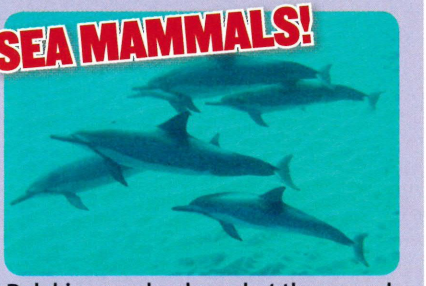
"In multiplayer all *Konga*'s ills are forgotten – it's actually fun."

Loud, but not proud

If you get bored of the bongo sounds, then try these...

One of the problems with *Donkey Konga 2* is that the bongo noise doesn't really fit with many songs. In fact, bongos are probably best left to jungle tribes and low-key buskers. With this in mind, Nintendo provided a range of other sounds to replace the standard bong, bong, clap, clap noises. Unfortunately they're even worse than before... at least there isn't a Crazy Frog sound effect – we'd have to kill ourselves.

This one will send the cops to your house, because they'll think it's being burgled. Hopefully they'll arrest this noise and send it to sound prison



Dolphins may be clever, but they sound worse than the Cheeky Girls submerged in poisonous, boiling water

Britney Spears mews like a sick kitten on most of her songs, but that's no excuse for this wailing waste of space

It's boring beating a computer. It won't cry

Has this game inspired any of you to become real drummers? Write in, kids!

Surprisingly the two mini-games provide another reason to play. In Barrel Race notes drop from the sky and you have to time your bongo strikes to clear them. It's not rocket science, but in four-player mode this is a frantic and fun diversion from the main game. The other mini-game, Rhythm Keeper, sees you trying to keep a beat without symbols to aid you. Unlike the main game, this relies on genuine ability to keep time and getting perfect scores requires the drumming skills of Buddy Rich. Buddy who?! He was a dead-good jazz drummer who could freestyle like the Spirit of Jazz had taken over his body. If he had joined Busted maybe they'd still be together. Quick! Someone invent a time machine NOW!

As a rhythm-action game, *Donkey Konga 2* doesn't work. Many beats don't feel natural and don't add anything to the songs. In many of the tracks the bongs and claps seem out of place and we'd deafen ourselves before we used the alternative sounds. But in multiplayer all this is forgotten and the game manages to be fun.

Wouldn't DK rather be chucking barrels?

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAG SAYS...

GRAPHICS 5

The 3D backgrounds are an improvement on the original, but generally the game lacks any real charm.

SOUND 6

Imagine a drunken karaoke evening at a rough pub and you're close. The Supergrass tracks are a particular travesty.

GAMEPLAY 7

The novelty of the bongos has long worn off by now. But it's still good fun when you play with some mates.

VALUE 6

Not great! There are songs you'll play a lot and others you'll avoid forever. Plus it's almost identical to the original.

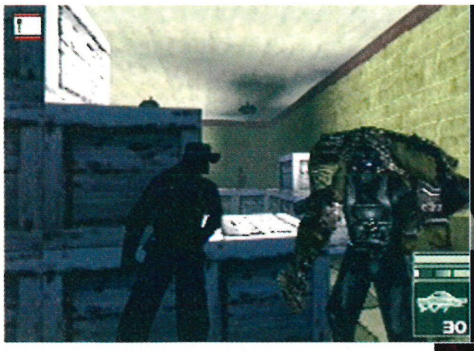
MARIOS AND WARIOS

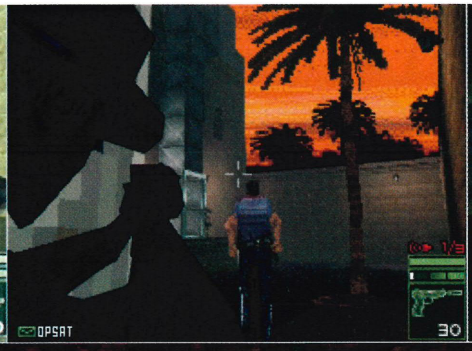
- SOME OF THE TRACKS WORK REALLY WELL WITH A BONGO BACKING TRACK.
- THE MULTIPLAYER MODE AND MINI-GAMES ADD SOME FUN.
- THE SONGS ARE COVERS AND SOME ARE GENUINELY CRINGE WORTHY.
- THE BONGO RHYTHMS DON'T FIT IN WITH MANY OF THE TRACKS.
- OH DEAR, ALL THE NOVELTY OF THE FIRST GAME HAS WORN OFF.
- THE ALTERNATIVE BONGO SOUNDS JUST ABUSE YOUR EARS.

THE VERDICT

[Rob Burman] We want to like *Donkey Konga*, really we do. But with another sloppy track selection for the UK we want to smash our bongos to bits.

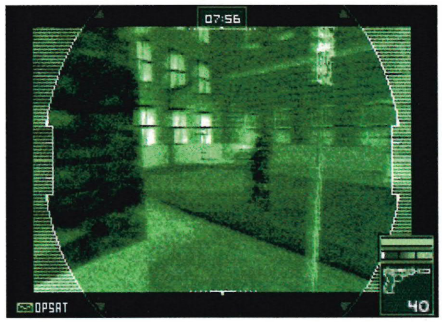
Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE JUDGEMENT **71%**





To celebrate his death, this guard has decorated the end of his rifle. Kill him quickly

Seen *The Fantastic Four* yet? This is the view from the bottom of The Thing's toilet



Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory

OMGZOR! Sam has snuck onto DS. We must get that alarm fixed.

GAME INFO

Out: **JULY 1ST**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1-2**
Publisher: **UBISOFT**

The guard wonders out loud: "Is someone there?" This is after I have noisily kicked the door in right in front of him, and am struggling to aim bullets at his face with the directional arrows on the touch screen.

About a minute ago, there was a similar situation. I booted the door in, but didn't draw my gun. I'll be honest with you: I sort of crapped my pants and legged it. Not far, just around the corner where I waited with pistol at the ready. I wasn't certain I was looking in the right direction to smoke him. As it turned out, it didn't matter. I heard him mutter "Ah, musta been nothing" and go back to where he was.

"MUSTA BEEN NOTHING"? You saw a special ops guy BOOT DOWN THE DOOR. I was standing there looking stunned for a good couple of seconds with my stupid goggles on that make me look like a spider. I was there. You saw me. And then I ran off. It wasn't "nothing". It was a person who is going to return and kill you.

The enemies in this game are as stupid as cardboard cutouts of themselves. Ubisoft aren't stupid though: it knows *Splinter Cell* is a bankable franchise. It knows DS can do 3D graphics, so Sam Fisher is reborn with square arms and shipped out on inch-square DS cartlets. Job done.

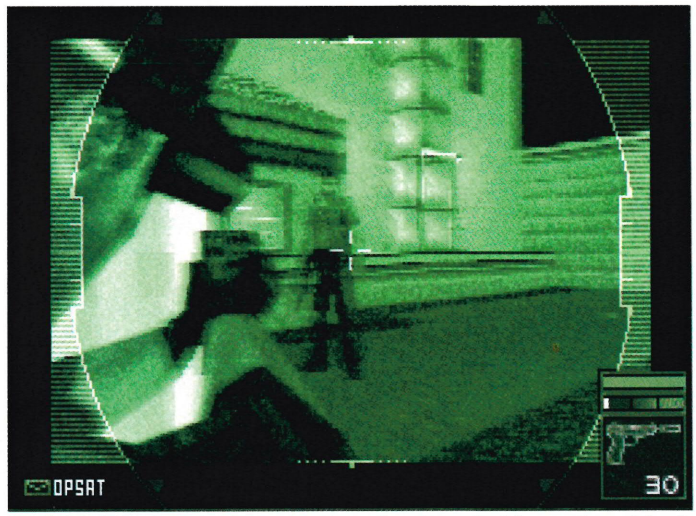
It reminds me of an argument I had with Mike J about *Super Monkey Ball Jr* on GBA. He said it was good for GBA. I agreed. He gave it a good score. I disagreed. "Good for GBA" doesn't mean good. You already knew what *Monkey Ball* was supposed to play like. It's one of the most analogue video games ever created and all the more beautiful for it. They made a D-pad-driven GBA game that approximated it, but, in direct comparison, was turd. Best it could be on GBA sure, but still garbage. *Splinter Cell* on DS is the same.

Sam Fisher's adventures are about absolute precision. Aiming carefully at a daydreaming guard in a far-away window, or scuttling silently under cover of darkness. It's a great concept, but the DS isn't the tool to execute it. Aiming using touch screen arrows is a nightmare. The clumsy controls compromise your stealth in the same way as a string of tin cans tied to your leg.

Because you can't be as precise, it's much less fun. Levels become about trial and error as much as skilful threat assessment. It's as unforgiving as the 'Cube game – kill someone you aren't supposed to and it's Game Over – and frustrating as hell because of it. You'll trip alarms you had practically no chance of spotting on the tiny screen. The game is so dark, you end up using night vision in rooms that already have a light on.

This is a shame, because *Splinter*

It's like *Dance Dance Revolution*. But a lack of rhythm leads to death



Night vision is so boring now. How about smell vision or fear vision?

The Darkness

I Believe in a Thing Called Brightness.

How many of you turn up the brightness in GameCube *Splinter Cell*? I do. I'm special ops, man. I take my job seriously. All I eat is carrots, so I can see in the dark like a badger. That's how I justify it to myself. But there's no brightness dial on the DS one and it's one of the darkest video games ever created.

The night-vision mode looks cool, but the frame rate drops through the floor. And because it's so dark and the DS screen isn't up to it, you end up using the night vision most of the time for trivial stuff. Like finding a ladder or something.

This game is dark. It's TOO dark. It probably looked a lot brighter on the PC screens they developed it on

Night vision! They made it look good! The thermal one isn't so good looking. It's like an Inspiral Carpets video

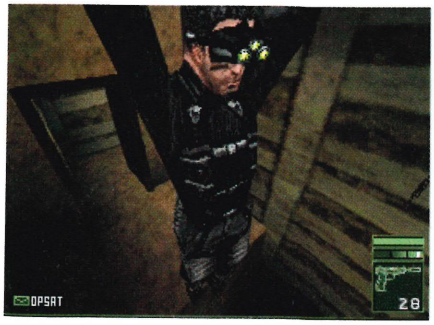
"Clumsy controls compromise your stealth like a string of tin cans tied to your leg."

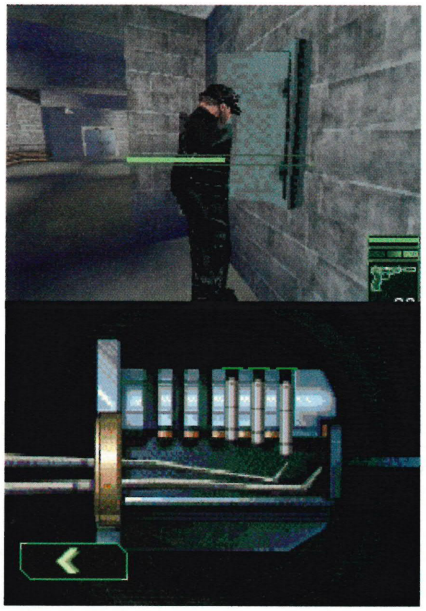
Cell on DS is a technical marvel. Ubisoft really did shrink down a brilliant game impressively, but it didn't tweak things enough to make it fun. A more junior *Splinter Cell* would have been preferable. You know, just a slap on the wrists for slitting someone's throat rather than a Mission Failed screen. The addition of an EXCLUSIVE NEW MOVE, the SWAT turn, doesn't ease the pain much. Sam just sort of does a little spin between boxes.

It's got the same awesome scenarios as its big brother. The blackout in NYC where you have to creep around undetected by the National Guard, seeing if some Koreans were lying about firing missiles, robbing banks in Panama – it's a bit more involved than saving a princess from a spiky green monster. Problem is, you're not getting the full effect. It's like watching a pirate version of an awesome movie like *Sin City*. It's been filmed on a shaky camcorder and people keep getting up in front of the cameraman to take a slash.

The multiplayer mode is full of great ideas worthy of a widescreen TV as a canvas. Two-player games of hide and seek in a dark base is a sweet idea and the fact that both of you are stealthing around in the same 'suit of armour' that is the controls, is quite a leveller. Can't promise we'll ever play it again, though.

You feel sorry for the developers, because you can't see how they could have done much more. Ubisoft has done its bit too, preserving the brand name by shipping something other than *Splinter Cell Kart*. There's no analogue stick on a DS and any game that absolutely depends on one is in trouble straight away. Oh, and don't even mention *Super Mario 64 DS*: if you tread on the wrong Goomba there it isn't Game Over. And Bowser hasn't put laser tripwire and surveillance cameras everywhere.





Lock picking! Do it with the stylus. Do everything else with your dirty finger

Nintendo® OFFICIAL MAG SAYS...

GRAPHICS 7

It looks like a PSOne game. Shut up, that's good! Everything's angular, but it's all totally *Splinter Cell*. It's too dark though.

SOUND 6

The 'sound' aspect of the stealth doesn't come across all that well. We like the music, though. Rock!

INNOVATION 6

Complex and involving, like a *Splinter Cell* should be. But it feels frustratingly unsuited to this platform.

VALUE 7

It's hard. You'll fail each mission so many times you'll lose count. It has a multiplayer mode too, which works pretty well.

MARIOS AND WARIOS

- UBISOFT DID AT LEAST *TRY* TO MAKE A PROPER *SPLINTER CELL* GAME ON DS.
- THE MULTIPLAYER MODE SHOULD'VE BEEN IN THE GAMECUBE VERSION.
- GUARDS DON'T STAY STILL SO YOU CAN AIM WITH THE DODGY CONTROLS.
- IT'S TRYING TO SHOW TOO MUCH DETAIL ON THAT TINY TOP SCREEN
- IT'S DARKER THAN THE INSIDE OF DARTH VADER'S UNDERPANTS.
- PICKING UP THE STYLUS JUST TO DO THE LOCK PICKING IS ANNOYING.

THE VERDICT

Dean You could make a convincing-looking wedding cake out of dogsh*t and white paint, but you shouldn't make the bride eat it. If you want to be Sam Fisher, buy this on GameCube. Seriously, kids.

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE JUDGEMENT **66%**

■ Let's hope that tank is fleshy and filled with blood like the rest of the platoon

GAME INFO

Out: **NOW!**
Price: **£39.99**
Players: **1-8**
Publisher: **ELECTRONIC ARTS**

Medal of Honor: European Assault

If you love World War II, watch *Downfall* instead.

We've played this game before. Running around a war-torn city in World War II, returning fire to dirty German snipers shooting from top-floor windows. What's this, a Panzer? Retreat and throw grenades at it like last time. The rousing orchestral score! The black and white film clips of troops looking grumpy! Check and check again.

That's not to say it's crap. It's not crap. It's just The Same. It can get pretty exciting at times when you're pinned down and outnumbered. The gunfire is crashing all around and you make a run for the anti-aircraft gun you have to take out with timed explosives. It's every other WW2 FPS in everything but name.

Do you care? You should, but we know sometimes you let that stuff slide. *Metroid Prime 2* was very much like *Metroid Prime*, only slightly better. *European Assault* is very much like *Rising Sun*, only they spread the fun out slightly beyond the first two levels this time.

You're American Lieutenant William Holt. Because you're super hard, you get to tag along with Britain's best commandos. Your tour of duty starts in the French town of St. Nazaire and winds up gloriously with the Battle of the Bulge. And we don't mean a load of soldiers going jogging around to work off their over-indulgence on captured Frankfurters.

This game is called *European Assault*. Mission two is set in North Africa. You don't have to be Michael bloody Palin to know that's wrong. Makes you wonder what they teach in American schools. "Okay children, America is the 'center' of the world and nowhere else matters. We're surrounded by people who HATE US because we are free to make our kids fat with McDonald's. And we pay those guys a dollar a week to make our Nikes, too. So ungrateful!"

And why do you have to play as an American anyway? Surely they could have fixed that for the UK release. You're hanging around with British regiments. They start banging on about the stupid Yank and you want to join in. "Yeah you dumb Yankee bast... oh hang on, that's me..." They wouldn't have had to re-record much of the dialogue to tailor this to UK gamers. It feels like you're playing a game that was made for Americans rather than for gamers.

When we talked to the people who made this game, they didn't like the suggestion that this game might be, you know, morally reprehensible. An excuse to print money off the back of the rows of headstones at Normandy and so on. "No!" they said, "we treat the subject with respect and it's as realistic as we can make it."

That'll be why when you shoot a guy in the face, it flashes up a little icon to congratulate you. And when you slaughter a load of German kids quickly, you can go into a superman 'Adrenaline' mode where you have infinite ammunition and your bullets don't

■ Intelligence reports that Hitler is hiding in this Tommy's elbow. Attack!

■ [insert German beach towel joke here]

■ Blow open this cottage and the dirty Jerries will have to come out... fighting!

miss. Don't worry about dying either – you can 'Revive' yourself. Get cut down and you spring back up. War is hell? No way! It sounds like great fun.

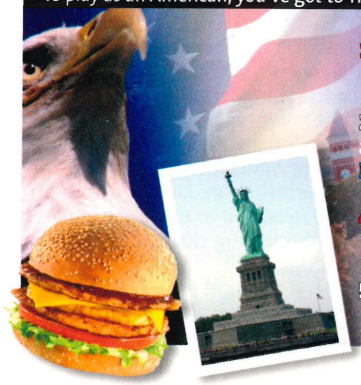
You can rarely fault EA for its visuals, though. From the bomb-hammered streets of occupied France to Stalingrad, *European Assault*'s environments are crafted with the same care and attention as a blockbuster Hollywood war movie. In fact, your TV lets you down at times. There just aren't enough dots on your screen for snipers in the distance to look like anything other than blobs. You're frequently shooting at people you can't really see because you know bullets are coming from there.

The zoom mode doesn't help much either. You see less, because the gun becomes bigger on the screen. But in reality, your brain blocks out that stuff as peripheral. When you're looking through a sniper scope, you're barely aware of the black surround. Just the cross-hairs twitching around your ex-girlfriends's head as she jogs down the street. NO, FORGET WE SAID THAT.

We liked the little boss characters that pop up occasionally, even though their super-hardness isn't logical. The basic squad control stuff is cool too, but everyone is doing that at the moment. Get some ROBOTS in there, EA! Let us shoot the textures off the polygons so we're running around a bare, wire-frame level. That would be COOL. This just doesn't surprise us in any way, so it isn't interesting.

Method gaming

To play as an American, you've got to THINK American.



1. Whenever you hear the American national anthem, start crying and sing about eagles and apple pie, and stuff.
2. Correct anyone who offers you French Fries. They are now called Freedom Fries. And crisps are chips.
3. Next time you play football, wear pathetic body armour and keep handballing it.
4. In America, fanny means arse. That's hilarious, but desensitise yourself to it right now or you'll blow your cover by cracking up all the time.
5. When writing, there's no such thing as an 'S'. It's all about the zees, man!

Nintendo® OFFICIAL MAG SAYS...

GRAPHICS 7

Great levels, but if EA want to "convey the horror of war" this should show what really happens when someone gets blown to bits.

SOUND 8

The same authentic, rousing score you get when fighting a real war. They had excellent sound systems on battlefields in those days.

GAMEPLAY 6

Solid, but unsurprising. The difficulty seems to spike in really random places, so you end up using a Revive when you don't want to.

VALUE 7

It's shorter than the real war, but longer than a fight in a pub car park. Not worth it if you already have *Call of Duty* or similar.

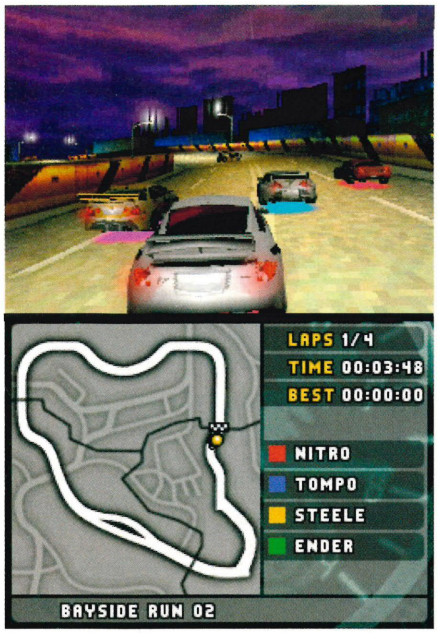
MARIOS AND WARIOS

- GREAT LEVELS – ARTISTICALLY SPEAKING. IT'S PROBABLY A BIT LIKE BEING THERE!
- GERMANS PILE INTO VIEW. YOU LEATHER THEM. DUGGA-DUGGA-DUGGA...
- SPECTACULARLY FAILS ITS GEOGRAPHY EXAM. WE CAN RELATE TO THAT.
- ADRENALINE MODE. IT'S RIDICULOUS. EXPLAIN THAT, EA. BZZT! TIME'S UP!
- MULTIPLAYER IN WAR GAMES WORKS BETTER IN CO-OP, WE FEEL.
- WAR IS HELL, BUT IT'S ALSO GETTING BORING. NEW INSPIRATION, PLEASE.

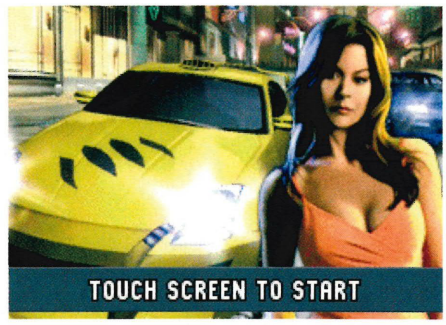
THE VERDICT

[Dean Zcott] What's that, EA? You're going to the shop? Wicked. Get me a pack of Bored and a can of Whatever. We know the ending: Hitler lost. Get a new idea.

Nintendo® OFFICIAL MAGAZINE JUDGEMENT **71%**



Have you ever tried looking at a map while driving? That's a recipe for death



Those little red lights on the back mean you're not going fast enough

GAME INFO

Out: **NOW**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1-4**
Publisher: **ELECTRONIC ARTS**

Need for Speed Underground 2

It's pretty fast, but it might also make you furious.

Hey, kids! Do you like racing really, really fast cars through post-apocalyptic zombie cities against opponents more interested in recreating key scenes from *The Fast and the Furious* than actually racing? Boy, have we got a game for you!

Need for Speed Underground 2 cuts right to the chase, so to speak. This is a game about racing cars, and that's all it's going to let you do. And for the most part, it accomplishes its objective competently. In motion, the races look great. Everything is rendered in true 3D and, at a glance, the environments look fleshed out and alive. Plus everything moves at 60 frames per second, if that sort of thing is important to you.

Just try not to stop and look around. The textures are kind of grimy and ugly, and sometimes buildings will connect in ways that make no physical sense. Sometimes they're even missing walls. But that's okay, this isn't a game about casually admiring the scenery. Just keep driving, man. You're only supposed to be driving. Stop trying to look into the flower shop.

The streets themselves are entirely devoid of life. There are no pedestrians, no streetlights and no police sirens or wildlife... hell, beyond the tyres on your car and some occasional exhaust, nothing moves or animates in this game. Here's a "for example" of why this is crap. There are a lot of ambulances roaming the streets; an absurd amount, even more than normal vehicles. They're just kind of casually cruising around at about 45mph. It's not as if they can do much else, the streets are entirely blocked off by barriers and magic invisible walls. They're ambulances, for crying out loud.

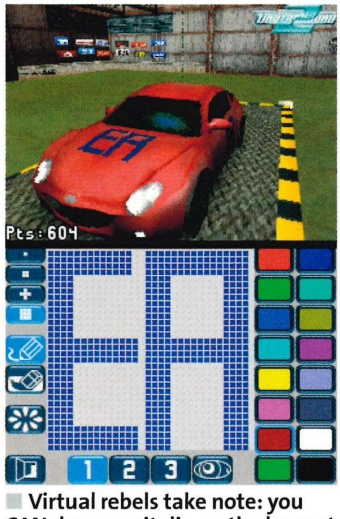
Why aren't they screaming by at 80mph, flashing their lights? Why do they behave just like every other car in the game? Game designers, here's a tip, courtesy of your friends at *NOM*: if you're going to attempt realism in your games, don't forget that reality, on top of looking pretty, is also alive.

But, again, none of this is important to the actual racing. If cars driven by living, breathing people are going to be replaced by moving hazards that merely look like cars, so be it. If elaborate city buildings don't even give the illusion of being accessible from the road, that's fine by us. If the town we're driving through has more ambulance and fire engine drivers than actual citizens... well, hey, whatever. This isn't *Shenmue*, it's a racing game. As long as the racing is fun, the actual immersion can take a back seat. So to speak.

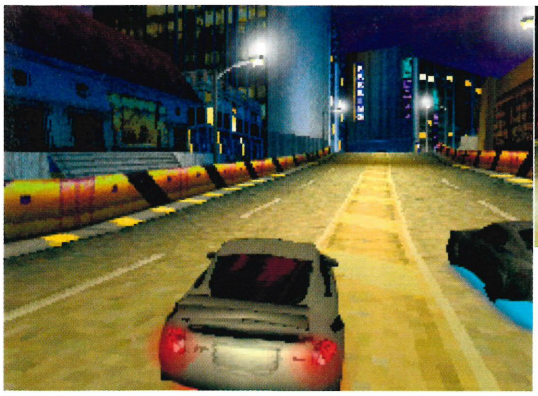
And, yeah, the actual racing is fun. There's a good sense of speed. Driving with the D-pad (there is no analogue touch screen steering support, and this is a good thing) works better than one might imagine. Precision steering involves lots of rapid taps left or right. You get used to it. The crashes are kind of neat and you're bound to experience some really exciting close calls. The AI, though, really sucks.

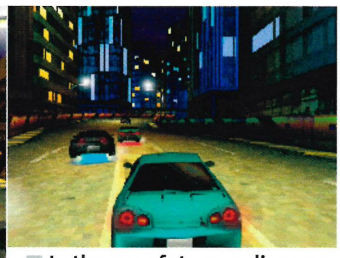
The thought pattern of the competing racers probably goes something like this: "Drive real

Even in our wildest fantasies we never thought we'd drive... A GOLF!



Virtual rebels take note: you CAN draw genitalia on the bonnet





In the near future, police cars will have underlights to attract criminals and idiots like moths to a flame

Driving backwards

Here your mum would rule the world of games.

Here's a fun way to extend the life of *Need for Speed Underground 2*: try driving the wrong way around the entire track and magic happens! Remember all those pesky ambulances and fire engines? They're gone now! Because just like real life, traffic ceases to exist when you turn around.

For added fun, pull down on the D-pad to look through your rear-view mirror. Now watch the buildings behind you miraculously disappear one by one! The programmers obviously weren't expecting anyone to admire the scenery while driving in the wrong direction, but we did. We did it because we're awesome.

Plus, it gave us a chance to look at the neat custom hood decal we drew with the stylus pen. It says "Fast Car." The other drivers are really intimidated by it.

"As long as the racing is fun, the realism can take a back seat."

fast, ignore everything, drive drive VROOM FAST". While the cars sometimes pull off impossible swerves to avoid oncoming traffic, they don't seem to recognise you at all. This means that, occasionally, your car will be rear-ended so hard that both you and the offending vehicle will go flying into the air so fast that your fancy neon ground effects stick to the road (bad game-testers, bad!).

What's even worse is when a competing driver manages to creep alongside you. When this happens, they seem to forget that they're in a race and their thoughts turn only to ramming into your side, slowing you both down as the other cars rocket past. They literally will not stop until you hit the brakes and manage to get away. They will grind you against the wall until the end of the race. This doesn't seem like very good racing strategy but, hey, maybe we're just not hardcore enough for this illegal street racing thing.

What's even worse is that road obstacles, such as barriers and parked tractors, seem to be pre-programmed "crashing points". If a car ahead of you encounters one of these, there's about a 50% chance that they'll wipe out on it, allowing you to edge forward. That's only if they're on-screen, of course.

Off-screen, God's hand comes down and carries them over everything. Your competitors are always just one step behind you and they can magically catch up if you're racing too well. Everything that happens in the game happens just for the sake of excitement. When you play *NFSU2*, you aren't racing, you're staging a drama, and that kind of sucks.

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAG SAYS...

GRAPHICS 7

The buildings are pretty when you're driving past at 140mph. Just don't stop and look at them or you'll be disgusted.

SOUND 8

The engine noises are incredibly loud, but realistic enough for skilled players to gear shift based on sound alone.

INNOVATION 6

The controls are great and the racing – particularly the drag racing portions – is lots of fun. The AI, though, made us cringe.

VALUE 7

Once you get past the frustration of racing against cars that only want to crash into you, you'll find a very long game.

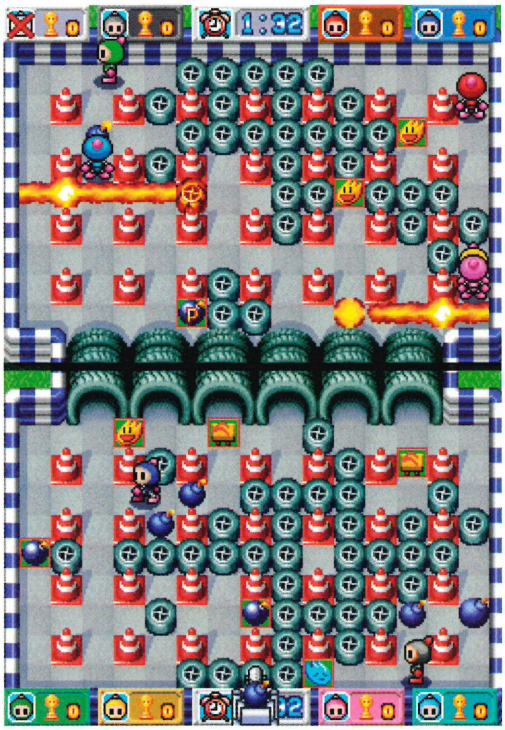
MARIOS AND WARIOS

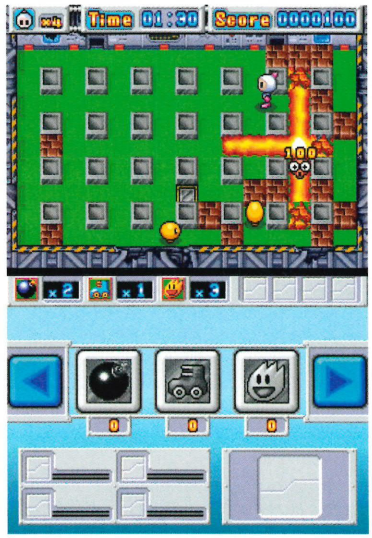
- THE GAME RUNS AT AN IMPRESSIVE 60FPS, GIVING A GREAT SENSE OF SPEED.
- IF YOU DON'T STOP TO SMELL THE ROSES, THE SCENERY IS REALISTIC.
- DRAW A KNOB ON YOUR BONNET. IT'S WHAT THE DS WAS MADE FOR.
- ZOMBIE TOWN, USA ISN'T A VERY FUN PLACE TO RACE. LET'S SEE SOME LIFE!
- ENEMY DRIVERS LIKE TO RAM INTO YOU FOR NO STRATEGIC REASON AT ALL.
- THIS "RUBBER-BAND" AI HAS GOT TO STOP SOMEDAY. IT'S JUST NOT FAIR.

THE VERDICT

Frank C Like an ex of mine, NFSU2 does a great job of letting you drive an expensive car really fast. But it doesn't have much of a personality.

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE JUDGEMENT 65%





This peaceful Yellow race know nothing of your violent urges. Educate them. With flames!

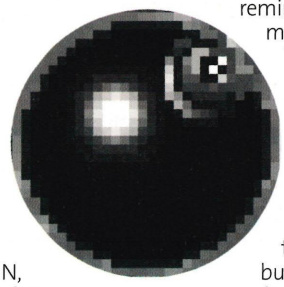
Bomberman

GAME INFO
Out: **JULY 8TH**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1-8**
Publisher: **UBISOFT**

It's like fireworks night. Light the bomb, throw it at your mate, run like hell.

Let's say you lay bombs for a living. Not remote-controlled bombs, but bombs on fuses. Bombs that once you set them down, are already fizzing away and trying to blow up. What qualifications do you think you'd need for a job like that? A GCSE in Explosions? Maybe. How about the ability to RUN LIKE HELL? Obviously.

When the DS Bomberman lays a bomb, he saunters away like he's wading through jelly. Like he only just learned to walk the second before and he's worried he'll get a speeding fine if he goes over 1mph. "RUN, YOU LITTLE BERK. YOU'RE GOING TO DIE." He doesn't listen.



It's bad enough in one player, but in multiplayer it makes you want to stop playing immediately. You need to uncover about three sets of roller skates just to move at the same rate as in the old Super NES games – and even that was a bit too slow for someone who laid bombs for a living.

Bomberman cries out for single-cart multiplayer. It cries all night so you don't get a second's sleep – the minutes ticking by like hours – so the following day you have red eyes like Satan and want to kill everyone who looks at you. To Hudson's credit, it took The Obvious by the horns and made that dream a glorious reality.

Don't let the slow guys ruin it. It's like life: sometimes it's so boring you end up killing yourself.

But play on the Speed levels to remind yourself of how much fun it can be. Then everyone belts it about like they're on a special new type of steroid that cannot yet be detected in urine samples. Whizz! The game's a bit tight with power-ups, but when someone can't concentrate on the slow motion gameplay and dies, you can to pick the power-ups out from among the bits of bomb-scattered brain and lung. The game's not violent, our sick minds just paint in the extra detail.

We preferred the way the old Bombermen looked. The guys are now lithe and quite athletic-looking. They used to be as round as the bombs they dropped. It's like it's Tim in the white suit, but without the mobility of the real Tim. He doesn't, for example, take a fortnight to get from the car park just outside into the office.

But at least the multiplayer assumes that, yes, since you've just picked up a bomb you might automatically appreciate the ability to start dropping that bomb right away. So you can kill more people, like. In the single-player game, every item you bomb out of a block is held in trust on the bottom screen until you touch it to activate. We thought it was pointless, then we realised why they were doing it. And it still seemed pointless.

Asset management! Yes, like a strategy game. So when you die, you can pull out extra bombing capacity from storage to get back to level like the one you were at before you stupidly incinerated yourself. Hudson has absolutely no idea what to do to make one-player *Bomberman* interesting. They never have had. It's like trying to make a no-player mode

800, 1600... it's not a score, it's the level of pain you're inflicting

Line up three roller skates and wheels will pop out of your DS

A multitap speaks

"Well that's me out of a job. Thanks, wi-fi!"

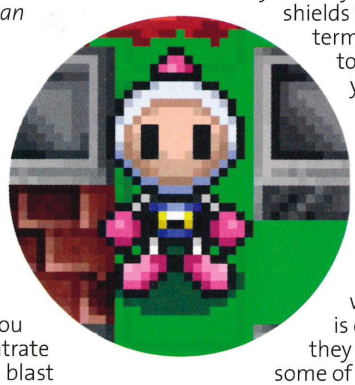
"When I first heard about wi-fi multiplayer, I just laughed. Then I heard my owner, Dean, and Tim had tried it on the plane to E3 2004 and I just laughed even harder. They were playing *Mario Golf*, Tim went for a dump and the connection was lost as he was squeezing one out. Ha ha ha!

"Then the DS crept up and whacked me on the back of the head. I was stunned, and people were playing *Bomberman* using INVISIBLE MULTITAPS in the SKY. I cried. Please buy me on eBay still. I look so cool, remember!"

"With eight-player wi-fi connectivity, this should have been THE *Bomberman* game."

in any other game interesting. You bomb crap enemies that walk obvious patterns. Every single second you play it, the awareness grows that you're completely wasting your life.

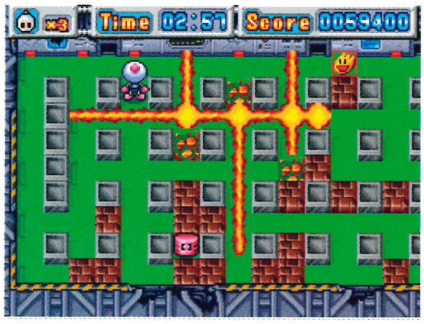
It doesn't even get you sharp for the multiplayer game. There's not a whole lot to know in a *Bomberman* game. You start off with one bomb in the corner of the screen. You bomb out walls to give yourself room to move, occasionally liberating power-ups. Bigger blast radius, ability to kick bombs, stuff like that. Then when you're dropping lines of bombs like frogs drop frogspawn you go after your mates. You test their ability to concentrate and remain outside of the blast corridors as you bathe the screen in fire.



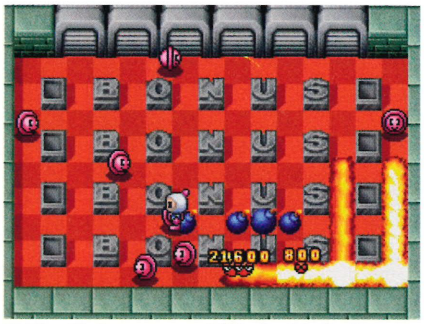
Bomberman's finest hours require seven other humans to be present. Forget four and five player, those were the dark days. Here, the map can be stretched out across both screens and filled with your friends. Be careful what order you download the map from the host, though: player two is the black Bomberman and player six is the gold one. Who wants to be pink or light blue? Dishonour!

Weirdly enough, certain modes use the microphone. You can opt for voice-operated bomb-laying which doesn't really add any fun. Or voice-activated shields which does in the short term. Brilliantly, it'll respond to whatever you say. So if you suddenly realise you're on Bomb Avenue, you can shout a word that starts with 'sh', but isn't shield. It's shorter and rhymes with fit. Or you could use the one that rhymes with duck. Thing is, shields are for the weak. And once everyone is composed with the game, they can shield too well and some of the glory goes on holiday.

It's just not the game that people who own two Bomberman-shaped Super NES multitaps want it to be. Occasionally it gets close in multiplayer, but every round doesn't play out like a classic like in the old games. It could be rose-tinted glasses, we guess. Tell you what though, that single player mode is DEFINITELY crap.



Name one problem in life that can't be solved with bombs. You can't can you?



The Pinks were on Hitler's side in the war. It's only right that you make them pay

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAG SAYS...

GRAPHICS 5

Functional sure, but what's with the tall, slim Bombermen? Someone took the old art style and wiped their arse on it.

SOUND 4

The tunes are a bit too jolly. We prefer a bit of menace when we're trying to tear people apart with incendiary devices.

INNOVATION 7

The twin screen maps in the multiplayer are sweet and the voice stuff is interesting. The touch aspects feel so token.

VALUE 6

For the solo gamer, it's an absolute washout. But it gives good one-cart multiplayer functionality.

MARIOS AND WARIOS

- SINGLE-CART MULTIPLAYER. THAT'S THE BIG WIN FOR YOU AND YOUR MATES.
- THE VOICE-ACTIVATED SHIELD ALLOWS FOR EXCELLENT SWEARS. FIDDLESTICKS!
- WHY CAN'T THE LITTLE GUYS RUN? OH WHY, LORD, WHY?!
- ONE-PLAYER MODE MIGHT AS WELL NOT EXIST. IT'S EXTREMELY TEDIOUS...
- ... AND IF THEY DID THAT, MAYBE THIS COULD'VE COST £20 INSTEAD OF £30.
- IS IT NOW TIME FOR BOMBERMAN TO DIE AND NOT PRESS CONTINUE?

THE VERDICT

Dean Nothing changes. Bomberman is the same as ever but slightly less fun than before because of some strange pacing decisions. Eight-player wi-fi though. God. This should have been THE Bomberman game.

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE JUDGEMENT **72%**

GAME INFO
Out: **NOW!**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1**
Publisher: **ACTIVISION**

Madagascar

The animals from *Zoo Keeper* are back for revenge. They want blood – YOUR blood.

Lions can tear your jugular out in a second. Hippos can kill a man with their huge jaws. Zebras could easily kick your arms right off and a giraffe gives a real nasty glance. These aren't animals we should be celebrating in a cuddly platformer, they should be the cast in Animals That Kill.

In *Madagascar* these potential killers have broken loose from the zoo and you're trying to HELP them. Wow. What a big mistake. The game should have gone like this... animals make bid for freedom, you're given a gun, you shoot animals and everyone's safe again. What's so hard to understand about that plot?

For starters it would have certainly been better than the actual game, which is just a very boring platformer. Yes, you play as four different animals, a zebra, a lion, a hippo and a giraffe, and each has different abilities – apart from their natural ability to KILL. But that can't hide the fact that all you're really doing is jumpy jumpy jump jump with a bit of bashy bashy bash bash at the odd enemy.

The only real change in gameplay is where you must sneak through without being spotted by humans. Humans who are really just trying to do their jobs and stop mad killing machines unleashing agony upon the world. They're wrongly portrayed as the bad guys in *Madagascar* though. Yeah well, listen animals, we're not so bad when we're saving your sorry asses from extinction are we? Eh? EH? Are you listening, white rhinos? Remember who stopped you shuffling off this planet next time you're encouraging your little animal pals to star in human-bashing platformers. Who cares who nearly made you extinct in the first place? Christ, you're not elephants, just forget about it.

Sometimes you do get to play as a penguin, which is great. Not because it gets any less half-arsed. Just because you're playing as a funny little penguin. Ha! They look like tiny waiters. Where are our cocktails, mate? But even the penguins can karate chop stuff. Next Activision will tell us monkeys (nature's clowns) can wield nunchuckas and throw ninja stars.

This game's fate is tied mercilessly to the success of the film. If lots of sugar-crazed tweenies feast their tiny eyes and minds on the funny CGI animals at the cinema, then expect this to do well. But you know better than that. You're not going to be easily fooled by this animal propaganda. Invest in a dart gun... the vicious animal revolution is coming and you need to be fully prepared.

Penguins are nature's practical jokers. It's their job to jump out and make people crap themselves

Lion versus crab: the battle you thought you'd never see explodes onto your GBA

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAG SAYS...

GRAPHICS 7
It cleverly hides the teeth of most animals, disguising their murderous nature.

SOUND 5
None of the humans scream in agony as they're pounced upon by evil beasts.

GAMEPLAY 5
Portrays animals as happy to be jumping about instead of tearing at people's throats.

VALUE 5
As a guide to the dangers of wildlife it lacks any value. There are mini-games though.

THE VERDICT

Accept this and you accept the lie that animals are our friends. The simplified platforming action is just lulling you into a false sense of security. Rob Burman

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE JUDGEMENT 48%

GAME INFO

Out: **TBC**
Price: **£19.99**
Players: **1**
Publisher: **NAMCO**

Pac-Man Pinball

Mario's had a go. And Sonic. And Pikachu. In the interests of fairness, we had to let this through...

In this modern era of games, there's no time for a legend to rest on his laurels. Just as Nintendo force Mario to play every sport under the sun, Namco is looking to get its money's worth out of the iconic pill-muncher. Problem is, what CAN Pac-Man do? Revisionist game history has given him arms and legs where he previously had none, but what use is a BALL exactly? Think Namco!

Ball... ball... Pinball! You have to hand it to them, the guys at Namco earn their money. So Pac-Man gets chucked onto a big table and smacked around with giant flippers until his fragile yellow skull casing cracks and the ghosts do a dance on his leaking brain. If only that really happened.

Here's why this is crap: physics. You don't need Stephen Hawking to tell you there should be a limitless number of directions the ball can go in when it leaves a mechanical flipper. In this game it feels like the paddle is divided into three. The ball shoots off in a pre-determined direction if you hit it in roughly the right place. Who needs skill when you can easily make Pac-Man fly around the loops, eh? What fun.

It's got those pre-rendered graphics, too. Our favourite! They make it hard to actually SEE the ball though, especially when it's pinging around randomly with no respect for actual physical law. There's not enough to do on the two tables either. You occasionally get to attack ghosts and there are pills scattered around to collect, but it's fairly boring. Pac-Man eats fruit, so there's a fruit machine mini-game. Powerful logic indeed, but still not any fun.

There's no point to it, anyway. Literally NO POINT. Why do people play pinball? It doesn't cure any diseases as far as we're aware. Nope, you set a high score which you hope will be revered by generations to come. *Pac-Man Pinball* doesn't remember what you did after you switch the power off. So a Pac-Man doesn't have a memory! You learn something new every day. Wonder if he can grow a beard? Maybe *Pac N' Roll* will tell us!

Nintendo® OFFICIAL MAG SAYS...

GRAPHICS 4
Pre-rendered graphics! Your mum is dead! Two lots of very bad news in one day.

SOUND 4
Sounds like those crappy free dance CDs you get with car magazines occasionally.

GAMEPLAY 4
Broken physics, so skill isn't required. No high score save = what's the point?

VALUE 4
Two tables, each with two skins! That makes a grand total of... still two tables.

THE VERDICT

You can tell Pac-Man didn't want to do this. Even *Pac-Pix* was a stretch, but he's gone into this half-arsed and cocked it up. Dean Scott

Nintendo® OFFICIAL MAGAZINE JUDGEMENT 43%

What do you get in the UK's best-selling football magazine that you don't get anywhere else?

THE BEST INTERVIEWS!

THE BEST POSTERS!

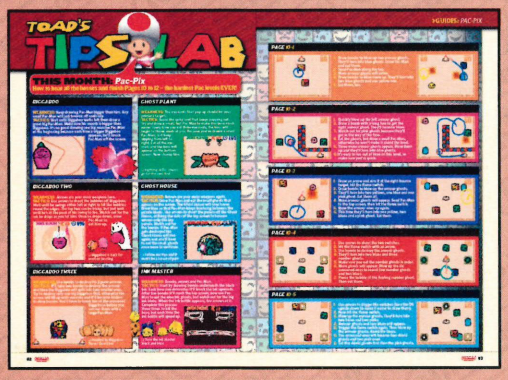
THE BEST STARS!

THE BEST VALUE!

MATCH! IT'S SIMPLY THE BEST! on sale every Tuesday!

This month there's more cool stuff than ever before. Except the pics I took of me bog-washing Luigi. We had to take them out when he cried.

>> TOAD'S TIPS LAB >> P.92



I'll help you beat the ghosts in *Pac-Pix*!

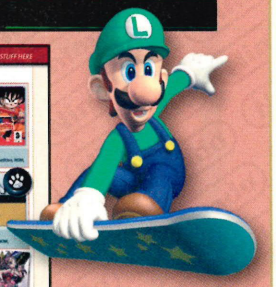
>> WARIO'S CHEATS >> P.96

Use my cheats and you'll be as evil as me!

>> PEACH & BOWSER'S ROYAL MAIL >> P.102

Bowser just ate the mail man!

>> LUIGI'S PRIZE PIT >> P.106

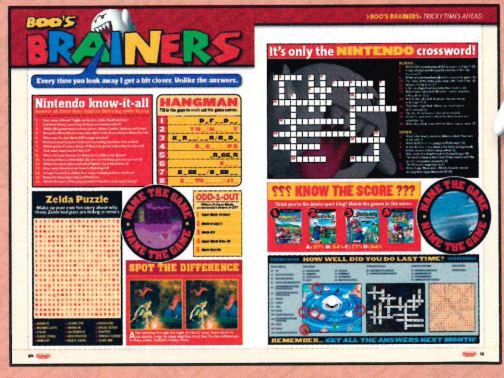


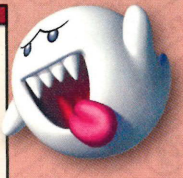
You could win all this cool stuff. Yes, really!

>> CHAIN CHOMP'S CHALLENGES >> P.108

Think you can beat me? There are three new tests of skill!

>> BOO'S BRAINERS >> P.110





Shine a torch at me and I run. Like you from my quizzes!

>> Don't forget to check out the great subscription deals where you could get *NOM* for less! >> P.100

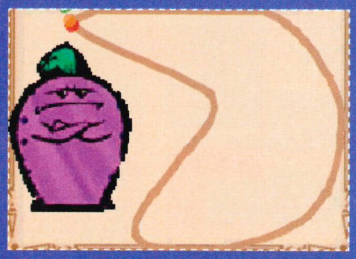
TOAD'S TIPS LAB

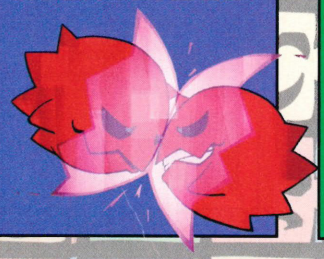
THIS MONTH: Pac-Pix

How to beat all the bosses and finish Pages 10 to 12 – the hardest Pac levels EVER!

BIGGABOO

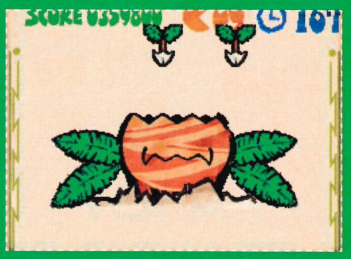
WEAKNESS: Keep drawing Pac-Men bigger than him. Any small Pac-Men will just bounce off uselessly.
TACTICS: Wait until Biggaboo walks left then draw a great big Pac-Man. Make sure his mouth is bigger than Biggaboo. It's no good drawing one big massive Pac-Man at the beginning because each time a bigger Biggaboo appears, he'll knock Pac-Man off the screen.





GHOST PLANT

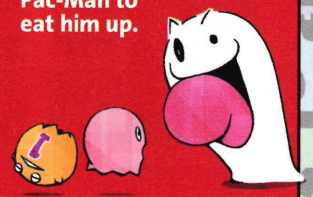
WEAKNESS: The eye roots that pop up should be your primary targets.
TACTICS: Avoid the spiky root that keeps popping out. Try and draw a small, fast Pac-Man to make this boss much easier. Every time you eat three eye roots, the boss will begin to throw seeds at you. Because you've drawn a small Pac-Man, just keep zipping from left to right. Eat all the eye roots and the boss will appear on the bottom screen. Now chomp him.



❑ Fighting skillz: always go for the eyes first

BIGGABOO TWO

WEAKNESS: Arrows are your main weapons here.
TACTICS: Use arrows to shoot the bubbles off Biggaboo. Wait until he swings either left or right to hit the bubbles round the edges. The top two can be tricky, but just wait until he's at the peak of his swing to fire. Watch out for the ink he drops as you hit him. Once he drops down, draw Pac-Man to eat him up.



❑ Biggaboo is back for another beating

GHOST HOUSE

WEAKNESS: Arrows are your main weapons again.
TACTICS: Draw Pac-Man and eat the small ghosts that appear on the screen. The Ghost House will now lower. Draw lines so that Pac-Man keeps bouncing between the puzzle blocks. Use arrows to shoot the panels off the Ghost House, utilising the sides of the top screen to bounce arrows onto the top panels. Watch out for the bombs. If Pac-Man gets destroyed the Ghost House will rise again and you'll have to eat the small ghosts once more to continue.

❑ Follow our tips and it won't be a house of pain

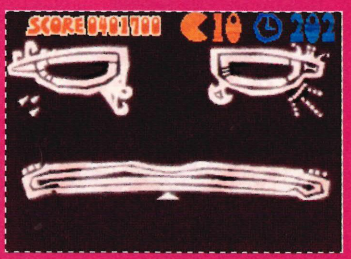
BIGGABOO THREE

WEAKNESS: Use bombs to destroy his jigsaw armour.
TACTICS: It'll take two bombs to destroy the armour and then the Biggaboo will split into two smaller ones. Try to destroy only one big Biggaboo first, otherwise the screen will fill up with enemies and it'll become trickier to draw bombs. You'll have to bomb ten of the armoured Biggaboos before you can eat them with a large Pac-Man.

❑ Puzzled by Biggaboo Three? Don't be!

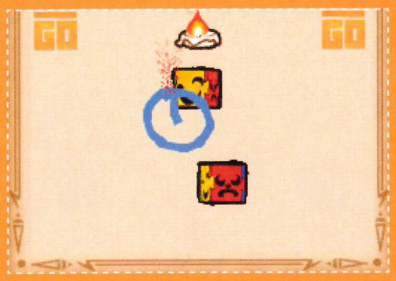
INK MASTER

WEAKNESS: Bombs, arrows and Pac-Man.
TACTICS: Start by drawing bombs underneath the black ink. Each time one detonates it'll knock the ink upwards. After five bombs it'll reach the top screen, now use Pac-Man to eat the nine ink ghosts, but watch out for the big ink blobs. When the ink bottle appears, fire arrows at it. Complete this process three times to kill the boss, but each time the ink bottle will speed up.

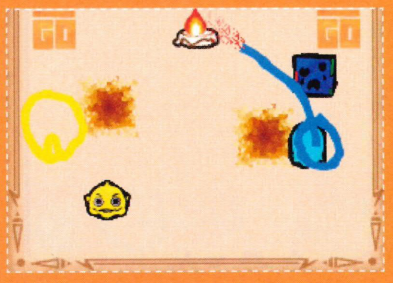


❑ Turn the Ink Master black and blue

PAGE 10-1



1. Draw bombs to blow up two armour ghosts. They'll turn into blue ghosts. Draw Pac-Man and eat them.
2. Send Pac-Man along the top.
3. More armour ghosts will arrive.
4. Draw bombs to blow them up. They'll turn into two blue ghosts and one yellow one.
5. Eat them, too.



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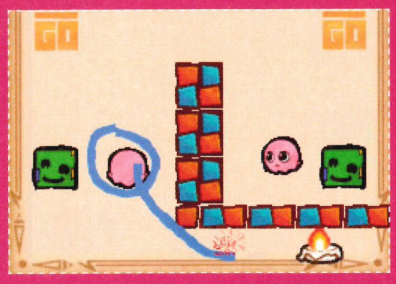
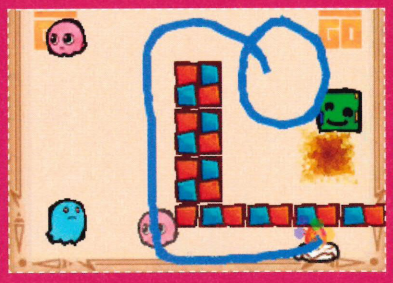
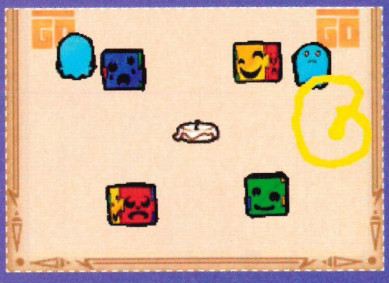


1. Quickly blow up the left armour ghost.
2. Draw a bomb with a long fuse to get the right armour ghost. They'll become blues.
3. Watch out for pink ghosts because they'll get in the way of the fuse.
4. Eat the ghosts, but draw a small Pac-Man, otherwise he won't make it round the level.
5. Three more armour ghosts appear. Blow them up and they'll turn into blue ghosts.
6. It's easy to run out of time on this level, so make sure you're quick.



PAGE 10-3

1. Draw an arrow and aim it at the right bounce target. Hit the flame switch.
2. Draw bombs to blow up the armour ghosts.
3. They'll turn into two yellows, one blue and one pink ghost. Eat them all.
4. More armour ghosts will appear. Send Pac-Man to the top screen, then hit the flame switch.
5. Blow the armour ones up again.
6. This time they'll turn into one yellow, two blues and a pink ghost. Eat them.



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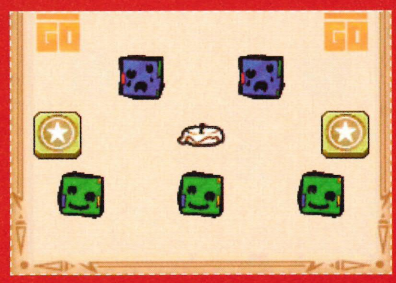
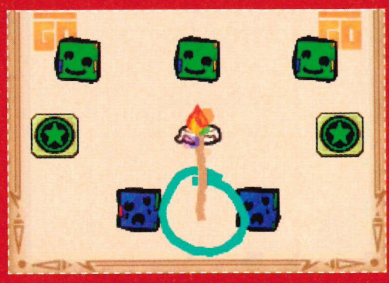


1. Use arrows to shoot the two switches.
2. Hit the flame switch with an arrow.
3. Use bombs to destroy the armour ghosts.
4. They'll turn into two blues and three number ghosts.
5. Make sure you eat the number ghosts in order.
6. More ghosts will appear. Blow up the six armoured ones to reveal four number ghosts and two blues.
7. Pierce the bubble of the floating number ghost. Then eat them.

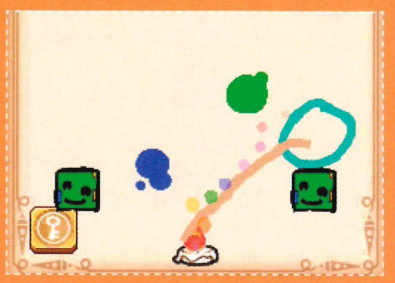


PAGE 10-5

1. Use arrows to trigger the switches (turn the DS upside down to make it easier to draw them).
2. Now hit the flame switch.
3. Blow up the armour ghosts. They'll turn into two blues and two pinks.
4. Armour ghosts and two blues will appear.
5. Trigger the flame switch again. Then blow up the armour ghosts. Avoid the blues.
6. The armoured ones will become two shield ghosts and two pink ones.
7. Eat the shield ghosts first then the pink ghosts.

PAGE 11-1

1. Draw bombs to blow up the walls. Trigger the switch with Pac-Man.
2. Send him up to the top screen.
3. Shoot some arrows at the bubble ghosts.
4. When Pac-Man comes back down, eat the ghosts.
5. More will appear. Shoot the yellow ghosts first because they're a nuisance.
6. Eat the two blues on the top screen.
7. Bomb the armour ghosts. They'll turn into two blues. Finally, chomp the lot.



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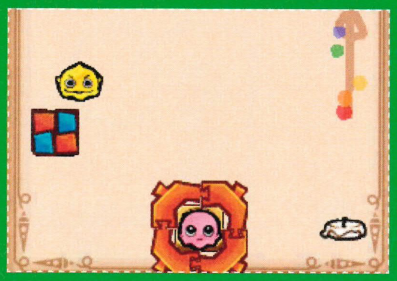
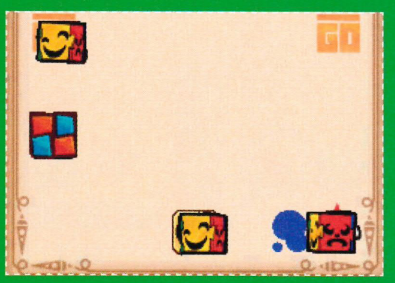
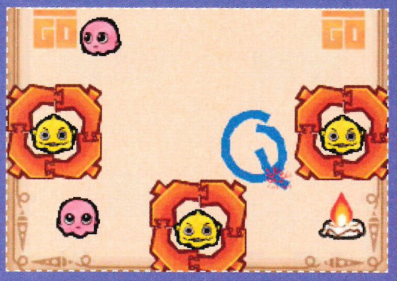


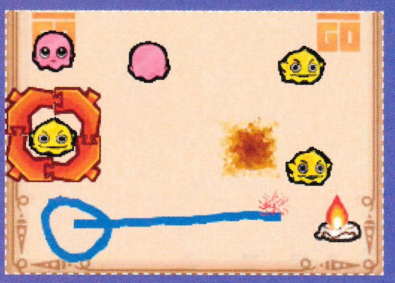
1. Wait for the block to trigger the switch.
2. Shoot an arrow at the flame switch.
3. Use a bomb to blow up the walls.
4. Draw Pac-Man and make him hit the switches. Send him onto the top screen.
5. Pierce the three bubble ghosts when the block is on the switch. Shoot the flame switch.
6. Use bombs to blow up all armour ghosts. They'll turn into two blues and one pink.
7. Shoot arrows at the two bubble ghosts. Then eat them.



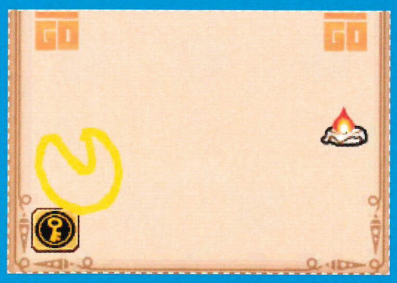
PAGE 11-3



1. Shoot arrows at the two switches.
2. Fire another into the rebound target.
3. Destroy the walls and blow up the armour ghosts. They'll become blue and yellow ghosts.
4. Shoot arrows at the two switches again.
5. Aim at the rebound target again, but draw an arrow big enough to hit all three bubble ghosts at the same time.
6. Blow up the armour ghosts. They'll turn into one blue, a pink and a yellow ghost. Eat them ALL.



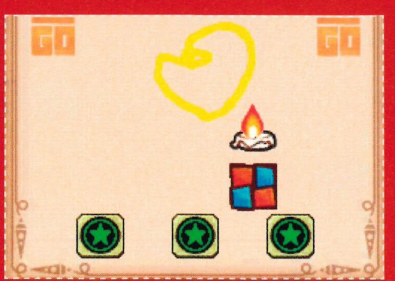
PAGE 11-4



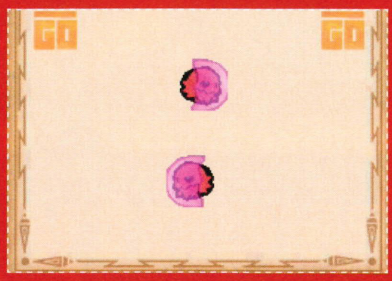
1. Aim arrows at the flame switch. Avoid the bubble ghosts for now.
2. Use bombs to blow up the walls.
3. Send Pac-Man onto the top screen.
4. Shoot arrows at the bubble ghosts. Eat them.
5. Fire at the flame switch and draw bombs to blow up armour ghosts.
6. Eat the ghosts then send Pac-Man onto the top screen while you shoot the bubble ones.
7. Try to avoid shooting the diamonds. Eat the remaining ghosts.

PAGE 11-5

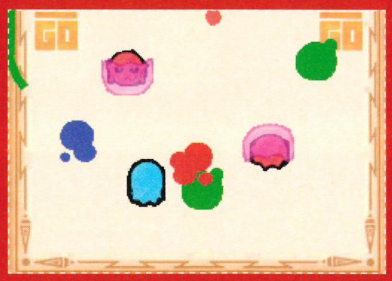
1. Use arrows to shoot the switches (again, turn your DS upside down to make this easier).
2. Hit the flame switch. Bomb the armour ghosts.
3. Shoot the bubble ghosts and eat them.
4. Remember that the switches can get in the way of your lines.
5. Hit switches, followed by the flame switch.
6. Destroy armour ghosts, then shoot the bubble ones. Keep sending Pac-Man onto the top screen while you do this.
7. Eat the remaining ghosts.



PAGE 12-1



1. Shoot the bubble ghosts.
2. Draw Pac-Man just behind a shield ghost to catch it off guard. Eat the others.
3. Next, eat the shield ghosts on the top screen. Wait until they turn back towards the edge of the screen before sending Pac-Man after them.
4. If you time it right, you'll get both at once, which saves valuable seconds.
5. While Pac-Man is on the top screen, shoot down bubble ghosts.
6. Eat them all as they drop down.



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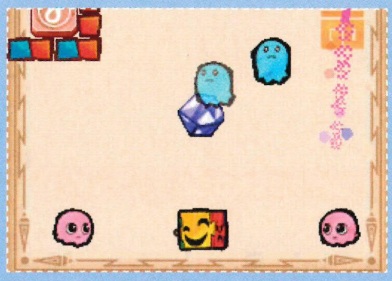
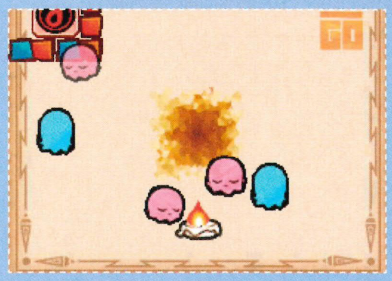


1. Aim an arrow at the right rebound target and hit flame switch.
2. Use bombs to destroy the armour ghost. It'll become a blue ghost.
3. Pierce the bubble ghosts.
4. Use an arrow to hit the flame switch. But try and avoid the crystals this time.
5. Bomb the armour ghosts who'll become three pinks. Shoot the two bubble ones.



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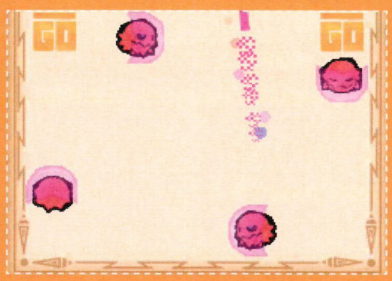
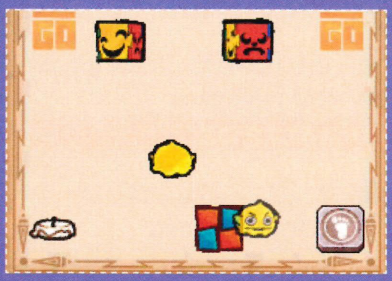
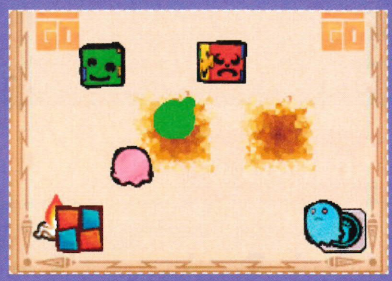


1. Pierce the yellow ghost's bubble. Avoid the crystal if possible.
2. Draw a small, fast Pac-Man behind one of the shield ghosts.
3. Time it right so you can send Pac-Man in a square and eat all the shield ghosts in one go.
4. Pierce the bubble of the number ghost. Eat the shield ghost first, otherwise it'll get in the way.
5. Now eat the number ghosts.

PAGE 12-4



1. Wait for the block to hit the switch.
2. Shoot the flame target.
3. Blow up the armour ghosts by drawing a bomb between them. They'll turn into one pink and a blue one.
4. Eat the ghosts then send Pac-Man to the top screen.
5. Pierce the bubble ghosts.
6. Destroy the armoured ones and shoot the next wave of bubble ghosts.



PAGE 12-5

1. Wait until the armour ghosts are at the side, then shoot an arrow at the flame switch.
2. Blow up the walls and armour ghosts. They'll become two shield ones.
3. Draw Pac-Man behind a shield ghost to eat it quickly, then chomp the other.
4. Send Pac-Man onto the top screen while you shoot the bubble ghosts.
5. More will arrive. Now light the flame switch.
6. Use a large bomb to blow up all the armour ghosts at once.
7. Draw a small, fast Pac-Man and eat them in one go.
8. Trigger the switches and send Pac-Man onto the top screen to eat the two shield ghosts.
9. Shoot the bubble ghosts and then eat them.

Wario's Cheats

Here's My Top Twenty

Dragon Ball

UNLOCKABLE...	HOW...
Piccolo in Free Battle	finish with Gokuo and Klylin
Cyber Taopaipai in Free Battle	beat Survival with Piccolo
Survival mode	finish with Gokuo
Piccolo in Tournament	finish with Krillin
Boss mode	finish with Gokuo and Krillin
Mini-game mode	finish with Gokuo
Sound Test	complete Boss mode

Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory

Crippling Otomo's I-SDF servers may seem difficult, but it's really not. Enter the lift and descend. Halfway down the lift will stop. Don't drop, though. Instead, shimmy across then jump onto a ledge – do this five times. Next, turn left and you'll spot three soldiers. Don't engage them – let them make their way out, then SLOWLY walk to the door. Enter and use infrared mode – there are lasers. Use the switch to your right to shut them off. Now head forward for the servers...

Boktai 2

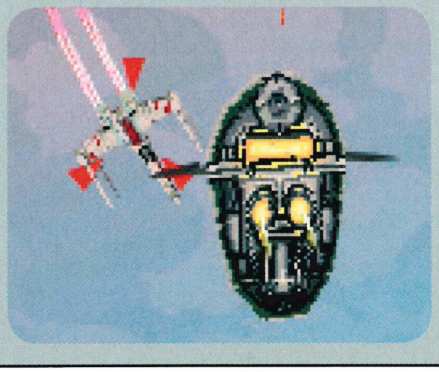
SWORDS TO FORGE...	NEW SWORD...
Bushido and Great	Blood Sword
Gradius and Short	Broad Sword
Zweihander and Flamberge	Claymore
Long and Zweihander	Flamberge
Short and Broad	Long Sword
Claymore and Flamberge	Magic Sword
Vorpal and Blood	Solar Sword
Bushido and Blood	Vorpal Sword
Long and Broad	Zweihander

1. **DRAGON BALL ADVANCE ADVENTURE**
2. **LEGO STAR WARS**
   Pause, then press ST, ST, ▲, ▼, ▲, ▼, ▲ and ▼ to play as R4-P17
3. **RESIDENT EVIL 4**
   To play as Hunk in The Mercenaries, get a four-star rating on the Island Commando Base map.
4. **STAR FOX ASSAULT**
5. **TIMESPLITTERS: FUTURE PERFECT**
   Complete Elite League with all golds to unlock INSETICK SD/10 as a playable character.
6. **STAR WARS EPISODE III**
7. **SUPER MARIO 64 DS**
   Collect all 150 Stars then return to Cool, Cool Mountain to race a fatter version of the penguin.
8. **DONKEY KONGA 2**
9. **THE SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS MOVIE**
   To unlock Ripped Pants Spongebob, pause the game then press Y, Y, Y, Y, X, Y, Y and X.
10. **MARIO PARTY 6**
    In Word Herd, say "Ukiki" into the mic and Ukikis will throw objects at your opponents.
11. **SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY**
12. **MARIO POWER TENNIS**
    Press X on the character- or stage-select screen to randomly choose either your character or stage.
13. **YOSHI TOUCH & GO**
    Get high scores in all the modes to unlock the balloon-popping mini-game.
14. **RIDGE RACER DS**
15. **KINGDOM HEARTS**
    To get the Stop Raid Skill, open the Key of Rewards room in Wonderland.
16. **MR. DRILLER: DRILL SPIRITS**
    Complete any mission course without using items or dying to unlock a special Driller Badge.
17. **THE INCREDIBLES**
    Pause the game and enter KRONOS as a password to defeat enemies with just one punch.
18. **VIEWTIFUL JOE 2**
    To unlock the Super VJ mode, in which you have infinite FX powers, beat all 37 chambers.
19. **FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 2**
    On the Venue Screen, hold ▲ until a bell rings, now you can play as smaller characters.
20. **BOKTAI 2: SOLAR BOY DJANGO**

Star Fox Assault

To make the final boss easier, hit the node on the Queen Aparoid in its first form. On the second form, wait for the boss to turn around then shoot its pink nodes. Aim for the eye and keep shooting the final form until it dies.

Star Wars Episode III



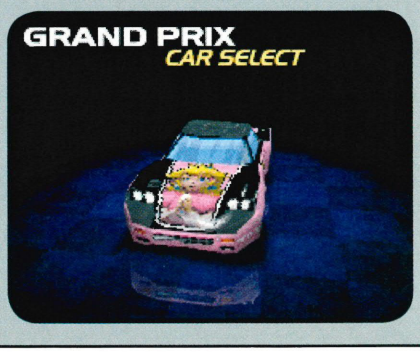
If you beat the corresponding bots in Skirmish mode you'll unlock their ships for yourself. Start with the easier pilots, like Boba Fett before moving onto tougher battles like taking on Han Solo in the Falcon.

Donkey Konga 2

UNLOCKABLE...	HOW TO UNLOCK IT...
Dixie's Notes 3	buy all Gorilla songs
Dixie's Notes 4	earn gold on all Gorilla duet songs
Dixie's Notes 5	earn gold on all Gorilla solo songs
Dixie's Notes 6	complete the full set in Challenge mode
Dixie's Notes 7	earn gold on all Chimp duet songs
Dixie's Notes 8	earn gold on all Chimp solo songs
Dixie's Notes 9	complete the 12-Song set in Challenge

Ridge Racer DS

Play more than ten multiplayer races to unlock the Shy Guy and Mario Racing cars. To get the DK Team Racing car, beat DK Team in Car Attack mode (after winning Grand Prix 6). To get the Peach car (after winning Grand Prix 5) beat Racing Team Peach.



Ask The Block!

His eager smile means he wants to help you soooo much.

Q. Do you have any tips to help me and my friends on *Zelda: Four Swords Adventures*?
Pete Moss, via email

Oh Pete, are you stuck on a particular section? Do you need help on a boss? Pete you need to be more specific for me to help you properly. Perhaps you're like me and when you say "me and my friends" you mean you're playing the game by yourself and have got lonely. As a general tip, it's really important to communicate with your fellow players. That way lies victory.

Q. On *Animal Crossing*, how can you get the Tri-Force statue and the Coin? The codes I got from a friend don't work and these are the only items I need.
Zak Bean, via email

Those codes wouldn't have worked because they're for the US version of the game. Unfortunately there aren't any codes for the UK version, which makes me weep with sadness. You're just going to have to keep playing until one of those lovely animals gives you these items.

Q. How do I defeat Event 50 in *Super Smash Bros. Melee*? I'm completely stumped. Help!
Daniel Potter, Bristol

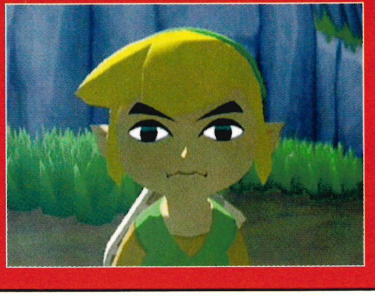
Of course I'll help, Daniel – it's my duty! Try using either Ganondorf or Falcon because their upwards smash will make those nasty Hands feel a lot of pain. Go for the left Hand first, then deal with the second one. I'm sorry Daniel, but it's really hard, so keep trying.

If you want The Block to help you out then send a letter to Ask The Block at the usual address. Or email theblock@nintendomagazine.co.uk. Although The Block wants to help everyone, sometimes it's busy doing charity work and stuff, so it can't reply to all requests.

PLAYER'S CHOICE

We've started playing through *The Wind Waker* again in preparation for the new *Zelda* adventure and we expect you'll be doing the same. So here are some tips for beating Ganondorf in the amazing finale.

At first you'll need to press A just when Ganondorf's about to attack while Zelda zaps him. Eventually Ganondorf will knock out Zelda and the only way you can hurt is by pressing A at the right time. Once you hit him, run round and strike his back. When Zelda wakes up you need to reflect her balls of magic at Ganondorf by bouncing them off your Mirror Shield. Watch out 'cos her magic hurts you, too.



Reader Cheats

"This month there's a special prize for everyone who sent in a tip – me as your mate for a day. I'll be round for grub at six, so cook something nice."

"Send me your tips. They can be for classic games like *Balloon Fight*, right through to modern classics like *Resident Evil 4*. Your tip can be for absolutely anything. Maybe you've got a great cheat code or a special tactic to ruin a difficult bad guy. Send them to me and I'll steal 'em. Some will get printed in the mag and the best will get a prize."

Fire Emblem

Yo Wario, here's a tip for *Fire Emblem* on GBA. In Chapter 19, when you meet Legault, steal the Member Card from the second thief. Now go to either the bottom-right corner (behind the wall) or the clearing between two broken walls (above the two treasure chests) to find a secret weapons shop. *CHAZ SCRIVEN, VIA EMAIL*

I hope that this shop is one of those 'everything's a pound stores' for weapons and you can buy guns. Everyone knows that guns are better than swords. I think we all know who'd win a scrap between Advance Wars and Fire Emblem... It'd be me... somehow.

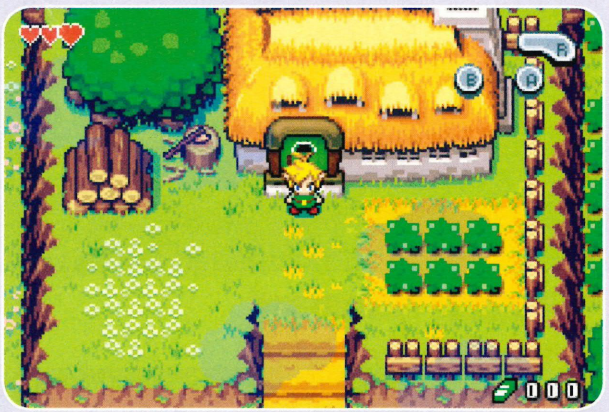
Super Mario World

To get loads of lives, go to the Forest secret area, but make sure you're wearing a Cape. Jump on the first flying platform. Now tap B to spin into the first enemy. Keep tapping B and the shell will bounce up and down. Every time it bounces, a number will appear. Score more than 8,000 and each consecutive bounce will give you an extra life. *RICHARD BINGHAM, VIA EMAIL*

Oooooh! Another Mario tip! I don't think you really exist, Richard! I think Miyamoto-san sent in this tip for his favourite Nintendo character. I used to be his fave, but I ate some bad sushi and threw up on him. He was never the same after that.

Zelda: The Minish Cap

Get Rupees the easy way! Once you have the Mole Mitts, go to Link's house and stand in front of the entrance. Dig the ground to the left of the door. You'll find a red Rupee. Now enter and exit the house. Dig in the same spot and the Rupee will return. Keep digking until you have as many as you want. *DAVID HOYES, EAST YORKSHIRE*



Ah, yes a nice tip to get lots of cash. Personally I wish you had told me about a bank I could dig near and find my way into the safe. Obviously I'm not saying everyone should rob banks, but if you do accidentally break into a bank make sure you give me a cut of the money, because it was MY idea.

Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory

To unlock all the missions in the game, hold L and R, then hit the X button five times and the Y button five times after signing into your profile. This also unlocks all the co-op missions – just enter the same buttons at the Main Menu. *JONATHAN GUNNER, BEACONSFIELD*

That old level-select cheat reminds me of the days when I used to spend ages pressing my NES pad and speaking backwards to try and unlock Luigi as a playable character in Metroid. Some tramp told me he used to work at Nintendo and he programmed the code. Why would he lie? WHY?

Golden Sun 2

To unlock the sound test option, select Battle at the File Select screen. Once you're in the plaza, talk to the girl in the bottom-left corner. As you speak to her, hold down L and R and you'll be able to use the Sound Test. However, you can only play music you've heard in the main game. *MARC TURKINGTON, VIA EMAIL*

Do you play this music at parties, Marc? When everybody arrives expecting fly beats, you whip out your GBA. Well, each to their own, but I won't be coming to a disco at your house... unless there's free food of course.

Sonic Mega Collection

To get level-select on *Sonic the Hedgehog*, just after the Sega screen comes up quickly press ▲, ▼, ◀, ▶, then hold B. You can also get a level-select cheat on *Sonic 2* – just select the Sound Test and play sounds 19, 65, 09 and 17 then hold Y and press ST. Now hold B and press ST on the Sonic and Tails screen. *STEVEN BAKER, VIA EMAIL*

When are they're going to release Wario Mega Collection? Just a disc with lots of photos of me on it. That's got to be worth £30 of anyone's money.

Pikmin 2

Here's how to beat Titan Dweevil, the final boss. Wipe out the weapons in this order: electric, poison, fire and water. There's no need to have purples in your squad for this final challenge, but at least 40 Pikmin are needed to be successful. *JAKE SUTTON, VIA EMAIL*

Pikmin do my housework for me. They enjoy dusting, vacuuming, cleaning and being ordered about. But whenever they get a little bit lippy I threaten to spray them with weed killer. It works wonders.

Ham-Ham Heartbreak

To get the last Ham-Chat, go to the dance competition in Sandy Bay – get the boat to the island. Enter the class A competition and put these Ham-Chats in your dance: Greatachu, Delin-Q, Zuzuzu, Hamtast, Bye-Q, Goodgo, Bloat-T, Blushie, Hamtast, Dazzle and Lalalala. Then you'll learn Hamcheer. Hello to all the Ham-fans! *ROSIE BENGE, VIA EMAIL.*

I'm sure the other two Hamtaro fans in the UK will be delighted to see this cheat. But perhaps you could've just whispered it to them at your next Fan Club meeting? Mwa ha ha ha haaaar!

Resident Evil 4

Here's an easy way to beat Jack Kauser. If you use guns of any kind, you'll either die or use up too many herbs. Remember that Jack likes knives and for the most part, this fight IS a knife fight. Instead of wasting ammo shooting him, slash Jack twice with your knife until he flash bangs and runs away. It sounds crazy, but trust me. *THOMAS JORDAN, VIA EMAIL*

Ha! I'm glad to hear that little idiot Toad didn't get his Resi 4 guide spot on. Then again he did keep hiding behind the sofa because he was so terrified. I'd have played the game with my face pressed against the TV while screaming at the bad guys.

SEND ME YOUR TIPS: Via email to wario@nintendomagazine.co.uk or via post to Reader Tips, *NOM*, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 5UW. Remember to include a photo!

WARIO'S WINNER: If you send me an awesome tip, I may just consider giving you some sort of prize that I don't want. This month a copy of *Another Code* was up for grabs. Who knows what it'll be next month...

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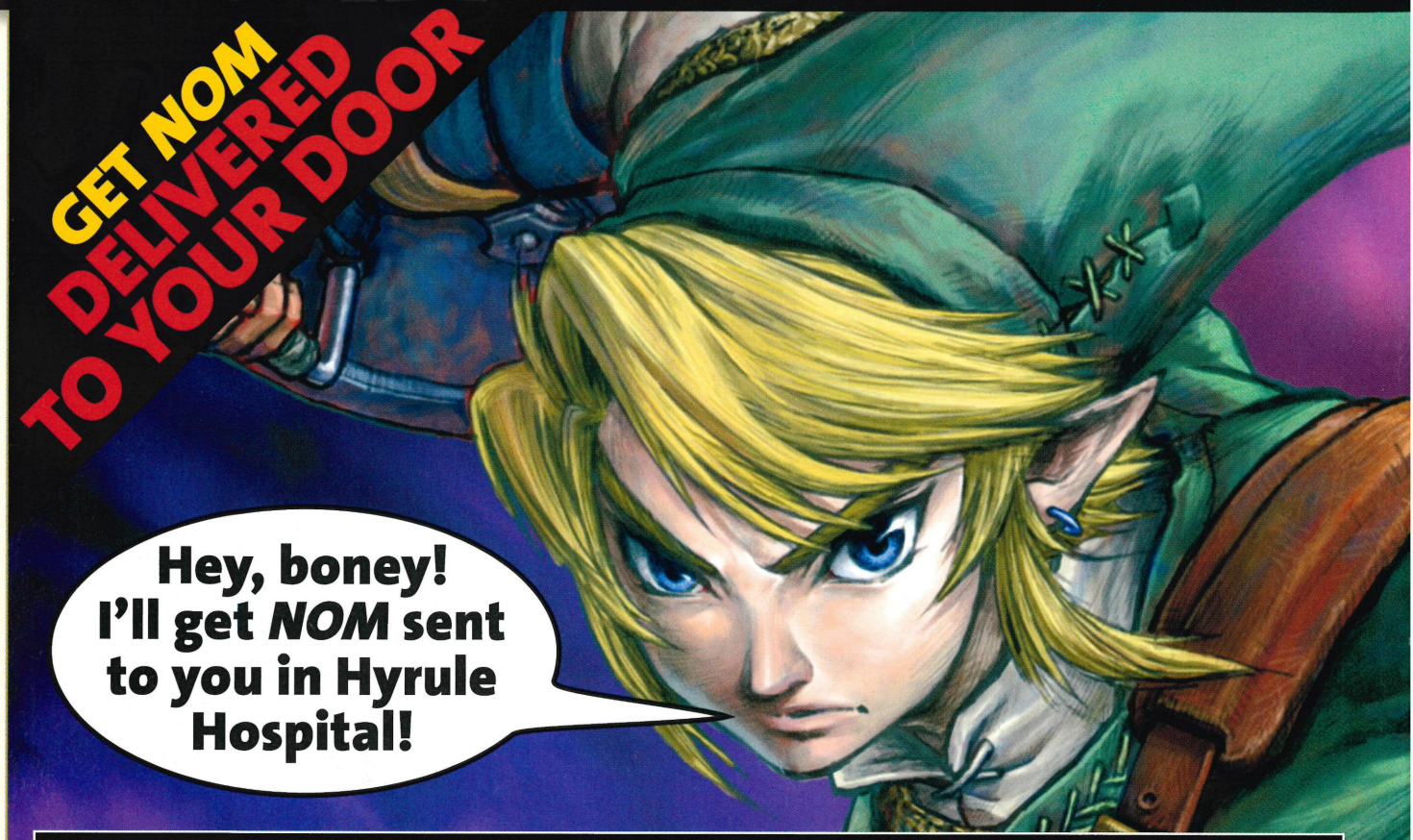

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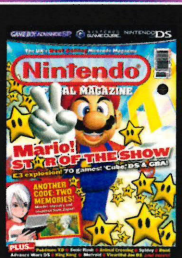

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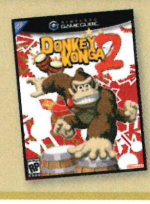
Win! Win! Win!

The rocking royal prizes this month will have you bashing your bongos in joy. The Star Letter and Star Picture get a GameCube and *Donkey Konga 2*. Two runners up just get the game. JUST?!



>>In with the new

When was the last time Nintendo created a totally new character? It's getting boring playing as the same characters over and over again. Whatever happened to Ness – you know, the boy in *Super Smash Bros. Melee*? I haven't seen him since. Nintendo's games are all great, but I wish it would come up with some new characters to attract more gamers around the globe.

Luca Siegel, Nottingham

Nintendo has to make new games out of its biggest heroes – it's what fans expect. We can't imagine a Nintendo machine without Mario, Link, Samus or Fox. And we think the Big N has made some great newbies recently – *Pikmin*, *Another Code* and the awesome *Nintendogs*, to name a few. Stop complaining, man.

>>Spunky iz dead!

After your *Zelda* preview last month, I got into the Hyrule mood. First I practised on my REAL Ocarina, then I played *Ocarina of Time* for six hours. I forgot about my opticians appointment. Now I have a pair of the biggest glasses in the world and a month's ban from games. Without games, what do I have to look forward to at the end of the day?

Thomas Wymer, Strathearn

Ha! When Mike was a kid he got so addicted to *Ocarina of Time* that he forgot to feed his guinea pig for a week. When he finally realised, little Spunky looked like Dhalsim in *Street Fighter*. He was alright after a few bits of Kentucky Fried Chicken, though. That's health food, that is.

>> Here, doggy

Why must we wait 'til the autumn for *Nintendogs* while Japan has it right now? I wish I could travel forward in time. The run up to *Nintendogs*' release is going to be a painful wait for me, with many sleepless nights. Do you really have to tease us by telling us about what's happening in Japan?

Daniel Eskins, via email

It takes time to localise a game. That's where Nintendo take out all the Japan-speak and crazy symbols, and make them into words you'll understand. You'll be grateful for that. There could be wider changes made to the UK version, too. Check out our interview with Nintendo of Europe's Head of Product Analysis, Marko Hein, elsewhere in this issue.

>>Sweet, sweet ketchup

I love ketchup, therefore I love the ketchup game on *Wario Ware Touched!* I made a deal with that 'Yummy' kid – if I get a good score at his game he'd give me those fries. The ketchup kid watched my every move, trying to put me off with his "Yummy" cheers. My belly was rumbling staring at the fries and kebabs. But I managed 174 points. I showed the kid my score and he reluctantly handed over his fries. Just thought you might like to know all this. Thanks.

Thomas Durbin, Newport

We tried the same deal, but our 'Yummy' kid had scoffed all the kebabs and chips after a night out on the beer. How rude.

>>DS only!

RUNNER UP

In *NOM* #154, Joe Xiang said that Nintendo shouldn't do N64 remakes on DS. But I think *GoldenEye 007* would be great. I hate recent console games made into downgraded DS versions, like *Need for Speed Underground 2*. It's alright, but nowhere near as good as the GameCube version.

Matthew Oates, Manchester

We agree. Downgraded versions of games usually turn out crap because there are ideas that have been cut in half to fit another format. Games that are developed entirely for DS are better and that's what we like to see.

>>Analogue? Whatever

PSP fans say the DS's control system is rubbish without an analogue stick. It would be cool if the DS could have an add-on analogue stick, but I think Nintendo is making some amazing games that will prove PSP fans wrong.

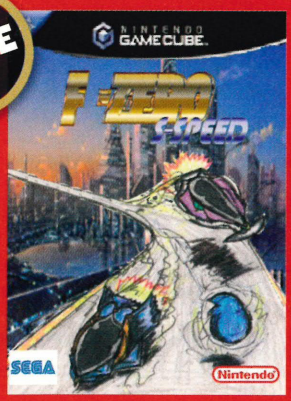
Bobak Saadat, London

The analogue stick on the PSP is rubbish anyway. It's tiny, it's flat and it's positioned uncomfortably low – too close to the edge of the machine. Plus, we're yet to see how durable they are under long-term hammering. We've heard of people having problems already.

GAME or LAME?

IF YOU'VE GOT A WICKED GAME IDEA, MAKE A COVER FOR IT AND SEND IT IN. IF IT'S *SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE 2* OR *MARIO VS SONIC*, DON'T BOTHER.

GAME



F-Zero: S-Speed

by *Greg Steckelmacher, via email*

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?
Sonic amazes the world of F-Zero by competing in races on foot.

WHO'S IN IT?
Dr. Eggman makes the crossover, to ruin Sonic's racing career.

OUR *MOST* FAVOURITE IDEA?
Sonic teams up with Captain Falcon to bust Dr. Eggman's ass in fast battles.

NOM RECKONS
THIS WOULD BE ONE OF THE MOST ACTION-PACKED 'CUBE GAMES.

LAME

Koopa Troopa's Driving Test

by *James Sedgwick, Northampton*

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?
Tired of losing in *Mario Kart*, Koopa decides to take lessons.

WHO'S IN IT?
Just Koopa in his car and his driving instructor, Toad.

OUR *LEAST* FAVOURITE IDEA?
Koopa's one of the best characters in *Mario Kart* – he's no dunce.

NOM RECKONS
LEARN-TO-DRIVE? WHAT'S NEXT? WATCH-PAINT-DRY GAMES?

The Samus experience

The *Metroid* series deserves more credit than it gets. I don't understand how some gamers prefer titles like *Sonic Adventure 2: Battle* when they're blatantly not as good. *Metroid Prime 2: Echoes* actually draws me into Samus's world. When I spot a Grenchler charging towards me I don't just think "Oh well, if I die it's not a problem". It feels like real-life danger and in my mind I MUSTN'T die. *Metroid* isn't just a game; it's an experience that you'll never forget.
Sam Whiting, Falmouth

This is what separates games like *Metroid* and *Zelda* from the rest of the crowd. They take your mind into a different universe. But they also take a lot of time to enjoy. That's why the world needs games like *Sonic* – for the gamers who just want quick thrills, rather than a drawn-out experience.

STAR LETTER

>> *Halo* on GameCube?

Have you ever played the wondrous game called *Halo*? It's great, you have to admit. It's made by Microsoft, but is there any chance that it will arrive on GameCube or the Revolution? It would really sell a lot, I think and everyone would love it.
James Eastcott, Wimbledon

So the question you're asking is: will Microsoft – a competitor of Nintendo's – release its most valuable game on a rival console? Have you got Goombas in your brain, or something, James?

>> Sister act

I persuaded my sister to get a DS and I also showed her some quality Game Boy Advance games like *Minish Cap* and *Golden Sun*. Then that night she went onto the internet and spent her money on some rubbish films. Not games, like she should. Now I need your help – should I use a Mario Hammer or Koopa Shell on her?
Daniel Millward, via email

This is a tricky one. Give her a Leaf so she turns into Tanooki Sister and flies off with her tail. When she's high enough, ping her with a Red Shell and watch her plummet to the floor. Then laugh hysterically.

>> Ocarina of Crime?

I don't really think *Ocarina of Time* is all that special. Sure, it was the first 3D *Zelda*, but it was nothing compared to *Super Mario 64*. I'm sure I'll get hate mail from angry *Zelda* fans – don't get me wrong, I love Nintendo games and I liked *Ocarina*. I just think there are so many games that are better.
Ray Wood, Chippenham

Saying that *Super Mario 64* is better than *Ocarina of Time* is a fair statement. But we reckon the first sentence of your letter alone will have Link fanboys dropping Bob-ombs and Koopa turds through your letterbox in fits of rage. *Ocarina of Time* is definitely very special.

>> Stupid siblings

Hey *NOM*. How far would you go to stick up for Nintendo? I've got a GameCube (which rocks, obviously), but my brother has another console. He said that *Zelda* sucks, so I punched him and got sent to my room for two hours. It was worth it, though.
Daniel Long, Guernsey

Mike hated a group of lads in school who insisted that PlayStation was better than N64. Fists flew and nostrils got smacked. »»

You sent in...

Zelda: Model of Time

Using a cut-out of some *Wind Waker* art and the face of a watch, *Craig Carrington* from *Basingstoke* has made this, wooden clock. That's ingenuity, that is.

RUNNER UP

ASK SHY GUY

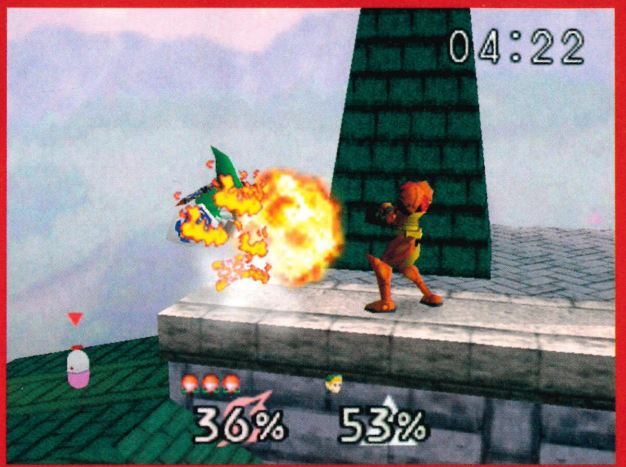
Q. I already know that US and Japanese games will work in my UK DS. But will a Japanese game connect with a UK game over a local wireless connection for multiplayer fun?
Alan Fishole, Nuneaton
A. No. Games from Japan and America will refuse to communicate with UK games. You'll be okay with games from Europe though, because they're the same as the UK ones.

Q. Shy Guy, should I sell my Limited Edition Platinum GameCube to get the Revolution? I really want a Revolution when it comes out and I know that it's backwards compatible, but I love my GameCube and I don't want to see it go. If someone just gave me a Revolution...
Matthew O'Sullivan, via email
A. I still dig out my old consoles just for nostalgic value. I'd never get rid of my Super NES or N64. They hold too many good memories. If your GameCube means the same to you, keep it, dude. Start saving pocket money now for a Revolution.

Q. How much will it cost to download retro games on the Revolution?
Daniel Potter, Henleaze
A. Nintendo hasn't announced what the pricing will be on its game downloads and it may not happen for a while yet. But I reckon it'll be very cheap. Besides, what WOULDN'T you pay for *Super Mario Kart*?

Q. Me and my little brother are huge *Pokémon* fans and we have heaps of Pokémon merchandise. We love *Pokémon Official Magazine*, but we can't find issue #3 in the shops. Do you have any idea why?
Edward and Ross Johnson, Alvaston
A. Unfortunately, the *Pokémon Official Magazine* is no more. But you will find all the biggest *Pokémon* news and games in a special *Pokémon* section in future issues of *NOM*.

Q. While playing *Metroid Prime* recently, I suddenly had a thought – why wasn't there a *Metroid* game on the N64? Surely, it would have been awesome.
Nathan Phillips, Mid Wales
A. The only time Samus popped her head out during the 64-bit era was for a quick ruck in *Super Smash Bros.* Apart from that she must have been on holiday.



Yoshi's art

We asked you to send in your DS stylus ideas. And you actually did it! We were only joking. Oh well, here's a few anyway...

TOM KIRCUP, WHEATLEY

DAVID LAIDE, CO. KILDARE

ALEX LAINE, BARNET

STAR PICTURE

CHRIS GREAVES, HARROGATE

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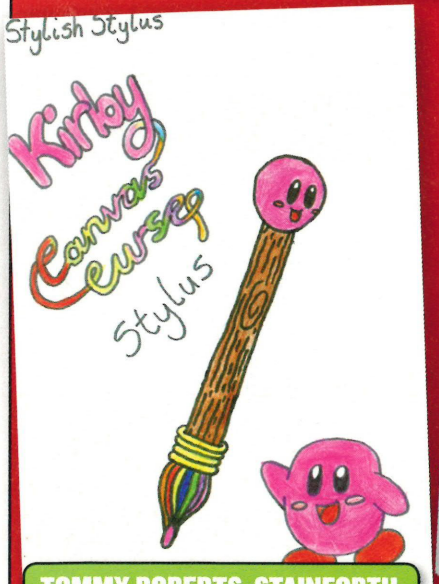

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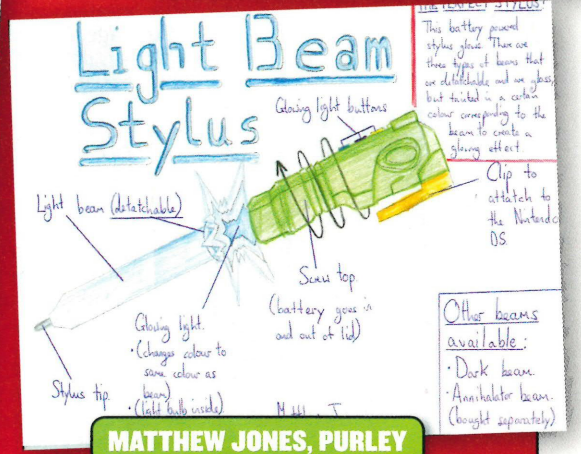


MATTHEW JONES, PURLEY

*We get hundreds of pictures each month, making it impossible to send them back. If you want yours back send an SAE and say so! Or better yet, just send us a scan or a colour copy!

Mike also unleashed crazy rage when someone mocked the *Super Mario 64* intro, "It's-a me-a, Mario". He's like a Nintendo-obsessed Wookie. Don't make him mad. Grrr...

>> Saved by *NOM*

I was on my way home from the newsie where I had just grabbed a copy of *NOM* when I tripped over a loose paving stone and fell into some freshly dumped turds. Luckily for me, I had the mag in front of my face at that time, happily reading, which saved my mush from a smelly encounter. Thank you, *NOM*!
Andrew Papasavva, via email

Here's something to think about: if you weren't reading *NOM* on the street, you might not have tripped into the crap in the first place. Are we to thank, or to blame? We feel like The Oracle in *The Matrix*, now.

>> PictoCrap

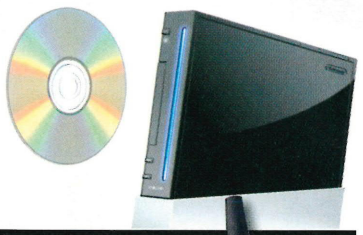
I know *PictoChat* is free, but I think it could have been better than it is. There should be a typing cursor to make using the keyboard easier. There should be a selection of different colours, as black doesn't really inspire complex pictures or drawings. There should have also been an extra-large thickness for covering large areas. That would have been cooler.
Clive & Lesley Tanner, via email

Agreed. We were a little disappointed that black is the only colour available. But that doesn't mean you can't draw complex pictures. We've seen amazing manga-style *PictoChat* drawings. If any of you guys are *PictoChat* artists, send us some photos of your work.

>> Nintendo has the answer

I think that the PS3 and X-Box 360 graphics that have been shown don't really improve much from the PS2 and X-Box. I think a graphics plateau has been reached, which is where innovation comes in. And oh look, that's the approach Nintendo has taken, which is why the Revolution is going to rule over all.
Joshua Walsh, Fleckney

Being able to download 20 years of Nintendo video games on one console is going to be awesome, but that's just a bonus. The best of the Revolution is still to be revealed. The controller is what we're all waiting to see.



TEXT THE EDITOR

TELL US WHAT'S ON YOUR BRAIN...

Now you can let us know how you feel about the world of Nintendo on a text!
Tap in 'TXT', leave a space, add your message and send it to 84070. You must get permission from the bill payer before texting us as each text costs 25p to send. Every text sent to us can be viewed online at www.clubnom.com and here's just a small selection of your ramblings:

* not that im dissing mario's style or anything, but why are mario's moustache and eyebrows black yet his hair is brown? This fact has baffled me. WHY?

* can someone please bring some naruto games out in english, i love that programme.

* Nintendogs is great! Now irresponsible people like me can get pets!

* i need pokemon emerald now or I swear i'll crap my pants!

* I saw rob burmans name in the ts3 credits. Wot I was his girly scream?

* if the revolution sucks i gonna have a tantrum.

* link a wolf omg

* i wud pu myself and eat it (in public) to get da new legend of zelda (best game in da world)

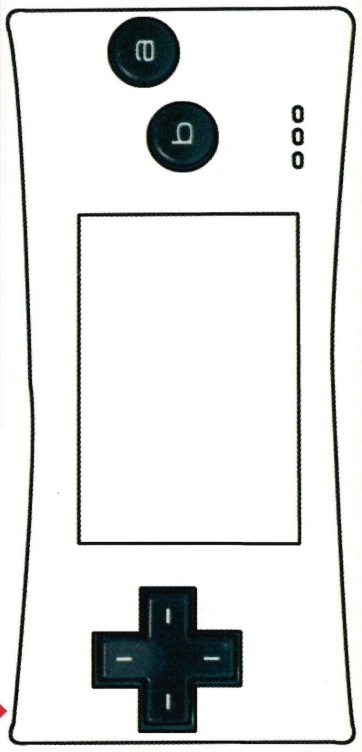
BE PART OF THE MAG(IC)!

Whip out your crayons and style-up the GBA micro.

Nintendo's new GBA Micro is all about style. It's small, it's sleek and it's got changeable faceplates. That means you'll be able to change the looks of your GBA Micro to suit your style. On a daily basis if you like. Kinda like those guys who walk around with Burberry covers on their Nokia phones, only much cooler.

What would your faceplate look like? You could have a GBA Micro sporting the face of your favourite Nintendo character or maybe you would like a sweet graffiti-style cover. You know what you've got to do. Get pencils, get paper and start scribbling. All the best GBA Faceplate designs we receive will go in the mag. And one of them will see the handing out of a sweet prize, too.

Mr Hideki Konno of *Mario Kart DS* fame: "Mine is well better than yours, innit?"



YES! COLOUR THIS IN WITH YOUR AWESOME DESIGN! IT'S LIKE BEING AT PRIMARY SCHOOL, BUT YOU MAY WIN A PRIZE!

Photocopy it NOW!

SEND US YOUR PIC NOW!

Post: My Micro Faceplate, Royal Mail, *Nintendo Official Magazine*, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW.
The closing date is July 13th, so get a move on!

LUIGI'S PRIZE PIT

This month my Prize Pit is so full of amazing giveaways that I can't even get in to sleep. I've had to stay with The Block and he keeps smiling at me.

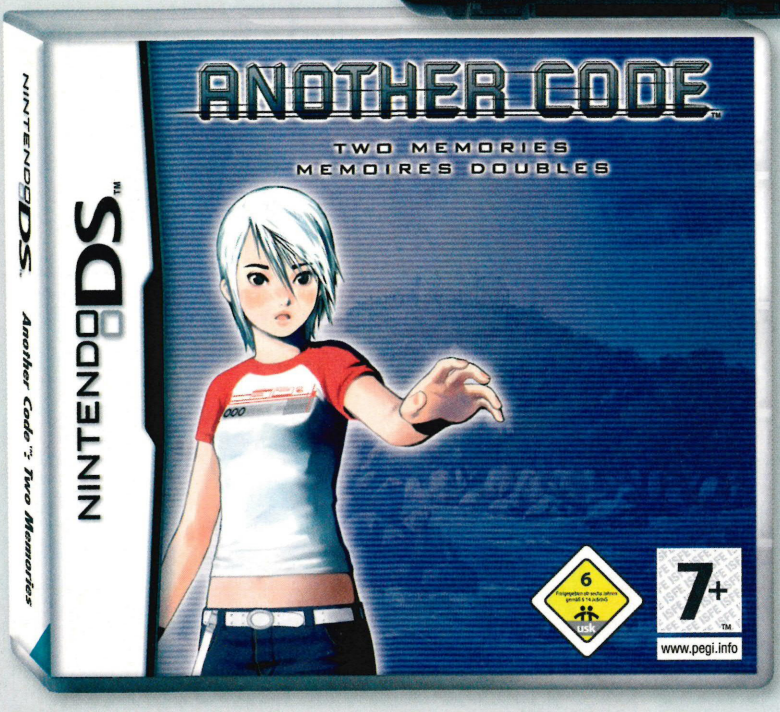
Another Code competition

If, between playing countless hours of games, you've popped into your local shopping centre you'll have probably noticed those rather cool looking DS pods. You know the ones, they look a bit like a lamp post with a DS attached. Wouldn't it be cool to have one of them in your bedroom? But surely that's the stuff of dreams...

Well dream no more, you silly dream heads, because thanks to Nintendo we've got an exclusive demo pod to give to one of you lucky readers. The unit is exactly like those ones you've seen in the shops, but we'll throw a brand-new DS in and remove any graffiti from the base. How cool will that look in your house? Cooler than a cucumber in the arctic – that's how damn cool it will be.

This is the kind of prize that money can't buy, people. This isn't something you'll find on eBay next week. You've got one chance to win this and if you don't, we'll fully understand if you soak your pillow with tears.

We'll also give the winner a copy of *Another Code*, which is available to buy now. Ten runners-up will also receive a copy of *Another Code*. Just answer the question and, who knows, it could be your lucky day soon.*



? QUESTION

What's the ghost called in *Another Code*?

A. J **B.** B **C.** D

ENTER

BY TEXT: Write "nomcomp ANOTHER", then the letter of your answer and send it to 83149.
BY PHONE: Call 0905 053 1101
BY POST: Send your name, address, telephone number and your answer to: *Another Code* competition, *NOM*, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW.

Dragon Ball competition

It's not often that we really like a *Dragon Ball* game. In fact, we can't think of any we'd like to play, apart from the little cart of awesomeness that is *Dragon Ball Advanced Adventure*. Goku has never looked tougher as he blasts wolves, smacks soldiers in the chops and generally causes some real pain.

This wicked old-skool fighter is out to buy now, but we've got ten copies to give away, if you can get the following question right.*

QUESTION

What are Goku's sons called?

A. Gohan and Goten **B.** Gowest and Goeast
C. Gomar and Golin

ENTER

BY TEXT: Write "nomcomp DRAGON", then the letter of your answer and send it to 83149.
BY PHONE: Call 0905 053 1102
BY POST: Send your name, address, telephone number and your answer to: *Dragon Ball* competition, *NOM*, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW.

E3 competition

Only the most special people in the world get to go to E3, but so you can pretend you were there, we've got a hat full of exclusive E3 goodies to give away.

This awesome pack includes *Pokémon* Action Cards, a *Pokémon* lanyard, a Groudon tattoo, a Nintendo lanyard, Tim's E3 press pass, a *Nintendogs* Frisbee, a *Pac-Pix* stylus, a *Mario Kart* stylus, an official Exhibit Guide, a Sega T-shirt and a *Zelda* T-shirt.*

QUESTION

Where is E3 held?

A. Los Angeles **B.** New York
C. Washington

ENTER

BY TEXT: Write "nomcomp E3", then the letter of your answer and send it to 83149.
BY PHONE: Call 0905 053 1104
BY POST: Send your name, address, telephone number and your answer to: E3 competition, *NOM*, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW.

Gravion: Driving Steel competition

Mecha animé is obviously some of the best out there. Massive robots scrapping against other massive robots couldn't be anything other than fantastically cool. Luckily *Gravion*, from the producers of *Full Metal Panic!*, looks like being another awesome animé.

A brand-new DVD with five episodes is available to buy now from ADV films and they've given us five copies to give away. Get entering robot lovers.*

QUESTION

Who produced *Gravion* and *Full Metal Panic?*

A. Gonzo Digimation **B.** Mecha Films
C. Anime Towers

ENTER

BY TEXT: Write "nomcomp GRAVION", then the letter of your answer and send it to 83149.
BY PHONE: Call 0905 053 1103
BY POST: Send your name, address, telephone number and your answer to: *Gravion* competition, *NOM*, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW.

ISSUE 153 WINNERS

LEGO STAR WARS
- Ken Carlile, Southend-on-Sea (main winner)
- Alex Quinn, Stafford
- Lydia Fuller, Hove

WARIO WARE TWISTED!
- Richard Hagues, Bromwich (main winner)
- Sara Floster, Kent
- Tom Parker-Hughes, Lichfield
- Kevin Simmon, Dublin
- Jack Selfridge, Doncaster

REVENGE OF THE SITH
- Tom Cull, Fishguard
- Corey Mort, Chipping Norton
- Alastair Stewart, Suffolk
- L. Bennet, Devizes
- Sam Bromley, Gillingham
- Jamie Morgan, Port Talbot
- Louisa Scarff, Poole
- Mat Parish, Mansfield
- S. Pollard, Newark
- Andy Porter, Peterborough

FINAL FANTASY
- Melanie Gardiner, Freshwater (main winner)
- Simon Smith, Chichester
- Billy Stewart, Northampton
- Daniel Arif, Rochdale

CLONE WARS
- Conrad Honey, Cobham

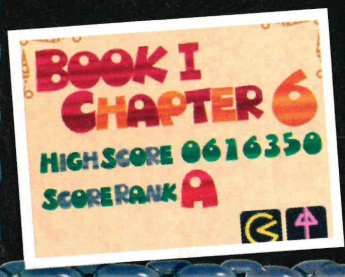
* SEE TERMS AND CONDITIONS ON P5

CHAIN CHOMP'S CHALLENGES

Win the chance to play at *NOM* Towers – if you beat my scores.

Pac-Pix

Try to score more than 615,000 on Book One, Page Six. Finish each set of ghosts in the quickest time possible and also keep a look out for any bonus fruits on the top screen. Use as few Pac-Men as possible and collect extra lives.



Yoshi Touch & Go

You've got to have the right touch, if you want to beat 345 points on Score Attack mode. The key to this challenge is to collect as many points as possible with Mario, so you can get a decent Yoshi. It can get hectic, so make sure you have loads of eggs.

Star Fox Assault

Blam, blam, blam, blam. Keep your finger on the trigger and try and beat 770 points on Fortuna: A New Enemy – bronze difficulty. Try and get as many Hit Point bonuses as possible and keep your team alive. Apart from Slippy – he's RUBBISH.

This month's new challenges

Last month's challenges

The Wind Waker

We need you to beat a score of 25 letters on the Letter Sorting challenge on Dragon Roost Island. You've got to have quick reactions to beat the Chain Chomp here.

Donkey Konga

You're going to have to work hard to beat 65,000 on Rainbow Cruise, Chimp difficulty. Try and get as many Greats in a row as you can to really rack up the points.

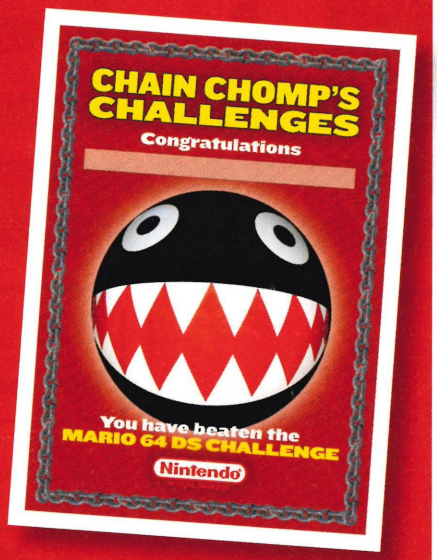
Pokémon Pinball

Let's hope this challenge to score 360,000,000 on the Sapphire table isn't too flipping hard – ha ha! Try and get the multiplier bonuses and catch plenty of Pokémon, too.

REMEMBER - THIS GROUP OF CHALLENGES STARTED IN *NOM* #153. DON'T MISS ANY!

How it works...

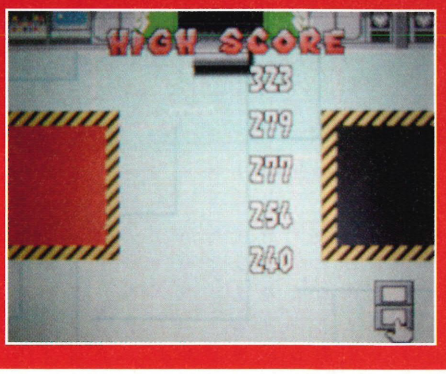
1. Every four months, Chain Chomp will start a new league for you to compete in.
2. At first there'll only be six challenges to beat, but every month three more will be added for you to tackle.
3. By the end of the four months, there will be 15 challenges for you to try and beat.
4. For each challenge you successfully beat, send evidence of your score to *NOM* and we'll give you a certificate to prove how great you are.
5. Get ten or more certificates and you could be in with the chance of coming to *NOM* to show off your skills.
6. Four people will be specially selected to come here and play against each other for the final awesome prize. What is it? Just wait and see...



How to take a pic...

Taking pictures of your DS, GBA or TV screen can be tricky, but with these tips it shouldn't be a problem. And remember, if you've got a digital camera you can take as many pics as you want to get it right...

1. Make sure the room is as dark as possible. Draw the curtains, turn out the lights and take the photo standing at a slight angle to the TV or your handheld's screen.
2. Make sure the flash is off, otherwise the picture won't come out properly. If you're taking a pic of a DS or GBA screen, try and put the camera on manual focus.
3. Once you've taken the pic either email it to us or post it. Send us a couple – just to make sure we can see your score properly.



THE QUALIFIERS SO FAR...

SUPER MARIO 64 DS
A. Dengenis, A. Hockin, A. Beare, A. Elkington, A. Weller, A. Innes, B. Wallace, B. Clarkson, C. Armah, C. Nally, C. Carrington, D. Fretwell, D. Griffin, D. Crossley, E. Hall, E. Hickey, G. Nesbit, G. McKenna, H. Moyne, J. Smith, J. Leach, J. Bridges, J. Pearce, J. Russo, J. Tien, J Atkin-Reeves, J. Short, J. Wormsley, Josh Smith, L. Huckle, L. Coleman, L. Mead, L. Wooldridge, M. Pagan, M. Perry, M. Thomas, N. Klimanski, N. Broome, N. Gower, O. Spalding, R. Powell, R. Johnson, S. Dyer, S. Billingsley, S. Lee, S. Mann, S. Browne, T. Fathers and W. McClean.

MARIO KART: SUPER CIRCUIT
A. Young, A. Cooper, B. Wallace, B. Smith, C. Armah, C. Donaldson, C. Bradshaw, G. Nesbit, J. Smith, J. Murthi, J. Phillips, M. Meisner, M. Thomas, N. Broome, N. Gower, P. Cervi, R. Powell, R. Russell, S. Dyer, S. Scott, T. Momi, T. Taylor, W. McClean and Z. Clark.

SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE
A. Hockin, A. Young, A. Elktinton, A. Cooper, B. Smith, C. Donaldson, C. Bradshaw, G. Nesbit, J. Kingsman, J. Smith, J. Bridges, J. Tienn, J. Thorpe, L. Coleman, M. Nettleship, M. Willis, M. Perry, N. Broome, P. Cervi, R. Powell, S. Dawson, S. Dyer, S. Mann, T. Momi, T. Ashton and Z. Clark.

MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!
A. Hockin, A. Young, A. Ripley, A. Elkington, A. Weller, A. Cooper, C. Donaldson, C. Bradshaw, D. Mills, E. Hall, G. Nesbit, G. McKenna, J. Kingsman, J. Warr, J. Russo, J. Minns, J. Tienn, J. Thorpe, J. West, Josh Smith, K. Ashley, L. Coleman, M. Pagan, M. Willis, M. Du Guchteneere, M. Gardner, M. Thomas, N. Gay, N. Gower, P. Cervi, R. Powell, S. Dyer, S. Sitaram, S. Scott, S. Mann, T. Momi, T. Fathers, T. Dean, T. Pugh, W. McClean and Z. Clark.

WARIO WARE TOUCHED!
A. Hockin, A. Young, A. Innes, B. Wallace, B. Clarkson, B. Speirs, B. Davis, C. Armah, E. Dace, G. Nesbit, I. Davis, J. Warr, J. Reidy, J. Russo, L. Williams, M. Pagan, M. Warne, M. Du Guchteneere, N. Klimanski, N. Broome, N. Gower, R. Powell, R. Conniff, S. Weston, S. Dyer, S. Mann, T. Momi and W. McClean.

SUPER MONKEY BALL
A. Young, A. Elkington, A. Cooper, C. Donaldson, C. Bradshaw, D. Mills, G. Nesbit, G. McKenna, J. Kingsman, J. Warr, J. Hill, N. Gay, N. Broome, R. Lee, S. Dyer, T. Momi, T. Fathers and T. Ashton.

THE WIND WAKER
A. Young, C. Wilkinson, C. Nally, D. Crossley, I. Ress, J. Smith, J. Bridges, J. Thorpe, J. Chicon, K. Palmer, L. Wright, M. Gardner, N. Gay, P. Johnson, R. Tonge, T. Momi, T. Ashton and W. McClean.

DONKEY KONGA
J. Smith, J. Bridges, P. Johnson, R. Tonge, R. Powell, R. Dawson, T. Momi and T. Ashton.

POKéMON PINBALL
T. Momi

How to enter...

Chain Chomp's Challenges, *NOM*, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW

chainchomp@nintendomagazine.co.uk

Make sure to include your address and evidence of your score – a clear photo is best (see above), but a video is fine as long as the Chain Chomp doesn't chew it up. No cheating is allowed and any entry arousing suspicion will be chomped up and posted back to you with a letter full of reasons to hate yourself.

YOU'VE ONLY GOT UNTIL AUGUST 5TH TO COLLECT TEN CERTIFICATES. GO FOR IT!

Boo's Brainers

Every time you look away I get a bit closer. Unlike the answers.

Nintendo know-it-all

Answer all these then laugh in Boo's big white fizzog.

1. How many different Tingles are there in *Zelda: The Minish Cap*?
2. In *Metroid Prime*, how many Artifacts are there to collect?
3. Which N64 game features these bosses: Meteo Crusher, Spyborg and Goras?
4. Name the *Mario World* enemy who didn't make it as a driver in *Mario Kart 64*.
5. When was the first *Mario 128* footage unveiled?
6. Nintendo used to make electronic love testing machines. True or false?
7. Which group of testers checks all Nintendo games before they're released?
8. How many racers are in *F-Zero GX*?
9. Who is the lead character in *Metal Arms: Glitch in the System*?
10. In *Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life*, who are the three girls you can marry?
11. Which item gives Mario unlimited flight in *Super Mario Bros. 3*?
12. How many characters are there in *Pilotwings 64*?
13. In *Super Smash Bros. Melee*, how many multiplayer levels are there?
14. Name the three legendary bird Pokémon.
15. What's the name of the cat you meet on the train in *Animal Crossing*?

HANGMAN

Fill in the gaps to work out the game names.

1	D_F__D__
2	TH_/H____T
3	K_R__/__R/R_D_
4	R_G__/_PS
5	_R_GG_R
6	X___
7	B_BB__/B_BB__
8	E__TH____/JI_

Zelda Puzzle

Make up your own fun story about why these *Zelda* bad guys are hiding in letters

K	C	R	C	N	M	U	I	K	K	M	S	A	R	M	O	S	Y	T	Q
C	K	R	Y	L	I	S	C	X	Y	Y	W	P	U	S	X	O	O	H	E
O	K	M	A	D	Y	O	C	W	B	J	J	N	O	V	V	N	V	G	A
R	B	J	U	B	R	Q	S	V	G	V	U	E	A	L	G	H	A	I	U
L	O	J	W	O	C	O	J	F	X	N	H	E	E	U	C	M	L	N	A
L	F	C	T	G	V	R	E	F	F	U	P	D	E	R	A	B	A	K	P
U	T	C	K	O	Q	E	V	C	U	U	F	F	N	Y	Y	G	M	M	O
K	O	R	G	F	D	D	T	Y	J	T	L	I	I	H	V	S	Q	O	K
S	U	G	D	V	R	S	A	E	K	O	X	I	X	Q	C	F	I	K	B
X	T	S	H	L	H	O	T	L	W	J	S	R	K	H	T	O	J	D	K
J	R	D	X	O	K	E	G	E	A	H	H	N	F	I	Q	M	O	N	R
W	F	F	C	K	F	U	R	L	W	C	L	R	F	L	T	U	E	Y	K
J	O	K	J	R	G	C	G	K	C	Y	A	H	A	L	U	P	T	W	E
Z	E	K	Q	T	V	F	J	O	S	W	S	V	E	A	Y	Q	K	X	R
R	K	N	T	B	A	N	D	R	C	X	E	R	U	T	L	U	V	S	N
G	R	I	A	Q	P	M	X	Z	T	V	R	Y	E	S	I	O	D	I	P
R	D	C	A	S	Q	G	V	V	U	G	E	M	A	Z	X	T	L	G	U
M	A	D	D	A	R	K	Z	O	R	A	Y	P	E	X	Z	B	K	A	H
P	B	N	O	U	V	I	J	Y	P	L	E	R	I	D	O	H	K	E	R
R	B	W	X	B	W	A	F	I	R	V	F	E	V	M	K	N	H	Q	T

- ARMOS
- BOMBCLOPS
- CRAB
- DARK ZORA
- KNIGHT
- LASER EYE
- MOBLIN
- OCTOROCK
- RED PUFFER
- ROCK FROG
- SHOCKER
- SKULL ROCK
- TEKTITE
- TONGUE FLOWER
- VULTURE

ODD-1-OUT

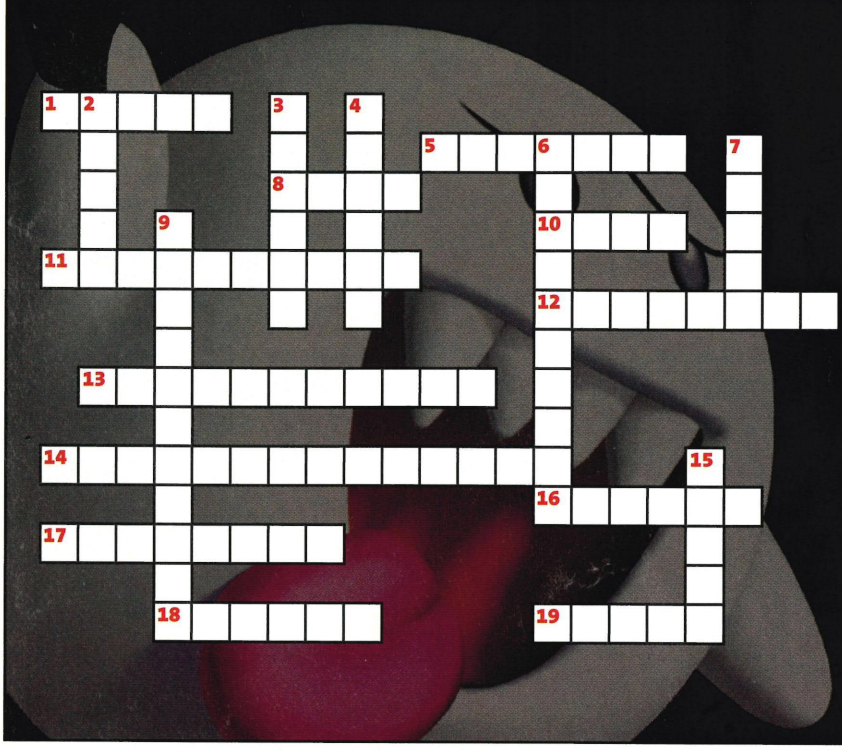
Which of these Mario games wasn't shown at E3?

1. *Super Mario Strikers*
2. *Mario & Luigi 2*
3. *Mario 128*
4. *Super Mario Bros. DS*
5. *Mario Kart DS*

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

After working through the night on the E3 issue, Dean starts to see double. Help his sleep deprived mind find the five differences in these *Zelda: Twilight Princess* shots.

It's only the NINTENDO crossword!



ACROSS...

1. What's the second name of the assassins in *Killer 7*? (5)
5. A type of glass and the psychic member of the *Star Fox* crew (7)
8. What can Link transform into in the new *Zelda* game? (4)
10. The colour of the stylus given away with *Touch Kirby*? (4)
11. Where is E3 held? (3,7)
12. Is this sky-high Pokémon taller than Doshin? (8)
13. Which international *NOM* writer's name resembles a fizzy drink? (5,6)
14. Which eternally dark developer has teamed up with Sega? (7,6)
16. That dark shape that follows you about and a fast mammal (6)
17. The star of *Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow* (4,4)
18. In *Pac-Pix*, you need to draw Pac-Man, bombs and what else? (6)
19. Which fizzy drink came with free Mario caps in Japan? (5)

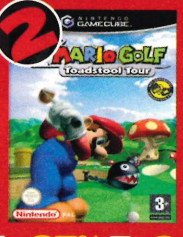
DOWN...

2. What's the deadly planet in *Meteos* called? The clue's in the title (5)
3. What did Rob call his puppy in *Nintendogs*? (6)
4. In the *Star Fox* series, what is the faster and generally better version of the Arwing called? (6)
6. Who wrote the *Alright* track in *Donkey Konga*? (9)
7. The land in *Advance Wars Dual Strike*, sounds a bit like an old Commodore computer (5)
9. The Nintendo mega boss (6,5)
15. Mario, Luigi, Wario and... Which character are we missing from *Super Mario 64 DS*? (5)

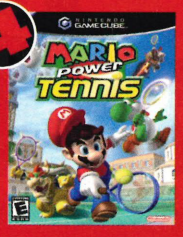
??? KNOW THE SCORE ???

Think you're the Mario sport king? Match the games to the scores.

1.

2. 

3.

4. 

A: 87% B: 84% C: 77% D: 94%

>>>>>>>>>> HOW WELL DID YOU DO LAST TIME? <<<<<<<<<<

KNOW-IT-ALL

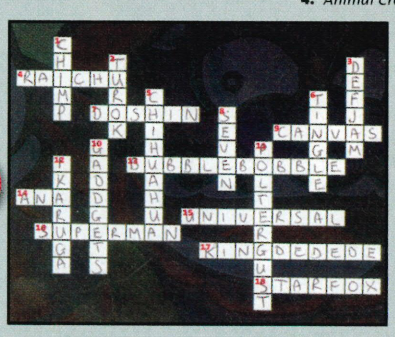
1. 40
2. Missile launcher
3. *Kururin Paradise*
4. Knight, queen and king
5. Flash Liquidizer Ultra Dousing Device
6. Chikorita, Cyndaquil and Totodile
7. Beedle
8. Aether
9. CD-I
10. Three
11. Courage Reactor
12. Rose, Dark, Chaotix and Sonic
13. Eight
14. Seven
15. *Pokémon Stadium 2*

HANGMAN

1. *Outlaw Golf*
2. *Red Card*
3. *Wario Wario*
4. *Vexx*
5. *Burnout*
6. *Crazy Taxi*
7. *Golden Sun*
8. *Rayman Advance*

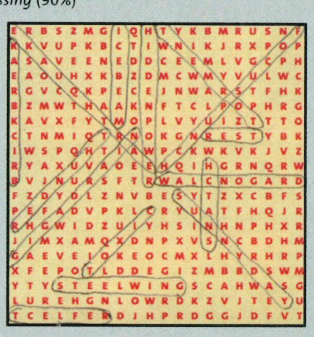
NAME THE GAME

1. *Super Mario Sunshine*
2. *Super Smash Bros. Melee*



KNOW THE SCORE

1. *Harvest Moon* (84%)
2. *The Sims* (78%)
3. *The Urbz* (49%)
4. *Animal Crossing* (90%)



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#18 STREET FIGHTER II TURBO

Truly great video games feature one or two iconic, unforgettable moments. *Street Fighter II Turbo* gives you at least two PER CHARACTER. If you've forgotten how to do Ryu's Dragon Punch and Fireball, you deserve to receive both. In the face. With your health already on zero.

No fighting game since has put together a roster of fighters like Capcom did. Chun-Li with her Lightning Kick, Eddie Honda and his Hundred-Hand Slap, Blanka's legendary electricity move. In '93, the whole respect structure of video games revolved around this cartridge. It didn't matter if you could do *Mario World* with your eyes closed: get perfected on this, you were NOTHING.

Everyone had their strongest character, but you had to know a load of other characters' specials as well. After a few months of quarter-circling your D-pads into powder, the slightest thing could decide a battle. Maybe the Chun-Li stage was your favourite. Maybe you couldn't 'be' Player Two.

Every single fight raised your heart rate by at least 20% as Capcom brought the arcade game into your home. Many couldn't wait for the UK release, and took £100 to the import shop to get the Japanese version. We weren't rich: £100 then meant Christmas, birthday and paper round money combined.

The *Street Fighter II Turbo* phenomenon was like *Pokémon* with punches. Better versions kept coming after this, but *Turbo* started a fire in our hearts that burns to this day like a Yoga Flame.

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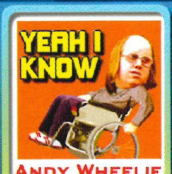
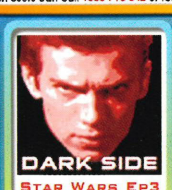
Demon Swoop 7247



Andy Wheelie 3804



Star Wars Ep3 8081

Homer Football 2955

Insane Stamp 1690

Ronaldo Head 3048

Homer Xray 2337

Disco Chick! 3807

Scrubs 7275

Chelsea Champs 2992

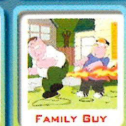
24 Flash 8445

Yeah But No... 7278

Loser Radar 1701

Mr Burns 7976

Matrix 1418


Family Guy 7771

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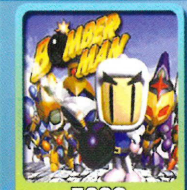
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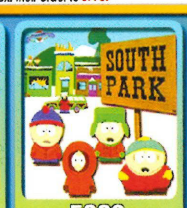

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3.	5401	Ice Cube	You Can Do It
4.	2859	Crazyfrog	Axel F
5.	8353	50 Cent	Candy Shop
6.	2220	Gwen Stefani	Hollaback Girl
7.	8250	Black Eyed Peas	Dont Phunk With...
8.	7451	Eminem	Mockingbird
9.	7438	Game ft 50 Cent	Hate It or Love It
10.	2053	Green Day	Boulevard...

POP Top 10

1.	6092	Akon	Lonely
2.	4508	Tony C. ft P Kay	...Way To Amarillo
3.	2859	Crazyfrog	Axel F
4.	2220	Gwen Stefani	Hollaback Girl
5.	8250	Black Eyed Peas	Dont Phunk With...
6.	7451	Eminem	Mockingbird
7.	7438	Game ft 50 Cent	Hate It or Love It
8.	2053	Green Day	Boulevard...
9.	1493	Snoop Dogg	Sign
10.	4603	Girls Aloud	I ll Stand By You

Fart Top 10

1.	4082	South Park Fart Song
2.	4079	Loud Burp!
3.	3120	Blow Raspberry
4.	2362	Slippery Fart
5.	2351	Puke
6.	2247	Sizzle Fart
7.	2492	Burp-tastic!
8.	3846	Go Pee
9.	5186	On Fart For Man
10.	2385	Fart & Burp Man

REAL Top 10

1.	4266	Crazyfrog	Axel F
2.	4279	Coldplay	Speed of Sound
3.	9016	Akon	Lonely
4.	2219	Gorillaz	Feel Good Inc
5.	2980	Oasis	Lyla
6.	2984	Black Eyed Peas	Dont Phunk With...
7.	6157	Tony Christie	...Way To Amarillo
8.	1259	Akon	Locked Up
9.	6162	50 Cent	Candy Shop
10.	6191	Will Smith	Switch

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Celeb Tones

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1146	Jordan
2389	Peter Kay
1106	Avid Merrion
1071	Bear (Bo)
2381	Borat (Ali G)
1150	Frodo and Gollum
1143	Kat Slater (Bo)
1069	Mel b (Bo)
1067	Michael Jackson
1159	Ozzy Osbourne
1151	Alan Partridge
1102	Ali G
9035	Kenny Craig
9038	Marjorie Dawes

Crazy Tones

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5416	Crazy Frog
2492	Burp
5467	Dog Eats Frog
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5982	Disco Chick
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5095	Scary Voice
5563	Torture Tone
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2510	Baby Sound
2487	Ambulance
2518	Creepy Door
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6173	Bird Splat!	7119	Parade
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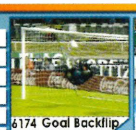
6177	Human Cannon	4637	Footy Stars 2
1467	Kung Fu King	4640	Footy Stars 3
1487	Gym Wiz		
1489	Whale Squash!		
1560	Bike Fight		
1576	ElectroTherapy		
5415	Jiggy With Elmo		
1296	Snow Surprise		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6235 Skater Boy

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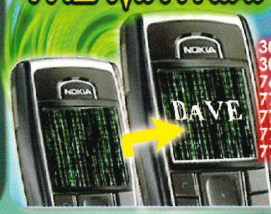

3045	Matrix Logo
3034	Becks Jersey
7611	Chelsea Score
7762	Arsenal No.1
7763	Ronaldo Jersey
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7766	Liverpool Rules

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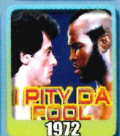

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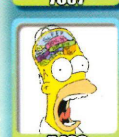
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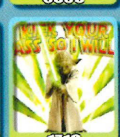

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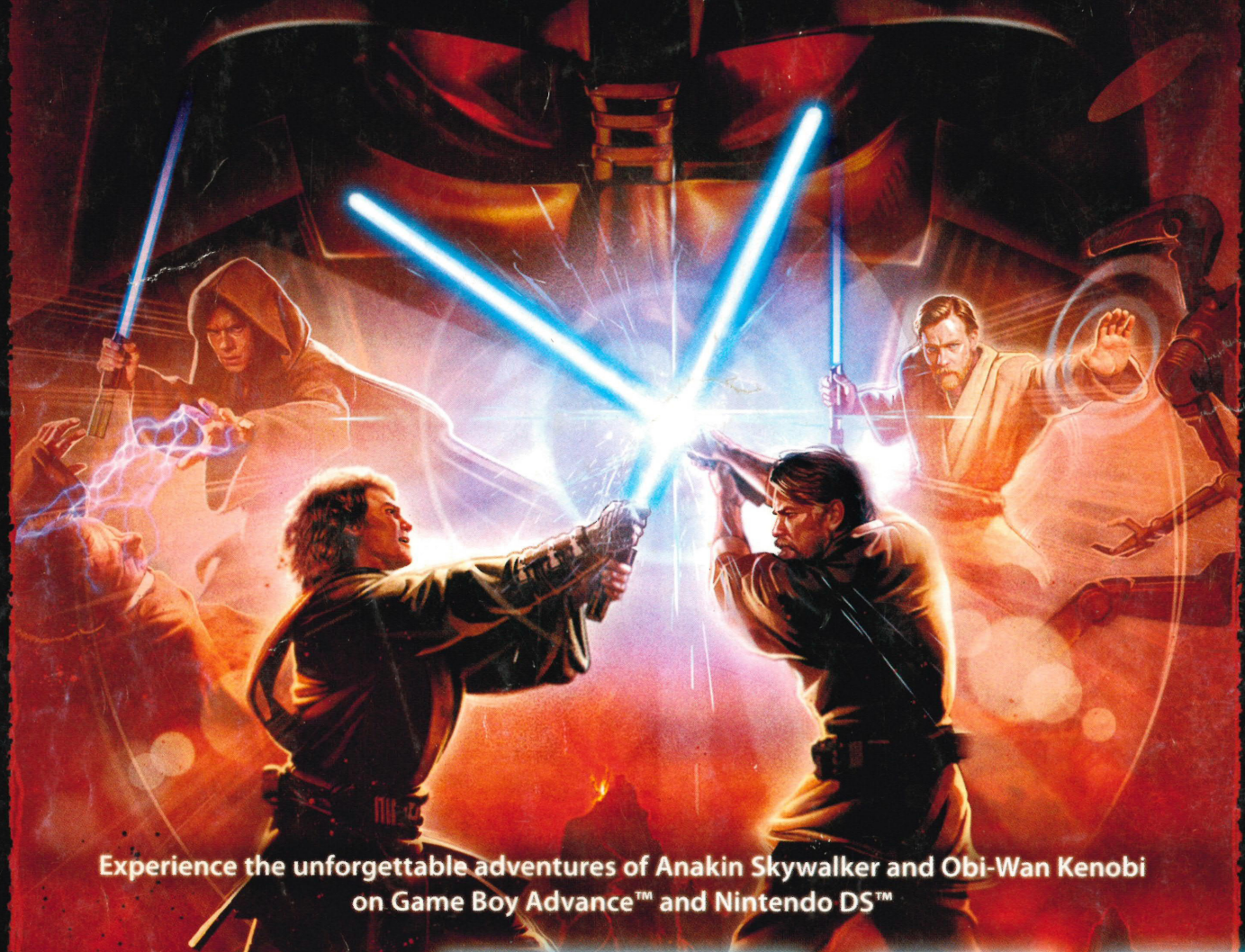

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