

NINTENDO DS



NINTENDO GAMECUBE

GAME BOY ADVANCE SP

Donkey Kong's Best Selling Nintendo Magazine



METROID PRIME 2!
FIRST-EVER
BOSS GUIDE!
p92

Nintendo

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK



DK HITS BACK!

FIRST OFFICIAL REVIEW!

DONKEY KONG JUNGLE BEAT

PLUS...

OFFICIAL REVIEW...



ASTRO BOY

HOT NEW PICS OF...

MARIO POWER TENNIS

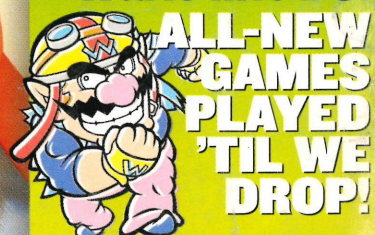


15 NINTENDO DS PREVIEWS!



Super Mario 64 DS

Wario hits DS!



ALL-NEW GAMES PLAYED 'TIL WE DROP!



Mr Driller

Project Rub

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NEW SHOTS!

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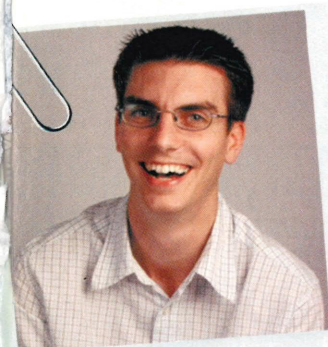
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Welcome

Welcome to *NOM UK*



Over 300 days and counting to next Christmas – just think how many brain-melting games we're all gonna play in that time!

This year's already lining up a stack of must-have titles and we'll be ripping them open over the next few months. From *Resi 4* to *Star Fox Assault*, *Viewtiful Joe 2* to *Pokémon Emerald*, 2005 is certainly gonna be a year to remember.

It doesn't end there though. Don't forget the all-new *Zelda*, a few E3 surprises and the latest revolution in handheld gaming, the Nintendo DS. You might want to check out the 15 DS previews we've got starting on p46. This new machine is a beast, and after feasting on *Mario 64 DS*, *Sawaru! Made in Wario* and *Mr. Driller: Drill Spirits* for a while all we can say is **YOU NEED ONE NOW!**

Enjoy the mag!

Tim Street

Tim Street, Editor



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For more information, see p104.

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DK's Big Bananas

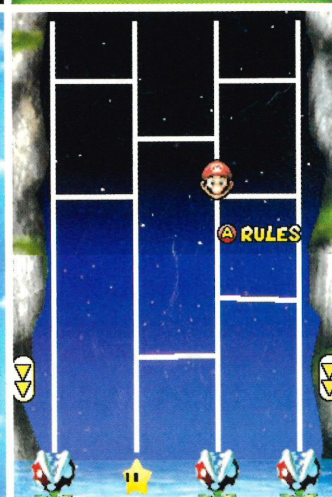
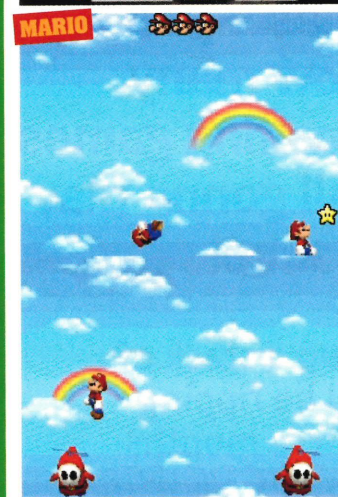
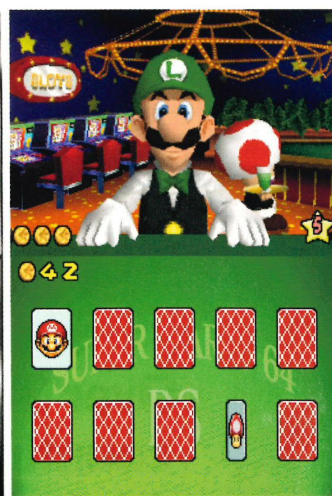


THIS MONTH... EVERY SINGLE MARIO MINI-GAME!

Each month there's always one game or one single moment that stands out from all the others in the world of Nintendo. Whether it's Samus getting the Light Suit, or Super Bowser Bros. in *Paper Mario 2*, only one can reach the notch marked AWESOME on our Banan-O-Meter. So now, before you tuck into the rest of the mag, feast on the Nintendo goodness you need most.

DK's first-ever Big Bananas is the mini-games in *Super Mario 64 DS*. Across these two pages are ALL the wicked games that will be eating up your time later this year when you grab a DS. From Bob-Omb sorting right through to snowball rolling, it's all here just for you!

CHECK OUT THE MARIO 64 PREVIEW
It starts on p46!





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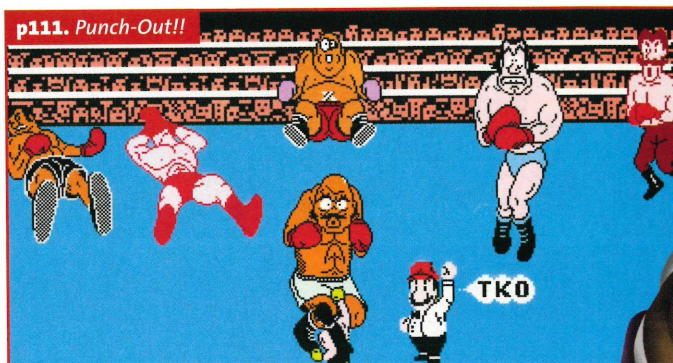
February 2005



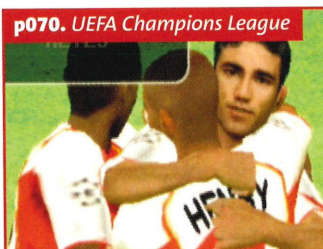
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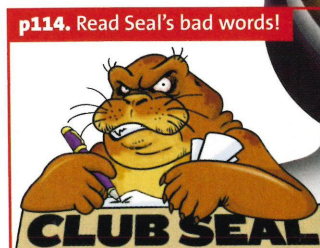
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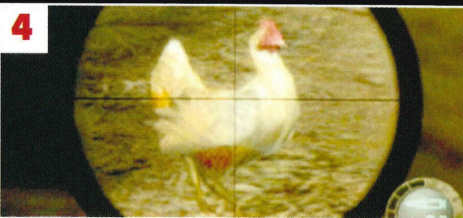
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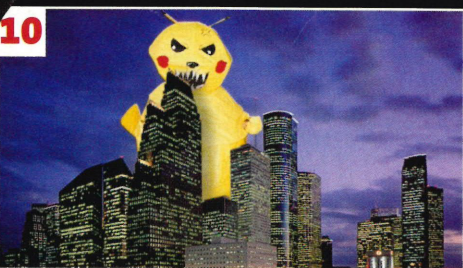
Donkey Kong Jungle Beat

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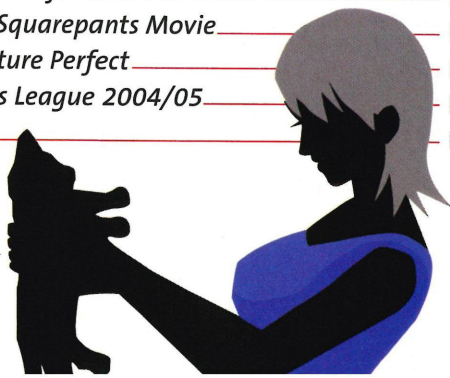
10 Things we didn't know last month...

1. That DK would be going nuts over the Mario mini-games (DK's Big Bananas, p004)
2. That old-skool DK platforming would rule (DK Jungle Beat, p008)
3. Rob would dare say *Minish Cap* was better than *Prime 2* (The Games of the Year, p039)
4. The Loch Ness Monster would look like a newt compared to the Del Lago (*Resi 4*, p050)
5. Mike and Dean would almost come to blows about whether the latest *Wario Ware* game's any good (*Sawaru! Made in Wario*, p060)
6. A game would reward us with hot chicks for being good at it (*Street Racing Syndicate*, p076)
7. If we'd ever get to play *Final Fantasy I & II: Dawn of Souls* (p080)
8. There were so many tough bosses in *Prime 2* (Professor E. Gadd's Guides, p092)
9. That you'd create heroes that could rival our favourite Nintendo ones (Quill's Mail, p106)
10. That Revolution is something far more sinister than just a new games console (Club Seal, p114)



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Donkey Kong Jungle Beat

Game info

Price: £39.99
Publisher: Nintendo
Web: www.nintendo.co.uk
Players: 1
Memory: 3 blocks

OUT
FEB 4th

From Kylie to Kongs, the bongos are back for a pounding. Can DK be king of the jungle again?

> Towering above you in a moody sky sits a giant bird with an eardrum-shattering screech. It's not enormous; this beast is the size of Australia and it wants to kill DK before he can kill it.

That's because clutched in its claws is an egg with a shadow big enough to block out the Sun. This hasn't just dropped out of the ass of a chicken, this has been formed by something not of this earth and you're charged with its destruction.

Surely it's a quick move of the 3D Stick and a fast combo to destroy the egg? 'Fraid not. What DK needs is a set of bongos and the only way you're gonna down that monstrosity is a double slap, quick clap and a bongo smack.

Welcome to the crazy animal world of *Jungle Beat*, an old-skool 2D platformer that's been sent forth from the jungle to raise a smile and give you an old-fashioned good time. What DK's latest outing does is give

you a simple game – simple levels and simple, easy-to-please gameplay. Anything complex has been given a wallop by DK's massive fists.

That's not to say that *Jungle Beat* will be back in the box after one night – we thought it would, but suddenly we were confronted with racking up ever-more-complex combos and tasked to reach even harder bosses so arrogant you'll be aching to drop them a DK-special one-inch punch. >>>



>>> There's nothing to confuse you here, no Create-An-Ape mode, no jungle level designer, nothing. It's back to the very roots of gaming, giving you a warm glow inside and reminding you why you started

playing video games in the first place; because they are fun.

These bongo games are certainly fun. Beating a rhythm with 'Kylie' and 'Supergrass' in *Konga* was fine for a while and in multiplayer it's a good 'un,

but *Jungle Beat* raised an eyebrow as long ago as E3. It was impossible to get on the game (although we eventually did) and the agreement was that the demo was both original and fun. Thus

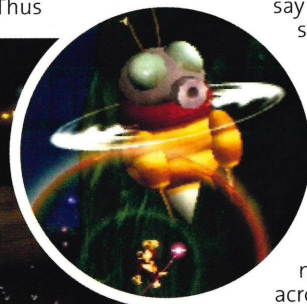
we've waited with anticipation ever since and showing it in *We Can't Wait For These* most months heightened our anticipation even further. Now it's here and we have to say our love at first sight was right.

Jungle Beat is one of those games that's simple from the outset. It's so basic it hurts, but that's why it's such a laugh.

Its easy going nature even comes across in the game's plot. Well it's not exactly a story, more like a headline from *The Sun*. "Four evil Kongs have stolen DK's bananas" screams the plot. Okay so there's nothing new there, DK seems to have his 'nanas half-inched in



■ The quiet drink at The Royal Oak turned nasty as some lumbering ape knocked over Donkey Kong's pint



■ Donkey Kong's right arm was double the size and great in a scrap

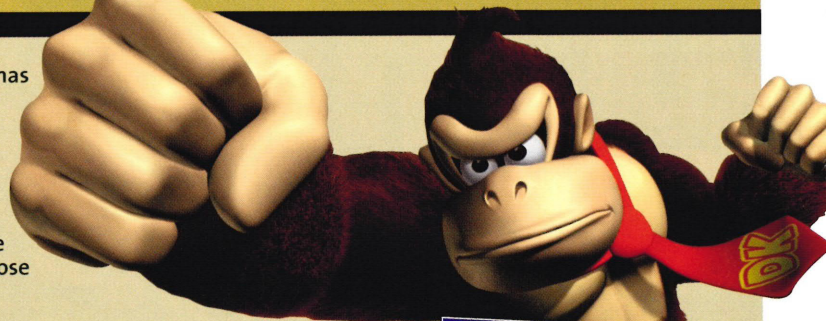
How to get bananas

You can't just walk into the fruit aisle in Tesco y'know.

■ It's not like this is the first time DK's had his hoard of bananas pilfered, so why he doesn't just bury them somewhere or eat them before they get nicked is a good question.

So once again they've all disappeared and there's a variety of ways the king of the Kongs can get them back, obtaining enough to get medals and open up later levels.

From punching some jungle beast until they burst into a banana spray to eating your way through piles of them at the end of each level, there are loads of ingenious ways to get those 'nanas back...



BEATING UP ENEMIES



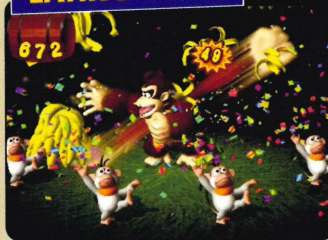
Some enemies require a simple punch, others must be leapt on and beaten to death. Whatever way you do it 'nanas will shower into the air so grab 'em. As with power-ups since the dawn of time, they do disappear after a few seconds so you'll need to be quick.

CLAPPING



To increase your tally further you can clap above the bongos as bananas fall around you. This makes Donkey Kong clap on-screen and retrieve the entire stash of bananas instead of running to pick up each one. You'll also get extras by doing it this way, increasing your total.

EATING GAME

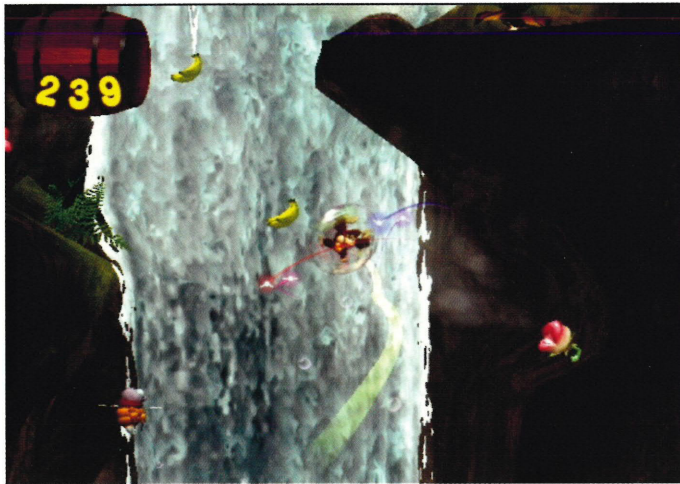


There are two stages per level and at the end of each one you must bite a giant piece of fruit. As the juice sprays everywhere you'll be blasted into the centre and will have to gobble up as many bananas as possible from two piles in just a few seconds. The *NOM* record so far? 58!

BURSTING BUBBLES



As with most platformers there are hard-to-reach pick-ups and in *DKJB* there are extra bananas. Most are trapped in groups of bubbles so you'll have to use your clapping powers to burst them and tear around catching the falling fruit before it vanishes into thin air.



■ As DK looked down he realised the rocks were closer than he thought

nearly every game he's been in and this only means you've gotta get out there and find your stash of yellow fruit. But there are no boring sub-plots and C-list characters that just get in the way. *Jungle Beat* is as basic as they come, and for that we can only applaud it. Or bang on the bongos.

Going back to what we said earlier, this is an old-skool platformer for GameCube lovers of the here and now. It's played with a set of bongos for sure, but it's the simple nature that appeals. For anyone who has played any of the ancient *Super Mario* platformers it's like you've been sent back in time to battle with your instincts and prove your gaming skills once again.

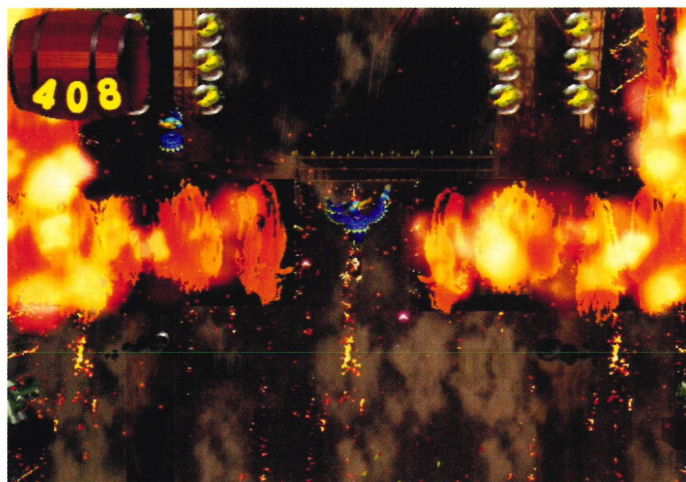
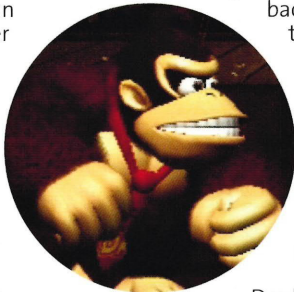
In a way this is the type of Mario platformer we've been dreaming about since *SM64*, except the portly plumber has been kicked into the jungle undergrowth and replaced with

The Great Hairy One.

As *DK* platformers go this is one of the best we've seen in a long time. The GBA ones have dampened the love we had for the Super NES originals and over time Rare's N64 effort is one of those games you used to care about, but don't want to kick it out of your collection just yet. In effect we're going

back over ten years, to when you fell in love with the *Donkey Kong Country* 16-bit series. You might say this is *DKC 4* with all the bells and whistles of the game's controller. Taking charge of

Donkey Kong is as simple as games get these days, harking back to a time when simple controls made a game – the D-Pad made you move and **A** made jump. Here the bongos make you move and jump, left bongo to run left, right for right and together to jump. Clapping your hands makes you grab or throw. >>>



■ Those blue birds are either brave or stupid. We'll let you decide which

Kong's combos

Sail through the jungle in one move.

■ Just like the other Lord of the Jungle, DK can swing through the trees using his friends and all manner of Mother Nature's objects to reach his goal.

If you can move from one thing to another without breaking the sequence DK will score a combo, and the more combos you get, the more bananas you will receive.

One of the easiest ways to do this is to be thrown from one monkey to another without being dropped, or swinging from vine to vine just like Tarzan.

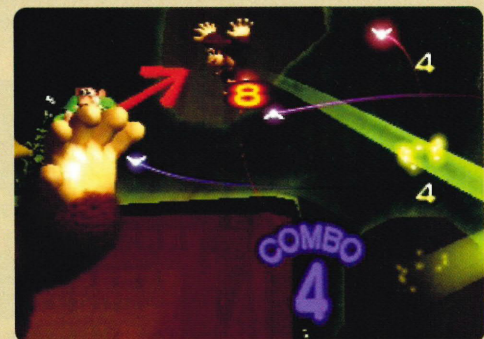
Rack up an impressive combo and a fluttering moth will appear. Hit this and rows of petals will be yours to collect.

1 With a graceful somersault, DK sails through the air from one vine to the next just like Tarzan. That's good moves!



2 DK leaps off the last vine and grabs a flower. Hit the right bongo and DK spins around the stem for part three of the combo.

3 Scaling ravines is a great laugh. Just hit the left and right drum to spring to the opposite side and make your way to the top.



4 Now for part five of the combo! Clap by the monkey and the little chap will snatch DK and chuck him onto the next part of the level. Thanks!



Not just in the jungle

This game might be called *Jungle Beat*, but there are water and fire worlds, too!

■ Worlds in platform games aren't always original, but *DKJB* breaks up the collecting marathon with some classic gaming moments. Whether it's riding a mountain goat, swimming the depths of the ocean or cruising through the skies of the jungle, we thought we'd



CAVE Fireflies will form platforms for you to get across molten lava pits and the odd bird will be on hand to fly you across too. Watch that you don't get scorched by boiling hot fire spouts otherwise you'll have to put out DK's burning hot ass by pounding on the bongos until he's got the all clear. Just look at his face above. That's just screaming PAIN!

»» On land these controls are perfectly fine, but hit the warm, tropical seas near the jungle and you'll be ready to fuzz the bongos across the room. That's because they don't let you climb through water very easily, so avoiding spike-encrusted puffer fish or the stings of a collective swarm of jellyfish is a case of timing your moves.

You just can't climb through water, it's a case of facing left or right and waiting for the ocean current to make you rise. Have no fear, you WILL be stung by those jellyfish. Having no control here is like being at the wheel of a runaway car as a mountain hairpin bend approaches. You want to move, but there's nothing you can do.

It's a minor gripe for sure, but one that does affect the underwater levels, even ruining some. One in particular sees you racing a group of turtles and only finishing first will



■ With burning embers and boiling lava rivers, this is too cool

ensure you get the gold medals you need to reach later levels.

Collecting medals is your ultimate goal in *DKJB*. Each world is marked by a different fruit, whether it be bananas, cherries, pineapples, or oranges and it's up to DK to belt through the two stages per level collecting as many bananas as possible. The more bananas you find the more will be added to your grand total at the end of each stage at the banana tree.

As DK's monkey pals beat out

"The crazy creations include knife-wielding moles and shuriken-chucking gremlins."



■ As DK climbed the beanstalk he saw green stuff fall out of Jack's ass

bring them together to give you a taste of the entire game. Some levels are straight out of the Nintendo Levels Ideas Factory, too, so you know you're in for a good time. Giant jellies are certainly the future.



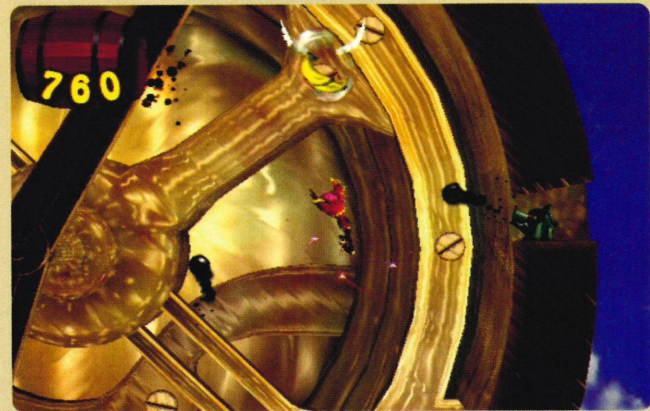
ICE Whether it's retrieving bananas frozen in icicles, escaping avalanches or riding a goat away from a mountain monster, this is easily one of our favourite levels in the game.



JELLY This sweet world is filled with towering shapes of wobbly jelly. You can pick up bananas by swimming through it and DK chocs help break your fall should you slip out.



SEA Soon you'll leave the cold for warm, tropical climes. Deep below the ocean's surface you'll find hidden bananas in giant oysters, poisonous jellyfish and large, spiky puffa fish.



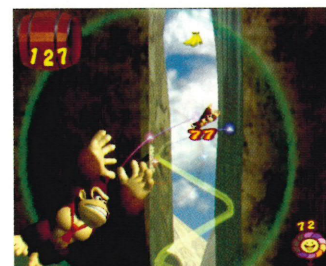
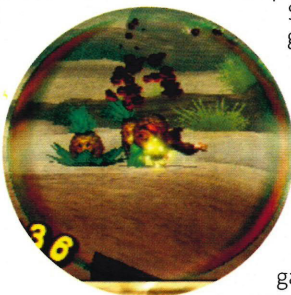
CLOCK Birds are gonna fly you to hidden bananas should you dodge cannonballs and the clock's inner workings. Don't lose your grip 'cos dropping too far will lose your banana health.

a drum roll the number of bananas you've collected will steadily rise to the top of a hollowed-out tree. You'll always get a bronze medal, but score over 400 bananas to grab silver and sit bathing in your god-like gaming skills with a gold medal should you bag over 800 yellow 'uns. Watch your total in the boss battles though. Each time you take a hit your banana total will ensure your hard work doesn't go to waste.

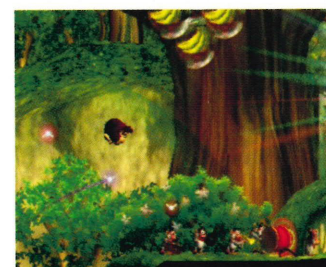
To secure bananas your jungle jaunt will take you to all manner of tried-and-tested level favourites. From the early jungle scenes to the monsters of the ice worlds and the mind-

boiling challenges of the fire levels and beyond, there are ideas here that are a mix of old and new. Throw in the bongos being hammered at full tilt and you've got yourself something fun and original, packed tightly together with some super-hot presentation.

Surprisingly the game's name would suggest *Jungle Beat* always takes place in the jungle, yet it doesn't. To broaden the gameplay and stop it getting stale later on in the game you'll have to negotiate a giant, working clock with all its intricate cogs, pulleys and continuously ticking hands. Then there are the ocean stages where you'll find a shipwreck and schools of fish. >>>



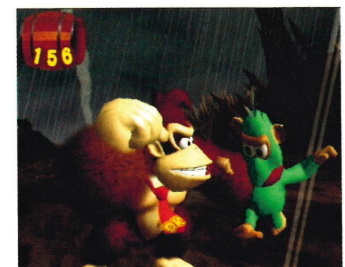
■ Flowers are evil. Just look at its demonic grin. This is a fact



■ Monkeys are the coolest game animals EVER. Especially when they're in a marching band



■ Even when underwater DK still wears a tie. What a gentleman



■ Seconds before this the green gremlin was chucking shurikens at DK. THAT's animal cruelty



Animal friends

He might be an ape, but he's sure made some pals...

■ Each world is bursting with fiends who want to defend the bananas you're trying to get back. Thankfully there are some animals who only want to help you.

In a change to previous *Donkey Kong* games, notably Rare's games on the Super NES and the N64, you won't be able to transform into different characters. You can only ride them this time around. We've also looked long and hard, but we haven't spotted Enguarde or Rambi anywhere.

From the game's friendly killer whale to a crazy mountain goat, flocks of multicoloured birds and a plump red squirrel you can use as a parachute, these creatures are a right laugh and here they are in all their glory...

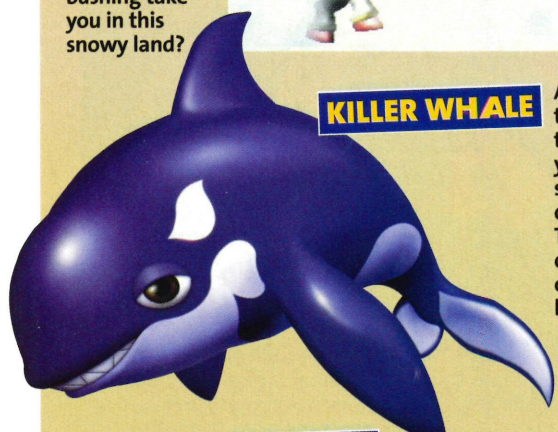
Jump on his back and he'll run away from a mountain avalanche. He'll even treat you to a banana-winning long jump event. How far will your bongo-bashing take you in this snowy land?

GOAT



KILLER WHALE

As you plumb to the depths of the ocean you'll spot a shipwreck you can't enter. Thanks to this dude you'll not only get the bananas inside, but he'll flip you high in the sky for even more surprises!



Tug its tail and this red squirrel will turn into a plump red parachute that you can use to drift down past the jungle trees, collecting bananas along the way. Cool!

SQUIRREL



BIRD

By using the bongos you can fly and reach secret bananas. Just don't hit a tree or another dangerous object otherwise the long drop will see you lose some of your fruit stash!



"You can even pull out a fish tongue and watch it explode!"



■ Instead of slicing the top off, DK hit the yolk another way

» Or why not dice with death while dodging showers of molten rock being spewed by an angry volcano?

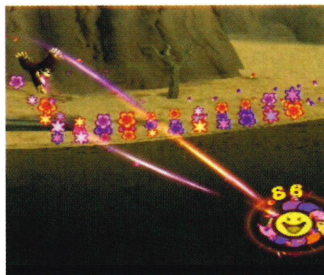
The range of enemies from start to finish also reminds us of the menagerie of mental creatures that was dreamt up for the very earliest *Mario* games. It's at bursting point with crazy creations including tiny, knife-wielding moles and temple-dwelling gremlins who love to rain razor-sharp shurikens down on you when you least want it. Others are slightly harder to defeat – look out for a pirouetting panda, a hard-as-nails armadillo and even a fish whose tongue you have to pull to make it explode,

in a cartoon way of course!

But let's head back to the jungle for it's here that the game begins and where you'll first fall in love with *Jungle Beat*.

As you'd expect from a video game jungle it's teeming with life. From little monkeys who give you a helping throw to reach hard-to-find bananas and flowers where you swing round the stems to some amazing sights, it really is a pleasure to look at.

Rivers flow down from the game's horizon to create crashing waterfalls in the foreground and the necessary spray and bubbles that will take DK on an airborne ride to even greater heights. »



■ Look at that giggling flower. It certainly is evil. Fact



■ Pineapple bombs – expected in the US Army real soon



■ Grab those bananas DK! AiAi's coming after you for those Fyffes!



■ Clapping away molten rocks makes a man of anyone!

Lords of the jungle

These ain't no ordinary end-of-level bosses.

■ Once you've completed the second stage of any level, you'll come face to face with a boss who you must try and defeat.

Most of them are evil Kongs and to help you on your way we've given you some subtle hints on how to defeat them.

Apart from the Kongs there's a giant vulture, a mechanical elephant who blasts bombs out of his trunk and a rhino who loves to throw electric fruit at you!



BOSS ONE

LOCATION:
Jungle treetops

BATTLE TIP:
Don't forget to clap! That's the only way you won't get beaten to death, DK!

BOSS TWO

LOCATION:
Death valley nest

BATTLE TIP:
Use the monkey to be thrown up to the massive egg above. Now get chomping!



BOSS THREE

LOCATION:
Disused mine

BATTLE TIP:
Clap to slow down the fruit being hurled at you. Now smash his face in!

BOSS FOUR

LOCATION:
Ancient settlement

BATTLE TIP:
When the elephant starts sucking in air, you start chucking those bombs.



BOSS FIVE

LOCATION:
On a log, hurtling down a fast river

BATTLE TIP:
Again, use your claps to dodge what is thrown at you. Now hit him!

BOSS SIX

LOCATION:
Beneath a giant tree

BATTLE TIP:
Hammer this white-mohawk mutha with that fruit, but slow it down first!



BOSS SEVEN

LOCATION:
On a polluted plain

BATTLE TIP:
Dodge and counter punch, that's the only way to see off this Kong.



>>> Little monkeys are even on hand to hammer out the game's 'jungle beats', complete with crashing cymbals, drums and other instruments if you look hard enough. The music fits the bill perfectly, from pacy tunes to match the manic opening levels to subtle, melancholy tracks that suit the underwater settings. Then hear it ramp up for the boss battles, giving you that necessary adrenaline rush to finish them off for good.

The end of level stages are a mixture of evil Kongs (the ones who have nicked your bananas in the first place) and some of the most terrifying animal-mutants to hit GameCube. As you probably realised when you started reading this review, these dudes are MASSIVE. As the camera pulls away for the face-off, Donkey Kong becomes a mere dot compared to the screen-filling monsters such as bomb-spitting elephants, egg-holding birds and a giant rhino whose snorting always sounds hilariously like the whistle of a steam train when he wigs out.

It's only when you face the Kongs that you get a close-up ringside seat where you'll be in fur-flying range. Each



scrap occurs in typically moody scenarios – Death Valleys, mountain tops, even on a speeding log hurtling down river.

Some even come with driving rain or whole packs of monkeys staring with doom-

laden eyes as flickering torches light up the final fight.

As with most boss fights you'll need to work out their plan of attack before you can rightfully turn them black and blue. DK's hand-to-hand combat will only come into play against the Kongs, where dodging punches and kicks that fly his

way is your only form of defence, before you can lay the smack down with his fists. Win and it'll leave DK beating his chest and hollering a typical Tarzan victory cry as your arms try and recover from the beating they've just taken.

You might think that last comment was a bit over the top

Race day

Those animals are a load of fun, aren't they?

■ Battling your way through the platforming levels is one thing, but you'll need arms of steel if you want to win at some of the mini-games hidden around the adventure.

Whether it's racing monkeys tied to birds through the inside of a giant flower or racing three turtles through the sea past jellyfish and difficult currents, there's plenty of fun to be had.

Just be sure to reach that line in a respectable position 'cos the higher up the rankings you finish the more bananas you will receive to add to your tally for that world.

Remember the more bananas you get the better the medal you will receive and this makes for even more levels to unlock. Make sure you bang those bongos like crazy!



■ Monkeys in balls was cool, monkeys playing ten-pin bowling was wicked, but monkeys tied to birds for a race? Awesome



■ Forget the pain from your arms that your brain is gonna tell you as you power through the sea. YOU NEED TO WIN!



■ Ski jumping is boring, but when you're riding on the back of a mountain goat and leaping off a ramp it's far from it

Win a free game! Send us your game face!

■ Back at E3, Tim was filmed playing *Jungle Beat* and if you read our massive E3 blowout back in *NOM#142* you'll have spotted his stupid game faces.

Safe to say, playing this review copy of the game brought the images back to haunt us and so we thought we'd get you involved.

Take a picture or video your mate's game face as they're playing any game and the three we deem the funniest will bag a copy of *Jungle Beat* and a smart set of bongos.

Just send your picture or video to 'Have My Face In Your Face!', *Nintendo Official Magazine*, Emap Active, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 5UW. Alternatively you can email any digital photos to rob.burman@emap.com and mark the subject 'My Game Face'. We'll be printing all of them in a future feature, so why not try your luck!



"You'll master *DK Jungle Beat* in 20 minutes. After that you'll be hooked."

but believe us when we say that *Jungle Beat* will kill your arms. At the end of each stage you'll have to take part in a mad scramble to eat as many bananas as you can and they'll certainly hurt then. But using the bongos to pummel end of level bosses with numerous left and right handers will leave your arm muscles reeling. You won't be breaking out in a serious sweat but it will give you some slight exercise, so at least your parents won't be on your case with their usual cry of 'you should be outside getting some fresh air'.

Using the bongos is what makes this game. Slapping and clapping makes it a right laugh as well as extending the life of your bongos beyond *Donkey Konga*. Unlike DK's musical marathon it doesn't work at all well with a GameCube controller as a substitute.

Initially we thought you'd be able to use the 3D Stick to move DK, with **A** to jump and **B** to clap, but there's no such luck here. To make DK run it's a double tap of the **B** button and a quick flick on the C-Stick to make him jump. The **Y** is then brought into play as a replacement for clapping. Quite simply it's impossible to play like this, so don't even try!

As character animations go, DK is so much better than the dire character animations that appeared in *Donkey Konga*. Not just content with charging

around the jungle, sailing through the air and swimming the high seas, he even takes it upon himself to ice skate across frozen wastelands. His inertia is perfectly pitched, too; quickly turn around on the ice and DK will skid as he tries to turn and move the opposite way. It's what made *Mario World* such a classic to play.

Compared with so many mind-numbingly boring platformers, *DKJB* is a breath of fresh air, using the bongos to form something totally new, yet totally classic with its old-skool platforming skills – basically, it rules.

We were worried when the credits rolled, after all we'd blitzed it for about seven hours, but that wasn't the end of the surprise – there was more DK action in store. Much more, in fact, with more combos to master and bananas to pockets, it opens up more possibilities.

Unlocking even later levels requires the right number of medals and, as you can only get a maximum of three per world (getting two is hard enough!), you will need to head back into previous encounters to unlock those seemingly unreachable medals. If you are the kind of gamer who likes to dip in and out of games you'll find that this lasts you some time, but be warned if you blitz through it – as good as it looks and plays, you might just be too quick for *Jungle Beat* for your own good.

So, should you buy it?



Yes if...

You've got bongos lying around and you're too bored to play *Donkey Konga*.

No if...

You hate the word 'originality' and would rather play a boring sequel instead.

You'll love it if you like...

Old-skool platforming, but with a new spin. DK fans will be glad he's in a great game.

GRAPHICS

9

Animation not to be sniffed at and worlds bursting in 2D Colour-O-Vision.

SOUND

8

It's got Beat in the name and certainly has it in-game. Some effects are weak.

GAMEPLAY

8

You'll master the controls in about 20 minutes and after that you'll be hooked.

LIFE SPAN

5

After a few days we'd seen everything. Only better scores had us coming back.

VERDICT

> The reason why you buy into Nintendo in one game – quirky, fun and downright playable. We're worried about how much it will appeal in the long-term, but it's such a thrill ride you won't be too upset. *Tim Street*



BEST BIT: The mini-games you can play along the way are a hoot.

WORST BIT: Water levels are always rubbish. Nothing's changed here.

SECOND OPINION

> This is a blueprint for how cool next-gen 2D-style platformers could be. I wish Nintendo would make a Mario game like this with traditional controls. *Michael Jackson*

Nintendo
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"KING KONG"

86%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK



World of Nintendo

INSIDE World of Nintendo

SLAM-DUNK MARIO

Nintendo All-Stars to feature in new *NBA Street*.

18

RETURN OF THE HEDGEHOG

Sonic's main man says the blue wonder will be back.

19

MULTIMEDIA MAYHEM

Audio and video playback is on the way to DS and GBA.

19

EVIL AT EASTER

Crack open some skulls along with your Easter Eggs.

20



IS IT STILL CHRISTMAS?

Giftopia may be a big present for the New Year.

22

KEEP ON ROLLING

Monkeys? In balls? Again? Furry fingers crossed!

22

THE YEAR OF THE PIKA!

What's in store for *Pokémon* fans in 2005? Loads!

23

FREE STUFF FROM SANTA...

... well *NOM* actually, but the result is the same.

24



With no mushrooms to save him, Mario could always rely on his... umm... moustache?

MARIO VS SHAQ!

Mario and the Nintendo All-Stars are set for a surprise appearance in *NBA Street V3*.



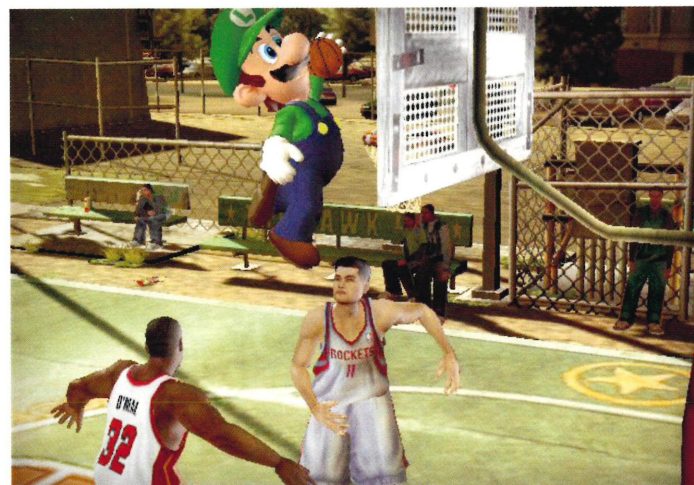
This is not a wind-up. Mario, Luigi and Princess Peach are going to appear in a basketball game. Electronic Arts has pulled off a major (and unexpected) coup in signing three of Nintendo's most famous faces as guest stars in *NBA Street V3*.

The proof is here, exclusively in *Nintendo Official Magazine*. The Mushroom Kingdom trio will be dribbling around men twice their size and using their ridiculous platform game jumping ability to pull off slam-dunks. We're only a little way into 2005 and this is surely the most randomly bizarre

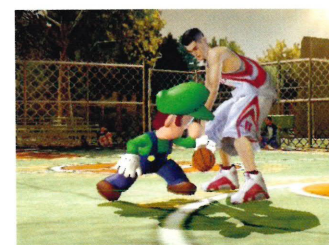
thing that'll happen in video games this year.

Luckily, the Nintendo All-Stars aren't going to be slumming it in a crap game. The *NBA Street* games usually play amazing basketball, ramping up the adrenaline so even the posh netball-avoiders among us can't help but get sucked in. We can't wait to see the special moves that EA cooks up for the Mushroom Kingdom's finest.

We'll have a hands-on ahead of the game's February 18th release, don't worry about that. That's golf, tennis and basketball – surely *Mario Soccer* has to come next?



■ Spectators stare blankly at mid-court – clearly they see this often



■ Luigi seems more interested in looking up this bloke's shorts

Naka says Sonic will be back!



Exclusive: Sonic Team guru announces new GameCube and DS titles.

➡ Sonic Team head, Yuji Naka, revealed two new *Sonic the Hedgehog* games for Nintendo in an exclusive interview with *Nintendo Official Magazine* in London at the end of last year.

"We are in development with a new GameCube Sonic game, which we hope to release before the end of 2005," Naka exclusively revealed to us. "Sonic Team is also currently making a Sonic game for the DS. We are taking our time to make sure the game makes good use of the DS's many new

features." Double whammy!

We pressed for details and Naka revealed that the DS game will incorporate parts of the screen-rubbing Sonic tech-demo shown at E3 last year. Naka expects both titles to be playable at this year's E3 and, as always, we'll be there to see it all.

Pick up *NOM UK* next month for the full interview, where Yuji Naka reveals his secret conversations with Shigeru Miyamoto about getting Sonic and Mario to appear in a game together. No, you are not dreaming.



■ Sonic started running at E3 and won't stop until he corners Mario for a ruck. Good luck...



■ This early rubbing demo saw people's hands cut to ribbons by Sonic's spikes. Except it didn't

Look and listen

Game Boy and DS to play movies and music!

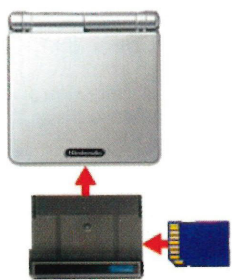
➡ Do you ever stupidly get bored of playing games on your SP? Wish you could watch videos on it or even listen to music? Then Nintendo's new multimedia accessory for the SP and DS is going to be just the thing for you.

The device, which goes on sale in February in Japan, allows both handhelds to play MP3s and Mpegs. Or, in non-computer speak, music and video files.

The Play-chan is slightly bigger than a GBA cartridge with a built-in headphone port and a slot to insert a special memory card type device, called an SD Card.

The card will contain any videos or music you want to play. When you decide what you want to view/listen to, the D-pad is then used to either adjust the volume or scan through the clip. While **START** pauses the action and **B** takes you back to the main menu.

According to Nintendo the Play-chan will be able to play music files for around 15 hours before the SP or DS has to be recharged. So Dean will be able to listen to Girls Aloud all day!



■ Video! Watch what you like – but any saucy stuff will trigger an ear-splitting alarm



■ Audio! It's kinda like *Donkey Konga*'s screen



TOO MUCH INFO



ARTY FARTY

Looks like *Mawaru Made in Wario* isn't just appreciated by gamers on the far side of the world. A bunch of bearded intellectuals in Japan have decided it's art as well. The ominous-sounding Agency for Cultural Affairs gave *Mawaru* top honours in the entertainment category, during the recent Media Art Festival.

SACRE BLEU! CALL ZE RESISTANCE!

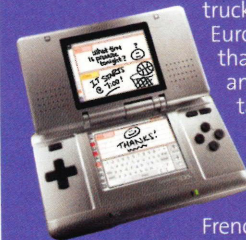
EA is still trying to take over the world. Having bought 20% of French developers Ubisoft, EA's now the biggest shareholder in the company, paving the way for a possible takeover. The news came just days after EA announced it had also signed an exclusive deal with the NFL.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS FROM NINTY

Members of Club Nintendo in Japan were greeted with a smart Christmas present – a demo disc just two days before December 25th! The gold-coloured disc featured over 25 DS movies and playable demos of *Naruto 3* and Capcom's forthcoming *Viewtiful Joe 2*. Turn to p32 and cue *Naruto* drooling...

NOM INVADES EUROPE

With the Nintendo DS selling by the truckload, Nintendo of Europe has told *NOM* that a massive announcement will be taking place in Paris at the end of January. We'll have all the news from the Moulin, sorry, French capital next month.



DS SELLS AND SELLS

DSs are flying off the shelves faster than simple US shop folk can restock them. Although the DS has only been on sale since November 21st, a million units have already been sold. Demand in Japan is also sky high with half a million consoles sold within four days of launch.

Resident Easter

Capcom releases the fiends to chase off the Easter Bunny.



You'll be killing crazy villagers before you're eating Easter Eggs. That's the bottom line after Capcom announced an earlier-than-expected release date of March 18th, 2005 for *Resident Evil 4*.

It seems that we've waited an eternity to get our hands on the crowning glory of Capcom's GameCube output. *Resi 4* helps keep the momentum going for Nintendo after a game-packed Christmas

and provides another stone-cold classic game to tide you over until the new *Legend of Zelda* game in the summer.

Before you reserve a big chunk of your Christmas money though, it might be worth double checking how old you are. *Resident Evil 4* is gorier than an abattoir open day and as such is likely to receive a BBFC 18 rating. So, if you're underage, just read Rob's latest preview of the game on p50 and pretend you're playing it yourself.

■ Leon's Easter egg hunt turned nasty



Unity falls apart

Jeff Minter's crazy 'Cube shooter is cancelled.



It's the news nobody wanted to hear. Jeff Minter's ambitious (and colourful) *Unity* project has been discontinued. "It was becoming increasingly apparent to us that we would not be able to finish *Unity* in an acceptable time frame," explained Lionhead Studios boss, Peter Molyneux, the man bankrolling the project.

While this is sad news, it's not all that surprising. *Unity* was basically a one-man enterprise, born in the crazy/genius brain

of UK coding legend Jeff Minter. Now is definitely the moment to be shipping a GameCube game and only Minter himself will have known how much longer he needed to have *Unity* ready. To his credit, he was unwilling to compromise his vision and rush the product to market.

"It's been a horrible decision for us to have to make, but in the end we've had to make it," explained a rueful Minter. "I've put two years of my life into this



and I was as desperate to play *Unity* as much as you were. I understand fully just how disappointed you all are."

Indeed Jeff, we're all very disappointed.

Memento competition

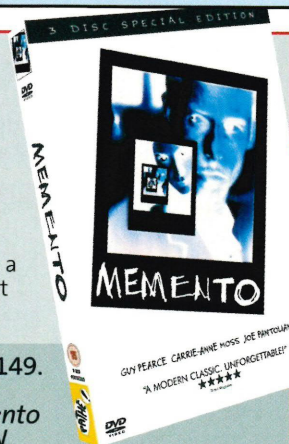
? QUESTION

Which soap did *Memento* star Guy Pearce appear in?

a. *Coronation Street* b. *EastEnders* c. *Neighbours*

Err... what's this competition about again? Oh yeah – to celebrate the *Memento* three-disc special edition being available to buy on DVD from Pathé Distribution Ltd. from December 27th. And we've got three copies up for grabs.

If you haven't seen this film about a guy who suffers from short term memory loss then you definitely need to. Then again perhaps you saw it, but have forgotten it. You probably even took a date to the cinema and snogged afterwards, but can't remember that either.



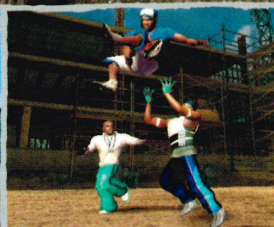
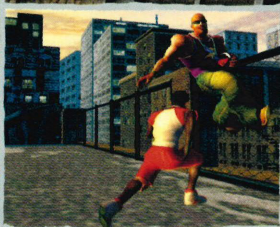
ENTER BY TEXT: Write "nomcomp MEMENTO", then the letter of your answer and send it to 83149.
BY PHONE: 0905 053 1103
BY POST: Send your name, address, telephone number and your answer to: The Memento Competition, NOM UK, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW.



Think you know what's up?



The game's played in the streets, but it's won in the air.
The high flyin' football season takes off at easportsbig.co.uk/nflstreet2



PlayStation 2



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Welcome to Animal Crossing Guardian

February Edition, 2005

LOVE IS IN THE AIR!

Looks like there's a bit of a slow start to 2005 in *Crossing* land. After last month's single event, there's still not much going on in February. At least you'll have time for lots of chores.

February 2nd – Groundhog Day

Everybody will show up at the Wishing Well from 7am onwards. At 8am Resetti the Mole will make an appearance as the groundhog. If you speak to the Mayor at 9am he'll give you a flower model.

February 14th – St. Valentine's Day

A week before this event, some of your animal neighbours will start mentioning sending presents to special people. Pete will also pin a note on the bulletin board, advising you to clear out your mailbox. On St. Valentine's Day you'll get letters from all animals of the opposite sex. They will also attach a gift to the letter. The present will either be a T-shirt or furniture, depending upon how well you get on with them.



A gift for all?

Is the wacky *Giftpia* about to 'do an *Animal Crossing*' and get a long-overdue UK release?

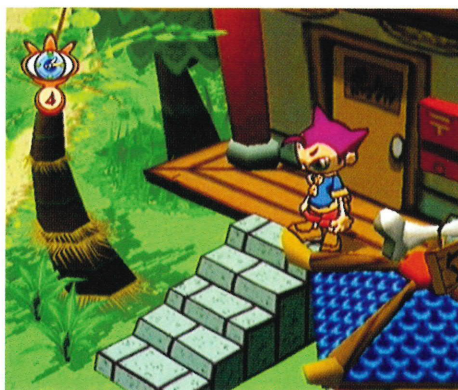


Giftpia, the crazy Nintendo "communication game" rumoured to have been taken off the PAL release list, may be heading to the UK this year after all.

Although there's still no confirmation of a release date, Nintendo of Europe has stated

that it has now got *Giftpia* pencilled in to ship in 2005. That's this year if you're a bit slow.

A bit like *Animal Crossing*, the game features a young character who must run around a town performing various chores for its cranky residents so he can pay the Mayor for a big festival.



■ *Giftpia*'s main man always leaves the barber's shop feeling strangely cheated



■ Will there be a gaming treasure at the end of this rainbow? The UK may soon find out

Super! Monkey Ball 3!

The man who first put monkeys in balls says AiAi could roll on.



In a recent interview with *got-next.com*, Toshiro Nagoshi, the Sega developer behind *F-Zero GX* and *Super Monkey Ball*, mentioned that a third outing for AiAi and co. is a real possibility. He said: "Of course, I couldn't comment on that subject before, but it's much more likely to happen now." We're willing to beg if necessary!

Mr Nagoshi also spoke about what it was like to work with Nintendo on *F-Zero GX*. He

added: "They have very strict and serious policies in making their games to a very high standard. The two staffs working together sometimes had to compromise on conflicting views on things like the visuals. But other than that [there were] not many problems."



Anchorman Competition

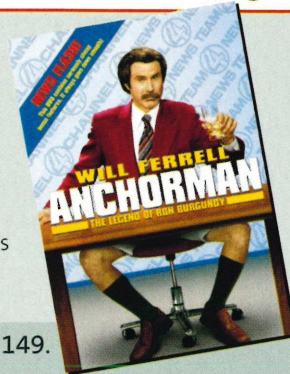
? QUESTION

Who stars in the movie *Anchorman*?

a. Will Ferrell b. Will Smith c. William Shatner

We have some urgent breaking news... eight of you lucky news hounds out there can get your mitts on a copy of *Anchorman* on DVD.

If you don't guffaw like you've had a belly full of laughing gas while watching this, you clearly don't have a funny bone. *Anchorman* is available to buy and rent from Trimedia on January 31st.



ENTER BY TEXT: Write "nomcomp ANCHOR", then the letter of your answer and send it to 83149.

BY PHONE: 0905 053 1102

BY POST: Send your name, address, telephone number and your answer to: *The Anchorman Competition*, NOM UK, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW.

It's gonna be the biggest year yet for Ash, Pikachu and the rest of the crazy Pokémon!



More Pokémon heading your way this year!

➡ **Finished Colosseum? Beaten the Elite Four in FireRed or LeafGreen? In which case you'll be wanting another Pokémon fix. Well, luckily for all you Poké-maniacs it looks like a load of Pokémon games are on the way to satisfy your needs.**

Pokémon developers Tsunekazu Ishihara and Junichi Masuda, have hinted that 2005 could become known as "The Year of Pokémon" with Mr Ishihara saying there will be brand-new Pokémon games for the GameCube, GBA and Nintendo DS!

Plus, Mr Masuda shed some more light on Pokémon Pearl and Diamond, the new games blasting onto the DS in the coming

months. He stated: "It will become a new type of game that offers a number of new forms of play." Hmm, does that mean there'll be no long grass next time?

As if all that wasn't enough, Mr Ishihara mentioned a Pokémon theme park will be opened in 2005. Unfortunately it'll be opening in Nagoya in Japan, so you better start saving all your pocket money if you want to go.



Cool courses on Pokémon Dash

➡ Race around Munchlax's face in an exclusive downloadable Dash track – as long as you live in Japan.

Owners of a DS and the Pikachu racing game Pokémon Dash will be able to download a Munchlax course at the World Hobby Fair. By using the DS's ability to wirelessly download information, visitors will be able to grab the track and then race around it whenever they want.

We're not sure if an event like this will take place when the game's launched over here, but we hope so. If you want to know more about Pokémon Dash, check out our preview on p59.



Cold discomfort

No takers for the fridge in the great Acclaim sell-off.

➡ **Last September, Acclaim Entertainment finally filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy in the United States. The company was in over its head; \$100 million in debt, with only between \$10 and \$50 million worth of stuff to its name.**

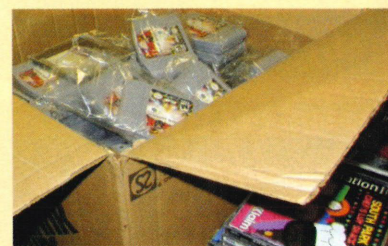
According to American law, a company filing for Chapter 7 has to sell everything they own to try and pay back as much of its debt as possible. In Acclaim's case, this was attempted via a public auction. And we, of course, were there.

While there was lots of cool stuff to buy – video games, televisions, expensive furniture – we decided to focus on what was truly important – the

contents of Acclaim's fridge.

As you can see, Acclaim's staff lived the bachelor's life up until the end, stocking their expensive refrigerator unit with only the essentials: three different milks, coffee creamer and... five bottles of mustard. Not five new bottles, mind, but five used bottles of mustard. It looked as if they opened one up, used it a couple of times, then put it away and bought a new one. Five times.

There was an opening bid of \$20 on the contents of the fridge, but we passed. Among lots that DID sell were a stack of crappy Acclaim Game Boy games for \$400 and a whole cabinet full of crappy Acclaim instruction manuals for \$50.



THE BIG DK TM COMPETITION

“Uh uh uh waaaaak waaakk uh uh!” That’s monkey speak for “look at all this wicked Donkey Kong gear we’ve got for all you gorilla nuts, so put down your ‘nana and get entering NOW!”

Gargantuan gorilla giveaway!

Donkey Kong's a jack of all trades. First he just threw barrels at Mario, but since then he's ridden rhinos, beaten up Pikachu and even had his own drum game. And with *Jungle Beat* it's pretty clear that he's found his calling: this is our favourite gorilla game since *Monkey Estate Agent*, which only exists in our minds.

So to celebrate everybody's favourite great ape, we've got a DK Mountain-high pile of goodies just for you. Up for grabs for one lucky winner is a GameCube, copies of *Jungle Beat* and *Donkey Konga*, along with four sets of bongos for multiplayer rhythmic action. And as if that wasn't enough, we'll also throw in an SP with *DK King of Swing* and *Donkey Kong NES Classic*. If you're not already jumping up and down and screaming like an excited baboon then there's something seriously wrong with you. There are also three copies of *Jungle Beat* for runners-up.



QUESTION

Who must you rescue in the original *Donkey Kong*?

- a. Paula
b. Pauline
c. Patricia

BY TEXT: Write “nomcomp DONKEY”, then the letter of your answer and send it to 83149.

BY PHONE: Dial 0905 053 1101. Answer the question. Leave your name, address and phone number.

BY POST: Send your name, address, telephone number and your answer to: The *Donkey Kong* competition, Emap Active, *NOM UK*, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW.*

ISSUE 147 WINNERS

- **Connor Cochraine, Middlesex (main winner)**
- **Ollie Boothman, Woking**
- **David Jones, Birmingham**

- **Frances Hannon, Hampshire**
- **Andrew Richardson, Co. Durham**
- **Steven O'Callaghan, Co. Carlow**

1. ROBOT COMPETITION

- **Liam Rank, Bedfordshire**
(main winner)
- **Dermot Summers, Sussex**
- **John Wood, Lincoln**

TXT UK

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2490 Sci Fi Weapon	2507 Alien Talk
2494 Machine Gun	2518 Creepy Door
2498 Laser	2497 Crowd
2505 Toilet Flushing	2537 Godzilla ***
2529 Electric Drill	2483 Thunder
2532 Evil Laugh	2550 Motor Bikes

To order by phone call: **0906 517 7604**To order by text: **GAME + CODE to 88066**

Irish users can call 1580 718 642 or text their order to 57767

RINGTONES

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You will need to go to a wap site to collect your Polytone. Make sure you have wap enabled!

CD/TELEVISION

9468 3 of A Kind Baby Cakes	3997 Girls Aloud I'll Stand By You
1965 Eric Prydz Call on Me	3915 Jolo Baby It's You
1722 Jo Jo Leave	6603 Anastacia Left Outside Alone
7775 The Streets Dry Your Eyes	5872 Scooter The Logical Song
9469 Natasha Bedingfield There...	7165 50 Cent In Da Club
9596 Usher Burn	3981 Eminem Just Lose It
4435 Usher Yeah	7687 Avril Lavigne My Happy Ending
2954 Robbie Williams Radio	3394 Khia My Neck, My Back
5533 Maroon 5 This Love	0397 Michael Jackson Billie Jean
2302 Girls Aloud Love Machine	8587 P.J.M.P. 50 Cent
6663 Eamon Don't Want You Back	9119 Britney Spears Toxic
1627 Nelly My Place	2726 Usher Confessions Part II
1178 Maroon 5 She Will Be Loved	2956 Danzel Pump It Up
8400 UltraBeat Pretty Green Eyes	4253 McFly Obviously
6718 D12 My Band	9603 O Zone Dragostea Din Tei
8098 XTM Fly on the Wings of Love	3300 Britney Spears My Prerogative
9109 D-12 How Comin'	2317 Green Day American Idiot
9006 DJ Casper Cha Cha Slide	2977 The Streets Blinded By The...
8809 Busted Thunderbirds Are Go	3979 Usher and Alicia Keys My Boo

CHART HITS + PRE RELEASES

4617 2 Play Careless Whisper	5816 Jamie Scott Searching
2253 Band Aid 20 Do They Know It's...	3984 Kanye West Workout Plan
3297 Blue Curtain Fall	3755 Kelis & Andre 3000 Millionaire
5805 Blue Get Down On It	4001 Kylie I Believe In You
2125 Bo Selecta I Got U Babe	3144 Lil Jon & the Eastside Boys Wh...
1959 Brian McFadden Real to Me	5808 Lucie Silvas Breathe In
4620 Brian McFadden Irish Son	9563 Mario Winans I Don't Wanna...
6789 Britney Spears Everyday	2039 Maroon 5 Sunday Morning
3137 Britney Spears Megamix	4041 Marques Houston Because Of...
5201 Busted She Wants to Be Me	4021 McFly Room on the Third Floor
4364 Cassidy Ft R Kelly Hotel	4619 Mousse T Right About Now
3139 Cheeky Girls Girls & Boys	5208 Nadia A Little Bit Action
4454 Christina Aguilera Dirty	4724 Natasha Bedingfield Unwritten
3140 Clara Goodies	3131 Nelly No NeNa Na
3327 D-12 Git Up	4022 Nelly & Christina Tilt Ya Head B...
3634 Dana Rayne Object of My Des...	6379 Outkast Hey Ya
5381 Destiny's Child Lose my Breath	5209 Outkast Ghetto Music
2301 Dizzee Rascal Stand Up Tall	3147 Paul Holt 50 Grand for Xmas
3978 Dizzee Rascal Dream	9408 Peter Andre Mysterious Girl
5811 Dizzee Rascal Grotin'	5226 Pop Serious
6481 Eminem Lose Yourself	5809 Rachel McFarlane Lover
3636 Eminem MOSH	2658 Rachel Stevens More More M...
4443 Frankie Fries + B	7874 Robbie Williams Misunderstood
4406 Freestall Do This Do That	3133 Ronan Keating & V.A. Father & S...
4603 Girls Aloud I'll Stand By You	3653 The Killers Somebody Told Me
4033 Gwen Stefani What You Watin	5217 The Streets Could Well Be In
3641 Hot Pants Give You One Christ...	3135 Westlife Smile
8711 Jamelia Superstar	4728 Westlife Fly Me to the Moon

HIP HOP + R&B

7137 50 Cent 21 Questions	2974 Armand Van Helden My My My
9121 Black Eyed Peas Anxiety	1962 Darren Hayes Popular
7878 Dr Dre Still Dre	1243 DJ Otzi Hey Baby
7877 Dr Dre Next Episode	0619 DJ Quicksilver Belissima
9175 Eminem Marshall Mathers	7874 DJ Sammy Heaven
5833 Eminem Without Me	0621 Faithless I Want More
4250 J Kwon Tippy	7012 Faithless Mass Destruction
8140 Ja Rule Clap Back	0339 Fragma Texas Miracle
6465 Jennifer Lopez Jenny from the...	1998 Prodigy Girls
1433 Joe ft GUnit Ride Wit U	0208 Robert Miles Children
7764 Justin Timberlake Rock Your...	5872 Scooter The Logical Song
7947 R Kelly Ignition Remix	2733 Stonebridge Put Em High

FOOTBALL ANTHEMS

3734 Arsenal FC One Nil To Arsenal	2999 Singing the Blues
3735 Chelsea FC Blue Is The Colour	2887 City Till I Die
3736 FC Barcelona Cant Del Barca	2981 Newcastle FC
3737 Glasgow Celtic FC Celtic Song	2906 Hot Stuff
3738 Glasgow Rangers Follow Follow	1231 Fields of Athenvy
3739 Liverpool FC Never Walk Alone	0899 We Are the Champions
3740 Manchester City FC Blue Moon	3812 Le Marcellaise
3741 Man Utd Glory Glory Man Utd	6243 Flower of Scotland
3743 Sunderland FC Daydream B...	0883 Marching On Together
3744 Various When The Saints Go	2893 Fog On The Tyne
8322 TV UEFA Champions League	1281 Molly Malone

CLASSICS TV + FILM THEMES

8800 AC/DC You Shook Me	0819 TV & Film Matrix
8791 Beastie Boys You Gotta Fight	0029 TV & Film Beverly Hills Cop
8807 Blur Song 2	5150 TV & Film Phoenix Nights
8716 Bruce Springsteen Born To Run	8559 TV & Film Kill Bill
8789 Def Leopard Pour Some Sugar	8561 TV & Film Lord Of The Rings
7181 Electric Six Gay Bar	1486 TV & Film Knight Rider
1425 Guns N' Roses Sweet Child...	8488 TV & Film Star Wars and Hutch
8473 Happy Mondays 24 Hour Party...	0076 TV & Film The Muppets
0098 Bob Marley Get Up Stand Up	1483 TV & Film James Bond
0598 Aerosmith & Run DMC Walk This...	0091 TV & Film The Simpsons

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ANIMATIONS

Get the latest in mobile entertainment with these dancing screensavers!



Wario's Brain Busters!

"Don't even bother trying if you're a thicky. Hwa ha haa!"

Nintendo know-it-all

Think you're a Ninty expert? Think again you berk!

1. How many Golden Coins are there to collect in *Super Mario Land 2*?
2. Was Donkey Kong originally going to be called Monkey Kong?
3. How many different types of arrows are there in the *Zelda* games?
4. What's the name of the large sword in *LOZ: Ocarina of Time*?
5. In what year was the Game Boy Pocket released?
6. Who directed *LOZ: The Wind Waker*?
7. How many *Metroid* games appeared on the original Game Boy?
8. Name the four different races in *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles*?
9. What's the highest scoring target in the Target mini-game in *Super Monkey Ball*?
10. How many different characters are there to unlock in *TimeSplitters 2*?
11. In *LOZ: Link's Awakening* what item does Link start off with?
12. How many different guns are there in *Perfect Dark*?
13. What is the first track called in *Diddy Kong Racing*?
14. Which NES game came included on the original *Duck Hunt* cart?
15. What was the first N64 game to use the Rumble Pak?

HANGMAN

Can you fill in the gaps to work out the names of these games?

1	R _ _ _ _
2	_ _ X / X X X
3	M _ _ _ / M _ _ _ S
4	_ K _ _ G _
5	S _ _ / S _ _ _ / S _ M
6	D _ K _ / _ _ _ K _
7	M _ _ _ D / F _ _ _
8	_ T _ _ T / G _ G _

F-Zero Puzzle

Fed up of getting beaten by Captain Falcon, these drivers hid in these letters to avoid the next race. Find 'em before it starts.

MWRUTRAWETSRDBLYLLIB
HIWTPYVNQBBAIILCUXJY
XTGKD JHXKQROKOUFOJTT
HKJHFIIIVIUHGRKNIJOA
PONATMDOJXTHEESWYQ SX
GWS CGYDRGOYGNX EZCBRT
AXTLPRGHCIJSNZGHDKLCX
QVIXMRRAOLBZSVTUPOAA
HYJRZNI DZOA WBOOVLOVN
YNEMQKYKIETSCNVLLDRY
KAOU DSMAPELIHGPTGFPH
DLWRUBRHOSGLOVWZWATY
RIAMLUNBEZKHECCQKLNA
GQMZMAOCNZMOQYICTCQO
KEZAOYBOCTOMANLPGORU
RQS ZWQEACRVQSLCNCNAE
JPROFLIXBYCRXSNMKRDN
APZGYP AEJB SA IYBJKOOW
IQYVLOLRASOVLGYAYTZV
MNLN AFRHLLIKMXWNI FMC

- | | | |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|
| >> BABALRON | >> LEON | >> THE SKULL |
| >> BILLY | >> MIGHTY | >> ZODA |
| >> BIO REX | >> GAZELLE | |
| >> BLOOD FALCON | >> MR EAD | |
| >> DR CLASH | >> OCTOMAN | |
| >> DR STEWART | >> PICO | |
| >> JODY SUMMER | >> SAMURAI | |



ODD-I OUT

Which of these games WAS available for the US launch of the Nintendo DS?

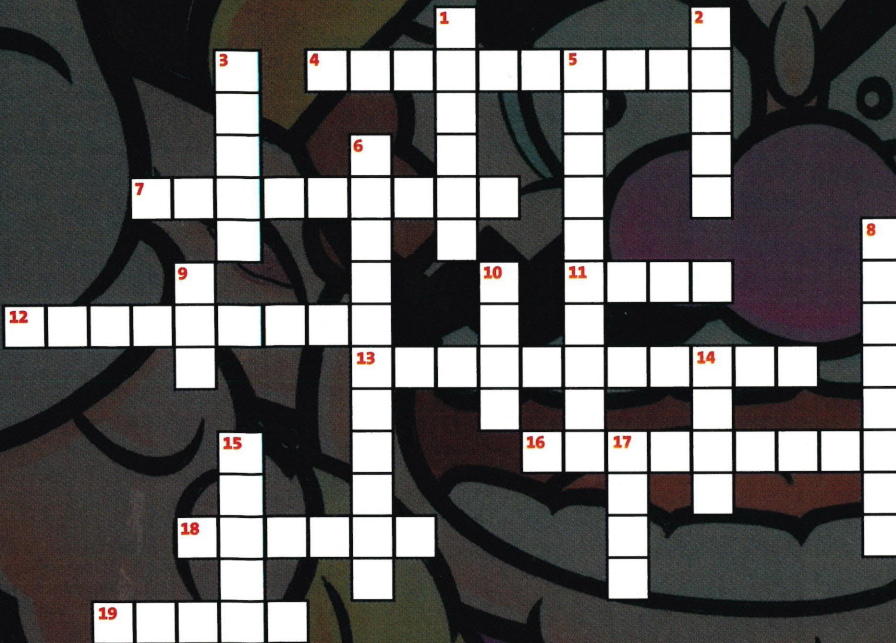
- 1 *The Urbz: Sims in the City*
- 2 *Mr Driller: Drill Spirits*
- 3 *Sawaru! Made in Wario*
- 4 *Pokémon Dash*
- 5 *Zoo Keeper*

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE



It's the final of the Mario Power Tennis tournament and the replay machine keeps going wrong. Try and spot the five differences in the replay footage.

It's only the... NINTENDO crossword!



ACROSS

4. You'll need it to play the latest *Mario Party*. Clue – it's not a tiny telephone (10)
7. In German this multi tailed Pokémon would actually have no tails (9)
11. Link this number to the latest *Zelda* game on GameCube (4)
12. It's a bummer man when you get blown up in this game (9)
13. A way to measure the calibre of your shoes? (4, 7)
16. Is this a metallic insect or a recent GBA shoot-'em-up? (5, 4)
18. The president's daughter in *Resi 4* (6)
19. Your puzzling master (5)

DOWN

1. This 'Cube launch game drove us round the bend (6)
2. A type of fruit or a member of royalty? (5)
3. The hood that lets Link run faster (5)
5. Only the best players get into this (4, 2, 4)
6. The newest member of NOM (5, 6)
8. You need industrial strength plant killer to take on this boss in *Metroid Prime* (8)
9. You can't surf it but you can catch stuff with it in *Animal Crossing* (3)
10. A part of a duck or a Nintendo character that's a bullet? (4)
14. The first ever Game & Watch (4)
15. This character must have been egged on to appear in *Super Mario 64 DS* (5)
17. This Mario character isn't at all amphibian-like (4)

??? KNOW THE SCORE ???

Think you are the Pokémon king? Match the games to the scores.



A: 84% B: 41% C: 92% D: 93%



HOW WELL DID YOU DO LAST TIME?



NINTENDO KNOW-IT-ALL

1. Joshua Fireseed
2. Kholdstare
3. 947,200
4. Drumstick
5. The Power Glove
6. Blinky, Pinky, Inky and Clyde
7. Brazil
8. Project Atlantis
9. The landlord of Nintendo USA
10. Sweden
11. 18
12. 293
13. Neville
14. 143
15. October 1992

HANGMAN

1. Turok Evolution
2. Mr Driller
3. Lylat Wars
4. Mario Party 4

5. Quake II
6. Golden Sun
7. ISS 98
8. Diddy Kong Racing

NAME THE GAME

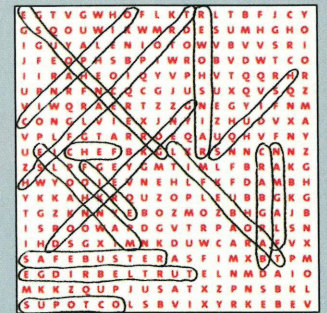
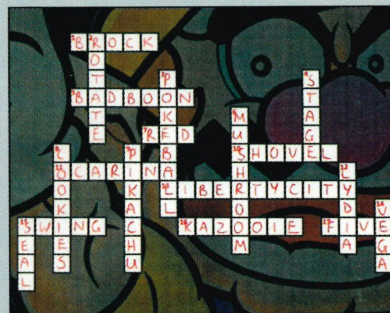
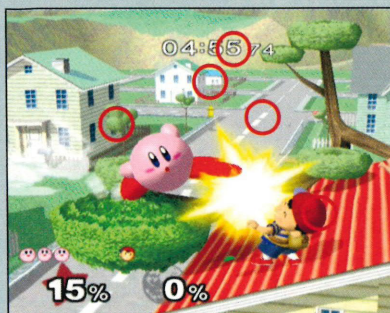
1. Resident Evil Zero
2. Wario World

KNOW THE SCORE

1. Mario Vs Donkey Kong 85%
2. Super Mario Ball 60%
3. Super Mario Advance 4 92%
4. Mario Golf Advance Tour 84%

ODD-1-OUT

Luigi's Mansion



REMEMBER... ALL THE ANSWERS NEXT MONTH!



The NOM SUPERSTARS

We sort the indefensible from the indispensable. Be thankful.



2004 was a year of many games. Some weren't fit to be thrown across the office at a lazy staff writer while some were up there on p39, living it up as Games of the Year. Now meet the games in the front row of the audience,

nodding wisely, stroking their pixelated beards and sipping power-up champagne, safe in the knowledge that their place in history is reserved. Here we list those games. Games you MUST have. It's an insult not to own them. If you don't you're laughing in Miyamoto's face.

Fire Emblem

Like *Advance Wars*, but with fewer tanks and more story.

KINGS SAYS: "The guns surrendered, but the gameplay is locked in a bunker with a hand grenade."

ROB SAYS: "It's my dream – a huge story and god-like power over tiny squares of land."

Metroid Prime

Samus went 3D, landed on a planet and all the cool bits of her suit fell off.

Yes, it's a different game. And still brilliant.

MIKE SAYS: "Until the sequel this was the best thing on 'Cube. Soz, Link."

DEAN SAYS: "A great mix of exploration and making aliens die."

Advance Wars 95 PERCENT ISSUE: 110 PLAYERS: 1 TO 4	Animal Crossing 90 PERCENT ISSUE: 144 PLAYERS: 1	Castlevania: Aria of Sorrow 90 PERCENT ISSUE: 129 PLAYERS: 1 TO 2	Eternal Darkness: Sanity's Requiem 92 PERCENT ISSUE: 122 PLAYERS: 1
F-Zero GX 92 PERCENT ISSUE: 133 PLAYERS: 1 TO 4	Fire Emblem 91 PERCENT ISSUE: 143 PLAYERS: 1 TO 4	Golden Sun 93 PERCENT ISSUE: 114 PLAYERS: 1 TO 2	The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past 96 PERCENT ISSUE: 127 PLAYERS: 1 TO 4
LoZ: Four Swords Adventures 91 PERCENT ISSUE: 148 PLAYERS: 1 TO 4	The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap 95 PERCENT ISSUE: 147 PLAYERS: 1	The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker 96 PERCENT ISSUE: 128 PLAYERS: 1	Mario Kart: Double Dash 94 PERCENT ISSUE: 135 PLAYERS: 1 TO 16
Mario Kart: Super Circuit 92 PERCENT ISSUE: 109 PLAYERS: 1 TO 4	Metroid Fusion 93 PERCENT ISSUE: 124 PLAYERS: 1	Metroid Prime 95 PERCENT ISSUE: 127 PLAYERS: 1	Metroid Prime 2 97 PERCENT ISSUE: 147 PLAYERS: 1 TO 4
Metroid: Zero Mission 93 PERCENT ISSUE: 139 PLAYERS: 1	Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door 91 PERCENT ISSUE: 146 PLAYERS: 1	Pikmin 2 92 PERCENT ISSUE: 145 PLAYERS: 1 TO 2	Pokémon FireRed & Pokémon LeafGreen 92 PERCENT ISSUE: 145 PLAYERS: 1 TO 40

Pokémon FireRed & Pokémon LeafGreen

Who forgot to lock up their Red and Blue cartridge? Everyone did. And now all the Pokémon you caught before are out in the long grass again.

TIM SAYS: "A remake of the highest calibre with a PokéMart full of new bits bolted on."

KINGS SAYS: "I designed a special mode where my Pikachu kills and eats every Pokémon it beats in battle. I play it from my padded cell."

Wario Ware: Mega Party Game\$

More mad mini-games fresh from Wario's fun factory/insane asylum. Get four psychos around the TV and this will upgrade all players from disturbingly addicted to multiplayer mentalists.

DEAN SAYS: "I'm the king of the Giant-Hammer-Earthquake game. You WILL respect me."

ROB SAYS: "Heart strain from this may have taken several years off my life. But I'm glad I played it."



Pokémon Ruby & Pokémon Sapphire



93
PERCENT

ISSUE: 131
PLAYERS: 1 TO 4

Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time



90
PERCENT

ISSUE: 138
PLAYERS: 1

Soul Calibur II



94
PERCENT

ISSUE: 133
PLAYERS: 1 TO 2

Star Wars: Rogue Leader



92
PERCENT

ISSUE: 116
PLAYERS: 1

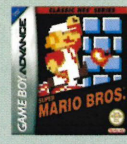
Super Mario Advance



91
PERCENT

ISSUE: 106
PLAYERS: 1 TO 4

Super Mario Bros. (NES Classics)



90
PERCENT

ISSUE: 142
PLAYERS: 1 TO 2

SMA 4: Super Mario Bros. 3



92
PERCENT

ISSUE: 133
PLAYERS: 1 TO 2

Super Mario Sunshine



93
PERCENT

ISSUE: 121
PLAYERS: 1

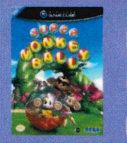
Super Mario World: SMA 2



93
PERCENT

ISSUE: 115
PLAYERS: 1 TO 4

Super Monkey Ball



92
PERCENT

ISSUE: 116
PLAYERS: 1 TO 4

Super Smash Bros. Melee



90
PERCENT

ISSUE: 117
PLAYERS: 1 TO 4

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005



90
PERCENT

ISSUE: 145
PLAYERS: 1 TO 4

TimeSplitters 2



92
PERCENT

ISSUE: 122
PLAYERS: 1 TO 4

Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell



92
PERCENT

ISSUE: 129
PLAYERS: 1

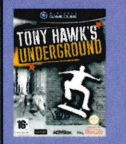
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 4



92
PERCENT

ISSUE: 123
PLAYERS: 1

Tony Hawk's Underground



91
PERCENT

ISSUE: 136
PLAYERS: 1 TO 2

Viewtiful Joe



93
PERCENT

ISSUE: 134
PLAYERS: 1

Wario Ware: Mega Party Game\$



92
PERCENT

ISSUE: 144
PLAYERS: 1 TO 16

Wario Ware Inc. Minigame Mania



93
PERCENT

ISSUE: 129
PLAYERS: 1 TO 2

Yoshi's Island: SMA 3



94
PERCENT

ISSUE: 123
PLAYERS: 1

Soul Calibur II

The hit man from Hyrule steps in to kick some ass and makes this a must for any combo-hungry fight fan.

MIKE SAYS: "You'll love it for Link, but it's got loads more to offer than that."

TIM SAYS: "Melee might have the stars, but this is GC's best fighter."



Yoshi's Island: SMA 3

Baby Mario is alone and helpless, but instead of eating him, Yoshi turns saviour in this platform classic.

DEAN SAYS: "The controls are second only to SMW. Eat it."

MIKE SAYS: "Getting 100% on every level is what I think about all day. Y'know and work 'n' stuff."



BLAST FROM THE PAST!

STREET GANGS



NES

This Double Dragon rip-off is a face-smashing dream in co-op.

TIM SAYS: "One of the best co-ops games ever. An excuse to have a brother."

DEAN SAYS: "Why isn't it called River City Ransom?! Another balls up by the marketing dept."

MARIO'S PICROSS



GB

Minesweeper meets Mushroom Kingdom in a game that drains time out of the universe.

ROB SAYS: "This is just behind Tetris in the GB Hall of Fame."

MIKE SAYS: "This lives in my Game Boy. And not just because I lost the box."

ISS DELUXE



SUPER NES

The game that would one day reign supreme as Pro Evo had blocky, but beautiful beginnings.

KINGS SAYS: "When Kick Off on my Amiga died, this helped me through the grief."

DEAN SAYS: "When a footy game's right you just KNOW IT."

MISCHIEF MAKERS



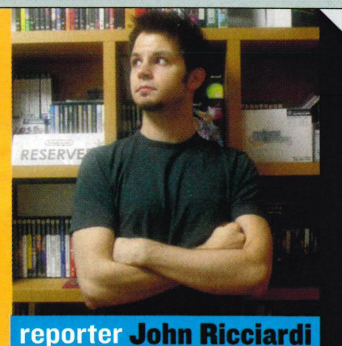
N64

Berserk and brilliant, this is another Treasure classic. Make it live again.

MIKE SAYS: "Stick with it and you're onto a winner."

TIM SAYS: "Mario went 3D, but this proved dimensions one and two weren't dead."

Big in Japan



reporter **John Ricciardi**

● Japan goes wild for DS! ● Accessorise to survive!

Nintendo DS Storms Japan

Half a million touched in the first week.

■ On December 2nd, gamers from all over Japan headed out to their local shops from as early as 7am to be among the first to own a Nintendo DS. By the end of the day, over 230,000 systems had been sold and by the end of the first week, the total had topped 500,000!

We hoped to snap some shots of eager fans queueing for a system, but lines were practically non-existent the morning of launch due a mountain of pre-orders. Less than 15 people waited outside Shibuya Tsutaya, one of Tokyo's most popular game-buying spots – a far cry from the 100+ who showed up at GBA launch. Sales have been steady ever since.

DS FIRST-WEEK SALES

■ According to Japanese research firm, Media Create, the top-selling DS game for the first week was, unsurprisingly, *Super Mario 64 DS*, with 151,373 copies shifted. *Wario Ware Touched!* followed closely with 148,825 and *Pokémon Dash* rounded up the top three with 56,337 sales. The top-selling third-party game was Sega's *I Would Die For You [Project Rub]*, with 27,250 copies.

LAUNCH SALES, FROM BEST TO WORST:

- 1 *Super Mario 64 DS* (Nintendo)
- 2 *Wario Ware Touched!* (Nintendo)
- 3 *Pokémon Dash* (Nintendo)
- 4 *Jam With the Band* (Nintendo)
- 5 *I Would Die For You [Project Rub]* (Sega)
- 6 *Chokkan Hitofude* (Nintendo)
- 7 *Tendo Dokuta* (Spike)
- 8 *Mr. Driller: Drill Spirits* (Namco)
- 9 *Zoo Keeper* (Success)
- 10 *Mahjong Tournament* (Koei)
- 11 *Urbz: Sims in the City* (EA)
- 12 *Cool 104 Joker & Set Line* (Aruze)



▲ After the girl drew a knob on *Pictochat* they left



▲ Just remember, it says "Touch!" not "Steal!"



▲ Mmm... massive banner of Utada Hikaru. But what's that crazy picture below her? Dogs in a rainbow? Eh?!



DS ACCESSORISING

Make sure your DS is the most stylish in town!

■ The DS hasn't even been out very long and already there's a ton of accessories available in Japan, both licensed and unlicensed.

Amongst the official goods, there are no less than nine different DS carry cases, not to mention an assortment of game cases, screen protectors, head phones and more. Spare styluses are also available, should you lose yours or find the cat has eaten it. We'll bring you more DS accessories soon!

◀ Worried that Japanese businessmen could snap DS carts in their briefcases, Nintendo made these DS game holders. Pokémon won't fit in them though...



▶ ... but Pikachu DID get a look-in with its own DS carry case. Luckily the function which saw the case give you an electric shock every time you opened it was scrapped. Phew!



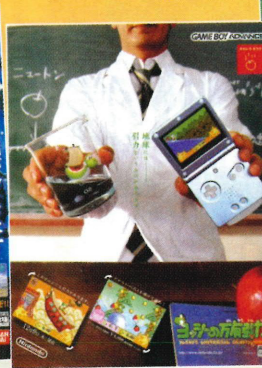
▲ This case is for gamers who like to think they're a bit classy. Along with fitting the console inside, there's also a mini-bar and trouser press

THE AD GALLERY

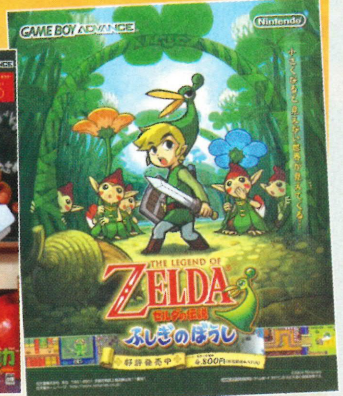
■ The latest ads from Japanese gaming mags...



▲ It's Mobile Suit Gundam!



▲ Yoshi's new egg (see p33)



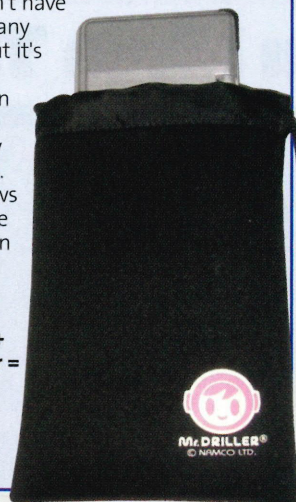
▲ We've already got this! HA!

Mr. Driller and The Pouch of Dreams!

■ Those who were lucky enough to pick up one of the first copies of *Mr. Driller: Drill Spirits* for the Nintendo DS in Japan were able to take home a sweet little bonus item – a limited-edition black Nintendo DS carry pouch with Hori Susumu's face and the words "Mr. Driller" printed on the front.

It doesn't have space for any games, but it's still more stylin' than any of the separately sold cases. Who knows if they'll be available in the UK? Not us!

▶ Black + Mr. Driller = cool! You know it makes sense.



Akihabara Watch

■ Nintendo DS isn't the only new handheld to have launched in Japan this past December, so as you can imagine, the shops were pretty packed for most of the month.

Elsewhere, *Donkey Kong Jungle Beat* and *Viewtiful Joe 2* both launched on GameCube on the same day, but any excitement over those two was drowned out by the DS.



▲ A salaryman gets some quality play time in with a DS while some other handheld gadget sits alone, unattended and sobbing

▶ We asked Solid Snake if he'd be coming back to a Nintendo platform anytime soon, but he just stared at us



JAPAN TOP TEN

The current best-selling games on Nintendo platforms in Japan

1	Super Mario 64 DS	(Nintendo, DS)
2	Wario Ware Touched!	(Nintendo, DS)
3	Pokémon Dash	(Nintendo, DS)
4	Jam With the Band	(Nintendo, DS)
5	Power Pro-kun Pocket 7	(Konami, GBA)
6	Mario Party 6	(Nintendo, GC)
7	Project Rub	(Sega, DS)
8	Chokkan Hitofude	(Nintendo, DS)
9	Naruto: Gekitou Ninja Taisen! 3	(Tomy, GC)
10	Kenshuui Tendo Dokuta	(Spike, DS)

Source: MediaCreate week ending December 5th

FISTS OF FURY!



Naruto: Gekitou Ninja Taisen 3

PLAYED!



If you're not already willing to sell your soul to the gaming devil to bag a copy of *Naruto* then there's something wrong with you. Problem is, now there are three of them we're running out of souls.

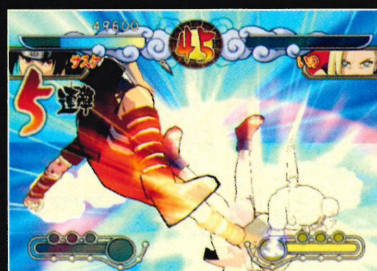
Naruto: Gekitou Ninja Taisen's now in its third version and one of the sweetest fighters ever just keeps getting better. It might be one of the easiest fighters to pick up, but it's certainly the hardest to put down. In the simplest terms possible, in *Naruto* **A** + **B** = ba-bosh. There's no faffing about with pressing the joystick, it's just a case of stringing together button combos to unleash a world of pain.

Even though the moves are simple, it doesn't stop them being any less spectacular when they're performed. During a typical match the screen lights up like a firework show, as characters kick each other into the air, send their opponents flying across the screen and throwing more punches in one minute than an entire Jackie Chan film.

Perhaps the best moves are the mighty special ones that can be activated by pressing **Y** once they've charged up. This is where the action's at, because pressing that innocent little grey button will make sure there are hundreds of blows raining down on your TV screen.

One of the additions to *Naruto 3* is the ability to pick teams of three characters. Although the normal scrapping is pretty much the same, as soon as you press **Y** to perform the super move, just make sure you're prepared for a hammering. All three of your chosen characters leap onto the screen and start pummeling your opponent. One character will throw your opponent into the air, another will smash a flying kick right in their chops and another will be waiting for them once they rocket back down to earth.

If you're not particularly fussed about *Naruto* never making it to the UK you probably live in Japan and are too busy cackling at our misfortune to care. Or you've been drinking stupid juice all night through a straw.





Yoshi's Universal Gravitation

PLAYED!



We thought we were safe from the horrific game stylings of developer, Artoon. As long as it was busying itself with the magnificently crap *Blinx* games on Xbox, it couldn't drop a digital stinker on GameCube.

Then we switched on *Yoshi's Universal Gravitation* and an Artoon logo flashed up. The crafty little blighter had blind-sided us. It seems that *Super Mario Bros. 2*'s reign of shame is over: *Yoshi's Universal Gravitation* is about as much fun as getting tangled up in a flesh ripping machine.

You're Yoshi. He can hover and lick. Swinging the GBA from left to right makes pendulums, platforms and the like swing in his badly-drawn game-world. You can also

use this method to arch Yoshi's back so he walks up walls. But none of this is any fun, because the tilt control is jerky and awful. When you're twisting the GBA violently around in your hands, you look like a chimpanzee trying to work out how to open a tin of beans.

We compared this with the subtle and beautiful control in *Mawaru! Made in Wario* and wondered just how Blinx Team managed to get it so wrong. The main game is tedious enough without all that anyway. Eat some cherries, collect some coins. The levels are often broken down into sections, some of which are a mere screen wide. It doesn't flow. You're just fed a succession of game biscuits that taste like

they've been rolled in turds and hair.

Everyone in the office spent a few minutes with this and everyone in the office was desperate not to be the person that had to play it in any detail. And this is a YOSHI game we're talking about. It's possible that, thanks to it being in Japanese, we're missing a trick here. Moving Yoshi with the D-pad and also tilting the hardware to make platforms unravel just feels completely unnatural.

It feels like a game that exists because it can, rather than because it should. Even *Super Mario Bros. 2* is laughing at *Universal Gravitation* and that's the game where Luigi floats and Mario attacks with root vegetables. Its shame is complete.





Interview by John Ricciardi and Hiroko Minamoto

RUB STORY

NOM gets all touchy with Yojiro Ogawa, the creator of the insane Nintendo DS gem *Project Rub*. He may also mention something about a new *Sonic* game for GameCube...

Ever since it was first announced in Japan last autumn, Sega's *Project Rub* (known as *I Would Die For You* in Japan, or the slightly rubbish *Feel The Magic: XY/XX* in the US) has been one of the most talked-about DS games around. It was the best-selling third-party game at the Japanese launch, and with a variety of strange-but-addictive mini-games, it's easily one of the best system showcases the DS has to offer. We trekked over to Sega of Japan's offices in Tokyo about a week before launch to get the lowdown on all things *Rub* straight from the source: Yojiro Ogawa of Sega Global Entertainment R&D Dept. #1 (uh, Sonic Team, to you and me), all-round awesome guy and producer of *Project Rub*.

NOM: What titles have you worked on for Sega previously?

YO: I've been with Sega for about ten years now. I've worked on *Sonic Adventure*, the original *Phantasy Star Online* for Dreamcast, *PSO Episode III* for GameCube... ah, before all that, there was *Panzer Dragoon Saga* on Sega Saturn. And lots of other smaller titles.

NOM: That's quite a track record. So, who came up with the idea for *Project Rub*? Tell us how the game got started.

YO: Back when Nintendo first told us about the DS here at Sonic Team, we got together and came up with around 100 or so concepts for potential games that could utilise the new hardware. *Project Rub*'s director, Takumi Yoshinaga, who was the main planner on the two *Space Channel 5* games, came up with the rough concept for *Rub*, along with one other, slightly more serious idea. We thought the *Rub* idea had a lot of potential, so the two of us got together and hashed out a more complete proposal. That's pretty much how *Project Rub* was born. The concept wouldn't have existed if it weren't for the DS.

NOM: Interesting. So the two main people responsible for *Project Rub* are basically you and Yoshinaga-san, then?

YO: Right. Yoshinaga-san in particular comes up with lots of crazy ideas... like the antlion, or the guy who swallows the goldfish, or the skiers who suddenly appear with the charging bulls... he's a very imaginative guy.

NOM: When did development begin on *Project Rub*?

YO: That's actually a secret! We're not allowed to tell you when we first learned about the DS (laughs). But I can say that the entire project, from initial concept to final product, took us around a year or so to complete.

NOM: How many people worked on the game, in total?

YO: Around 20 people or thereabouts.

NOM: What was it like making a game on the DS hardware? Is it difficult compared to, say, making a game for Game Boy Advance?

YO: Overall it's hard to say if it was harder or easier. At first, we weren't sure what we were going to need more of – 2D artists or

3D modellers. But it turned out that the DS could handle 3D just fine, so that part worked out good for us, since 3D is what we were already used to. On the other hand, it has got two screens and the touch screen function, so those posed some new challenges for us, too.

NOM: Right. Until now, we'd imagine most console game makers haven't had much experience working with a touch screen – how was it adjusting to that?

YO: It was pretty tough (laughs). In the past, if you were pressing a button, you knew you were pressing a button. You could feel it. But now it's just this flat screen, so we have to try to make sure the player can still feel the results of their actions, whether it be through sounds, or visuals, or what have you. It's not that easy!

NOM: You really went to town with the touch screen for *Project Rub*...

YO: We tried to add as much variation as possible to the ways you can interact with it. Some games you rub the screen lightly, others you scratch at it furiously. You might poke it, draw on it, blow on it and so on. Of all the DS launch titles in Japan and the US, we think *Project Rub* offers the most examples of what the DS hardware is capable of.

NOM: How does it feel to work on a launch title for a 'new' kind of platform like this?

YO: Well, Naka-san (Yuji Naka, Sonic Team big boss) likes new toys, so that's one reason we usually get involved with new hardware launches (laughs). But also, it's just exciting to be able to create games on a new platform, especially one like the DS, which is basically a big challenge from Nintendo to us to try and create something great and interesting with these new functions – something that wasn't previously possible on a normal handheld like the GBA.

NOM: The artwork in *Project Rub* is very stylised and unique; was this the plan from the beginning, or did you start out with something a little more basic?

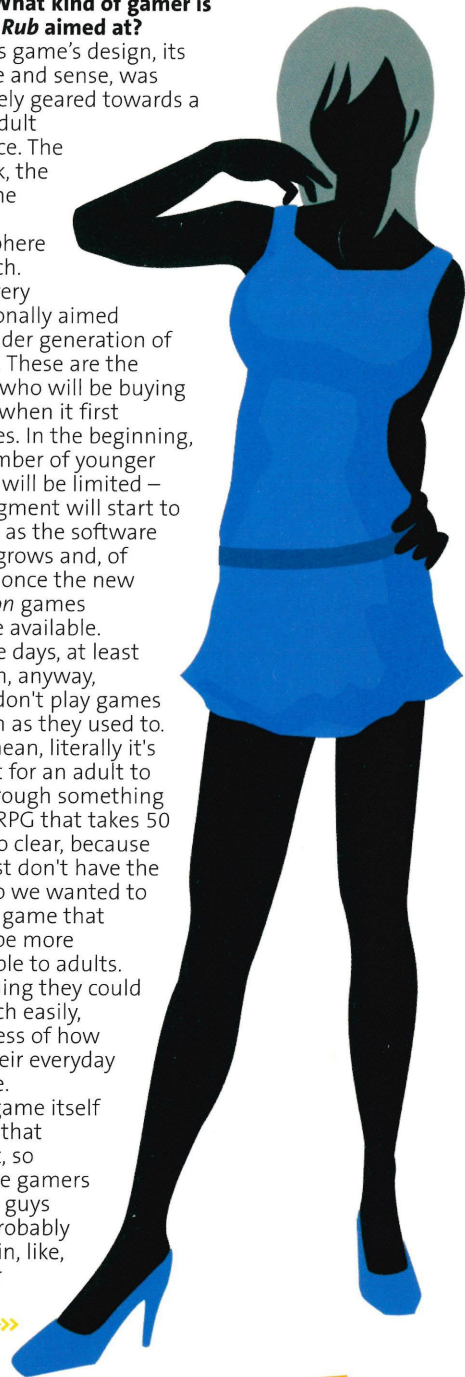
YO: We planned to use the silhouettes from the very beginning. The style emerged after Hino-san got involved [Interface Designer Taro Hino previously worked on *Rez* and *Space Channel 5* at Sega's UGA studio].

NOM: What kind of gamer is *Project Rub* aimed at?

YO: This game's design, its balance and sense, was purposely geared towards a more adult audience. The artwork, the style, the overall atmosphere and such. It's all very intentionally aimed at an older generation of players. These are the people who will be buying the DS when it first launches. In the beginning, the number of younger players will be limited – that segment will start to expand as the software library grows and, of course, once the new *Pokémon* games become available.

These days, at least in Japan, anyway, adults don't play games as often as they used to. And I mean, literally it's difficult for an adult to play through something like an RPG that takes 50 hours to clear, because they just don't have the time. So we wanted to make a game that would be more accessible to adults. Something they could approach easily, regardless of how busy their everyday lives are.

The game itself isn't all that difficult, so hardcore gamers like you guys could probably clear it in, like, three or four hours. >>>



GET YOUR SILHOUETTES OUT

Nudity fear prompts art rethink in the land of the free.

NOM: We noticed that on the US pack shot for *Feel the Magic* the girl is wearing a bikini, whereas in the Japanese version, she is not. Can you explain why there's a difference?

YO: In America, if the girl character is 'naked' it means that we can't sell the game in Wal-Mart (laughs). Of course, she's not meant to be naked, it's just a silhouette – but they didn't buy it. Honestly, I think it looks more sexual with the bikini than without! America is a mystery to me sometimes (laughs).



>>> But if you're a casual player, you can enjoy it in short bursts, maybe playing along with a friend or a girlfriend, taking turns on a single machine and generally having a good time together. Similar to how you might spend time with someone watching TV or going to see a movie. This is the kind of atmosphere we were aiming for with this game. I think we have achieved that.

NOM: How many mini-games are there in total in *Project Rub*?

YO: Around 30 or so. In the beginning, the mini-game themes might seem a little strange or random, but as the game progresses, the mini-games will start to fit in more naturally with the story.

When we first started developing the game, we thought a lot about the difficulty level. We wanted the game to be accessible to everyone – not just hardcore gamers, but women and younger players, too. So you might notice that the Normal difficulty level in Story mode is a bit easier than in your average game. But if you finish the game on Normal, you'll unlock the Hard setting, which is much tougher. And if you can manage to clear that, you'll get to try out Hell mode, which is really, really challenging.

NOM: Is there anything you had to cut from the game in order to get it done in time for launch? What kind of things would you have liked to add if you had more time?

YO: I'd say we got about 90% of our original plan into the final game. The main thing we wanted to implement, but couldn't because of time constraints, was a network mode.

NOM: *Wario Ware* pioneered the 'microgame' concept and your game is the first third-party title to implement a similar concept. Did you guys get any of your inspiration from *Wario Ware*?

YO: To be honest, not really. *Wario Ware*'s concept is different; it's more like a quiz show. You've got a short amount of time to figure out what to do (the answer, per se) and then once you do it, that's it. Then you move on to the next question. In *Project Rub*, it's not like that.

As a matter of fact, I'd say we were more inspired by games like *Virtua Cop*, where the timing of what goes on on-screen and the tempo are the most important aspects of play.

Don't get me wrong: *Wario* is a lot of fun and it's very gameplay-oriented, but once you finish the mini-games, you usually forget about them. Whereas in *Project Rub*, there's a hook in each game that relates to the story, so they wind up being memorable even after you've stopped playing.



NOM: Were any of the scenarios in *Project Rub* based on a real-life experience from one of the staff members? I think we've all experienced that stampede of bulls situation at one time or another...

YO: Hah! Well, none of the events are based on any actual experiences, but some of the stuff in there will remind guys of real-life. For instance there's one scene where the girl's clothes get wet and you have to simultaneously fan the flames of a fire to keep her warm while also helping her get out of her clothes.

In real life, this might be like when you're alone in your room with a girl, and you're trying to get something going, but at the same time you have to keep your eye on the door to make sure nobody else is coming or can hear you.

NOM: During development, the working title was '*Project Rub*' and now this is the European title as well. What was the reason for this name?

YO: The meaning is pretty obvious in Japanese, though it loses a bit in the translation to English. In Japanese, it has a double-meaning of "rub" and "love". [The phonetic spelling for "love" in Japanese is "rabbu", which is exactly the same as the phonetic spelling for "rub".]

NOM: What are your general thoughts about the DS as a game platform?

YO: Well, it's hard to explain in just a few words, but as a game creator, you can try to make totally different types of games, which is really exciting.

NOM: Are you satisfied with the hardware? As a creator, is there anything else you would've liked Nintendo to include in the system?

YO: Hmm, not really. Ah, well, if the top screen was a touch screen as well, that would've been nice. And the stylus is a little small, too, but it's not too bad. It's a nice system, overall. We considered creating a longer stylus ourselves, but we found out that it was too expensive to manufacture because the little tip that has to touch the screen isn't made out of the same material as the rest of the pen.

NOM: Do you think it will be a successful platform? The GBA was hugely popular worldwide, but how about the DS?

YO: Well, I'm not sure whether or not it's going to be another Game Boy Advance. It's too early to tell. But I hope it will, because it's a different kind of hardware from the GBA or the PSP, and I'll be happy if the market supports both.

LOVE AND HAT

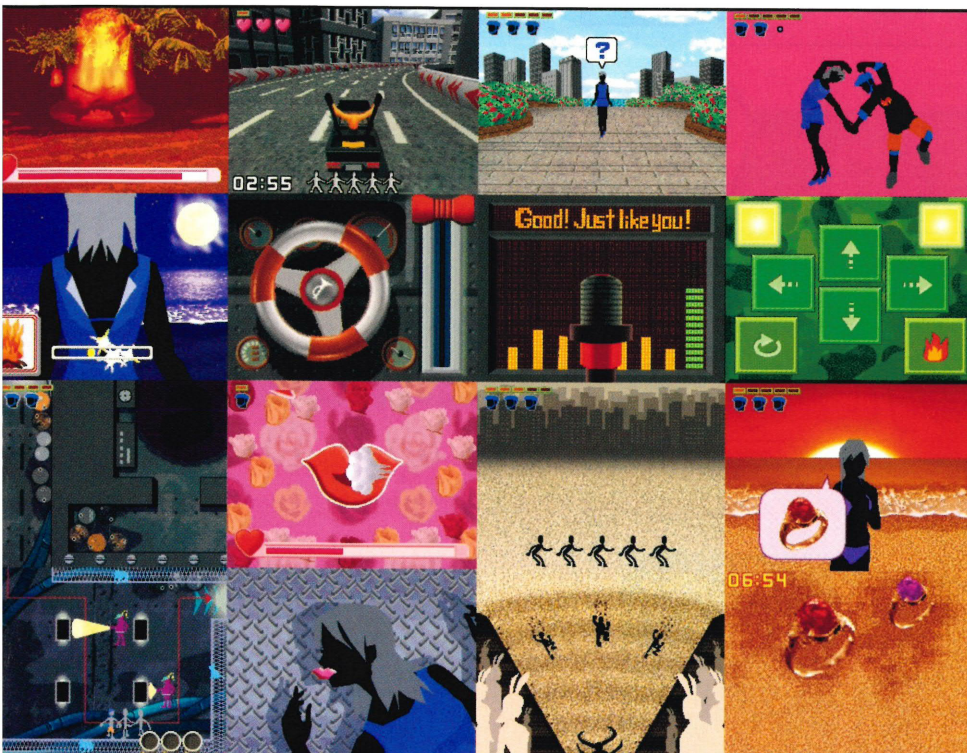
Ogawa-san reveals a cheeky *Project Rub* secret, only in **NOM**.

NOM: Can you tell us about any secrets in *Project Rub*?

YO: Of course! Please try putting some of Sonic Team's previous GBA games into the GBA slot on the DS while running *Project Rub*. Doing this will allow you to unlock some cool outfits in Maniac mode.

- *ChuChu Rocket* (NiGHTS hat)
- *PuyoPop* (Puyo hat)
- *Sonic Advance* (Sonic hat)
- *Sonic Advance 2* (Sonic hat)
- *Sonic Advance 3* (Ciao hat)
- *Sonic Battle* (Ulala hat)
- *Sonic Pinball* (NiGHTS hat)





NOM: What's going to happen to the GBA now that DS is here? Will developers continue to make GBA games or will the main focus shift to DS?

YO: I think the GBA will continue to get support for the next few years. They'll sell a ton of games this holiday season and it'll continue to do well just because of how many units are already out there in the hands of the users. And though we haven't made any specific announcements yet, we at Sega will continue to support the GBA as well, next year and beyond.

NOM: Now that *Project Rub* is finished, what will you be working on next?

YO: That's a secret (smiles). Well let's put it this way. As long as this one sells well, you can look forward to more DS games from us. As a producer, I don't want to throw away the opportunity to work on games for a new piece of hardware after just one title, so hopefully we'll be able to continue making games for the DS.

NOM: What about GameCube? Is Sonic Team finished with 'Cube, or can we look forward to more GC games?

YO: Sorry, that's a secret, too (laughs). But seeing as how all of the previous *Sonic* games were released on GameCube, if I were a fan of the *Sonic* series, I would be hopeful that the next installment would end up there as well, right? (smiles). But I can't say for sure.

NOM: What do you think about the direction Nintendo seems to be headed in?

YO: Nintendo is worried about the general public losing interest in games, so they're fighting really hard to figure out what it is that will appeal to people and get them interested again. That's a really great thing.

NOM: What do you think are the main differences between Japanese game developers and Western game developers?

YO: When I think of Japanese games, the image I get is one of still beauty. It's not the movements that are beautiful, but rather the images themselves. Whereas in Western games, it's the movement, or the motion. How you can control the action. That's the beauty of Western games. Recently, some games like *Burnout 3* and *Prince of Persia* have been mixing in the best factors of both, which is really interesting.

NOM: And finally, do you have a message for all of your European fans and the fine folks who read *NOM UK*?

YO: *Project Rub* has a lot of different factors that make use of the DS hardware – things you can't do on other systems, like touching the screen, or blowing on it and so on. So what I would like to ask of all of you, is if you buy a copy of the game, please make it a point to show it to all of your friends – even the non-gamers – so they can see it and experience it too. You really need to touch it to understand it.



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HEY BONNY, I'VE SCORED MORE GOALS THAN YOU, PAL!

YEAH, BUT MY SKILLS PAY THE BILLS, TUBBY!

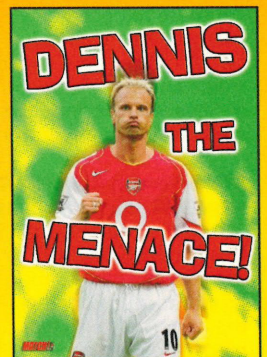
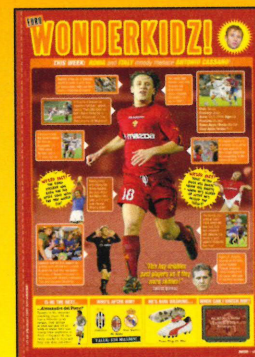
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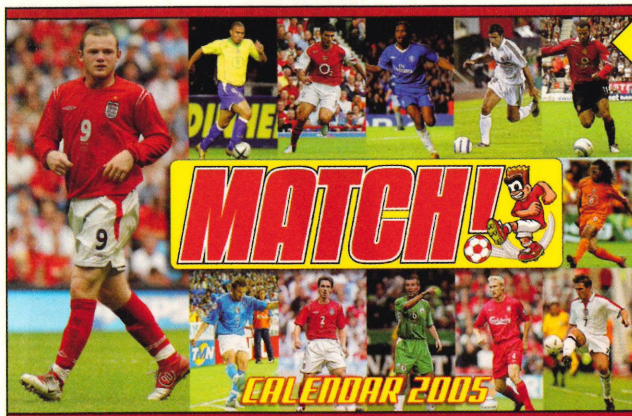


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*Boots not included!

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A vibrant collage of video game characters and icons. In the center, a golden, metallic Mario statue stands on a yellow circular pedestal with a black star-patterned base. The background is a red grid with repeating star and mushroom icons. Surrounding the central figure are various characters: a blonde anime-style girl with a blue and white circular attack effect at the top left; a green-haired anime girl with a sword on the left; a character in a red and yellow suit with a green gun at the top right; a woman in a green tactical suit with a camera on the right; a Mario head at the bottom right; a character in a green hat (Luigi) at the bottom center; a character in a blue and white outfit at the bottom center; a white dog-like character at the bottom center; a yellow fish-like character at the bottom left; and a character in a green and black suit with a large green gun at the bottom left.

THE BEST GAMES OF 2004

It's that time of year when we line games up against the wall and shoot most of them. But some escape and end up here. They are the strong...

NOW TURN OVER
TO SEE THE GAMES
THAT MADE IT...

20 Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles (NOM #137)

Fun with one, but more with four.

★ Our first issue of 2004 saw *Final Fantasy* return to Nintendo, bringing with it a world of beauty, mystery and vaguely annoying furry little creatures.

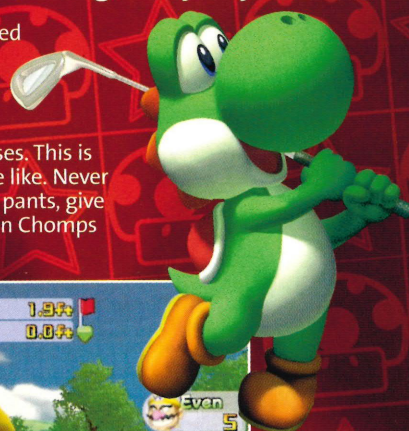
The presentation was amazing, but this needed more one-player appeal to be knocking at the door marked 'top ten'.



19 Mario Golf: Toadstool Tour (NOM #142)

We'd pick a Toad over a Tiger any day.

★ More refined than redefined and there's nothing wrong with that – the N64 original plays a great round, but the graphics are so blurry you'd think Lakitu had lost his glasses. This is what sports games should be like. Never mind the Ping bags and Nike pants, give us floating fairways and Chain Chomps in the bunkers.



The pressure's on Wario. Altogether now... "MISS!"



"PLAYED AT ANY PRICE" The top-five import games of 2004.

- | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| 1 Kururin Squash
"GET THE STICK THROUGH THE MAZE. IT'S LIFE-CHANGING. BELIEVE." | 2 Wario Ware Rotation
"THE PORTLY PRINCE OF PUZZLES HAS A BRAND-NEW TOY." | 3 Astro Boy: Omega Factor
"SURE TO BE ONE OF THIS YEAR'S GBA TREASURES." | 4 Alien Hominid
"HOTTER THAN A VINDALOO FACTORY ON A VOLCANO." | 5 Naruto: Gekitou Ninja Taisen 2
"YOU SMACK CARTOON FACES. SIMPLY PERFECT." |
|---|---|--|--|---|

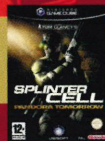
"MULTIPLAYER MADNESS!" Kidnap your mates for these.

- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| 1 Wario Ware: Mega Party Game\$
"PLEASE LEAVE YOUR SANITY AT THE DOOR." | 2 Pac-Man VS (free with R:Racing)
"ONE PLAY AND YOU'RE HOOKED ON PAC-PILLS." | 3 Zelda: Four Swords Adventures
"IF THEY GET MORE RUPEES THAN YOU, KILL THEM." | 4 Metroid Prime 2
"STUFF THAT MORPHBALL WHERE THE SUN DON'T SHINE." | 5 Pokémon FireRed/LeafGreen
"FRESH WAYS TO CRUSH BERRIES AND YOUR MATES." |
|---|--|--|---|---|

16 Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow (NOM #144)

Easily spottable in most games shops.

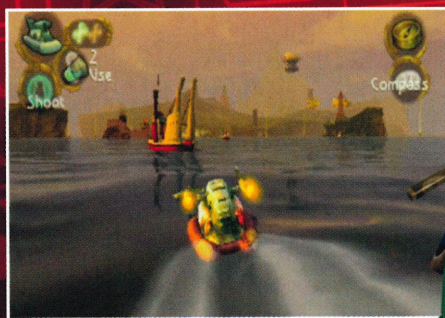
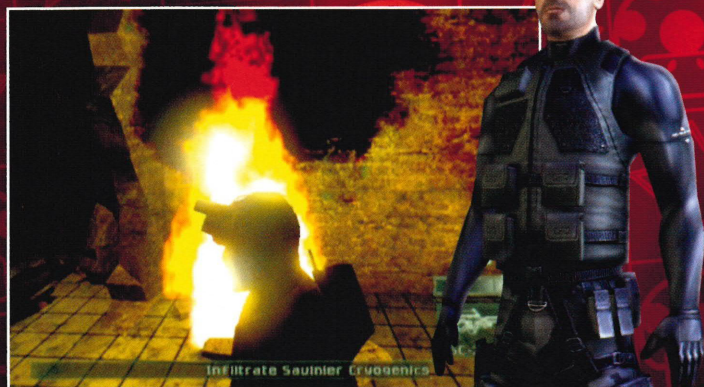
★ Sam won the sneak-off 'cos he got to no.16 before we found him. And because *Pandora Tomorrow* is less of a remake than *Twin Snakes*. It's too similar to the original to go much higher, but still the best stealth game out there, especially if you like a big dollop of realism with your action.



15 Beyond Good & Evil (NOM #138)

Turn left past good for excellent.

★ "Originality is the oxygen that games breathe with their mouths", that's a direct quote from someone who was once in the same lift as Miyamoto-san. And that's never been truer than in the case of *BG&E*, a sprawling, innovative adventure unfettered by the need to conform.

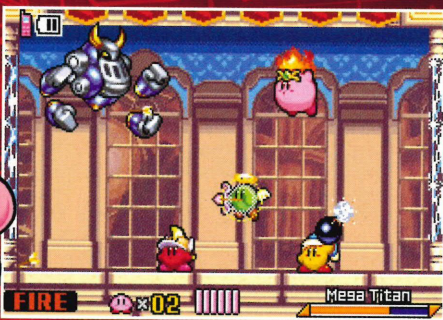


18 Kirby's Amazing Mirror (NOM #142)



Phil Mitchell looks in the mirror and sees Kirby.

★ Months before the release of *Amazing Mirror*, Kirby sought out help from the pantheon of gaming heroes. We should all be thankful he listened to Link and "split himself in four" instead of "running really fast to the right" like Sonic suggested, 'cos just below its embarrassing pink surface is a real platforming gem.



"HOW HARD?!" We were these bosses' bitches in 2004.

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| 1 Vaati (Zelda: Minish Cap)
"THAT GIT JUST KEEPS ON GETTING HARDER." | 2 Dark Samus (Metroid Prime 2: Echoes)
"HOW TOUGH? THE CLUE IS IN THE NAME." | 3 Thrall (Prince of Persia: Warrior Within)
"STUPIDLY HARD BLOKE + EXPLODING DOGS = HELL." | 4 Psycho Mantis (MGS: The Twin Snakes)
"FETISH MAN WILL EAT YOUR TINY BRAIN." | 5 Tom Nook (Animal Crossing)
"YOU'D BEST HAVE THAT RACCOON'S DOLLARS." |
|---|---|---|--|---|

14 Racing Gears Advance (NOM #146)



An old-skool race duel to make you drool.

★ A return to racing games of old. Think *Super Sprint*. Think *Micro Machines*. Think "I must get to shops now and buy this, even if it means stealing a car and running down those teenage nuns barricading the games store." *Gears* is the best racer on GBA. There, we've said it now and it doesn't feel dirty.



17 Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes (NOM #138)



Crumbly Snake now unlockable.

★ After years locked in a Sony-exclusive dungeon with only jagged polygons and bad textures for company, Snake escaped and booked a five-star graphical holiday on 'Cube. This is top sneak-'em-up fun and even if you visited Mr Solid in his PSone isolation it's well worth your money.



"POWER UP!" The top five gaming items of the year.

- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| 1 Mole Mitts (Zelda: The Minish Cap)
"OH SWEET LORD OF ZELDA ITEM JOY!" | 2 Screw Attack (Metroid Prime 2: Echoes)
"BEATS THE NUT AND NAIL ATTACKS EASILY." | 3 Web fluid (Spider-Man 2)
"STICKY CRUD HAS NEVER BEEN MORE WELCOME." | 4 Secret Tape (T.H.U.G. 2)
"WE LOVE THAT SECRET TAPE LIKE A LONG LOST BROTHER." | 5 Cardboard box (MGS: The Twin Snakes)
"GET UNDER IT. THEY CAN'T SEE YOU. GENIUS." |
|--|--|--|--|---|

13 Tales of Symphonia (NOM #147)



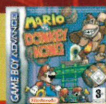
A strange name for a great game.

★ Real-time battles, a gripping story and more silly haircuts than an episode of *CD:UK* combine to make the first *Tales of...* game to reach these shores a joy from start to finish. This could be renamed "How to make a decent RPG" and it'd be a crime if it doesn't end up selling by some kind of enchanted bucket load.



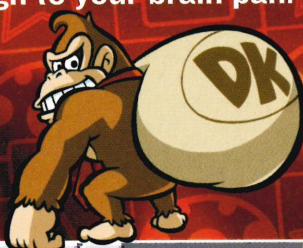
You can't buy clothes like this. We tried

12 Mario Vs. DK (NOM #146)



Head scratch right through to your brain pan.

★ Can you save the Mini-Marios from fire, spikes and a familiar furry face? This love letter from Nintendo history is a dizzying puzzler full of tiny marching plumbers, deadly Thwomps and psychotic Shy Guys. Guaranteed to bring screams of joy and contorted howls of pain in equal measure.



"ALSO RANS" Five we loved, but not quite enough.

- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| 1 Medal of Honor: Infiltrator
"WWII GOES 2D. SHOOT THE TINY NAZIS!" | 2 Mr. Driller 2
"DRILL-BASED SATISFACTION GUARANTEED OR YOUR MONEY BACK. MAYBE..." | 3 T.H.U.G. 2
"THEY MADE CLASSIC MODE BETTER THAN THE ACTUAL GAME. OH, WELL." | 4 Sphinx and the Cursed Mummy
"THE SPHINX BITS JUST GET IN MUMMY'S WAY." | 5 Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005
"AND YOU'RE TIGER WHO? OH YEAH THE GUY WITH THE GOLF BATS." |
|---|--|--|--|---|

11 Fire Emblem (NOM #143)



A Red-hot, turn-based strategy apocalypse.

★ Alone in the games shop one night, *Advance Wars* got too close to an unwrapped copy of *Golden Sun*. Next morning *Fire Emblem* sat blinking in the light, a miraculous fusion of hit points and small flashing squares. Yeah, there's a lot of dialogue, but if you're just TOO busy, you can skip it. That's what the B button was invented for.



"NEW PANTS PLEASE" The most exciting stuff of 2005.

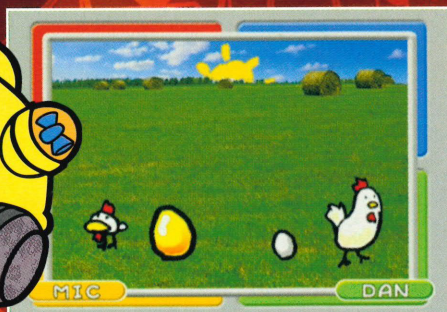
- | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|
| 1 The big <i>Zelda</i> news at E3
"WE TAUGHT THE YANKS A FEW NEW SWEAR WORDS THAT DAY." | 2 Nintendo DS hits NOM
"THE FUTURE IS HERE. BUT YOU CAN'T TOUCH OURS." | 3 <i>Animal Crossing</i> is here!
"IT'S NOT A DREAM. AND TOM NOOK WANTS HIS MONEY." | 2 The gore in <i>Resi Evil 4</i>
"HEY, THAT GUY WITH THE CHAINSAW IS LOOKING AT ME FUNNY." | 5 Wireless Adapters
"GBA ADD-ON CRUELLY TOPPED BY THAT TWO-SCREEN DEAL." |
|--|---|--|---|---|

08 Wario Ware: Mega Party Game\$ (NOM #144)



Apple crushing to Olympic standard.

★ The only way to make a room housing four hung-over, twenty-something men smell any worse is to have them play *Wario Ware* on GameCube. This is multiplayer gaming at its most randomly, hilariously intense. Forget being seen at Mario's party and go insane at Wario's place.

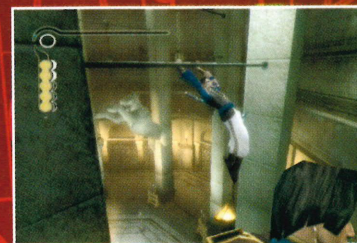


07 Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time (NOM #138)



Turn back the clock for a classic.

★ Take a minute to look at the six games ahead of *PoP*. See the pattern? *Sands of Time* has the distinction of being the best non-Nintendo game this year. That honour saw the original sand blast knock its sequel out of the top 20 and no amount of irritating fight scenes and big trousers can take that away.



10 *Zelda: Four Swords Adventures* (NOM #148)



When one Link just isn't enough.

★ Not a cynical marketing ploy aimed at bumping up GBA sales, but a first-class mix of classic puzzles and multiplayer thrills. One-player mode is a tasty snack while you wait for Link's full GC return, but multiplayer is where it's at, though you may lose a lot of rupees/sleep/friends that way.

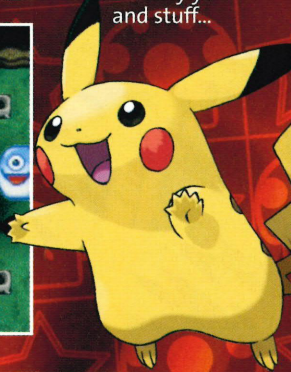


09 *Pokémon FireRed and LeafGreen* (NOM #145)



Caught 'em all? Tough, do it again.

★ The triumphant return to Kanto is so much more than the same old story. New battles, moves, items and events make for an adventure that's fresh and nostalgic in equal measure. And it's in colour! Who'd have thought Pikachu was, y'know, actually yellow and stuff...



"THAT'S EMBARRASSING" 2005's five biggest letdowns.

- | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| 1 <i>GoldenEye: Rogue Agent</i>
"HE'S GOT A GOLDEN EYE? OH, RIGHT..." | 2 <i>Pokémon Channel</i>
"THAT YELLOW MOUSE THING SHOULD GET OUT MORE." | 3 <i>NES Classics</i>
"FREE GAMES YOU HAVE TO PAY FOR. THAT MAKES LOADS OF SENSE." | 4 <i>Prince of Persia: Warrior Within</i>
"NO! WE SAID LESS FIGHTING THIS TIME!" | 5 <i>Donkey Konga</i>
"IF IT AIN'T SUPERGRASS, WE AIN'T DRUMMING." |
|--|--|---|---|---|

"FLOATERS" Five games that just won't go away.

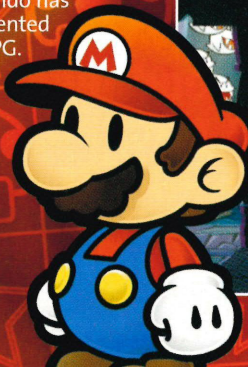
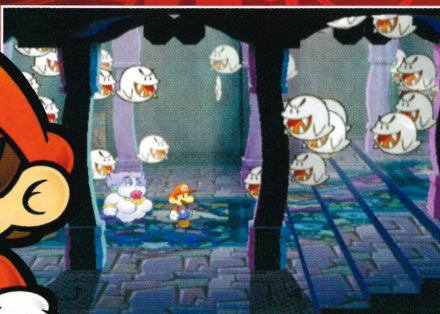
- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1 <i>FIFA 2005</i>
"4.5% MORE LIFELIKE THAN LAST YEAR." | 2 <i>Madden NFL 2005</i>
"YOUR COSTUME RUGBY HAS NO PLACE HERE, BILLY BOB." | 3 <i>Yu-Gi-Oh!</i>
[insert extra bits of title]
"RIGHT, THERE'S THESE CARDS AND... ZZZZZZZZZ..." | 4 <i>Kids movie tie-ins</i>
"ACTUALLY PRINTING MONEY WOULD BE LESS PAINFUL" | 5 <i>Lord of the Rings</i> games
"THEY LOOK LIKE TINY DVDS, BUT YOU PRESS BUTTONS AS WELL." |
|--|--|--|--|--|

06 *Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door* (NOM #146)



Screwed up in all the right ways.

★ It's not explained why Mario turns flat and starts talking to people instead of jumping on their heads. But who cares when the result is as good as this? Despite grotesquely getting Toads to product place its games there's no denying that with the likes of this and last year's *Superstar Saga*, Nintendo has re-invented the RPG.



05 *Animal Crossing* (NOM #144)



Better late than never? Of course!



★ The *Animal Crossing* 'express' finally limped into the station marked 'UK' this year, although anyone serious about playing it had long since left the platform and gone to the import games shop next door. It's still brilliant though. And who pushed the train those last few miles. That's right, it was us. We've still not received any cash though...



04 Metroid Zero Mission (NOM #139)



Mature lady seeks fresh blood to spill.

★ We love a few of the NES Classics series, but this is how Nintendo ought to be packaging its heritage — a remake of the highest calibre featuring cheeky extra levels, ultra-evil bosses and the kind of 2D graphical skill they keep locked away for times of national gaming emergency. Utterly awesome and it's not even the top *Metroid* on the list.



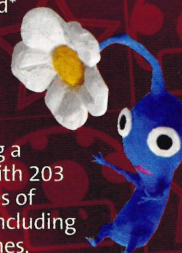
03 Pikmin 2 (NOM #145)



Olimar sets our pulses racing.



★ Stung by comments that the original was "charming but limited", Miyamoto-san is said to have flown into a rage and begun designing a sequel with 203 new types of Pikmin, including brown ones, which looked a bit too much like little turds. Only two new types made it into *Pikmin 2*, but that didn't stop the expanded adventure's tasks, treasures and subterranean terrors storming into the top three. (*by us).



"WHAT TIME D'YA CALL THIS?" Five dirty stop-outs.

- | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| 1 Mario 128
"LOOK, THIS IS GETTING BEYOND A JOKE NOW, BOYS." | 2 Geist
"THEY'RE STILL ARGUING ABOUT HOW YOU SAY IT. WE'LL LET YOU KNOW..." | 3 Killer 7
"HAS BEEN LOOKING STYLISH EVERY MONTH FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS." | 4 Winning Eleven 7
"BASICALLY IT'S TURNING INTO A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE." | 5 Star Fox Assault
"ARMADA? ASSAULT? IT'S STILL GOT A FOX IN IT, RIGHT?" |
|---|--|--|---|---|

"ITS KNOT HOUR FALT" Stuff that went wrong with NOM.

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Misspelling 'Cristmas' (#148)
"IT WAS 2AM. HAK WROTE IT, TIM HAD GONE HOME AND KINGSLEY WAS DRUNK/ASLEEP." | 2 The Deku Tree's revenge (#144)
"TREE OVER TEXT EQUALS MISTAKE BY ART DEPT. THEY SAID IT WAS 'BURGLARS'." | 3 Come on, give Rob a ring (#143)
"MOBILE NUMBER VISIBLE. CUE DEATH THREATS TO BURMAN. DAN NOT SACKED... YET." | 4 When apostrophes attack (all of #144)
"DEAN AND JESS, SLAG EACH OTHER OFF ALL DAY AND FORGET THEIR JOB." |
|---|---|---|---|

02 The Legend of Zelda: The Minish Cap (NOM #147)



Shrink-wrapped in Nintendo perfection.

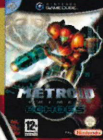
★ It's not as long or as tough as *A Link to the Past*, but Link's tiny-but-mighty quest in *Minish Cap* packs in the *Zelda* goodness tighter than a fairy trapped in a bottle, making it inferior to Link's Greatest Quest™ by just the width of a Deku Leaf. Enormous enemies, a varied map and puzzles that come together like a jigsaw with that familiar *Zelda* fanfare mean there's nothing small about this.



"Goodness is packed in tighter than a fairy in a bottle."



01 Metroid Prime 2 (NOM #147)



Topping the original as well as the charts.

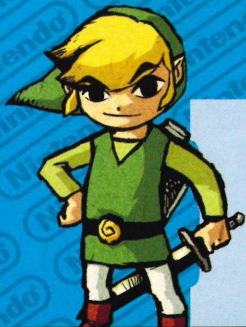
★ *Super Mario World* on the Super NES. *Ocarina of Time* on the N64. Every Nintendo console has its finest hour and this could be GameCube's (okay, 20 hours, give or take if you want to be picky). Samus's journey through the dark and light sides of Aether is as spine-shakingly action packed and atmospheric as any FPS you'll play. The bosses are a nightmare to beat, but conquer them and new areas offer up a dreamland of exploration (and tons more aliens to ruin with your fearsome Beam weapons).

As the next generation draws closer, the odds on this ranking as 'Cube's defining moment are shortening fast, even if its planning meeting did go something like this: man from Retro Studios: "... and then she has to get all the pieces of her suit back... again". Cue spontaneous applause and shouts of "you're a genius, my son".



"Samus's new adventure is as spine-shakingly action packed as any FPS you've ever played."





Nintendo®

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

ALWAYS FIRST WITH THE BIGGEST GAMES

Previews

"Super Mario 64 DS suits portable gaming to perfection. Dive in for a few minutes or play for hours."





Super Mario 64 DS

Your eyes should already be telling your brain and hands that you need this. If they aren't there's something wrong with your wiring.



No beating about the bush, we'll hit you with the big issue right now – the Nintendo DS doesn't have an analogue stick. That's a slight problem being as *Super Mario*

64 needs to be played with analogue control. The **WHOLE** game was designed to use it. But it's not Game Over for the DS version of this masterpiece. Nintendo has a solution.

Every DS comes with a Wrist Strap that has a Thumb Pad on the end. It's a small, rounded piece of plastic that straps over your thumb. In Touch mode, you can lay this on the touch-screen

and slide it around to control Mario. It's like a virtual analogue stick – you can move in any direction and the further you move your thumb the faster Mario will run.

In theory this solves the problem. But it's not as good as an actual analogue stick. It's a compromise. Sliding your finger over a screen doesn't give your thumb any touch-feedback at all. It's difficult for your brain to judge where to put your thumb for 100% movement and accurate direction. Your thumb will also drift too far and you'll end up reaching the end of the screen.

It takes a while to get used to it, but once you do, you'll have brushed away the only dirt on what is otherwise a brilliant conversion of this epic game.

IT'S *SUPER MARIO 64*, MAN! Realise. It doesn't matter how old it is and it doesn't matter how many banjo-playing bears, hedgehogs, Spyro dragons or bandicoots have a pop at platforming. *SM64* is still the king. It's raw game design at its very best. The levels, the music – outstanding. After all this time, we can still whistle every tune from this game. *SM64*, we missed you. >>>



»» Now it's back and in all its glory. Those two letters tacked onto the end of the title come with loads of juicy additions to the classic game. It's got 150 Stars this time; 30 more than in the original adventure. The extra Stars are thrown in as new challenges in the original 15 worlds, as well as in new mini-worlds hidden around Peach's castle.

If you're as familiar with the original as we are, finding an all-new level will be a moment of ecstasy. "ARR WICKED! IT'S A MARIO SUNSHINE LEVEL! LOOK!" We mentioned Sunshine Isles last month. There's no cheating F.L.U.D.D. device, which is good — SM64 is a PROPER platformer. But it has got the same music from Delfino Isle in *Mario Sunshine*, as well as the pine trees and lots of water. That's too cool.

The Goomboss stage is even cooler. It's a wide-open level with hardcore shifting tree platforms and thin walkways in a spooky forest area. The floor is covered in a poisonous purple haze, so you have to stick to the raised platforms. It's also home to the Goomboss — a giant Goomba

that has imprisoned Mario.

You start off your adventure as Yoshi because Mario, Luigi and Bowser have been kidnapped along with Princess Peach. Yoshi can turn into any of his mustached pals by wearing their caps that are scattered around

the levels. But that's only temporary and he'll soon change back to his green dino form. You have to track them down in the mini-worlds where they're being held captive.

Each character has unique abilities, which adds new layers

of depth to the game. Even something as simple as collecting eight Red Coins is more involving. Some coins are trapped in ice that can only be melted by Yoshi's breath. Others are on high platforms only Luigi can jump to. Luigi is now the



All change

Some of the things you didn't see in the original...

If you played — and loved — *Super Mario 64* as much as we did, you'll know its levels better than you know your own home. But now imagine finding a whole new set of rooms hidden under your stairs.

That's how cool it is finding new stuff in SM64. There are new rooms in the castle, new large bricks that block entry to secret new worlds and new challenges with new Stars. It's all too exciting.



❑ What's all this? That's new! A wicked little world is down there. We won't spoil it



❑ Mug the bunnies for their keys, then hold B to run before the Koopa Five-O arrives



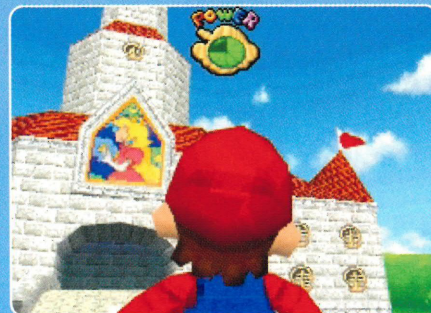
❑ When not in action the heroes chill in their rooms. But who's behind the grey door?



❑ You've seen the Goomboss. This is his level. That's PROPER platforming, guys



❑ As well as eight Red Coins, each world now has five Blue Stars. Find them all!



❑ What's on the castle roof now? It's not Yoshi. You'll need 150 Stars to find out



❑ Look in your brain, behind the door marked Platforming Heaven. This is what you'll see

only one who can turn see-through and walk through walls.

Metal Mario is no more. Now the invincible metal power belongs to Wario, who can also smash giant blocks. And Mario is gifted with an all-new power: the ability to inflate like a balloon and float through the air for a limited time – like in *Super Mario World*. But the best power of all has to be Super Mario: collect a Red Mushroom and Mario will become massive and able to stomp all over enemies like Godzilla.

Subtle changes have been made to each world to make proper use of the abilities. For example, the giant rolling boulders in Hazy Maze Cave

were indestructible in the original. In this version, you can grab a Red Mushroom and batter through them to get a Star. The secret Blue Switch room in the original has now changed to a new hovering challenge for balloon Mario.

SM64 is seven years old, but with all this new stuff, it still feels fresh. It also looks surprisingly better on the DS than it did on the N64. The new handheld may have more pixelated textures, but those patterns are far more detailed than the blurred ones of the old 64-bit console.

The monotone grey walls and green grass of the original now have more depth. The snow levels aren't all white anymore -

they have mud patches and puddles. And on the small screen the whole game looks a lot sharper, unlike the low-res blur that cursed the N64.

The character models are more detailed, using more polygons than the N64 version. Mario looks less like a Lego-man and the Chain Chomps have full-3D teeth. It's not GameCube standard, but it looks great for a handheld. As we've said before, DS's 3D graphics look far better in motion than on a mag page.

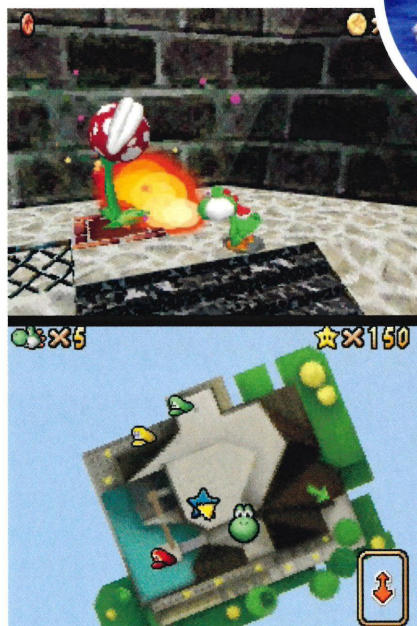
The sound is every bit as good

as it used to be, too. Every one of the classic tunes has made it to this new portable version, with a few new ones for extra head-nodding goodness. The game makes great use of the DS's stereo speakers, with challenges that require you to follow the direction of a sound to find an item or get through a maze. And it sounds even better if you whack in a pair of headphones.

Super Mario 64 DS suits portable gaming perfectly. You can dive in for a few minutes to grab a Star or two, yet it's fun enough to play for hours on end. Plus there are all the wicked new mini-games, and the awesome VS. mode. It's too much! This is *Super Mario 64*! It's like a religion. It's the reason to pre-order your DS to make sure you get it at launch. **Mike Jackson**



❑ I'm-a-gonna jump all over your face



❑ Mushroom Kingdom weed killer. Spicy



ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: NINTENDO

FAMOUS FOR:

Bringing Mario into your empty lives and making the world a better place.

MULTIPLAYER:

1-4

PUBLISHER:

NINTENDO

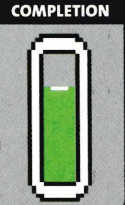
RELEASE:

TBC

REVIEW:

TBC

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



PREDICTED SCORE

The 1s and 0s in *SM64*'s holy DNA make the cartridge glow with heavenly light. It's one of the best games ever and the DS version is mint.

90%
PLUS



□ He's on fire, but he might not be dead yet. Quick, cap 'im some more



□ "What? I didn't touch him, officer. I swear!"



Resident Evil 4

Forget spine tingling games, because this is spine-crackingly scary.



"Spacious wooden cabin to rent in secluded village. Attractions include regular burnings at the stake, mass murders, religious chanting, running around with flaming bits of wood and general bedlam. For more info contact Mr E. Psycho, 22 Mentalist Road, Headcase Heights."

Although we've played the *Resident Evil 4* demo to death (if you'll pardon the pun), those few gore-packed minutes only left our hearts pumping and our trigger fingers twitching for more. We wanted to get to grips with the proper game and to find out if Leon Kennedy ever makes it out of that crazy village alive. You know, the one stacked to the rafters with whacked out farmers.



So when the US preview code arrived at *NOM* we forgot all about the season of goodwill and opted to be scared witless for four hours instead.

Until now we've only ever managed to get into the village square and take out a load of nutters with pointy farming equipment before the demo ends. But it's after leaving the village centre that the action really heats up. You know things are going to get serious when you grab the shotgun. Up until then you've only been packing a handgun, which has little or no effect on the bad guys.

You'd think that shooting someone in the face would pretty much stop them dead, but these dudes just keep on coming. Thank God for the over-the-

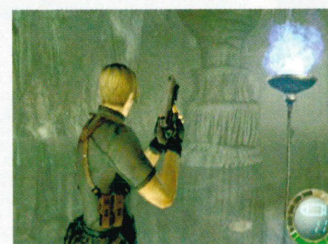
shoulder aiming, which makes it a lot easier to keep on blasting headshots, although some of these villagers still take a couple of blows to the head, just grunt and keep on coming. Luckily the shotgun sees to that problem. Aim for the eyes, squeeze the trigger and BLAM! they're not getting up from that. No, sir.

The shotgun is unusual because it's one of the few weapons you just pick up while on your travels. All the other firearms need to be bought, using gold and treasure you collect, from a mysterious weapons dealer. We don't know how, but this guy manages to fit rocket launchers, automatics and rifles under his overcoat.

Not only does this guy have weapons to buy, he can also upgrade any guns you've got in your armoury. One of the worst things while playing *Resi 4* is those moments when there's a horde of hostiles closing in on your ass, but at that



□ Is that a zombie? Who cares? We'll just shoot his arm off for a laugh



□ Nothing to kill here... bored



□ "Did I mention I wanna snog?"



Animal Cruelty

If only Leon could speak to the animals like Dr Doolittle.

Leon's a kind-hearted soul really. Before entering the village he comes across a dog that's been caught in a bear trap. Throwing caution to wind and forgetting all about zombie dogs, Leon

helps him. To repay the favour the dog then pops up to aid Leon later on. Hmm, perhaps that's not the only animal that could lend us a paw?



❑ Here's our trusty canine friend. We just hope he doesn't expect us to start taking him for walks and giving him worm tablets.



❑ Leon could throw the chickens at the villagers and they could peck their eyes out! If only we could actually catch them!



❑ On average 13 people a year are killed by cows! True fact. So they must be wicked ninjas who could bust a few heads for us.

precise second your gun has the nerve to run out of ammo. Then you have to s-l-o-w-l-y reload. Luckily this can be avoided if you get the weapons dealer to upgrade your reload time or speed up the rate at which your gun can fire.

You're definitely going to need these upgrades because if you thought the run-of-the-mill crazies were tough to beat, then you'll soil your shorts when it comes to the bosses. Know that guy with the chainsaw and the bag on his head? The reason why he's got a sack on his bonce is because he's copped a load of the "Del Lago" lake monster, which takes fear to a whole new level.

In typical *Resi* fashion you come across the lake monster while trying to find a key to a locked entrance. Why can't people in *Resi* games just get a nice key hook near their back doors or something? At first the calm waters look relatively

harmless until you spot a pair of villagers in a boat lobbing a body into the lake. Suddenly something shoots to the surface and gobbles it up. Surely Leon's not going to get into a boat and float precariously out there is he? Please Leon just call the Navy or something, don't go out there yourself.

The ensuing scrap is so intense it could give someone with a weak heart some serious trouble. Leon's boat becomes attached to the monster's back when the anchor gets caught on its tail. As the Loch Ness Monster's evil twin rockets around the lake, it drags the rickety little boat behind it.

Plus, to make things worse, the only weapon that Leon can use to damage this beast is a bloomin' harpoon. We're not whale hunting! Give us grenades or

something. Trust us, you're going to need nerves of steel to get through this scrap!

So with boss fights like this, it will come as no surprise to find we actually enjoyed the relatively calm puzzle moments. Normally in *Resi* games, the puzzles can be infuriatingly obscure, but in *Resi* 4 the puzzles make sense... kind of. In the simplest example there's one point when we needed to get across a fast-flowing river and after our little encounter with Del Lago, we didn't fancy swimming across it! So instead we used the wooden crates that were kicking around to create a bridge.

Another time we needed to rotate some stained-glass windows to match up with a multicoloured pattern. Although there were no clues, it was logical that these windows had some other use. It's refreshing to see that, to a certain extent, the issue about overly abstract puzzles has been addressed in *Resi* 4.

Another problem addressed is the clunky controls of previous *Resi* games. Controlling Jill Valentine was a chore and often you were screaming at her to move her ass more than at the zombies. >>>



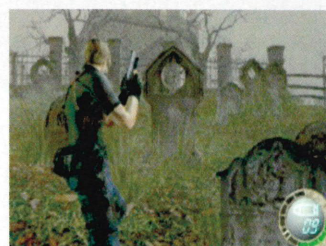
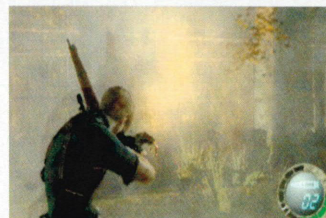
❑ Leon tries the keep-still-and-hope-it-passes-you tactic. Hold steady...



❑ No-one needs farmers. Crops are rubbish. Chickens are all we need



□ That shady dude wants cash for guns. Do business gansta-style — shoot him and loot his hardware fast



»» "Jill, it's right there in front of you! No! Don't turn around really slowly. Just run away, it's shuffling along like an OAP with bad arthritis, you're quicker than that." Although the controls in *Resi 4* aren't perfect, they feel a lot more responsive than before.

It's a major benefit because you'll need quick reactions after you rescue the president's daughter, Ashley. If it wasn't hard enough keeping Leon safe from these crazed townsfolk, now you've got to keep a 20-year-old woman from getting chomped or spiked with a

rusty pitchfork. Normally Ashley will just run happily behind you, but by pressing **B** you can make her wait in one place when it looks like trouble's a-brewin'. The only problem with that is, once you rescue Ashley, the crazy bunch won't just go for Leon, also heading for Ashley as soon as they get a sniff of her expensive perfume.

This makes for some frantic moments as you're blasting away at a horde of crazy dudes, when suddenly you spot one guy creeping over towards her. It doesn't matter how quickly you bash



the **B** button to try and shoot faster because it doesn't work and Ashley is still in mortal danger. Plus, just like Leon she's got a health bar and once it reaches zero, it's Game Over! For her AND you.

Don't worry though, because she's not completely useless. There's one moment when you can't get through a massive gate because it's locked. But luckily Ashley steps up to offer her services. She jumps onto Leon's back, then bounds over the gates and unlocks them for him. We hope that she'll have some more uses like this in the final game, otherwise we might get a bit fed up of her.

Nonetheless, *Resi 4* is shaping up to be the best game in the series so far. Although it isn't scary in the traditional zombie-dogs-jumping-through-windows way, it's terrifyingly eerie. We're not just talking shock moment then a rest before another shocking bit. Instead it gets under your skin. You'll be traumatised by it even when you're not playing. **Rob Burman**



□ *Resi 4* has a new feature built in so Leon never reloads at awkward times (this is a lie)

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: CAPCOM

FAMOUS FOR:

Making you cry like a frightened baby with the other *Resi* games.

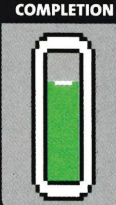
MULTIPLAYER: NONE

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM

RELEASE: MARCH

REVIEW: AROUND THEN

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



PREDICTED SCORE

Well, what more can we say? Seeing a naked old lady riding a horse wouldn't be as scary as 30 seconds playing *Resi 4*. Be scared, very scared.

90%
PLUS

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Project Rub

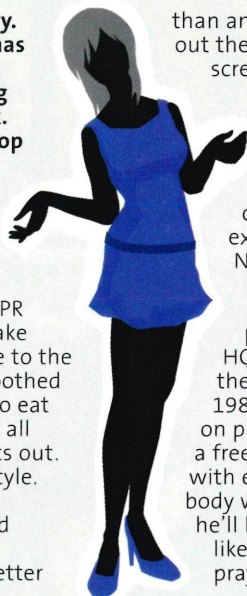
The game formerly known as *I Would Die For You* and *Feel The Magic XX/XY* gets a new name for the UK. They should have just called it *Rub Story*.



It's a classic love story. Boy meets girl. Boy has to defend girl from a stampede of bulls by popping the bovines with a little stick. Boy has to take care not to pop the random skiers that race towards them both.

The course of their love will also see boy helping girl out of her wet clothes while trying to keep a camp fire burning. Boy giving girl CPR so the Grim Reaper doesn't take her away. And boy setting fire to the thorny tentacles of a giant-toothed plant creature that is trying to eat girl. Hmm. Is girl really worth all this effort? Hopefully she puts out.

This is a love story, Sega-style. Amazingly stylish silhouette graphics over two screens and gameplay that shows the possibilities for DS gaming better



than anything else out there. Touch the screen, blow on it, shout

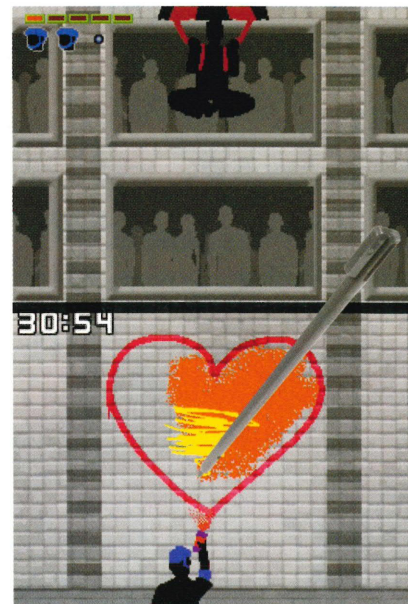
— every game is unique and just couldn't have

existed before the Nintendo DS came into existence.

Every game is also so completely off its head we think that some police are going to be visiting Sega HQ soon with the powers vested in them under the Mental Health Act of 1983. The interview Yojiro Ogawa gave on p34 about this game was his last as a free man. After they've zapped him with electricity and force-fed him his body weight in lithium, the only thing he'll be churning out is fun-free rubbish like *Sprung*. So enjoy it and say a prayer for him. *Dean Scott*



VANDALISE STUFF!



Neatly scribble inside the shape to apply spray paint. Go outside the line and you've had it. You also have to stop spraying to avoid the guys parachuting in from above. Oh, and there's a time limit.

Later levels have you colouring three different outlines, while the silly men parachute down like big flakes of man snow. Big lethal flakes.

SNUFF CANDLES!



Blow on the screen to extinguish the candles. You can rub each man in an upwards motion to make them blow, or you can ACTUALLY BLOW ON THE SCREEN.

Make sure you haven't got something in your mouth though, or you'll gob your dirty spittle all over the screen. It's hard to clean off as well because the touch screen is recessed. Damn it.

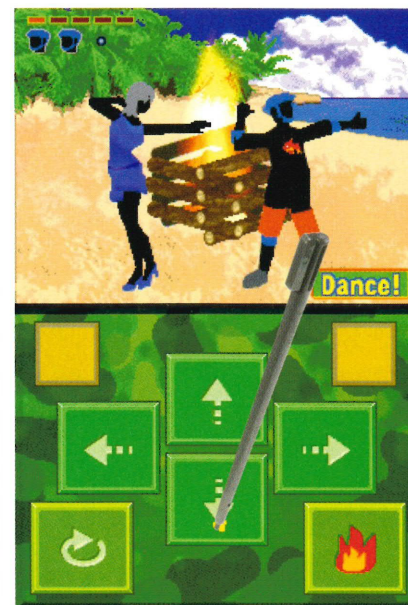
ESCAPE ANTLION!



Save the men from the ANTLION by rubbing upwards on them to haul them up and out of the pit. You have to rub all three in turn. Quickly. No, quicker! WHAT ARE YOU DOING, THEY'RE GOING TO DIE!

This is nothing like any scene in *Return of the Jedi*, so stop thinking that immediately. STOP IT! YOU'LL GET THEM INTO TROUBLE!

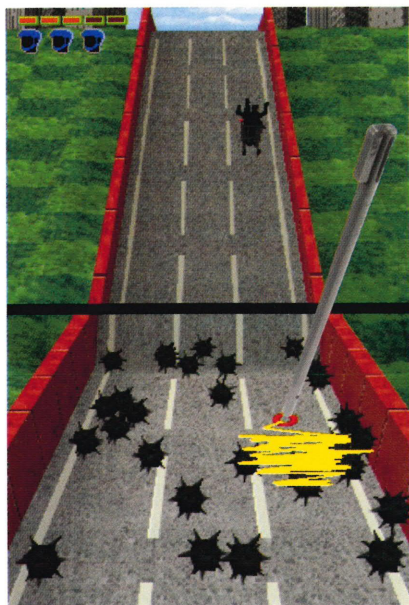
DANCE LIKE HELL!



If you don't include any other video game genre in the reckoning, you can't beat a bit of rhythm action! Tap the directions the girl does and impress her.

It's almost identical to the Dreamcast game *Space Channel 5*, which means it's the campest thing you'll see on a three-inch back-lit screen all year. Unless you glue a Will Young picture on there.

SWEEP THE MINES!



□ People are coming down the hill on trolleys. That is a situation that cannot be prevented. You can, however, flick the nasty mines out of the way with the stylus so they aren't killed.

It's easy until TWO trolleys come at you. What are you going to do then? We'll tell you what: you're going to cock it up and the guy in the trolley is going to die.

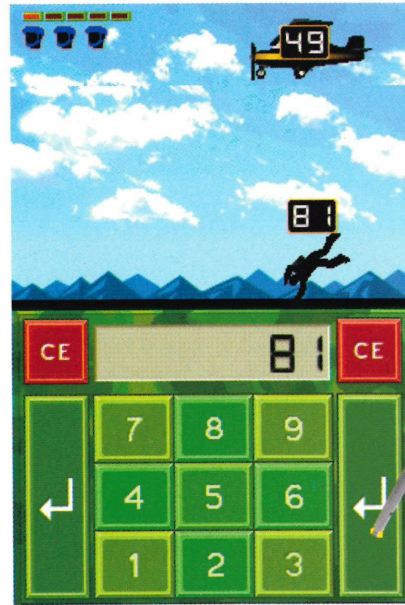
FIND THE JEWELS!



□ OH NO! She's lost her ring in the sand! Have a dig around with the stylus, but make sure you get an exact match. Weirdly, there are three other rings down there which are almost the same.

Think of all the sand in the world and yet four near-identical rings get buried in the same small area. That's not a game, it's a minor marine miracle.

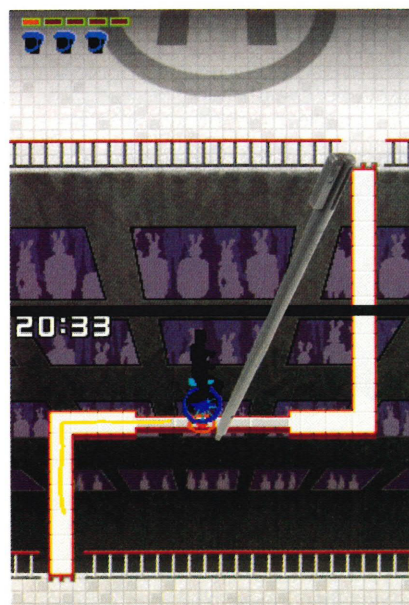
PARACHUTE!



□ These skydiving people trust you. Tap in the number that's above their heads and the chute opens and they live. Prod the screen like an unco-ordinated retard and they plummet to their death.

Here you see us leaving it to the last minute to press enter, just to mess with the guy's head. Turns out we were too late and he died, but that's the price of fun.

UNICYCLE OR DIE!



□ Keep a steady hand and guide the unicyclist around the track. If you're a big, shaky-handed freak you're going to need to get help with this. Or just pop some Diazepam like Snake does when sniping that Wolf woman in *Metal Gear*.

Later levels are all thin bits. It's possible you're just going to burst out crying and give up on this one.

BE SNAKE VOMIT!



□ There's nothing worse than getting swallowed by a giant serpent while you're out with your woman. It's okay though, because you can swim through its bile and emerge from its mouth, possibly covered in little bits of mouse.

Avoid the green things, whatever you do. Whatever they are, they KILL YOU. Hardly anyone wants to date a corpse.



ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: SONIC TEAM

FAMOUS FOR:

Invented the super-fast mammal that gave the studio its name: Team the Hedgehog

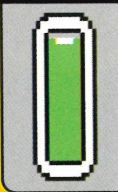
MULTIPLAYER: NO

PUBLISHER: SEGA

RELEASE: DS LAUNCH

REVIEW: SEE ABOVE

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



PREDICTED SCORE

No game showcases the unique functionality of the DS better than *Project Rub*. Some games are better than others, but it's all fun.

80%
PLUS



□ In the future, all waiters must die



□ We aimed for the sensitive mouth-area

TimeSplitters Future Perfect



Zombie decapitation, a truck full of big bad guns, raunchy females and lots and lots of blood – yes this will get an 18 rating.



TimeSplitters Future Perfect is a game you've got to respect. It's got lasers, rockets, plenty of monkeys and females with big breasts. No, MASSIVE breasts. It's a shame your arms are the only parts of yourself you can see in FPS games. We tried looking down, but were denied the glory.

Not being able to see your two giant globes at the bottom of the screen is a small oversight in what is otherwise a game full of great new features. You can forget *TimeSplitters 2* now. Just forget it. You won't go back after you blast a few rounds into an enemy and see the lovely red kill-juice fly. The bloodless deaths of *TS2* are rubbish. It's like you're shooting rubber men. Now fat laser beams and hot lead shots strike with

satisfying devastation. That's what you need in a proper FPS.

A shot to a soldier's head will batter his cranium back like it has been smacked by a bus. He won't shoot back after that, probably because his brains decorate the wall behind him. It feels kinda wrong to like it. But it's great. We're not mental – it's surely no worse than biting the heads off Jelly Babies, and everyone does that. Don't they?

We ruined dozens of soldiers, but didn't hear a single Yelp of Death in Burman's sissy voice. In case you

missed *NOM#147*, Rob recorded some death-scream voice samples with Free Radical a couple of months ago. We were

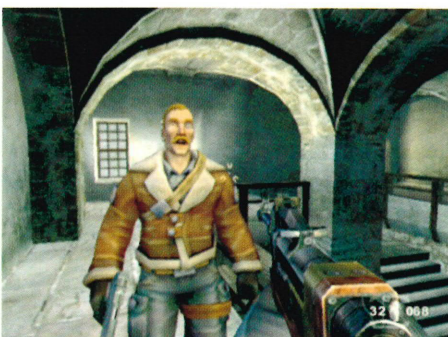
looking forward to laughing at his screams, but this is only a preview version – it could still make it to the final game.

There's plenty of wicked blood-spilling tools at hand this time, especially if you're into futuristic guns. The Ghost Gun is so good the grim reaper wants one as it shoots a big red laser beam that takes away life power like an axe to the brain. And it lets you

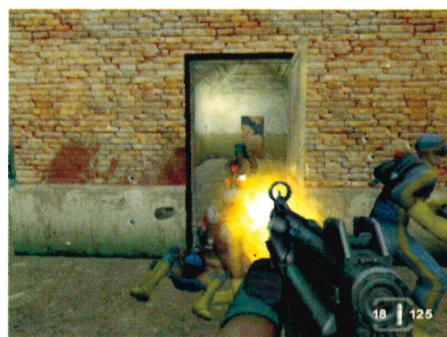
see enemies through walls too, which is a real bonus.

If you prefer a shooter with a bit more grunt, there are chest-ripping 12-gauge shotguns and dirty great machine guns. Lasers are cool but there's nothing more satisfying than the papping sound of two Glocks blasting lead through the air. There are plenty of old-style guns too, but old guns are a bit crud, aren't they? In levels set in the past we always steal one of the *TimeSplitters'* modern guns as quickly as possible and discard the crappy old hardware.

The time-travelling aspect of previous *TS* games ripped the ass out of the plot. You played as a different character in every level, which never allowed you to grow attached to



□ No, you can't kill him. And yes, we did try



□ Time to spice up the weekly fire drill a bit

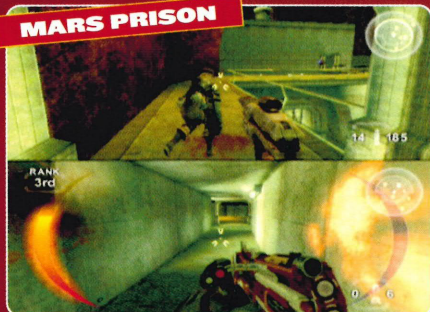
HeadSplitters

Time travel... blah, blah, whatever. It's all about the deathmatch

We say Free Radical owns GameCube multiplayer. *Double Dash* and *Smash Bros.* are classics, but neither soaked up as many NOM lunchtimes as *TimeSplitters 2*. It was great and *Future Perfect* could be even better.

The key to a good multiplayer FPS is well-designed levels. Here are a few of the best we've seen so far and if there are more like this in the final game, we're going to be all over it like a serial camper in the Mexican Mission bell tower.

MARS PRISON



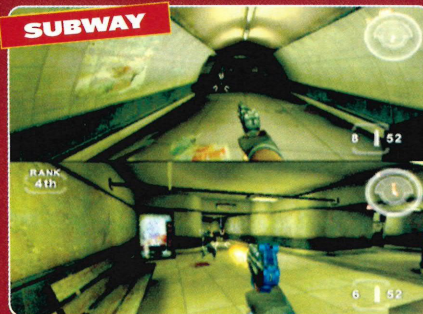
❑ Mars Prison has a cool mix of tight corridors and open areas. It's a large stage so better suited to four-player shootouts.

TEMPLE



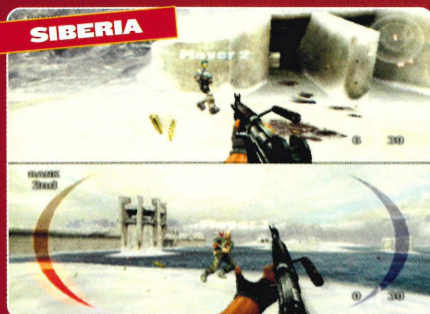
❑ It's easy to get lost in the maze-like Temple stage, but if you know your way around there are some great sniper positions.

SUBWAY



❑ The Subway is dark and gloomy. Crafty players creep about in the shadows dealing out swift deaths like Sam Fisher.

SIBERIA



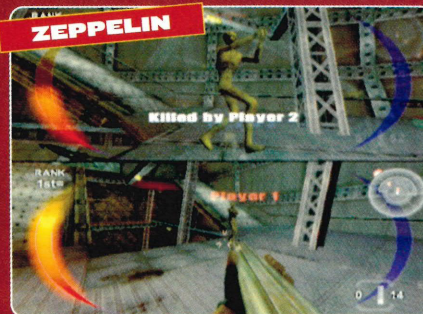
❑ This stage is basic, but it's massive – one huge open area, surrounded by small weapon-packed outposts.

SPACEPORT



❑ The SpacePort is cool. In the centre there's a spaceship hovering just above the ground. But don't stop to look – you'll get fragged.

ZEPPELIN



❑ If you've only got two players and hate using bots, this small stage is perfect. One-shot-kills are best here.

any of them. *Future Perfect* has you play as the Vin Diesel look-alike Sergeant Cortez throughout, which is better. At least this time you'll be able to understand what's happening in the game. It's not just a soulless shooter.

When you've blasted your way through the single-player quest and seen the

ending, it'll be the hectic action of the multiplayer mode that'll keep your *Future Perfect* disc stuck in your GameCube. *TS2* had the most awesome multiplayer mode and the magic is still there. The new levels are cool. Check out the HeadSplitters box to see the best ones.

They've even thrown in a few golden

oldies like the Chinese house and Mexican Mission (the *NOM* favourite). Get in! You can play as all sorts of wacky characters, too. As well as the common soldiers you see in the single-player adventure, there are zombies, robots, ninja assassins and a giant moose. And yes, the cheating little monkey is in there, too. But picking him is not allowed 'cos he's shorter than the others and harder to shoot.

We feared *Future Perfect* would end up being more of the same. But its cheeky humour and increased gore give it the extra personality it needed. The missions look great and the multiplayer will be wicked. We just know it. **Mike Jackson**



❑ This scuffle over an ice cream turned ugly when that guy tried to lick it. He's dead now

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: FREE RADICAL

FAMOUS FOR:

TimeSplitters 2 and the super-psycho *Second Sight*.

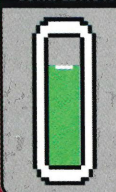
MULTIPLAYER: _____ HELL YEAH

PUBLISHER: _____ EA

RELEASE: _____ MARCH

REVIEW: _____ TBC

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



PREDICTED SCORE

The single-player game is looking much better than *TimeSplitters 2* and the multiplayer equally as epic. We need it now. Or sooner.

85%
PLUS

Mario Party 6



❑ Staff at Bullet Bill factories suffer massive casualties. It's horrific really

When we scream at you it's because we love you very much.

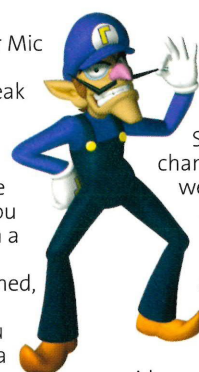
MELON! BANANA! APPLE! No, we haven't developed Tourette's syndrome. We're playing Fruit Talktail, one of the new mini-games in *Mario Party 6* that uses the GameCube Mic controller, included for FREE. Screaming has always been a very important part of playing *Mario Party*, but this is the first time it has an effect on gameplay.

See, in Fruit Talktail there are a bunch of different pillars with fruits on them. One player holds the microphone and says the name of a fruit. Then the other three have to run onto those pillars before all the rest of them drop away. The four other Mic mini-games are also 1-vs-3 contests. They'll pop up during the main Party mode, but you can just go into Mic mode to

play them at any time.

There are two longer Mic games that are only available separately. Speak Up is like a game show where contestants answer trivia questions to earn points. There are different categories – you can count things, watch a little movie then try to remember what happened, or solve optical illusion puzzles. And in case you have no friends there's a mode called Star Sprint where you give a character commands using the Mic to help him run an obstacle course. The Mic controller works really well and it always knew exactly what we were saying. It's genius.

Don't feel bad for Party mode and Solo mode though – they've been given upgrades, too. Whereas all the boards in previous



Parties used to be pretty much identical in terms of goals, your choice of board in *Mario Party 6* can totally alter the game. In Faire Square, there's only one Star Space and the price changes at night. Once when we were playing it was set at only five coins and you could buy five at once! In Snowflake Lake, there are no Star Spaces – everybody starts with five Stars each, and you have to buy rides on a Chain Chomp to steal from other people.

There are only three boards available so far in Solo mode, and they're all fairly brief affairs with no opponents. You have to try and climb up to the very top of the board without falling off. If you hit the last space with an exact roll of the Dice Block you can win a rare mini-game and/or lots of Stars. Why do you want all these Stars? So you can unlock a whole laundry list of secrets, including a playable Toadette. Ah Toadette, don't worry, we're coming to save you... **Chris Kohler**



❑ Look, it's obvious what's going on here – just look at the bright colours and chill out

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: HUDSON

FAMOUS FOR:

Faking his own death in 1985 to retreat from the cinematic spotlight and devote time to doing what he loved: making video games. Good on yer, Rock! (Anyone born after 1976 may need to look this up to find it funny).

MULTIPLAYER:

1-4

PUBLISHER:

NINTENDO

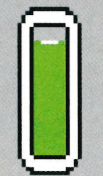
RELEASE:

MARCH 18TH

REVIEW:

LIKE, SOON

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



PREDICTED SCORE

It's the sixth *Mario Party* game in seven years, but it hasn't got boring yet. Microphone mini-games mean madcap merriment.

80%
PLUS



□ The faster you rub, the faster Pika runs. He's right to fear the stylus



□ You can even see Professor Oak's bald spot



Pokémon Dash

Soon to replace the Grand National with the Minish as jockeys.

Pikachu and pals have ditched Poké Balls and turned their backs on the bare-pawed, no-holds-barred fighting we're all used to. Instead they've gone for underground street racing where honour is the only thing at stake. Forget cute, these guys are tough!

Or perhaps not. *Pokémon Dash* is a predictably twee racer starring all your favourite battling animals, from Pikachu right through to the latest addition, Munchlax. Each course sees them blitzing through fields, across snowy landscapes and even taking to the skies in a bid to claim the illustrious victory.

But because this is the DS, you won't be just holding down **A** and using the D-Pad to rocket round the courses. Oh no! You use the stylus to rub the screen

in the direction you want Pikachu to run. Left, right, up or down, it's all about the furious rubbing away and the faster you rub, the faster your favourite red-cheeked creature will dash.

This control method is extremely simple and even a village idiot would probably be able to work it out, after putting down the chicken's corpse he was trying to use as a stylus, though. The courses are split into a series of checkpoints in the shape of Poké Balls, which you must touch before moving onto the next one.

Along the way your progress will be severely hampered by different terrain, including bogs and sand, which slows you down. So far, so good. But *Pokémon Dash* gets a bit messy when you need to

fly to a marker. To do this Pikachu runs over a balloon icon and then floats into the air below a Pikachu shaped hot air balloon.

While in the air the bottom screen zooms out to a map of the level, while the top screen gives you a clue as to where you need to go next. When you have to land, Pikachu lobs itself groundward wearing just a couple of balloons to slow its decent. Unfortunately these sections can be frustrating because it's not always clear where you need to be. Plus, there are only certain terrains Pikachu can land on safely. It can fall on grass from the very heavens themselves, but try and land on sand from the stratosphere and Pikachu goes all dizzy, wasting precious time.

These balloon sections slow the pace of the game down far too much. Although the racing as a whole isn't brilliant, it does have a certain frantic fun about it as you rub the screen for dear life. But at the moment we think Pikachu should stick to scrapping with Bulbasaur and leave the racing to experts like Mario. **Rob Burman**



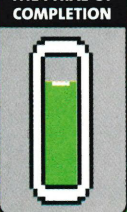
ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: NINTENDO

FAMOUS FOR:

Making *Pokémon* into some kind of gaming drug that you just need to keep playing.

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



MULTIPLAYER: 1-6

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

RELEASE: TBC

REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

The racing style is extremely easy to pick up, but that will doubtless make it far too simple for fans of racing games like *Mario Kart*.

60
PLUS



□ Wario then blew out the candles and wished to be a pretty little girl



□ Don't use a giant stylus to put discs in your real 'Cube. It won't work

Sawaru Made in Wario

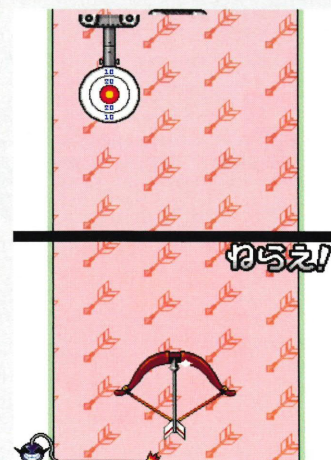
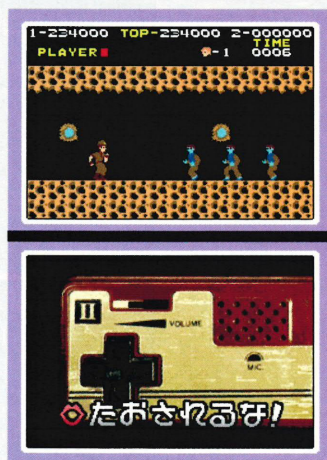
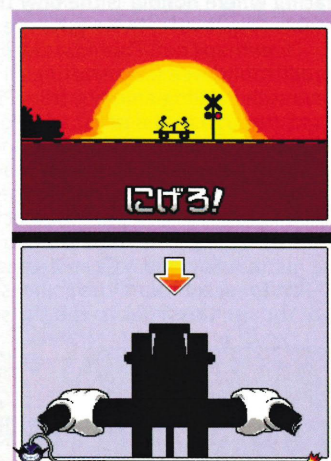
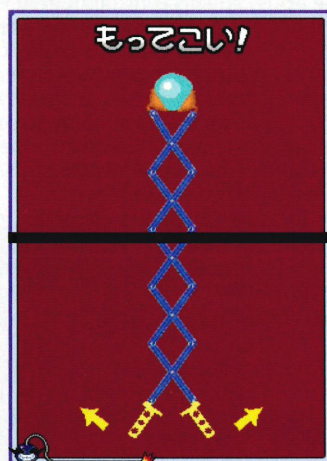
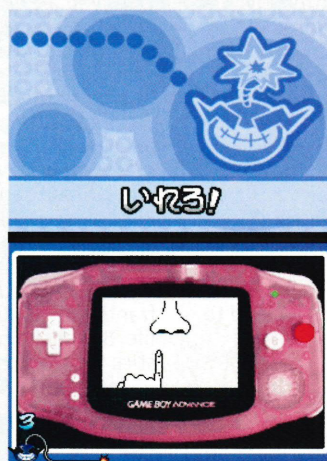
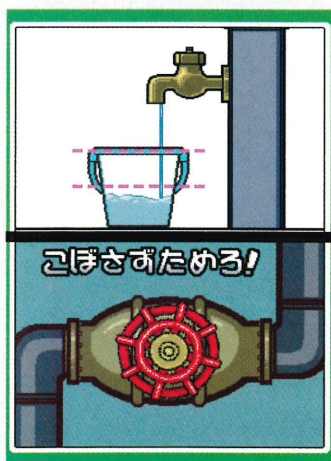
Rub! Cut! Draw! Explode! Mr. Fat Man With The Crazy Mini-Games is back on his bike and this time he's brought along Mr Stylus.

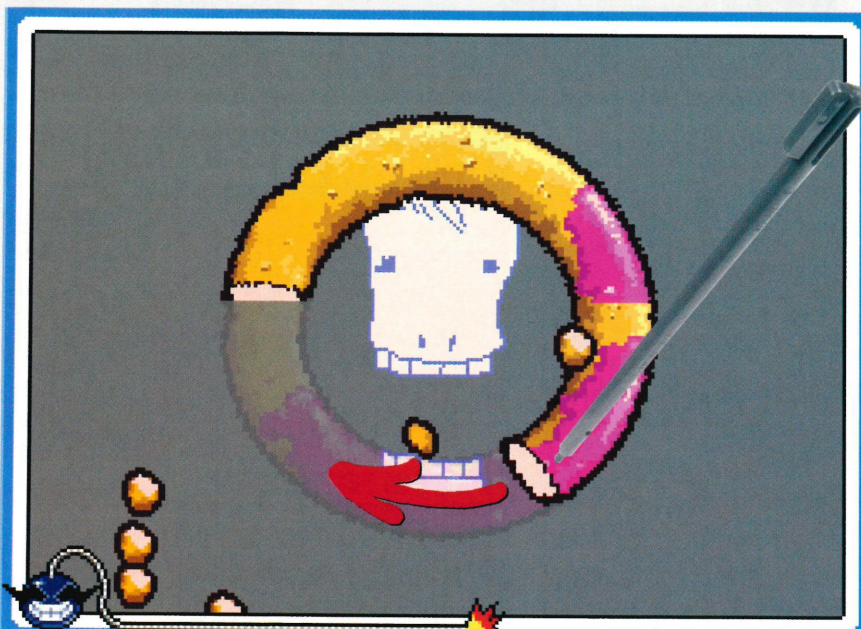
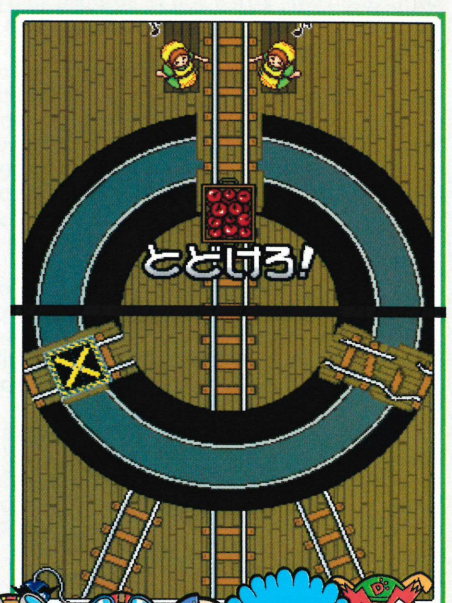
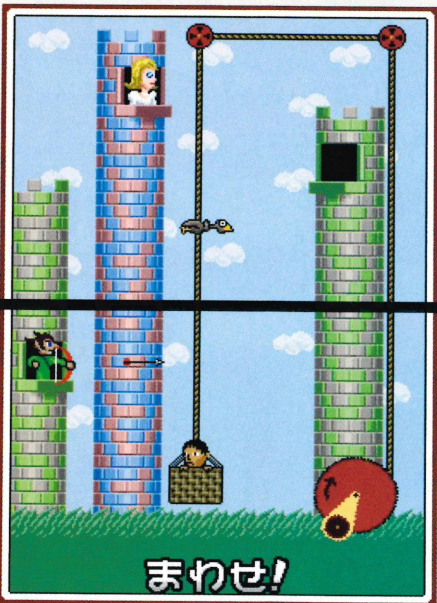
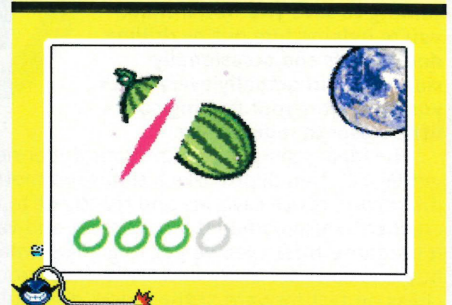
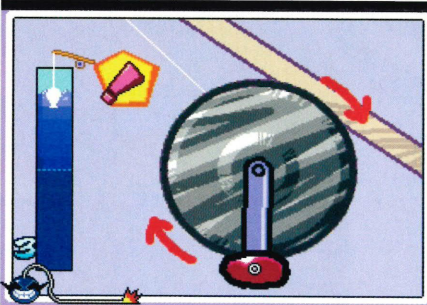
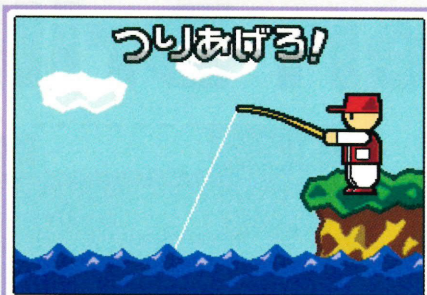
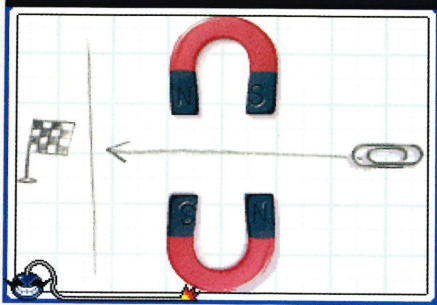
➡ Wario was the king at E3, slicing up veggies, dropping coins in a purse and catching a school of fish in a net. Ten games of pure joy and then it all went quiet until the Japanese DS launch game landed at **NOM**.

Over the next two pages we'll show you as many mini-games

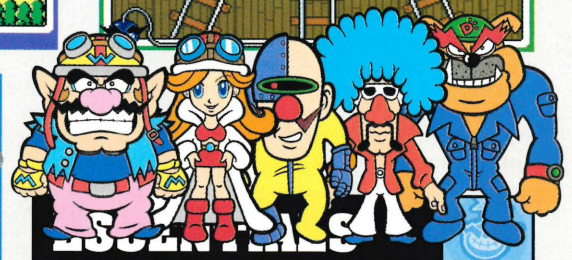
as we can humanly fit in. Check out our styluses too, 'cos on some games we'll even be showing you what you've got to do.

Wario Ware doesn't stop at the stylus control 'cos some mini-games will even see you blowing into the Mic to sail a boat, blow feathers around and more!





Quickly feed the horse the entire doughnut before it tries to gobble the stylus as well!



DEVELOPER: NINTENDO (CO-DEVELOPED WITH INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS)

FAMOUS FOR:

Not only giving us this for Nintendo DS, but the forthcoming *Advance Wars*, too. You might have heard of *Paper Mario* and *Fire Emblem* amongst their other work.

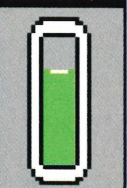
MULTIPLAYER: NO

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

RELEASE: TBC

REVIEW: TBC

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



PREDICTED SCORE

Thanks to the stylus and Mic input it breathes new life into the *Wario Ware* franchise. Pencil this in for a purchase for your sparkly new DS.

90%
PLUS

Mr Driller: Drill Spirits

Namco adds a screen to its magic formula.



Non-believers listen up: *Mr Driller* is a little pixelly Jesus and he's coming to save you. You'll think you're helping him out by drilling downwards and occasionally sideways, but actually every block you pop takes your gaming soul a little closer to redemption.

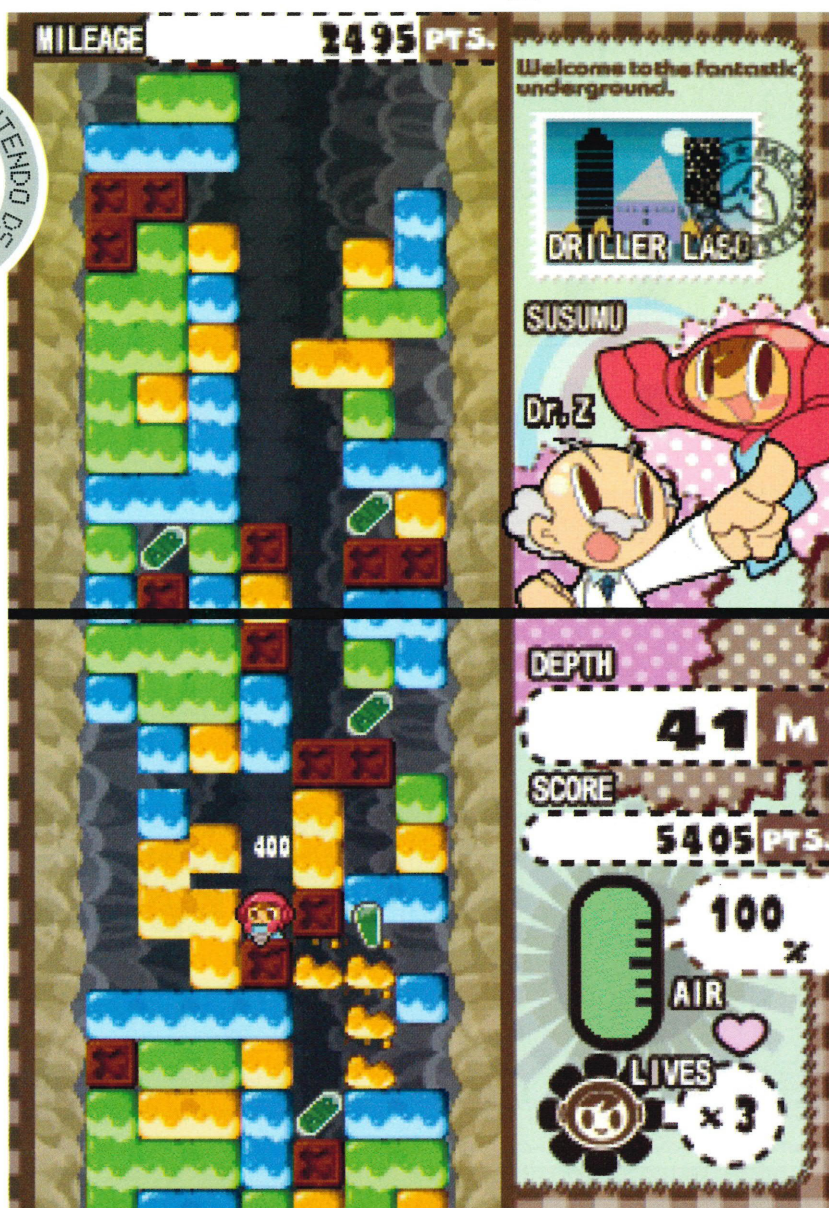
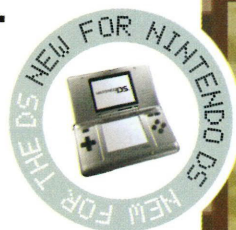
The idea is simple enough. Your driller needs to get to a certain depth. Like a thousand metres. You drill down, cause cave-ins and try to not to be crushed as like-coloured blocks meet and vanish. It's a game where you've got to go like a maniac, but also consider every move. It's underground chess on fast forward. If the blocks don't kill you, suffocation will. When you've stopped to try and free an air canister, you might actually look up at the top screen.

Ah yes, the top screen. You get to see more of what's happening above when you've stopped and need the chain reactions in the well to stabilise. In the white-hot heat of downward drilling, you can't see it. You just lock onto your guy on the bottom screen, in a trance and mentally feasting on the popping noise of cracked blocks. We're not going to lie: this is classic *Driller*. The sensations are very similar on the Game Boy Advance games.

The GBA games don't give you wireless one-cart multiplayer. Actually, neither does the US version of this. We're hoping the UK game copies this mode from the Japanese edition, allowing five drillers to race to 300m. You can't interfere with the others, you just see their ghosts in your well.

You can use the stylus to stab the blocks you want to drill, but, to us, that feels about as natural as spreading our faeces onto toast and eating it. When you need to pull off some mad manoeuvring through a cluster of poisonous brown blocks, the touch control just falls on its arse and dies. It's D-Pad all the way.

You'll probably give your A button a year's worth of wear in one day drilling, but by God it'll be the best day's play you've had in a long time. We only stopped playing this when the DS battery ran out and it was fully charged when we started. One continuous session. Awesome. **Dean Scott**



□ Off the top of the screen, never to be seen, Mrs Driller nags constantly about the mess



ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: NAMCO

FAMOUS FOR:

Ridge Racer, Tales of Symphonia and the like. These Japanese superstars hardly ever hit a bum note. Yes, *R-Racing* would be one...

MULTIPLAYER: 1-5 (ONE CART)

PUBLISHER: TBC

RELEASE: UK DS LAUNCH

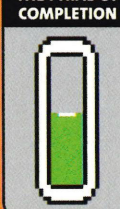
REVIEW: A COUPLE OF ISSUES' TIME

PREDICTED SCORE

Familiar symptoms, but there's still no cure for *Mr Driller's* awesome disease. If you can't get into it, try again because you're wrong.

80%
PLUS

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION





Spider-Man 2

Did you know steam is like kryptonite to Spider-Man?



This is Reggie Fils-Aime's favourite DS game? What?! He must have said that before he realised *Sprung* and *Ping Pals* weren't the only other DS games.

Maybe he was blown away by the smooth 3D graphics. But the gameplay isn't 3D – it scrolls sideways on a 2D plain. You're given a set of objectives to complete in each stage. In the first level, a group of arsonists have set a building

on fire and you've got to rescue the five hostages. Dodging the flames isn't a problem. Spider-Man's wall-sticking powers are quite easy to master. But his fighting isn't.

Spider-Man can maul the average thug in a second in the films. Yet it's tough enough just to land an attack in this game. Your physical attacks don't connect unless you're practically standing on the enemy's toes. Once the

enemy gets in one hit they can just keep hammering you, even if you batter the kick and punch buttons. There are special-move buttons on the touch screen, but all the good ones are locked to begin with. Besides, that's a rubbish use of a perfectly good touch screen.

In the second level you have to find and defeat 23 enemies. We bet it took them ages to think of that. This stage is based on the streets and it's where we discovered that the steam from manholes harms Spider-Man. We struggled to stay awake much further in. **Michael Jackson**



□ Spider-Man was always the champion at ping-pong at the ceiling in school toilets and lifts

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: VICARIOUS VISIONS
PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
MULTIPLAYER: NO
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

This is like a GBA game with polygons. The gameplay is frustrating and it makes poor use of the touch screen. This is not why you want a DS.

50%
PLUS

Daigasso! Band Brothers

Crank up the game tunes and bob your head. This is cool.



Our collection of DS games came together in one box of duel-screen love. We obviously ripped open *Wario Ware* first, closely followed by a bit of *Feel the Magic*, *Spider-Man 2* and *Urbz*. *Band Brothers* was one of the last games we opened. We made a BIG mistake.

It's a rhythm-action game that uses buttons. No dance-mat, no bongos, no maracas – just buttons, but we don't

care. It's wicked. It starts off simple – you press any D-Pad button for blue symbols and any face button for red. But it turns up the heat with button and direction-specific symbols as you go through.

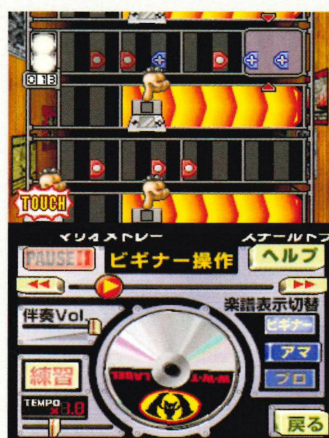
It's okay to play on your own, but the single-cart multiplayer mode is where you'll experience the rhythm mania. One to eight players each take their own part of the song: top line, drums, backing rhythm, base notes, etc. Played with

proper skills, everyone's sounds will synchronise to make sweet music.

The tunes are cool, too. The fly-as-you-like Mario tunes mix is one of our favourites and there are *F-Zero*, *Pokémon*, *Zelda* and Game Boy Classic tune compilations as well. Okay, the Hovis tune may be a bit rubbish, but this is the Japanese version. The Western one will surely be tons better. **Michael Jackson**



□ This is what it'll say if you've got 'nuff skills. If you haven't it'll say "You're Crap" or "Are You Deaf?"



ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: NINTENDO
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
MULTIPLAYER: 1-8 (ONE CART)
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

You've got to experience eight DSs all buzzing synchronised sounds to make the Mario theme. Then you'll love it. Who needs bongos?

75%
PLUS



Asphalt Urban GT

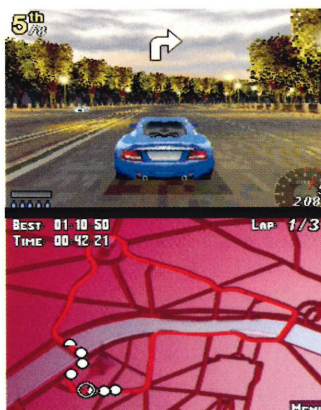
Country GT with tractors was unfortunately canned.



Taking its cue from racers like *Need For Speed Underground* and *Burnout*, this has dispensed with racing traditions such as avoiding danger. Instead you're encouraged to plough into cars, squeeze past trucks and even rocket off ramps on the back of lorries.

This charges your boost meter and pressing **A** sends your car careering along the track. So, *Asphalt's* got the speed, but has it got the looks? Well to a certain extent it has. The tracks, particularly those based in cities like New York, look good and the draw distance isn't too bad.

The main problem is that the handling on the vehicles is a little rough. Although there are plenty of cars, some of the larger ones, like the Hummer handle, like a shed on wheels and you'll be crashing into the barriers a lot. **Rob Burman**



ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER:	GAMELOFT
PUBLISHER:	UBISOFT
MULTIPLAYER:	1-5
RELEASE:	TBC
REVIEW:	TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

With pace and pretty graphics, but not much else, we'll have to wait and see. But at the moment this is looking more 'turnout' than *Burnout*.

55%
PLUS

Chokkan Hitofude

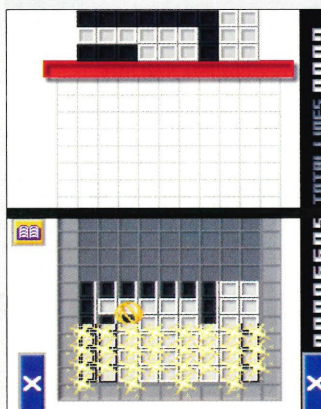
Join the dots gets a DS make-over... and it's awesome.



At the moment this is the DS game of choice around the *NOM* offices. Flipping tiles from black to white and vice-versa is horrendously addictive, particularly the Marathon mode.

Blocks of black and white tiles rain down and you need to clear them as quickly as possible. Flip the tiles onto their opposite side by drawing an unbroken line to try and create matching coloured rows, which then vanish. If you clear the bottom screen before the next block drops down you get a sweet bonus.

It may sound simple, but you need the reactions of Speedy Gonzales and the memory of... er... hmm... Captain Memory Man so you can learn how to clear the blocks in one fell swoop to rack up the bonuses. **Rob Burman**



ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER:	NINTENDO
PUBLISHER:	NINTENDO
MULTIPLAYER:	NO
RELEASE:	TBC
REVIEW:	TBC

PREDICTED SCORE

Just pray that this isn't deemed too obscure to be released over here 'cos it's too brilliant to even think of missing out on.

80%
PLUS

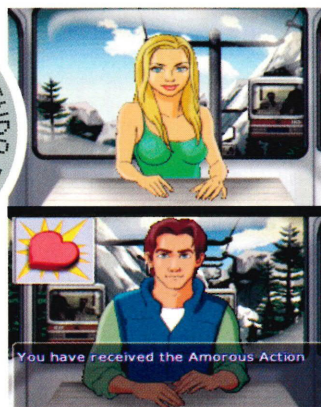
Sprung

If this was our DS blind date we'd kill ourselves. Even the postman had to beg us to take it off his hands.



Do you like selecting a dialogue option from a list and praying that it's the right one? If so, *Sprung* may be the game for you, because that's the entire extent of its gameplay. Go on dates with hot college girls and try not to shove your foot too far back in your mouth.

The only slightly amusing thing is looking at things from a girl's point of view. That's a legitimate excuse to see what it's like to wear make-up and talk about sleep-overs. The dialogue is funny and the character animation is decent, but somebody forgot to put a game in here. **Chris Kohler**



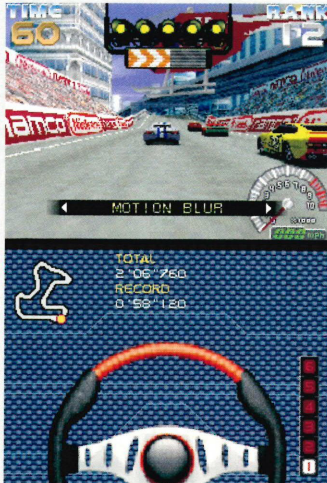
ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER:	GUILLEMOT
PUBLISHER:	UBISOFT
MULTIPLAYER:	NONE
RELEASE:	TBC
REVIEW:	TBC

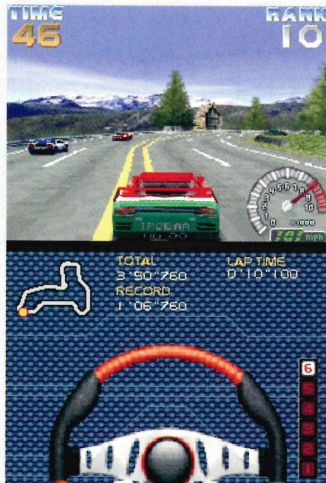
PREDICTED SCORE

This must be some kind of joke? No-one could possibly think of releasing this? Oh, they are? Oh dear. Bargain bins will be full of *Sprung*.

30%
PLUS



□ The in-car view is the best way to feel the action...



□ ... but if you want to kid yourself, that's not our problem



□ Show your dramatic replays to complete strangers on the bus

Ridge Racer DS

Mirror, signal, side-on power slide with the tyres burning.



➔ If you're ever in the market for a used car, be sure to ask if it's a *Ridge Racer* car. Sellers usually like to keep that little fact a secret. In a *Ridge Racer* car, steering and hammering on the throttle makes the car turn sideways-on almost instantly. That's fine if you're one of eight cars blasting round the futuristic streets of Ridgetown, but not quite so clever when you're trying to park up at Asda on a wet Wednesday night.

This vital piece of *Ridge Racer* genetics hasn't been lost in the downsizing process required to squeeze it into a DS. Nintendo Software Technology has boil washed the N64 game and it looks better than ever

shrunk to the small screen. It's sharp and quick but pretty tough to control.

The Nintendo DS isn't supposed to be about "when you get used to it". It's supposed to be immediate and intuitive, but both touch-control systems in this game are a total car crash. Literally.

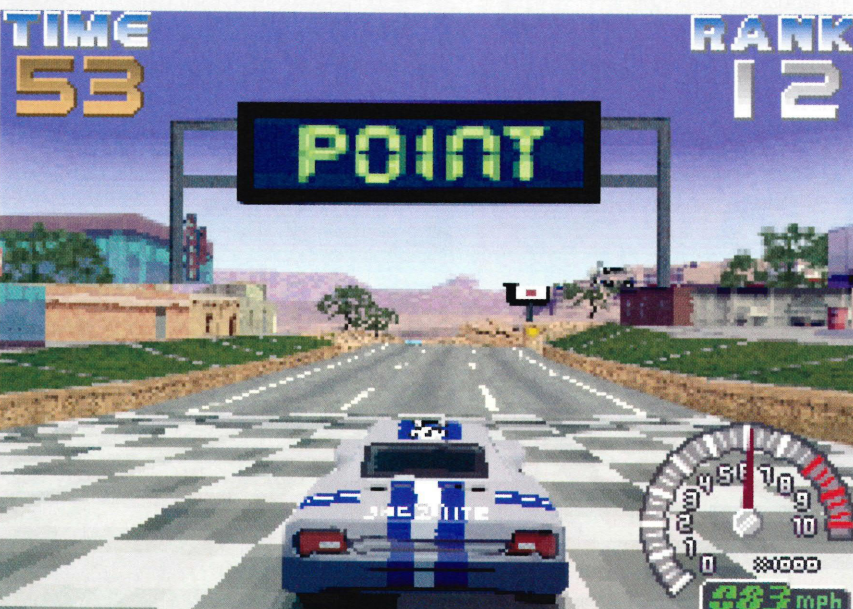
Can you imagine steering a high-powered racing car with a STICK? It feels unnatural to stylus your motor around the bends and probably always will. What's more the touch-the-steering-wheel control doesn't work much better.

That means digital control and holding the DS really close to your face to immerse yourself in that wonderful

in-car view and judge those power slides into and out of bends perfectly. Get round a few laps without clanging the car off the sidewalls and you might start telling yourself it's almost as much fun as the N64 version.

Almost. What good is 'almost'? Almost is a failure. It's not that NST has done an awful lot wrong in this version, it's just that *Ridge Racer* seems all wrong in this format. The arcade cabinets had 50-inch monitors. You need to be overwhelmed by the noise and fury of a *Ridge* game and then you need to love sliding around.

In the hours we put into this, we never got that feeling of stupid racing game fun. In fact, the almost automatic powerslides here feel a bit dated compared to the fully-analogue nursing-a-car-sideways-through-a-bend that the *Outrun 2* coin-op serves up. But seeing the scenery blazing past your eyes here will certainly convince you there's a killer racing game in this hardware yet. **Dean Scott**



□ Dean refused to move until his Chicken McNuggets were brought out to the car

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: NST

FAMOUS FOR:

The American development arm of Nintendo, which can be a bit hit and miss. Previous credits include *Mario Vs Donkey Kong*, *Wave Race: Blue Storm* and *Metroid Prime: Hunters*.

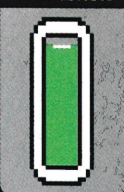
MULTIPLAYER: 1-4, ONE CART

PUBLISHER: NINTENDO

RELEASE: TBC

REVIEW: AROUND DS LAUNCH

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



PREDICTED SCORE

Makes all those silly mock-3D racing games on GBA completely obsolete with a simple flex of the DS graphics chip. Impressive.

70%
PLUS



□ You know that's a big key and not a gun, right? Okay, just checking



□ It's saying it doesn't know. Now torture it with the big key thing

Kingdom Hearts: Chain of Memories

Someone must have wished on that Disney star...



Just when you thought it was safe to escape from the avalanche of card games rolling down Mt.

Nintendo, along comes another to satisfy your shuffling skills. Yet this card battler is as far removed from *Lost Kingdoms*, *Reshef of Destruction* and *PSO III* as you could imagine – it's actually playable.

For once this is a card game that's up there with *Baten Kaitos*, making an RPG name for itself by throwing in those loveable Disney favourites and the instantly recognisable story book worlds they inhabit.

The GBA game starts where the PS2 one finished, thrusting the young hero, Sora, back

into the limelight. You must try and piece together the parts of your broken mind as the game kicks off with some mint video footage. Sora's not alone in his quest to find his friend Riku and King Mickey – Goofy and Donald Duck tag along for the ride, perfectly cast as a dopey Knight and a Court Wizard in need of some anger management, just as you'd expect.

Sora is known as master of the Keyblade, a giant key-cum-sword that enables him to unleash punishment, rid the innocent Disney lands of evil and piece everything back together again. It's with this Keyblade that Sora will win battles, open new worlds in

Castle Oblivion and ultimately find the way to the final battle.

But in order to reach this final encounter you will need cards. Those little things are your oxygen, battle attacks and door key in this world of *Final Fantasy* rejects. Catching them whenever you can is your priority.

By adding them to your deck you'll create a stash of battle-winning cards as they help improve your magic and attack powers. Using your Keyblade just before battle will give you an advantage (as seen in *Mario & Luigi*) and you can scroll through your cards during a stand-off to pick the kind of attack you want to do next.



□ We don't mean to go on about the key, but there's a bloody great cannon right there!



Producer talk

What's going on at the heart of Square Enix's RPG production line?

One man has been at the very heart of Square Enix's franchises over the last few years. His name is Shinji Hashimoto, Senior Vice President and Producer of

Kingdom Hearts. This is what he had to say about the game and Square's DS projects when *NOM* caught up with him in London, just before Christmas.



NOM: So far *Kingdom Hearts* is looking ideal for younger GBA players. Has the game's development been very difficult?
SH: *Shinji Hashimoto:* The difficulty was getting the balance right; couldn't make it too difficult, couldn't make it too easy. This has quite a unique card battle system.

NOM: Was the reason for using cards as a battle system because of their popularity?

SH: In Japan such card battling games, such as *Yu-Gi-Oh!* and *Pokémon*, are loved by younger kids and *Kingdom Hearts* combines this with quite a deep story line which will appeal to older kids. It's a blend that should be fun for all.



NOM: How long did the battle system take to develop?

SH: Just for the battle system it was one year. A lot longer than the usual time taken – long nights and weekends.

NOM: Sounds like working on a magazine!
SH: <laughs>

NOM: Disney stars like Goofy and Donald Duck have such a wealth of characteristics to draw upon. Did they make the development of *Kingdom Hearts* fun?

SH: Of course Disney characters are famous around the world. It was great fun to use them, however, we have to be very careful how we use them as the characters are so important. You have to keep the originality of the characters.

NOM: Was there a lot of research involved, such as watching old Disney films and reading the books?

SH: This project was initiated in 1997 and, in order to develop the game, the people at Square Enix had to sit down with Disney animators to understand exactly how the characters move and how to convey their expressions, making sure all the stars were represented in the correct way.

NOM: In the UK there are very few RPGs that make a name for themselves. *Final Fantasy* is a hit, but do you think *Kingdom Hearts* will succeed on GBA?

SH: Having *Kingdom Hearts* on the GBA and working well with Nintendo, we feel we can open up the RPG market. We would like to do it with this game.

NOM: How is *Final Fantasy* coming along for the Nintendo DS?

SH: We're just working on it as hard as possible. The original game was one screen, the DS has two screens so we're thinking how to use two screens as well as possible right now. That's our main focus and also the same thing is happening with *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles* where we're also wondering how best to use the dual screens.

NOM: Which aspect of the DS excites you most? Would you use the headset to communicate and command your team, telling them the type of attacks you want rather than just using the stylus?

SH: With the DS everyone is looking at the touch screen, but that's better for action games. We mostly make RPGs, so we're focusing on how to use two screens.

It's easy to sit there idly scrolling through the cards when there aren't too many things to fight, but when there's no room to manoeuvre and choose a card at the same time the idea of a strategic RPG goes out the window. All that's left is mashing the buttons. That's until you find the character cards and unleash hell.

Depending on the card you pick up, a summoned character can appear out of

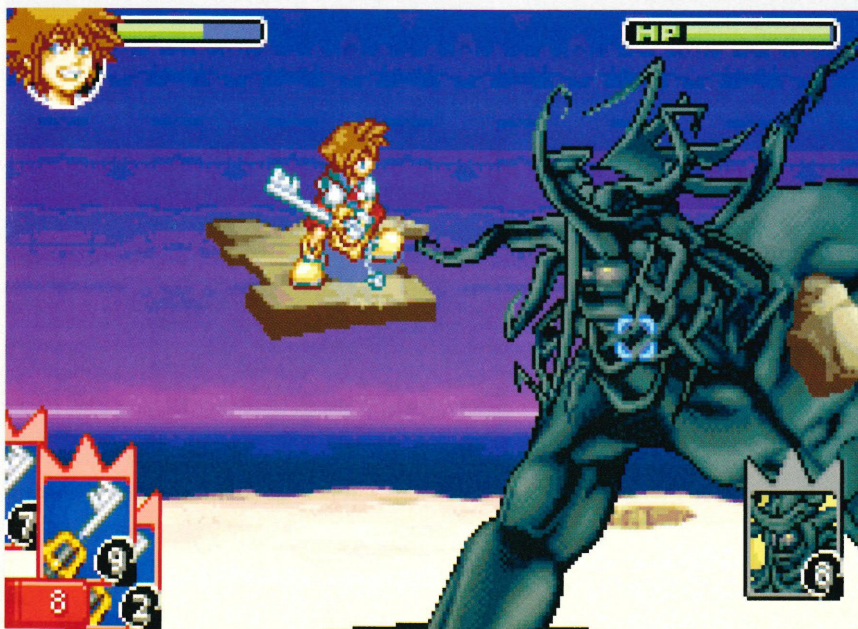
thin air and wreck your opponents. Whether it's Donald's lightning or Goofy's charge attack they'll win you a battle or two. But don't rely on them too much; they disappear after you've summoned them and getting another takes luck.

As RPGs go, this looks like a sweet, but linear adventure. Cards defeat enemies to give you more cards, these open doors to more enemies, extra cards and bosses. Even

though the characters you face are different and some bosses are spectacular by GBA standards you will find it repetitive.

These minor gripes shouldn't put you off Square Enix's worthy attempts. The wealth of characters and their personalities have been perfectly captured in one small cart. With so many favourites from Winnie the Pooh to the Genie and beyond you'll have a riot with them all.

This is a Disney game that works and we haven't seen one of those for quite some time – it's as far away from *Hide 'n' Sneak* as you could wish and we can't wait to see the final version. Uncle Walt certainly won't be turning in his grave after hearing about this! **Tim Street**



□ We forgot to put screen-filling bosses on our Xmas list, but Square sent some anyway

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: JUPITER/BUENA VISTA

FAMOUS FOR:

Being a small, portable-only developer, Jupiter has made some of Game Boy's finest titles – *Mario Picross* and both *Pokémon Pinball* games are just two from its impressive roster.

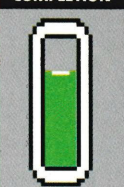
MULTIPLAYER: 1-2

PUBLISHER: SQUARE ENIX

RELEASE: MARCH

REVIEW: NEXT ISSUE

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



PREDICTED SCORE

It doesn't quite match *Pokémon* in the RPG stakes yet, but this is a quest that will certainly delight fans of Square's RPG heritage.

85
PLUS

TMNT2: Battle Nexus

Hack, slash, hack, slash... repeat until brain shuts down.



Four wisecracking mutant ninjas brandishing the type of weapons that would almost certainly get you arrested should be fun, right? Unfortunately not, because these turtles would be best served piping hot in a bowl.

The first *Turtles* game was a disappointment and it looks like the latest is heading down the same sewer of tedium. Basically each has managed to sap all the fun out of the ass-kicking amphibians and become a repetitive bash-the-buttons affair.

At least this one has a four-player co-op mode though. The original's two-player-only multiplayer was almost criminal and showed a complete lack of

understanding by the developers about what the whole *Turtles* phenomenon is about. Unfortunately if you plan to play this one in multiplayer you better find some friends who suffer from short-term memory loss, or they may try to kill you.

That's because from what we've played so far it's safe to say each level will see you hammering either **A** or **B** to dispatch irritating baddies who block attacks far too easily and often gang up on you. Some even have the bare faced cheek to explode when you kill them, damaging you as they burst into flames.

There are times when you don't even realise that an enemy is likely to go kaboom. It's pretty

easy to tell when they're clearly robotic, but sometimes there'll be exploding androids that look like normal people, so you don't expect them to damage you when you deliver the killer blow.

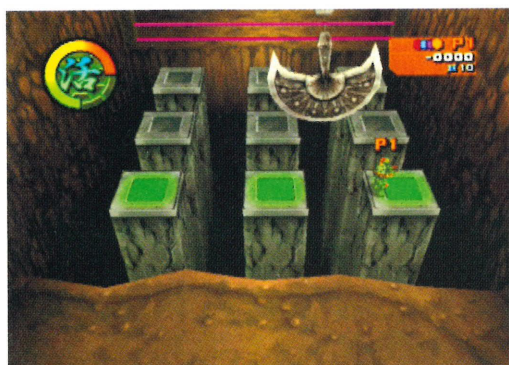
When you're not getting tricked by exploding people, there are some half-baked platforming sections. The fixed camera makes it tough to get through moments when you have to make precise jumps and you'll often plunge to your death.

There are also unusual *Indiana Jones*-style bits with huge rolling boulders and swinging blades. We thought sewers were bad enough with all the crap, but we never realised there were big scythes of death hiding down the U-bend.

At least *Turtles* has some visual clout. Like the original, the cel-shaded characters look like they've come straight out of the cartoon series, which is good. But to be honest once you've seen one decent looking Mouser, you quickly tire of the million other irritating and biting Mousers you'll keep getting attacked by.

Turtles 2 is shaping up to be a lacklustre retread of the first game, but with the added "joy" of four-players. The only hope is that somehow this preview code will cross its genes with something good, mutating into the *Turtles* game of our dreams, not of our nightmares like it is at the moment.

Rob Burman



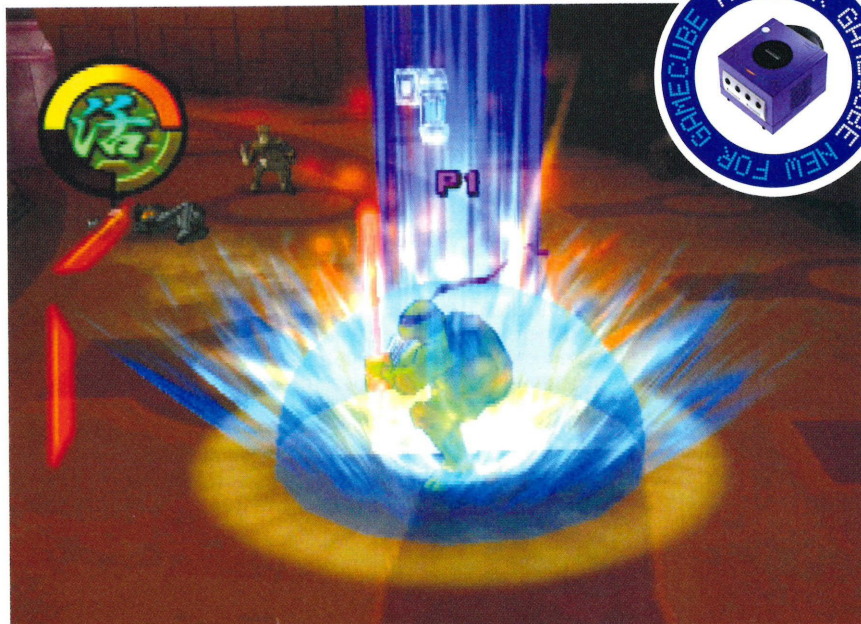
□ Big sewer blades are there to chop up rogue turds



□ Jesus! Wipe your flippers when you come in, Leo!



□ We button-bashed our fingers into bloody stumps



□ Notice how the bright colours and illusion of movement make this seem exciting



□ Who's that big yellow dude?



ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: KONAMI

FAMOUS FOR:

Well, they're certainly INFAMOUS for making the horrendous mistake that was the first *Turtles* game.

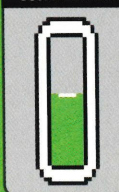
MULTIPLAYER: 1-4

PUBLISHER: KONAMI

RELEASE: EARLY 2005

REVIEW: MIGHT BE NEXT ISSUE

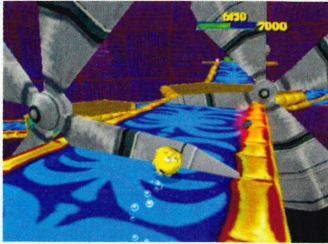
THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



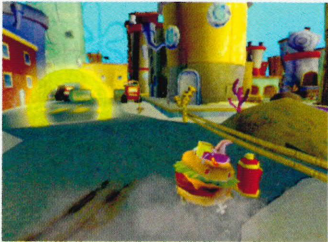
PREDICTED SCORE

God himself would have to bless this to make it into anything above a middle of the road game. Its only saving grace could be the multiplayer.

50% PLUS



□ The best bit. Nicked off Mario



□ The burgermobile. Very poor



□ At least it looks like the cartoons... well, a bit...



The Spongebob Squarepants Movie

Hooray for another movie tie-in. We can't wait to play this!



This shocked us by not being the most unplayable game ever. We didn't once feel the need to cut off our hands in depression or burn our eyes with acid because of the bland visuals. It's still not very good, though.

Like almost every other movie licence based on a kids' film, *Spongebob* sees you jumping over stuff and collecting things. A lot of the time you don't know what you're collecting, but it looks like you should try and grab as much of it as possible anyway.

Although, unlike most platformers, collecting strange glowing items is

genuinely beneficial. After getting a certain number of the whatever-they-are you can upgrade Spongebob's abilities. This is pretty nifty. You can give him more powerful attacks or increase his health. So you're always willing to go the extra mile to collect more... things.

Sadly the platforming is extremely bland. The only relief comes from side quests where you warp to different dimensions. In a nod to *Mario Sunshine*, these sections are straightforward miss-a-jump-and-you'll-die-a-messy-death bits that work quite well. The blocks you have

to jump between spin and move as you skilfully try and cross them. If only the rest of the game required this level of skill it would be okay.

But it doesn't and this is most noticeable in the driving sections between some levels. Driving a giant burger on wheels may sound like fun, but don't be fooled. The burgermobile handles as badly as you might expect and navigating your way between pick-ups is a chore. You'll spend a lot of time reversing through the courses, trying to collect things you missed because of the poor handling.

Plus, and this is a major flaw in the game design, isn't *Spongebob* set underwater? In which case why doesn't he just swim around, instead of leaping across spiky pits? Also, Spongebob is walking through water on each level, so why does it damage him when he misses a jump and falls into some water? That stinks of bad brains to us. **Rob Burman**



□ He's thinking about taking your money for something as fun as an empty box

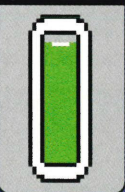
ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: HEAVY IRON

FAMOUS FOR:
Making the equally boring and generic *Incredibles* game.

MULTIPLAYER: _____ NO
PUBLISHER: _____ THQ
RELEASE: _____ NEXT MONTH
REVIEW: _____ NEXT MONTH

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



PREDICTED SCORE

It's not as abysmal as the last *Spongebob* game, but it fails to do anything new. If there are more *Mario Sunshine*-type bits, it could be alright.

50 %
PLUS



❑ Realistic coverage of Arsenal in the Champions League sees this goal-bound effort hit the upright and cruelly deflect in at the other end



❑ Thank God EA included this ultra-important coach-customiser. No-one wants to look like Hoddle though, so say no to track suits

UEFA Champions League 04/05

No, don't get excited, we haven't found a new mode in *FIFA 2005*. This is a whole new kind of balls-up.



➔ We'll tell you what this is. It's *FIFA* at night with players that sometimes slide and hook the ball back to stop it going out of play. In fact, sometimes it seems that the players miss the ball on purpose just so they can slide and keep it in play. Electronic Arts have a new animation, kids and they're not afraid to use it.

We were really excited when the disc arrived. It's probably just *FIFA* again, but



❑ The keeper defends a helpless worm

WHAT IF IT ISN'T!? What if they've made a sweet new football game that's going to give our lunch hour new meaning? We could order some of those boards that show how much injury time has been added and hold them up before extending our session beyond lunch time and well into the afternoon.

We think this preview build tells us we don't need to bother ordering those boards. For some reason, the game plays in widescreen. Not proper widescreen, but letterboxed. They use the black space to put in the score and player names, but it looks really odd. On the default view (massively zoomed out) playing with a composite cable (the yellow, red and white one you get free) we could hardly see what was going on. We couldn't tell Man U and Monaco apart.

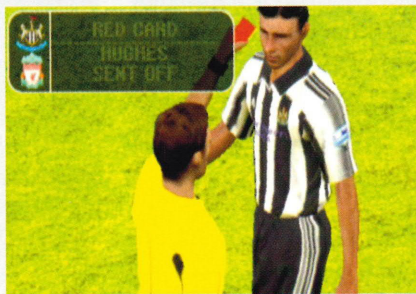
It's got Clive, though. You can't beat a bit of Clive. Tyldesley is the top man when it comes to football game commentary. Andy Gray sounds uncomfortable, like he's sitting on a mountain of broken glass

while reading his lines. But Tyldesley's right there. He's inside your GameCube and the cramped conditions aren't affecting his vocal performance one bit. Oh no...

It'd be a bit weak if you only had four English teams to choose from in this game, so EA let you dream. If you want to take Charlton or Southampton to the San Siro, it's your choice. The game won't even laugh at you. But you could have done this in the last *FIFA* game, too. It doesn't say 'Champions League', but you can get the same experience bar the admittedly excellent presentation. We'll find out come review time if they've added anything that makes this essential. And also if the transfer window balls up all those lovely official squads. **Dean Scott**



❑ No, it's not a replay. Those black bits suck



❑ 'I said smell it!' The ref baits Hughes

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: EA SPORTS

FAMOUS FOR:

Making sports games look really sexy, usually at the expense of actual gameplay. See *FIFA 2005* for example.

MULTIPLAYER:

1-4

PUBLISHER:

EA SPORTS

RELEASE:

TBC

REVIEW:

TBC

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



PREDICTED SCORE

Just as Champions League fever has us all running a temperature, EA puts the floodlights on in *FIFA 2005* to try and coax us to the shops.

65
PLUS



NO ONE THROWS
OFF THE CLIFF!

2

plug me into
a GameCube



every single moment is
every single moment is
Put simply, it's everything you
hoped it would be

and me...

EDGE 9/10

ARE WE
THERE
YET?

3

and me...

WE FEAR
NO ONE WHO HAS A
STRAWBERRY HEAD

I'm Sticky Fingered
TINGLE
I STEAL YOUR
CRYSTALS

www.nintendo.co.uk

All for one and one for all...

...unless there's
something in it
for me!

Save me!
OUT 7th JAN



4

and me!

MY HEADS ON
WONKEY

...but it's just
as fun with one

Nintendo®



A zoo keeper's life is not an easy one. Sure, all you do is tug animal heads around so they line up and disappear. That's easy enough. But the MUSIC? That constant clanging two-note melody? It's the sort of thing they use to break terrorists in Guantanamo Bay.

It's relentless. Ding-dong-ding-dong. Reminding you that, second by second, you're dying. Your life is ebbing away. Ding-dong-ding-dong. And what are you doing with your life? You're playing a game about lining up animal heads.

We're not even sure if it's good. It's just heads. You drag heads. They disappear. That's the whole game. But we kept going back. The prisoner-breaking two-tone melody compels us to. The game even plays a hilarious trick on you: change the background music in the options menu, start the game and... ding, dong, ding, dong. THE SAME TUNE. You can't change it, because that would break the spell. There's a one-cart wireless multiplayer game, too. We need to lie down. *Dean Scott*



Zoo Keeper

Can we put the lions in with the zebras?



ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: SUCCESS
PUBLISHER: IGNITION ENTERTAINMENT
MULTIPLAYER: 1-2 (ONE CART)
RELEASE: UK DS LAUNCH
REVIEW: SEE ABOVE

PREDICTED SCORE

As a showcase of the DS's abilities, it falls flat on its multicoloured arse. But somehow it's as addictive as hell. We suspect foul play.

60
PLUS

Madden 2005

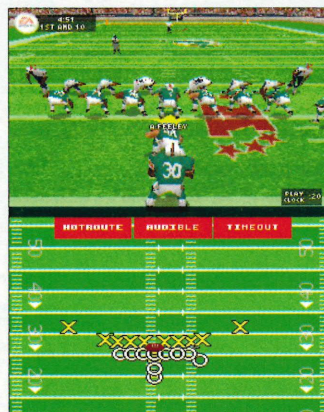
DS gridiron game gets to end zone, but keeps running.



It's not coming out here. That's what EA told us. But what are you missing? You're missing an American football game played by little angular men where you can touch the screen to select DIME or NICKEL or whatever.

The passing works well enough, but moving the players is quite imprecise when the camera zooms right out. The players all have the same animation though, so when they're all in a line and moving together it looks like you're watching a boy band video.

If you're looking for a portable PSone-calibre Madden game... well, tough. It's not coming out. It makes us think though: that the DS *Winning Eleven* game that's on the way might actually be the nuts if this is anything to go by. *Dean Scott*



ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: EA SPORTS
PUBLISHER: EA SPORTS
MULTIPLAYER: 1-2 (TWO CARTS)
RELEASE: NOT COMING TO THE UK
REVIEW: THIS IS AS CLOSE AS IT'LL GET

PREDICTED SCORE

The penny seems to have dropped at EA HQ. Four people buying a Madden game each year isn't a great business proposition.

60
PLUS

The Urbz

A 'z' instead of an 's'. How street. We can do that too. We think this game is going to be zhit.



We don't know what kind of people play and enjoy *The Urbz*, but we don't want to be friends with them. We're guessing the only time they get to be cool is when they're playing this game and it tells them they are 'cool'.

It's basically the same cultural train wreck as on GBA. Do tasks, get your haircut, that sort of thing. When we opened the window washing mini-game we assumed the touch screen would be the window and we'd wipe it with the stylus. Wrong. You move a little window cleaner man with the D-Pad and use the touch screen to navigate options. Bored. *Dean Scott*



ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: GRIPITONITE
PUBLISHER: ELECTRONIC ARTS
MULTIPLAYER: NO
RELEASE: UK DS LAUNCH
REVIEW: SEE ABOVE

PREDICTED SCORE

We can't imagine the kind of gamer that feasts on *Ikaruga* and *Mr Driller* getting any enjoyment from this. Girls might at a push. Time will tell.

40
PLUS

Kenshuui Tendo Dokuta

Diagnosis: brilliant concept. Prognosis: release unlikely.



Your first day in a new career is always tough. You meet new people. You suss out the job. You get lost on the way to the bogs. Now imagine you work in a hospital. It's okay though, you're a doctor, so you won't be doing anything tough like heart surgery or stitching a kid's hands back on. Oh...

Here's the real first-day snag – no-one can tell you what's wrong with them, not due to some freak tongue-eating virus, but

because they cruelly speak nothing but Japanese, no matter how many times you jab at the screen and swear.

This isn't the actual plot, but it gives you an idea of what *Tendo Dokuta* is like to play. Vets operating on dogs must feel similar as communication is minimal. Here, the dog was a woman with a pain... somewhere. We finally got her into theatre and accidentally killed her. Fifteen times. After that we gave up.

Tendo Dokuta hints at a strong manga RPG story line and the diagnostic use of the touch screen is a real innovation. Graphically its no great shakes, but stylish enough to half convince you the words don't matter. Don't be fooled. Those wanting to play doctor should point their computer at www.spike.co.jp/tendo-dokuta/shokushin.html, expecting to be intrigued and frustrated in equal measure. *Kingsley Singleton*



□ One sharp scalpel and a whole body to aim at. Anyone complaining of a painful coccyx beware

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: SPIKE
PUBLISHER: SPIKE
MULTIPLAYER: NO
RELEASE: YOU'LL BE LUCKY
REVIEW: WE'LL BE LUCKY

PREDICTED SCORE

Winner of NOM's DS game least likely to be released here, *Tendo Dokuta* will be sorely missed if that prediction comes true.

70%
PLUS

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TRIVIAL PURSUIT ORDER CODE: MGU410 TP	BLOCK BREAKER DELUXE ORDER CODE: MGU410 BLOCK	RAYMAN® 3 ORDER CODE: MGU410 RAY3	PREDATOR ORDER CODE: MGU410 PRED	MOTOGP™ ULTIMATE RACING TECHNOLOGY 2 ORDER CODE: MGU410 MGP2
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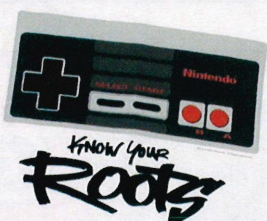


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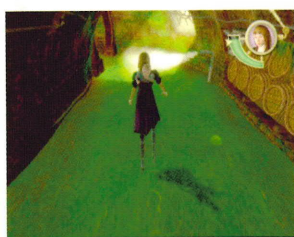
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Reviews



» Street Racing Syndicate » P.76



» Lemony Snicket » P.87



» NFL Street 2 » P.89

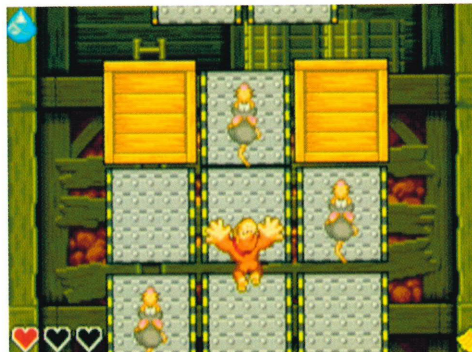


» Astro Boy: Omega Factor » P.82



Gold Golem	1	Winny	3554/3581	187
Chaos Rider	2	Scott	2910/3054	130
		Josef	2217/2606	30
		Ricard	2792/2792	17

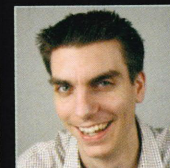
» Final Fantasy » P.80



» DK: King of Swing » P.78

MEET THE TEAM

Christmas is over. Back to work, slaves.



TIM STREET

Tried bongo-controlling his wife into the kitchen to cook dinner. But she's not DK, or in the TV, so she just hit him.



DEAN SCOTT

Spent his Christmas money having an anal machine gun fitted like Astro Boy. The nurses in casualty called Tim.



KINGSLEY SINGLETON

Can't figure out why cutting a big hole in a woman might cause death. Wishes there was an Eat Patient button.



MIKE JACKSON

Ate some food that made his poo runny, but only had two weeks off work as a result. That, friends, is valour.



ROB BURMAN

Got busted trying to swipe a pub landlord's smokes. Thinks he can nick stuff because his name's Rob.

SPECIAL THANKS TO...

CHRIS KOHLER

Plays multiplayer in San Francisco. With men.

SCORES AND AWARDS

90+
85-89
80-84
70-79
60-69
50-59
40-49
30-39
0-29

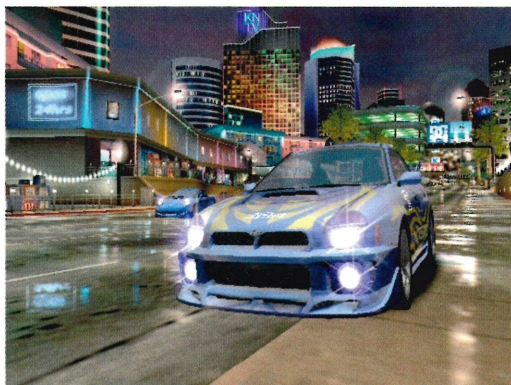
A Nintendo classic
Exceptional in its class
Great fun, but not ground-breaking
Some nice ideas, but lacks Nintendo magic
Few classic moments, for die-hard's only
Been there, seen it, played it. Yawn!
No ideas, no gameplay, no way
Not worth buying
Not worth stealing



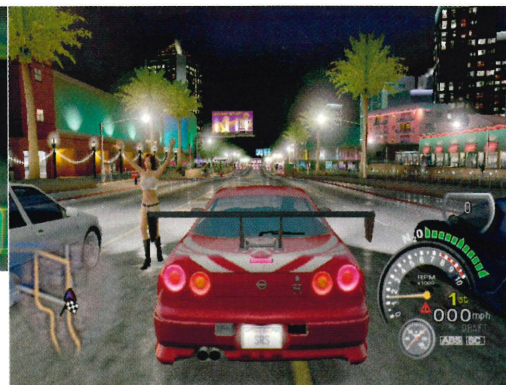
POISON
A real minger that might give you a bad disease just by touching it. Like Universal Studios.



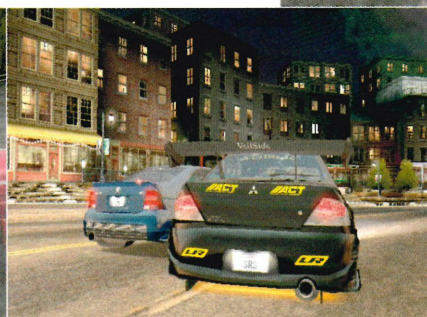
SUPERSTAR
We'll dish these out each issue to the best games, regardless of whether they're on GameCube or GBA.



■ Courtney later revealed she had no idea where the petrol went in



■ When your missus fails to stop the ice cream van it's time to bin her



■ Solid-gold cars – bling, but they won't win a thing

Game Info

Price: £39.99
 Publisher: Nintendo
 Web: www.nintendo.co.uk
 Players: 1-2
 Memory: 11 blocks

OUT NOW

Street Racing Syndicate

Like a Lottery syndicate, but with more cars and less chance of someone killing themselves.

➤ Illegal street racing is generally not a good idea, even in America. When we went to Los Angeles for E3, Mike stole a \$30,000 custom Toyota, then got another car to drag-race him down a busy highway. He thought he would win money and the respect of the local gang members. Instead they took him to jail and we haven't seen him since. He telephones in all of his game reviews from the cell he shares with three five-hundred pound walking tattoos.

If only *Street Racing Syndicate* had been in the shops before he made his rash decision. As *SRS*'s main story mode commences, you find out that your buddy Eddie has been busted by the cops for (guess what?) illegal street racing and he's got a race tonight! So you take Eddie's ride – a totally pimped-out Nissan Skyline with nitro boost and all that stuff – and race against three other jokers. You split the cash prize.

Then you've got to use the money to buy your own car. This will let you enter the alluring

underground street racing circuit for yourself, make some mad bills and hook up with all the fly honeys. So you head down to the garage, where you can purchase one of 40 different real-life automobiles from Fuji, Toyota, Nissan, Lexus, Mazda, Mitsubishi and Volkswagen.

Sadly for non-petrolheads, picking a Lexus right off the car lot isn't going to win you any races – you have to choose from hundreds of different custom auto parts (also pulled from real-life manufacturers) to give your motor the power it needs. Then you take to the streets. *SRS* isn't just a series of races held one after another; you actually drive your car around LA looking for action. What you'll mainly be doing in order to raise more cash is to head over to the

underground races. You'll need to ante upwards of \$1,000 to enter the race and then you can place wagers with any one of your three opponents.

Beat them and you'll earn even more money and more respect. The latter is especially important as it adds to your respect-o-meter determining whether or not you can enter the harder races.

It's interesting, on paper. So it's too bad the actual racing just isn't very much fun at all. Race after race is full of skidding around and smashing into things because the handling isn't intuitive or natural. What's more, the sense of speed is off. We glanced down at the speedo in the lower right-hand corner of the screen and it said we were going 80mph. So why did it feel like we were poking along a country road doing 30mph?

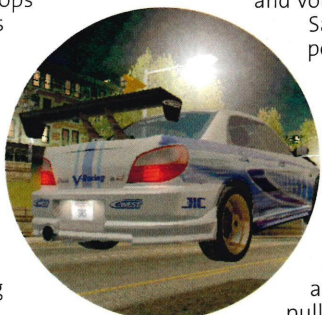
After you've totally obliterated your car, it doesn't just fix itself. You have to pay big bucks to repair the damage. And you lost the thousand you put up to enter the race. Then there's the

small matter of wagers you placed with other drivers who totally outclassed you.

Now you're flat broke, which means you've got to enter some sanctioned races, which have no entry fee, to win some cash. These are just as ridiculous as the street races, but at least the turns aren't at ninety degree angles. Okay, maybe we should just roam around on the streets for a while. Just don't drive too recklessly, or you'll get picked up by the cops and fined for your behaviour.

You can win a girlfriend by participating in a "respect challenge" (see 'Chicks dig wheels' for more), or you can pull up behind another car (one with 'RACE ME' over it) and flash your headlights to goad the driver into drag-racing you one-on-one, for money or for pink slips.

To its credit, *Street Racing Syndicate* also offers an Arcade mode that lets you jump behind the wheels of tricked-out cars without having to scrape up enough cash to build them yourself. Checkpoint races



Chicks dig wheels

How to get your virtual girlfriend in three easy steps.

■ Getting real girls is easy – they respect your video gaming skills. But hooking up with girls in games? Hmm... not so easy...



STEP 1: Pick a girl from the dozen or so real-life 'import scene' models who populate the world of SRS. That's Sasha.



STEP 2: Find Sasha somewhere in LA and she'll set you a respect challenge – like driving through checkpoints, or winning a short race.



STEP 3: Congratulations! She's now your girlfriend and she'll live in your warehouse. Go there to pick her up, then press and you can hook up with her (watch a comically bad video of her dancing alone)!

“Syndicate isn't just a series of races – you cruise LA looking for action.”



■ We can't get enough of the spoiler, or that wing-type deal on the back of the bonnet



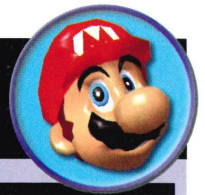
challenge you to zip through a city and hit every single checkpoint within a certain time limit. Quick Race lets you (and a friend if anyone can put up with your constant bleating on about NO₂) jump into a race immediately. Doing well in the Arcade mode challenges can let you unlock a variety of awesome rides in Street mode without having to actually upgrade them yourself.

And that's a plus because the Garage, where you pimp out your ride, is a

confusing, frustrating mess. You've got this entire menu of parts that you can put on, and you're given only the briefest of descriptions. It doesn't even tell you if the part is better or worse than what you've got on, or how much of an impact it will make on your car.

There's no tutorial mode to explain what you should and shouldn't do in the beginning, so if you aren't already a car mechanic we're not sure how you're supposed to figure it all out.

So, should you buy it?



Yes if...

You can overlook handling flaws as long as the game rewards you with hot chicks.

No if...

You don't like feeling completely ripped off after you buy a video game.

You'll love it if you like...

Racing games that let you use real-life parts to customise real-life car models.

GRAPHICS

6

Looks sort of passable while you're driving, but really ugly in the garage.

SOUND

5

A bunch of mediocre hip-hop songs give it that urban-American 'flava', just.

GAMEPLAY

6

The handling's strange, customisation is a chore and it's just not much fun. Next!

LIFESPAN

5

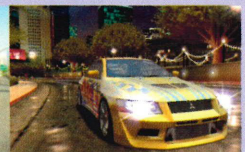
There are plenty of races and extra modes, but you'll probably be bored before long.

VERDICT

► Although it certainly tries hard, what with all the sexy models and customisable car parts, SRS just isn't very much fun. There are better non-linear-import-custom-racing games out there. *Chris Kohler*



BEST BIT: The first race, the first high-powered car, the first saucy lady.



WORST BIT: Staring at the giant list of custom parts and wondering what to do.

SECOND OPINION

► There's not a lot to choose between this and *NFS Underground 2*, but both get owned by *Ridge Racer DS*, which is a bit like getting beaten by a girl. *Dean Scott*

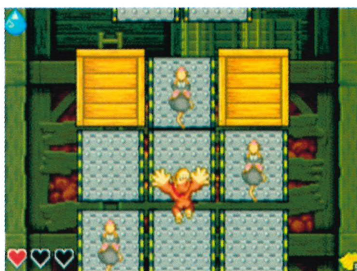
Nintendo

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

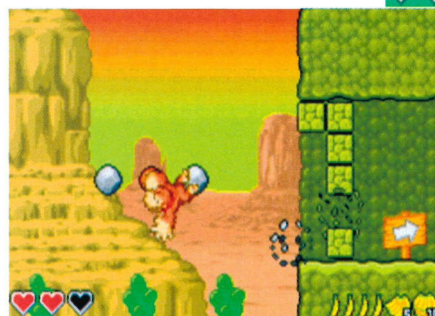
"STALLED"

69%

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Those rats kill you, but you can't punch them in the face. It's not fair



Spin on the switch to make cool stuff happen

That fly is going to muller you. It's a fact



DK: King of Swing

DK's GBA adventure is the king of mood swing. Frustration, anyone?

Game Info

Price: £29.99
Publisher: Nintendo
Web: www.nintendo.co.uk
Players: 1
Memory: Cart (3 slots)

OUT NOW

If Donkey Kong's new mission is to wreck our gaming hands, he's succeeding. We bongo-battered our way through *Jungle Beat* until they were red and aching. And now *King of Swing* has our index fingers stuck in the GBA gripping position like two claws.

In the controls department, *King of Swing* is just as wacky as *Jungle Beat*. Ninety-five per cent of the game is played with the L and R buttons. All of those running and jumping skills you've honed to perfection over years of Mario platforming won't do you any good here.

Using the shoulder buttons, you control DK's hands individually to grab and swing on the yellow pods hovering in mid-air. Grip with the left and he spins anti-clockwise. Grip with the right and he spins the other way. This will

fry your gaming mind.

To start with, you won't be such a king of swing. You'll fumble around the first few stages like a headless chicken. It's all about momentum. One mistimed release of grip and you will find yourself plummeting head-first to the bottom of the stage.

It took about an hour for our minds to switch into swing mode. Then we were alternating between left and right swings with perfect timing and flicking around the screen with mad monkey skills.

The first world is pretty empty: a few leaps of faith and a spiky bee here and there are all that threaten you. If you make DK grip with both hands he readies himself for a Charge Attack, which can be used to swat enemies or get some big air for larger jumps. The game felt a bit shallow at first. But later levels hold clever puzzles that all revolve around the swinging mechanic.

There are cranks that need to be pumped repeatedly to open a door and obviously there's no Use Crank button. In *King of Swing* you grab the base of the crank with

one hand and use your swinging motion to pump the other end with your other hand. Get it? There are also shifting platforms with levers that need to be pumped in the same way to make them move.

You'll come across hovering rocks that you must grab and use your spinning motion to lob them at enemies or break down walls. There are cracked pods that will crumble shortly after they're gripped. By that point you'll need the master skills to speed past them before they disappear.

Invisible mazes turn up too, in which only the pods immediately next to the one you're holding will be visible. They appear as you go, but you need to find the correct route to the top.

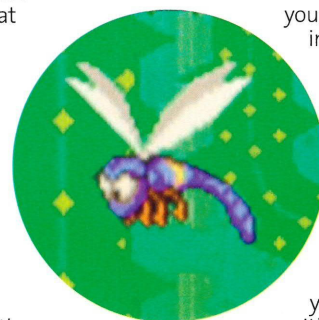
These challenges of timing and agility are the better part of the *King of Swing* experience. The major annoyance is the increase of enemies in later levels and DK's lack of ability to deal with them. You can only kill enemies with the Charge Attack. DK's usually a fighting machine. He can bust out crazy punches in *Jungle Beat*.

What happened to his primate brutality? You can't even flick into the air to land on top of enemies. What's all that about? That's against the LAWS OF GAMES.

Moving enemies are a nightmare. Teeing up the Charge Attack is annoying enough – you have to get yourself into a position that's facing the enemy as you charge up the move. But to add to your trouble, its range is short, so you'll have to get into position right near the enemy. He'll be hitting DK, you'll be panicking – it's a mess.

After doing some RUDE swinging skills and getting near the end of a tough stage, getting ruined by some little bee will not please you. It's times like these you'll find out how far back your GBA SP screen can bend before it snaps off. It's not far, by the way.

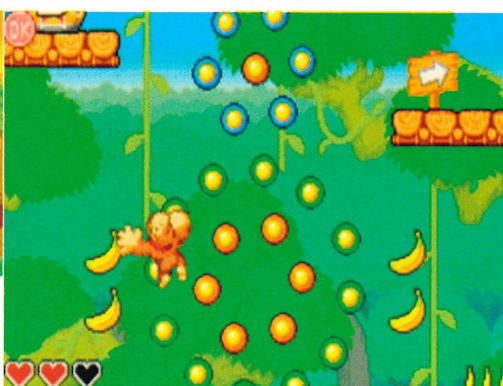
It's not so bad in earlier stages where there are few enemies that move. But later levels in the game are crammed with them and frustration suffocates the fun. This is a shame because *King of Swing* is a unique game, and overcoming the puzzles and obstacles can be fun.



"Later levels in the game are packed with enemies and frustration suffocates the fun."



■ Four-player crate breaking – as much fun as breaking a big line of wooden boxes in real life



■ Crazy bosses are all around



■ Grab the switch and hang on with your big monkey hands

Four lords

The multiplayer mode that'd be better not existing...

■ This must be a widely-known trick of the trade for games developers – if you're short of multiplayer ideas, bung in a race or battle mode. *King of Swing* has both, but neither are fun. In Battle mode you swing about trying to Charge Attack another player (mostly failing). In Race mode you swing to the top of a stage. The end. They think you'll find this fun. It's insulting.



Tim ran screaming out of the room, Kings had an aneurysm, Mike set himself on fire and Dean slit his wrists on the little metal battery terminals of his old-skool GBA

So, should you buy it?



Yes if...

You're up for a unique platform experience with a new challenge.

No if...

You lack the patience to learn a new control style. It's very strange at first.

You'll love it if you like...

Pretending you're an ape on the monkey bars at the park. Err, maybe.

GRAPHICS

7

Colourful, well animated and more cartoony than *Donkey Kong Country*.

SOUND

7

Chirpy remixed versions of the tunes from the *Donkey Kong Country* games.

GAMEPLAY

6

Original but frustrating, plus DK has forgotten how to fight, which is bad.

LIFESPAN

6

It's no *Zelda*. You'll either blast through it or lose interest after three worlds.

VERDICT

> *Swing* will make you angry. It will remind you what's so great about the standard game controls like the D-Pad and A button. They tried something unique and came up with fury-inducing software. *Mike Jackson*



BEST BIT: Some of the puzzles in *King of Swing* are clever.

WORST BIT: You'll spend more time falling than swinging.

SECOND OPINION

> I didn't like it at first. The whole concept just made my brain hurt and I wanted to go home. I assumed that I'd sort of grow to like it, but I didn't. Stupid ape. *Dean Scott*

Nintendo

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"KING OF MING"

61%

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■ King: "Who the hell are you and where's my meat-feast?"



■ Caves have so much to offer. Be geologists, kids!



■ It's just like looking at a Super NES. We're going for a little cry

Game Info

Price: £29.99
 Publisher: Nintendo
 Web: www.nintendo.co.uk
 Players: 1
 Memory: Cart Save (3 slots)

OUT NOW

Final Fantasy I & II: Dawn of Souls

It's hard to go back and play NES games today. The graphics kind of suck by any standards, and the gameplay was designed before anybody had come up with crazy ideas like "intuitive controls" and "quick saves." So instead of just porting the classic NES games over, Square Enix went all out and redesigned the first two *Final Fantasies*, from start to finish. The controls have been smoothed out and you can save anywhere you want – perfect for gaming on the go.

Final Fantasy never had much of a plot. Four Light Warriors have to save the world by defeating lots of bad guys and reviving the power of the four Crystals they hold. But what it lacked in story it made up for in complexity. You pick four characters at the start of the game from six classes: Warrior, Thief, Monk, White Mage, Black Mage, and Red Mage.

Final Fantasy II mixed things up a bit. There were no character classes, but the story was a deeper, *Star Wars*-inspired tale.

FINALLY we get to review a tasty slice of history.

Four youths flee their village as the evil Empire burns it down. Ticked off beyond belief, they decide to join the rebel army. Along the way, they meet all sorts of interesting characters who join their party from time to time as the story unfolds. And did we mention that there are Chocobos, too?

The graphics are now bright, colourful, and sharply detailed.

There are even some cinematic scenes, although they're mostly concentrated around the beginning of each game (and they're nowhere near the level of *Kingdom Hearts*' awesomeness).

The music is absolutely fantastic – series composer Nobuo Uematsu was doing

some of his finest work with these early games and the all-new arrangements sound beautiful even on the GBA's tiny speakers.

Dawn of Souls features all sorts of new stuff. The designers went back and rewrote the

entire script. So now, people actually have intelligent things to say rather than just spitting out terse, monosyllabic phrases. And both games have new dungeons – in *FFI*, four Soul of Chaos dungeons open up as you beat boss characters and they're filled with baddies from later *FF* games. And the story of *FFII* continues after you beat the game – you get to play on using the four characters who (ALERT! Spoiler Warning!) actually die in the main story line.

Final Fantasy I used to be one of the hardest games ever and now it's one of the easiest. You'll blow right through this version of *FFI* in record time – leveling up takes almost no time at all, money is very easy to come by and magic spells and armour cost a lot less. Spend a little time in the monster dens leveling-up and you'll be a superpower. And you'll need it, because the four new, optional Soul of Chaos dungeons will kick your ass.

The enemies inside aren't too bad, but the boss monsters will kill your entire party in one hit unless you're trained well.

Don't get all worried that there's a lot of statistics management. Your characters power up pretty much automatically as you win battles. Weapons and armour are pretty basic; you can even use the "Optimise" command in the menu screens to automatically equip the best stuff. In fact one of the only major decisions you have to make is what magic spells to buy your mages. And that's easy because you can read the descriptions of them in the magic shops. "Puts one enemy to sleep". No, that's boring. "Attacks all enemies with fire". Yes!

Final Fantasy II is a tough nut to crack. In fact, the gameplay system's pretty much broken. Rather than giving you XPs for every battle you win, *Final Fantasy II* levels-up each of your stats individually depending



"Dawn of Souls features all sorts of new stuff. The entire script has been rewritten."

Back for more!

Where the hell did these new bosses come from, anyway?

Atomos		Defeated	1
L	R	HP	12000
		Attack	50
		Accuracy	80
		Defense	70
		Agility	10
		Intelligence	120
		Evasion	10
		Magic Defense	200
		Gil	0
		EXP	0
		Treasure	Judgment Staff
A Toggle B Back			

NAME: Atomos **FIRST APPEARANCE:** *Final Fantasy V* (Super Famicom, PSone)
WHAT HE DOES: Atomos is lethal. Towards the end of *FFV*, he totally ruins you. He'll use the deadly spell Comet until somebody is dead, then suck them into his mouth, never to return. Exploit this by killing your weakest member, then attack while he's sucking.

Rubicante		Defeated	1
L	R	HP	15000
		Attack	68
		Accuracy	150
		Defense	40
		Agility	50
		Intelligence	65
		Evasion	30
		Magic Defense	220
		Gil	0
		EXP	0
		Treasure	Rikuichimonji
A Toggle B Back			

NAME: Rubicante **FIRST APPEARANCE:** *Final Fantasy IV* (Super NES, PSone)
WHAT HE DOES: Because he's so nice, the first thing he did in *FFIV* was restore your party to full health before you fight him. Then he unloads on you. Since he's the Fire fiend, Ice spells hurt him pretty bad. But they only work when his cloak is open, as shown.



NAME: Gilgamesh **FIRST APPEARANCE:** *Final Fantasy V* **WHAT HE DOES:** Kick ass. Gilgamesh is one of the most beloved bosses in *Final Fantasy* history, because he tries so hard. You fight him five times in *FFV* and each time you can steal a piece of his armour. Towards the end, he'll show up and save you. He's the man.

on how you do in battle. So if you use magic spells in battle, you gain more MP and magic strength. If you fight, you gain more Attack Power. And if you lose lots of HP, you get more. Unfortunately, this means that the only good way of becoming powerful is to go into battle

and start beating yourself up.

But, like most other aspects of these games, that's been tweaked. It's still broken, but it's less broken. And although we'd have rather they just ripped it all out and put in the standard *FF* level-up system, it still seems to work okay.



Monsters in this wood ate all the squirrels and owls years ago



So, should you buy it?



Yes if...

You love everything *Final Fantasy* and want to see how a classic series came to life.

No if...

You want your RPGs to have more depth. Despite the upgrades, these are old-skool.

You'll love it if you like...

Other *Final Fantasy* games, but also 2D, turn-based RPGs like *Golden Sun* or *Fire Emblem*.

GRAPHICS

7

Looks like a Super NES game. Entirely acceptable, but nothing special.

SOUND

10

The great Nobuo Uematsu at his best. Lovely arrangements of charming themes.

GAMEPLAY

7

Faster battles and new dungeons keep things interesting. But *FFII* is still broken.

LIFESPAN

6

It's over fast, but you'll have to level-up a lot before you clear the extra dungeons.

VERDICT

> One's so old it has liver spots. One's so broken that the best way to level-up is to beat yourself up, yet, somehow, I can't stop playing either. *Final Fantasy's* still got the magic. Now where's *FFIII* on the DS? *Chris Kohler*



BEST BIT: Meet Bahamut, the dragon that powers-up your characters massively.

WORST BIT: Having to constantly punch yourself in the face just to level-up.

SECOND OPINION

> I'm sort of allergic to wizards, but any remake that bothers to add new stuff to the mix (like *Metroid Zero Mission* did) is okay with me. *Dean Scott*

Nintendo
 OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK
 "SPELLBINDING"

82%

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■ These flying robo-fish thought they were it. They weren't...

Game Info

Price: £29.99
Publisher: THQ/Sega
Web: www.thq.com
Players: 1
Memory: Cart (3 slots)

OUT
JAN

Astro Boy: Omega Factor



➤ *Astro Boy* is a video game. You might think this magazine is full of those, but it isn't really. To explain why this is, we need to go back to the time of Noah...

Some monkeys drew a little guy out of dots. "Sweet, dudes!" said Moses. "Now draw a load of other stuff for him to dodge and shoot at!" The monkeys did this and Noah let them stay on the Ark for together they had invented The Video Game.

The next day, the monkeys

A shot of adrenaline for your GBA's silicon heart.

made a driving game out of polygons and Noah threw them into the sea. As water engulfed their thrashing furry bodies, Noah screamed angrily that video games were about unreality and blowing stuff up. If he wanted to drive a bloody car, he'd get the giraffes to make him one and kick out all the elephants to make room for a decent track.

We love *Astro Boy*. We wish it was called *Astro 25-year-old Girl*, because then we wouldn't feel so guilty about wanting it to have our babies. It's based on an ancient Japanese cartoon we haven't seen and nor do we need to because the awesomeness speaks for itself. It ticks all the right boxes. Awesome 2D graphics? Check. A little boy with

a machine gun in his ass? Check. Bosses that include a huge dirty spider vomiting fire? Chezz-heck!

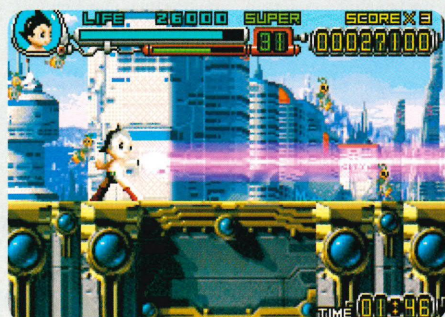
This is the kind of game mankind was just getting good at making before they decided the new plan was to fill CDs with FMV. In *Astro Boy*, there are no laborious cut-scenes, explaining away your every footstep. Someone pops up, says a few words in a speech

Get a Chubby On

Ladies love a fatter beam.

■ We're pretty damn sure we'd talk to real people a lot more often if it meant we could punch that bit harder. In *Astro Boy's* world, every new face you meet earns you vital points to spend on

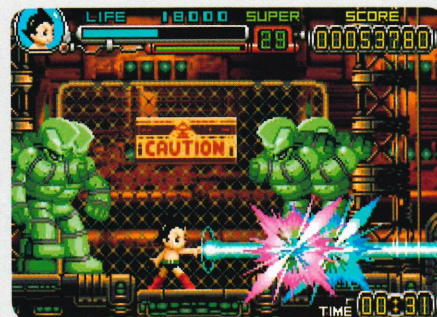
making yourself even more lethal. And in a world full of robotic monstrosities after your skin, you'll need to be tough. Allow us to demonstrate with this selection of informative screenshots...



We'd settle for any kind of finger laser, even a thin one. Astro Boy, however, won't.



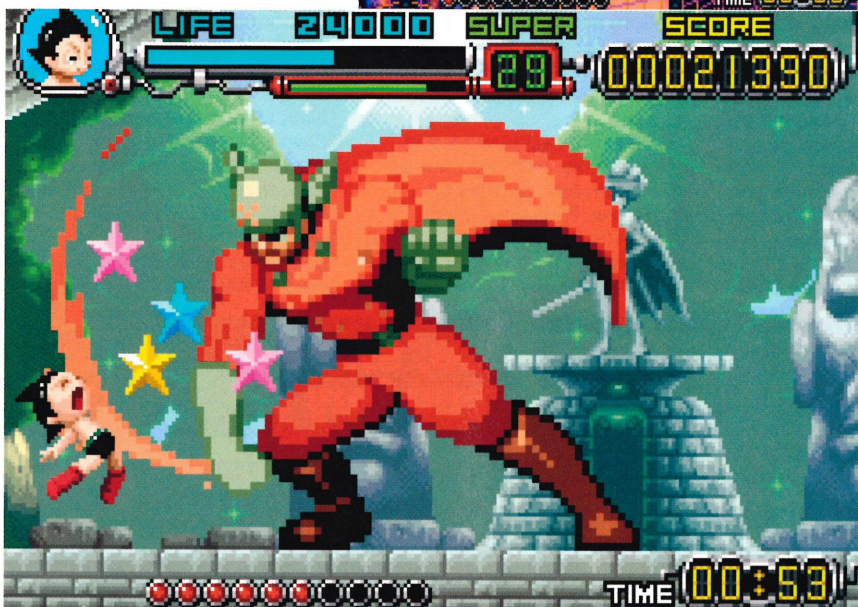
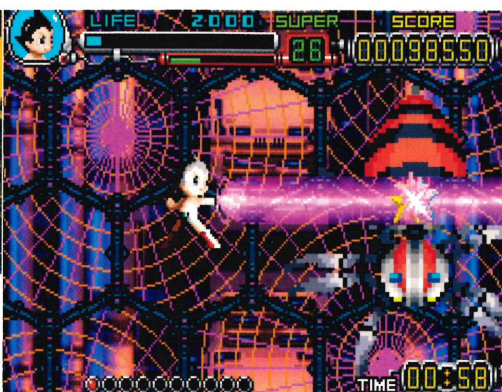
Meet some animals, befriend them, earn an upgrade. Zoo-tastic!



Test new laser. It hurts people a lot more. That's a good result for our man.



■ Summer or winter, desert or jungle, pants are what to wear



■ Since they made slapping kids illegal you have to do it with a mask on. Have that!

bubble and you get out there and kick ass. You punch, kick and laser blast a succession of enemies that have the misfortune to wander onto the screen while you're in the mood to kick an unholy amount of ass.

You start off weak. Your puny laser is little thicker than a strand of hair and hardly hurts anybody. Luckily, each level you plough through wins you upgrade points to spend on laser-fattening or harder punches and stuff. But as you get harder, so does the game. Bosses blaze lasers across practically the whole width of the GBA screen, and foot soldiers arrive in even greater numbers. Sometimes even scaled up so they look all pixelly-but-still-awesome.

You've got the whole screen to dodge about in, because Astro Boy wears rocket boots. That could potentially be a control nightmare, but the connection between your thumb and him is absolutely flawless. In fact, the only thing standing between this and a score in the stratosphere is what happens when you press the **R** button.

Special move! You've broken enough robots into bits to fill your meter and now it's hammer time. A vengeful flick of **R** and... the game stops. Astro doesn't just burn out a thick beam of death light and

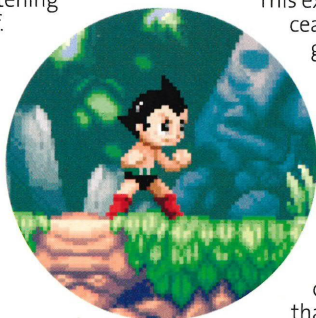
get back on with it, he really draws it out. "Here's me switching to my FAT laser, here's me prepping my fat laser, there's me shooting the fat laser. Good eh? Shall we punch some more people now?" In a game as fast moving as this, it's as unwelcome a halt as somebody jamming on their anchors on the Autobahn.

He doesn't just do it the once, either.

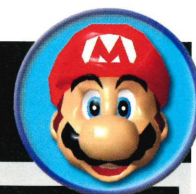
This extended laser theatre never ceases. It just feels wrong in a game as brilliantly paced as this one. Your nerves are jangling and your synapses are firing, and then you're forced to drop back into idle mode for a WHOLE THREE SECONDS. But in this context, it feels like a lifetime. It's the single duff rhyme in an amazing piece of poetry and we won't let that spoil the game.

We love *Astro Boy*. We've

screamed about this like babies ever since the Japanese version came out. The GBA was invented for games like this. Forget stupid racing games and FPSs that look like rubbish. Crap like *Serious Sam* poisons your GBA. All the chips inside cry and it shorts out the battery. *Astro Boy* repairs the damage with beautifully-drawn 2D bandages. Not bloody pre-rendered ones like *Mario Vs Donkey Kong*. That's a whole other story, though. A story entitled Why Noah Gave The Panda A Black Eye.



So, should you buy it?



Yes if...

You want your grinning face to be lit up with constant explosions.

No if...

You have an allergy to sprites that makes your throat close up.

You'll love it if you like...

Treasure games. Forget *Advance Guardian Heroes*: this is them running at full power.

GRAPHICS

9

Beautifully drawn by a team of digital Da Vincis. The bosses are crazy and ace.

SOUND

8

When you smack the robots into each other, they make a sweet clanging noise

GAMEPLAY

9

All-action and great control. Just a hint of slow down when it gets super hectic

LIFESPAN

8

On Normal, it's hard as nails. Replay it with your levelled-up guns and love it afresh.

VERDICT

> *Astro Boy* delivers action. In fact, it turns up with two massive lorries full of action and asks where you want them. Your driveway is too small, so you have to borrow next door's as well. Who cares if they mind? Dean Scott



BEST BIT: It's awesome, and yet doesn't contain a single polygon.

WORST BIT: That bloody laser delay. Sack whoever was responsible.

SECOND OPINION

> We've had to wait, but now the pain is over. Feel the same sweet relief and satisfaction as a Russian peasant who's just got to the front of a 12-hour potato queue. Kingsley Singleton

Nintendo

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"STAR CHILD"

90%

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Banjo Pilot

Game Info

Price: £29.99
Publisher: THQ
Web: www.thq.co.uk
Players: 1-4
Memory: Cart (1 slot)

OUT NOW

The bear crashes and burns. Presumably the bird bailed and flew off.

There's no such thing as a plane race, so *Banjo Pilot* is on shaky ground from the very start. Quite literally in fact, because if you fly your plane where you're not supposed to it shakes and slows down like some low-cost airline, laden down with sunburnt fools, straining into the skies above Magaluf. Somehow, the mud you're flying over slows you down. That's MUD. On the GROUND. And you're up in the air. In a PLANE.

Get past this farcically illogical means of keeping you on the track and you're into yet another

kart-racer situation that has no reason to exist. Let's be clear: when *Super Mario Kart* sired this awful racing genre in 1994, it also perfected it.

But this god-given video game fact hasn't stopped Rare greasing up a large bear and forcing him into a tiny plane. A plane whose weapons include giant ice cubes you just sort of leave floating in the sky.

You'll be glad of them whenever someone behind you has a homing weapon. You see it floating behind you for a few seconds and unless you've got something to chuck back at it

you're screwed. Unavoidable attacks are as much fun as breaking all your teeth out with a hammer, yet they are seemingly ever-present in kart games. "Oh, you got the random power-up that swats us all out of the sky, used it near the end, and won. That's great fun. Shall we go again?" Actually, let's not.

You can imagine what the levels are like without raising your brain activity beyond comatose. Fire! Ice! Desert! Grass! It's not awful to play, but it has all been done so many times before. Just not in planes.

There's a mode where you race Bottles the Mole while trying to collect puzzle pieces. Bottles would never have gotten a flying licence – he's as good as blind. It's about as fun as watching a pensioner reverse park.

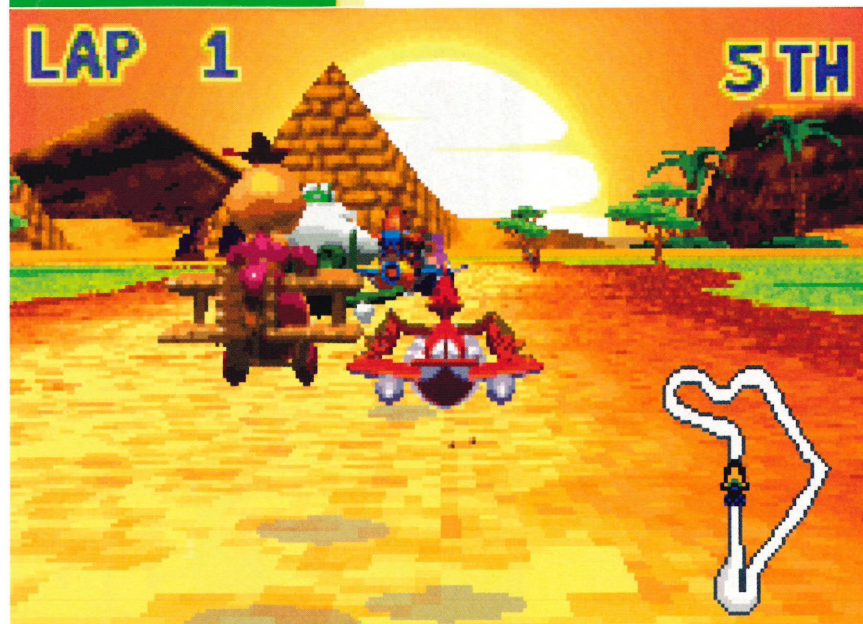
And can you imagine the Rare guys trying to get Kazooie into a plane? "Get in the plane." "Nah, I'll just fly. I have wings." "Please get in the plane?" "Like I said, I'm a bird. I can fly. I can't swim though, have you got any boats?" "That's *Banjo Sailor*. We've nearly got that ready too, we just need an extra 14 years to finish it."



Why not just fly over the grass?

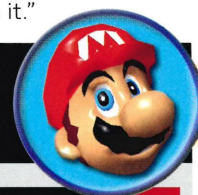


Cartoon animals in small craft chase each other. But not to death. That would be cruel



They race towards the sun, but stop short of diving into it and cooking themselves

So, should you buy it?



GRAPHICS

5

Bright, but the sprites look a bit poo and what's this? Pop-up?! Eurgh!

SOUND

4

It's got music like a circus in your nightmares and really unfunny effects.

GAMEPLAY

6

The planes handle okay, aside from the nonsensical mud-slows-plane interaction.

LIFESPAN

6

There are a good load of cups to win and the rubbish Bottles puzzle piece bit.

VERDICT

> It's hardly Nintendo's, or indeed our, problem, but will Rare make a truly essential video game ever again? *Banjo Pilot* is the game equivalent of wood chip wallpaper. Yes it's functional in some respects, but it's just so terminally bland and outdated. Really quite embarrassing. *Dean Scott*

Nintendo

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

"PLANE STUPID"

55%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK

Advance Guardian Heroes

Game Info

Price: £29.99
Publisher: Ubisoft
Web: www.ubi.com
Players: 1-2
Memory: Cart (2 slots)

OUT
NOW

► Enemies jump onto the screen. They fancy themselves as fighters. They think they're tough, striding up to you all confident. You throw a forward-lunging punch that ruins them all. More appear – they keep coming. They don't have brains – they're IDENTICAL to the 50-or-so guys you just mauled yet they charge on without fear. Fireballs and hyper-combos send them flying across the screen to painful deaths. We like this sort of game, when it doesn't run in S-L-O-W motion.

Treasure are clearly trying to tie up this year's Most Slowdown in a Game award early.

This is Treasure – the masters of 2D wreck-'em-ups, as proven by this issue's *Astro Boy: Omega Factor* and the mighty *Ikaruga*, which most people forgot to buy on GameCube. It hurts us to say they've let the side down here.

Advance Guardian Heroes is a lot like *Astro Boy*, but whereas the butt-gun boy's game only suffers from an occasional judder, this has the slowdown plague. It's almost constant, like your GBA is broken.

And that ruins what would otherwise be a great game. The bosses are as hard as nails. You'd have an easier time in a fight with Lennox Lewis.

Giant robots and super ninjas pound your body with combos, rockets, lasers and all sorts of other attacks. It'd be impossible to survive for even a minute without the all-important counter-attack button.

The counter-attack needs to be timed just right. Hit it just as an attack strikes and it'll stun enemies and ping bullets back where they came from. It's an essential skill. If you're crap at it you won't get past the fat ogre in the training level. He chucks his giant fists at your face with enough force to pop your head like a kid's balloon. WHADDAAH! He's evil.

There are loads of cool multiplayer options. You can smash your way through the single-player adventure with a mate in Co-op mode, or up to four players can go head-to-head in a fight to the death. You'll need multiple copies of the game, though.

It's a shame. We should be writing words of praise about this. It should have a sweet-looking two-page review with a juicy score slapped on the end of it. But the whole package suffers a tragic single-page fate all because of disastrous frame rates. Treasure – don't do this ever again.



■ That's you... getting your face smashed in... by some Nazi robot... again

■ They stole your picnic basket



So, should you buy it?



GRAPHICS

8

Flashy scrolling backgrounds come at the expense of a really dirty frame-rate.

SOUND

7

It does the job, but blows and explosions could have had more impact.

GAMEPLAY

5

Has all the ingredients for an eight here, but this level of slowdown is inexcusable.

LIFESPAN

5

Again, we'd play this all day if it wasn't for the slowdown. It's challenging.

VERDICT

► Seeing *Advance Guardian Heroes* is like arriving at a sunny holiday resort to find a giant sewage-processing plant nearby – the smell of rotting turds poisoning your nostrils. It should be great, but it's not. You try to ignore the major flaw and enjoy it, but you can't. Sorry. It's wrong. *Mike Jackson*

Nintendo

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

"NO TREASURE"

61%

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OUT 3rd DECEMBER

FINAL FANTASY I & II: DAWN OF SOULS.
Only on Game Boy Advance.



Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events

Game Info

Price: £39.99
Publisher: Activision
Web: www.activision.com
Players: 1
Memory: 17 blocks

OUT NOW

The events in question are someone coming up with this, making it and us having to play it.

immediately lock yourself in a room to stop yourself going out and accidentally purchasing it.

If you do buy this then you're in for a roller coaster ride of collecting things, collecting things to beat a bad guy and then collecting things within a time limit. To make it more exciting the things you have to collect are normally pretty easy to find.

Why do you have to find all these items? So you can create the most pointless range of inventions since the solar-powered torch.

To kill some rats you have to make a springy boxing glove. To get a baby to jump higher you have to make a fire extinguisher-powered booster. That's POINTLESS! Use a shovel to bash the rats and just lob the baby up to the shelf. Even flipping a switch that's too high to reach involves making a pair of stilts. Just use a long stick or stand on your tiptoes!

Then there are the incredibly easy bosses, like a spider that shoots very s-l-o-w webs and a guy with a fork who lobs food.

Sometimes the pace does pick up, but in a bad way. One task sees you returning books to their correct shelves, but for some reason you only have 20 seconds to return each book, even though you can have as many goes as possible without an overall time limit. It just reeks.

We should have been expecting the worst right from the intro. Perhaps a more accurate opener would've been: "Prepare to be bored to death by the sheer tedium of this."

► In some ways you've got to give Activision credit. It actually warns you this is going to be bad. The intro kicks off with: "The game you're about to play is extremely unpleasant." If only it said that on the box.

If you enjoyed the adventures of the Baudelaire orphans and now you want a piece of the action by buying the game you should



■ These stilts let you... um... be taller and stuff. They're the best, kids!



■ It's a hallway. Get over it



■ Such amazingly bland graphics can only be blamed on a really spiteful programmer

So, should you buy it?



GRAPHICS

6

The drabdest of drab. It's meant to be moody, but just looks dull.

SOUND

6

The speech is fuzzy and the music is repetitive. Olaf sounds like Carrey, though.

GAMEPLAY

5

Linear and tedious. Running around and collecting stuff is as exciting as it sounds.

LIFESPAN

5

A monkey could beat this in a day. There are secrets, but we couldn't care less.

VERDICT

► Like some evil plot from Count Olaf himself, we're drowning in a tide of lazy games based on films and this is no exception. There's absolutely nothing here to recommend and even the invention creation, which should be fun, becomes dull after literally a few seconds. *Rob Burman*

Nintendo

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

"UNFORTUNATE"

53%

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BADGES



4 STICK IT!

POKÉMON WICKED
WALLCHART &
CALENDAR



ALL NEW! - Available from all good newsagents
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Game Info

Price: £29.99
 Publisher: Electronic Arts
 Web: www.eagames.com
 Players: 1-4
 Memory: 27 blocks

OUT
 JAN 28th

NFL Street 2

American football goes all 'jumpers for goalposts'.

> You and a few mates have got together in the park to have a quick game of American football. It's all going well until one guy grabs the ball by jumping 10ft in the air, runs up a wall and then slows down time. Eh? Did someone invite the dude from *Prince of Persia*? No, it's just every player in *NFL Street 2*.

Right, first things first... why are all games obsessed with slowing down time at the moment? In games like *Viewtiful Joe* and the original *PoP* it's cool. But banging it into every single sports game, like *Tiger Woods* and now *NFL Street 2*, is slightly pointless. We can't remember ever watching a football match in which Ruud

Van Nistelrooy suddenly started moving in slow motion, so why should it happen in video games? The answer is that it shouldn't.

The time warping buffoonery in *NFL Street 2* is part of the latest attempt to make American football hip and trendy. Forget the pad wearing, stat-heavy, cheerleader-ringed game you all know because this is football in the back alleys and car parks rather than glitzy stadiums. It's "extreme" American football with rappers like Xzibit, hip-hop/hard rock soundtracks and players showboating for the crowd.

All this is hiding a watered-down version of America's much loved sport with arcade style

elements thrown in for good measure. This means you can jump up walls to reach high passes, run around in a comedy fashion to tease your opponents and generally fire it up with an in-your-face attitude. The problem is your average American football fan, yes there are some over here in the UK and Rob is one of the unfortunate few, likes all the stat guzzling and complicated plays. Many (Rob, again) even try kidding themselves it's a bit like a tactical game of chess, but with a ball and some helmets.

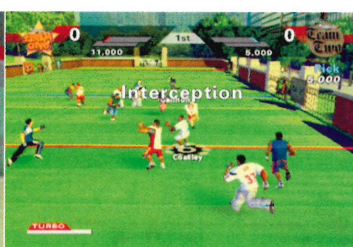
Compared to the *Madden* games, the matches in *NFL Street 2* are scrappier with more plays ending in a fumble and

a desperate scrap to get the ball. There are times when you don't really know what's going on, you saw the ball slip out of someone's hands, but you can't find it anywhere. And although the game is more action packed, it suffers from being played on a smaller playing field, the long passes don't feel quite as sweet as the huge lobs in *Madden* and the runs often end all too soon.

All the frivolity of extreme-style American football is fun for a while, but it'll leave fans of the real sport wanting more, while those new to the game are likely to be left cold by the stop/start action and the actual sport itself.



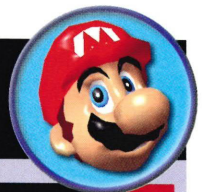
■ Pumped by years of gym abuse, this large human was locked in a constant state of celebration, even at funerals



■ That's like a tackle... but not



So, should you buy it?



GRAPHICS

7

The characters are like cartoons and the environments lack any "wow factor".

SOUND

7

In typical EA fashion there's a knowingly 'cool' soundtrack catering for everyone.

GAMEPLAY

6

It's easier to select tactics and plays, but the whole "extreme" thing gets dull.

LIFESPAN

6

One-player becomes boring, but you can break out the multiplayer now and again.

VERDICT

> For me it's all about *Madden* and taking the Ravens to the Super Bowl. This lacks depth and the over-the-top plays verge on totally ridiculous. It's unlikely to win over any fans that aren't already American football nuts and those that are may find it too light compared to *Madden*. Rob Burman

Nintendo

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

"NFHELL"

62%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK

Tiny little reviews.

Lemony Snicket

Publisher: **Activision**
Release date: **Out now**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1**
Game Save: **Cart (1 slot)**

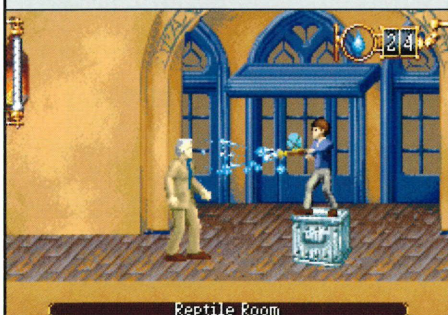


■ You've just been to the cinema to watch the film and now you get to go home and play the GBA game. Hoo-flipping-ray. In fact you can guarantee that for every film you see nowadays there'll be a game lurching like a decapitated zombie onto your 'Cube or GBA just days after release.

Lemony Snicket takes its cue from many generic platformers on the GBA, by being a basic run-around-and-collect-things affair. Although you get to play as three different characters from the film it can't hide the fact that this is a by-the-numbers game. The only mildly exciting character is a baby who can bite through wooden boxes! Blimey, imagine trying to breast feed her!

Levels see you collecting a number of items to generate a wacky invention, like an apple core-shooting machine – cores that kill people by hitting them! The inventions are totally over the top, but quite fun, if only for a short time.

As GBA titles go, it doesn't even look good, but at least that means the gameplay doesn't suffer alone. Instead of being a bright and colourful game that's pleasing to your discerning graphical eyes, it's bland and samey, looking as though the developers chose grey as their prime colour.



Nintendo

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"UNFORTUNATE"

51%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK

Beyblade G Revolution

Publisher: **Atari**
Release date: **Out now**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1**
Game Save: **Cart (1 slot)**

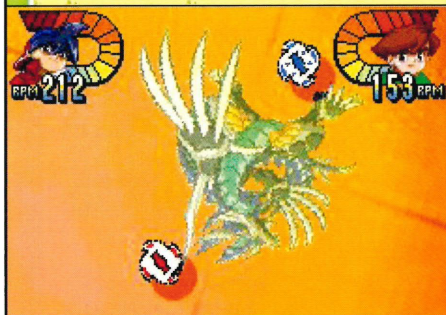


■ Yu-Gi-Oh!, Beyblade, Duel Masters... there are some weird GBA games to buy these days. You have to wonder why in the world they sell so well 'cos they're usually rubbish. Handheld gamers should be exploring planets with Samus or hacking Octorocks to bits with Link.

Here's a newsflash about Beyblade. It's basically a glorified version of the spinning tops that were popular about a hundred years ago. And you know why it was popular? Because there were no GBAs. They had to play stupid wooden top games to pass the time before being shoved up a chimney or into some dangerous machinery at a factory.

Beyblade the video game is as pointless as the actual real-life version. You challenge someone to a duel with your top of terror then watch as fate either deals you a good go or a pants one. Yes, you can press **A** to try and attack your enemy, but it's all down to chance.

They may as well make a video game of Pooh Bear's favourite pastime of dropping sticks into water and seeing which floats down the river quickest! Do yourself a favour and avoid this. Spend all your cash on awesome things like *Metroid* or *Mario*.



Nintendo

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"SLIPPED DISC"

43%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK

Smashing Drive

Publisher: **Zoo Digital**
Release date: **Out now**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1-2**
Game Save: **Cart (1 slot)**



■ Here's a dictionary definition of the word "smashing" – Informal, chiefly British. Excellent or first-rate; wonderful: we had a smashing time. This can't be applied to *Smashing Drive* unless you rearrange the letters to spell "woeful".

It's not really clear what *Smashing Drive* wants to be. There are *Crazy Taxi* elements (because you're driving a cab), generic racing bits and a pinch of *Burnout 2* thrown in for good measure. A typical level sees you racing along until you shoot up a ramp and start driving along the top of an aeroplane.

It's not even really clear why you're racing. Perhaps the driver has heard there's a millionaire in town who likes to tip liberally or perhaps it's just because it's a fairly ridiculous game. Case in point is the fact that if you bump into a car you get a little bit of damage, whereas the car you crashed into flies off the road. It even happens when you ram into a truck.

Smashing Drive is also Namco's latest attempt to make the GBA produce 3D graphics, a bit like *Kill Switch*. Sadly this just serves to turn the game into a blocky mess, lacking the smooth style of other GBA racers like *V-Rally 3*.



Nintendo

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"SMASH THIS"

42%

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK @ WWW.NINTENDOMAGAZINE.CO.UK

They are the future.

Tron 2.0 Killer App

Publisher: Buena Vista
Release date: Out now
Price: £29.99
Players: 1-4
Game Save: Cart (3 slots)



■ Way back in the 1980s there was a film called *Tron*. It featured revolutionary computer graphics that would nowadays make any gamer laugh out loud. Now the GBA game is here and just as laughable as the ancient movie.

Back in the blocky days of games, the idea of *Tron* was a revolution because it was all about virtual people that lived inside your computer. But now there are so many games that feature this idea – the *Megaman Battle Network* series is a prime example – that it's no longer anything to shout about from the rooftops.

Playing as Tron, you run about destroying rogue programmes with your frisbee and take part in lacklustre mini-games. One involves driving a blocky tank around a blocky maze, destroying other blocky tanks. Although we've come a very long way in terms of gaming, playing this feels like we're back on an Atari 2600.

To fully 'enjoy' the 80s experience, the original *Tron* arcade games can be played for the first time outside of a sweaty arcade. Unfortunately, they should have remained in the last millennium because even on the GBA they play, and look, terrible.



It's Mr. Pants

Publisher: THQ
Release date: Jan 28th
Price: £29.99
Players: 1
Game Save: Cart (4 slots)



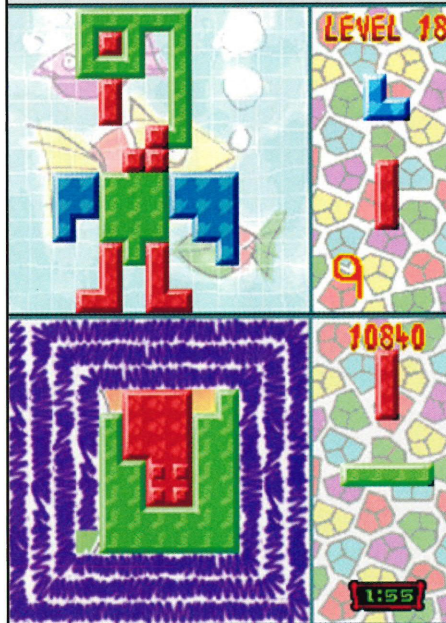
■ Being half-naked isn't necessarily a recipe for fun. It can sometimes be cold, you might get laughed at and you could even be arrested if you've decided to strip off in Tesco. But *It's Mr. Pants* appears to love posing in his Y-fronts.

Tetris set the standard for handheld puzzle games. Everything else is playing catch-up. *It's Mr. Pants* tries to do this by combining puzzles with pretty childish comedy. But if you can overlook that there's a decent game waiting to be enjoyed.

On each level you have to make a multicoloured shape disappear by linking up blocks of shapes the same colour. The shapes range from trains to a pig's head. The problem is you only have a limited amount of blocks to clear the picture from the screen. It's certainly addictive.

There's also an against-the-clock mode in which you have to keep clearing blocks of shapes for as long as possible. It lacks the ingenuity of the main game, but it's still fun when you've melted your brain trying to get through the Puzzle mode.

It's probably best not to sit and play through this in one sitting though, because eventually Mr Pants himself does begin to get on your nerves.



Dead to Rights

Publisher: Zoo Digital
Release date: Out now
Price: £29.99
Players: 1
Game Save: Password



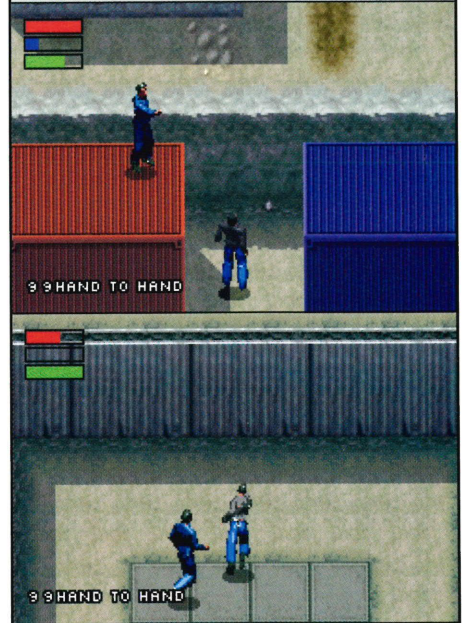
■ "So far my day had been a typical one in the life of a P.I. in grimy Peterborough. Some broad walked into my office and said her husband had been killed after playing a bad GBA game. I asked her if she had any clues and she passed me the empty box of a game called *Dead to Rights*."

"After questioning the manager in Dixons I made him give me a copy of the game and took an SP off some punk down town. After all my years as a P.I. I wasn't prepared for what I saw. This is a travesty against all hardnosed detectives like me."

"For a start the guy talks about leaves turning to red and brown in the autumn. Is this guy a sissy? And I don't know what gangster films he's been watching, but I don't run around like a chicken either."

"An", even though I've been to some of the sleaziest nightclubs in Cambridgeshire, I ain't never seen a bunch of thugs appear out of the lights on the dance floor. And even if I did, I'm sure they wouldn't look exactly the same as each other."

"When I got back to my office, the broad was still there. I told her what I'd found out and she burst into tears, saying she tried to buy *Minish Cap*, but got this by accident. One of the saddest stories I ever heard."



Nintendo

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Nintendo

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"PANTASTIC"

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OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"CRIMINAL"

49%

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PROFESSOR E. GADD'S Guides



This month: *Metroid Prime 2: Echoes*!
HOW TO BEAT ALL THE BOSSES THAT HAVE BEEN BEATING YOU.

BOSS 1: ALPHA SPLINTER

Lock-on to the creature and circle it, strafing around and firing continuously at its evil little face. After depleting its health it will transform into a dark version.

Use the same tactics as before, making sure you sidestep its acid attacks. It has quite a large health bar, but is fairly easy to kill. If you get bored, try using missiles to speed things up.



EASY

BOSS 2: BOMB GUARDIAN

You don't really need to attack the first form as it will change to the dark version quickly.

Move around and dodge the slithering beast. Get behind it and continuously fire at its tail.

Eventually it will raise its head in pain and open its mouth. This is the only time you can actually hurt it. Now start launching missiles and hammer that fire button like there's no tomorrow.



EASY

BOSS 3: JUMP GUARDIAN

Stay inside the safe zone and shoot the creature when it's on the ground level. When it jumps, look up and lock-on. Keep shooting until it jumps back down.

When it hits the ground, be ready to jump over the shock waves. As you are fighting in a protective bubble you can dodge around to let your health regenerate making this an easy fight.



EASY

BOSS 4: DARK SAMUS I

At first she's weak so just strafe her. After getting rid of half her energy she'll get stronger. Watch out when she rises into the air and put the central column in-between you and her. This is the only large obstacle in the room that she cannot destroy.

Keep strafing around the central column and whittle down her health. If you use the other columns as cover she'll explode it causing A LOT of damage.



MEDIUM

BOSS 5: AMORBIS

Find a Light Crystal and stand near it while charging your beam. Lock-on to Amorbis as soon as it comes out of the ground and hit it with a full blast.

Repeat this a few times and it'll attach itself to the central sphere in the middle of the room. Dodge its attacks as best you can and keep hitting it with charged shots. Eventually it'll flop over and start sucking in air.

Change to the Morph Ball and roll in front to get sucked inside then mash the bomb button. After you're spat out there'll be two of the creatures to fight. Use the same tactics as before.

After defeating the next two it will split into three. Repeat the same procedure and you'll soon win the fight.

**BOSS 6: BOOST GUARDIAN**

As soon as the fight starts, charge up your energy beam and fire a Super Missile at the boss. Repeat a few times and the boss will roll into a ball.

Do the same thing and roll around dropping bombs. Try and drop them in the path of the boss when it's a moving bubble cloud. When it's whizzing around try and circle around the smaller creatures and hopefully the boss will roll through a few, killing them.

After a while the boss will return to normal. Now is your chance to shoot it with Super Missiles again. Try and avoid the minions as you move around and keep your beam charged up, ready for when the boss appears.

**BOSS 7: ALPHA BLOGG**

The Alpha Blogg is a simple boss to kill. All you need do is shoot five rounds of Super Missiles in into its mouth when it charges at you.

Lock-on to it, charge-up your beam and dodge when it fires. After it shoots it will charge at you, so be ready to greet it with a Super Missile to the face. Five clean shots will be enough to kill it.

**BOSS 8: GRAPPLE GUARDIAN**

So long as you stay in the safe zones and avoid being rammed by the boss you won't have any problems winning. Charge up your beam and shoot it in the eye a few times. This will make it angry. After shaking its head it will attempt to grapple you.

Make sure the beast is on the other side of a pillar. When it grapples at you, strafe behind a pillar so that the beast latches onto it. When it gets stuck on the beam quickly move behind and fire a Super Missile at its vulnerable backside.

Repeat this a few times until its armour falls off. Now shoot it in the eye again, as soon as it starts shaking its head you can damage it with a charged beam.



BOSS 9: CHYKKA LARVAE AND CHYKKA ADULT

The first form is easy. Stand in the middle and watch it swim around. When it dives, look for a dark patch on the surface where it'll emerge. When it leaps from the water, hit it with a charged beam and double jump over the wave. If it lands on the platform use the Light Beam to shoot it in the mouth, followed quickly by the stomach. Repeat this until it dies.

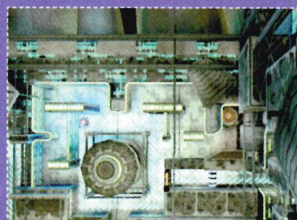
When the adult appears, lock-on and keep firing. Double jump the acid it spits. Soon you'll stun it. Determine which way it's facing then grapple to a platform behind it. Lock-on to one of the red spots on its wings and fire a Super Missile.

Destroy all four spots and it'll turn into a dark version. Kill the mini-larvae and hit the boss's stomach a few times with a charged Light Beam and it'll revert to normal.



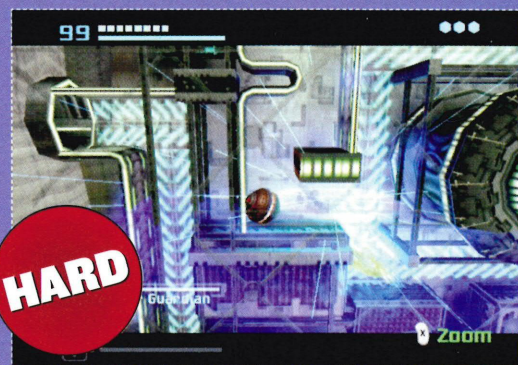
BOSS 10: SPIDER BALL GUARDIAN

Lay bombs in its path and repeat until it goes green then quickly move to the bomb slot in the top-right corner. Once you've bombed it the boss will be damaged. Follow it to the next room and get up on the top-right side. When the boss approaches, lay bombs so blunders it into them. Repeat until its green.

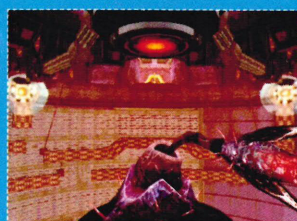


Boost to the far side and drop onto the ledge so you can bomb the slot. Use similar tactics in the third room. In the final area bomb the boss green again and hit the slot to the lower left. After the boss is damaged, turn it green again when it's heading to the right.

Activate the lower-left slot then the upper-right slot. Repeat this, using a third slot on the upper left of the screen.



BOSS 11: POWER BOMB GUARDIAN



Roll up the spider track on the wall and head right while avoiding the explosions (explosions are bad for you, see?).

Each bomb slot damages the boss, but, in turn, makes the damn thing fire faster with a bigger blast radius. Therefore it makes sense to get the hardest ones first.

Ignore the first bomb slot you see, instead moving around to the second bomb

slot on the right of the area. Now lay a bomb in the slot and drop back down. Go back up the track and roll left this time. Head for the second bomb slot on the left and bomb it. Next, do the first bomb slot on the left and, finally, the first on the right.



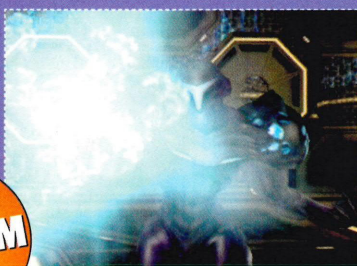
BOSS 12: DARK SAMUS



MEDIUM

This fight is very similar to your first encounter with Dark Samus. Lock-on and charge up your beam. When you get a chance, let rip with a Super Missile. If she starts rolling around, avoid her by double jumping. If she turns invisible, use the Dark Visor to track her and keep shooting.

After hitting her with a few well-aimed missiles, she'll start moving more quickly, making her much harder to hit – too fast for missiles. Now switch to your beam and hammer the fire button to gradually whittle away the remainder of her health.



BOSS 13: CARETAKER CLASS DRONE

Do a bomb jump to get on the rail and hold down the boost button. As soon as the red light appears boost across and, with a bit of luck, you'll smash right into it.

Repeat this a few times and a large cylinder will appear in the chamber. Smash this in the same way as the red light. This will force the drone upwards. Move up and repeat the process twice more to destroy this boss.

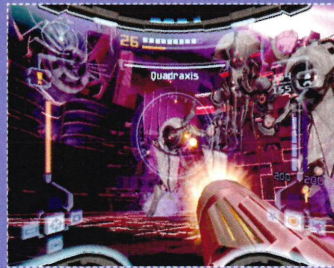
**MEDIUM****BOSS 14: QUADRAXIS****HARD**

Lay bombs under the glowing spots on its feet. When they're gone, lock-on to a knee and shoot it with a charged shot when it's glowing blue.

Keep targeting the knees when they glow and one of them will blow. Every time you destroy a bit of Quadraxis, suck up all the discarded health so you can reach the second part of the fight fully stocked.

Bomb the spots again, then blow a second knee. Repeat this to break all the knees. When it only has one good knee left it'll try and keep it as far from you as possible, meaning you'll have to move under it to get a shot in. With all knees broken the body will crumble and the head will pop off.

Use the Echo Visor and fire two Super Missiles at the emitter on the broken body. Keep firing until all the head emitters are gone, then shoot the head to stun it. Boost Ball ahead of it and roll up one of the leg tracks. Boost off the top when the head floats past and stick to it so you can plant a bomb in the slot. Do this twice to defeat the beast.

**BOSS 15: EMPEROR ING**

First stand in the corner and use missiles to hit the tentacles. If they gather above you, roll away and double jump over them as they sweep around.

After destroying all the tentacles, lock-on to the glowing spot that appears and hit it with the Annihilator Beam when ever you get a chance. After a few seconds the tentacles will re-appear. Repeat this process until it is dead.

The second form is easy and allows you to replenish your health. Roll around on the body and drop bombs near the holes to kill the tentacles. Leave one alive and bomb the black bubbles – they drop health and ammo. Don't destroy the final one 'til you have full health and ammo. Lock-on to its heart and strafe around firing missiles into it.

If you can get behind it there's a hole on the back that you can fire into. After a few hits the heart will change colour. Use the Annihilator Beam to damage it.

**HARD****BOSS 16: DARK SAMUS**

The first part is similar to the other encounters with Dark Samus. Dodge around and shoot her. If you have the ammo, use fully charged Dark or Light Beam attacks for maximum damage. If she turns invisible, switch on the Echo Visor to keep track of her.

After taking half her health she'll float in the middle of the arena and become invincible to normal attacks. Stand against one of the walls not covered in phazon and dodge from side to side if she fires. Keep the Power Beam fully charged at all times. When small blue sparks head for you release the lock-on and put the charged beam in their path. The beam will suck them up and turn blue.

Once the beam is blue, fire at her. This is the only way to damage her when she is shielded. After this she'll revert to her previous attacks. Damage her again and repeat the process of collecting particles in your gun to finish her.

HARD



Tips Lab

Gadd's Quick Tip
In the Game Boy Advance version of *Urbz: Sims in the City*, the password for Club Xizzle is BUCKET.

Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door

I once had a thousand-door year. I created 1,000 differently coloured doors for no reason. Anyhow, here are some special badges...

BADGE...	HOW TO UNLOCK...
Pity Flower (<i>recovers FPs when attacked</i>)	beat levels 31-40 in the Pits of 100 Trials
Strange Sack (<i>doubles inventory space</i>)	beat levels 41-50
Double Dip (<i>use two items in the same turn</i>)	beat levels 61-70
Bump Attack (<i>defeat weaker foes without a battle</i>)	beat levels 71-80
Lucky Day (<i>greater chance of evading an attack</i>)	beat levels 81-90
Return Postage (<i>attackers incur 1/2 damage they cause</i>)	beat levels 91-100



□ Jeeez! That's worse than the spelling in NOM!

Need For Speed Underground 2

They should customise their cars with anti-gravity exhausts rather than just unlocking these unique items in Outrun Races.



□ Your new spoiler will be four times wider than the car

UNLOCKABLE...	HOW...
Hoods	four wins in Stage Two
Performance choice	six wins in Stage Five
Performance choice	nine wins in Stage Four
Performance choice	three wins in Stage Three
Rims	six wins in Stage Three
Spoiler	four wins in Stage Four
Vinyl	six wins in Stage Four
Widebody kit	11 wins in Stage Five
Power Magazine	32 wins in Stage Five
AutoMaxx Magazine	16 wins in Stage Four

Gadd's Quick Tip
In the GBA version of *LOTR: The Third Age*, complete the game to unlock the Gap of Rohan mission.

Grand Theft Auto Advanced

Heki heki. Unlock all these guns! PS. Violence is wrong, kids.

WEAPON...	HOW TO UNLOCK...
Shotgun	collect 40 hidden packages
Molotov cocktails	collect 50 packages
Grenades	collect 60 packages
Assault rifle	collect 70 packages
Minigun	collect 80 packages
Rocket launcher	collect 90 packages



□ A bigger muzzle flash equals more respect

NOM Superstar Tip



Chup chup! When I entered *Rogue Leader: Rogue Squadron II* into my Cheat Champion it almost exploded because there are so many codes to enter on the Passcode Screen.

To get the Naboo Starfighter enter CDYXF!Q, then ASEPONE. To unlock all Tech Upgrades enter AYZB!RCL then WRKFORIT. Finally to brag yourself unlimited lives type in JPVI?IJC then RSBFNRL.



□ Sadly there's no code to make *The Phantom Menace* a good *Star Wars* film.

Gadd's Quick Tip

To unlock all the team gear in *NBA Live 2005*, enter 1NVDR89ER2 in the NBA Lounge.

Yu-Gi-Oh! Falsebound Kingdom

I don't know whether Yugi uses my Super Spike Gum in his hair, but it looks like mine did before most of it fell out. Here are some unlockable cards. Heki, heki!



□ Power up your deck by following our special combinations

CARD...	COMBINE...
B. Skull Dragon	Red-Eyes B. Dragon + Summoned Skull
Chimera	Berformat + Gazelle
Cosmo Queen	Dark Elf + Mystical Elf
Crimson Sunbird	Mavelus + Winged Eagle
Gaia The Dragon Champ	Gaia the Fierce + Curse of Dragon
Gate Guardian	Kazejin + Suijin + Sanga
Meteor B. Dragon	Meteor Dragon + Red Eyes Black Dragon
Thousand Dragon	Baby Dragon + Time Wizard

The Prof's Problems

Each month you can ask me about all your gaming problems. Heki heki!



Q. Where can I find the sixth Mercury Djinn in *Golden Sun*? It's the only one I need so please help me!

Thomas Maryan, via email.

☹ In Altmiller Cave, follow the path until you get past the invisible man. Go to the right room and push the first pillar on the left all the way to the right, then push the bottom pillar all the way up. Freeze the puddle, then push the pillar from the right over it. Push the second pillar from the top to it too. Finally walk around the room to the top pillar and push it down.



Q. I heard that in *Mario Kart Super Circuit*, you can play as Pikachu, but I've forgotten how to do it. Can you help me, Prof?

Pezhvok Joshqani, via email.

☹ Oh dear, I've consulted all of my gaming books, even the one I keep on a really high shelf and none of them say you can unlock Pikachu! You shouldn't believe everything you hear, Pezhvok..

Q. I keep dying on *Samurai Jack*. Is it because I lack the essential ninja skills to take on Aku?

Peter Blowers, Teesside

☹ Hmm, Peter I wouldn't like to say whether you're rubbish, but perhaps that's the reason. To refill your health meter, hold **Y** and **X**, then press **A**, **X**, **B** and **Y**.



Q. How do I unlock the Solo Battle mode in *Gotcha Force*? My mate's done it, but won't tell.

Lyodd McJones, Suffolk.

☹ Your friend must have played through the entire game to unlock this special mode.

Heki heki! Want me to help you out? Then send a letter to The Prof's Problems at the usual address. Or email rob.burman@emap.com. Because I'm busy making new gadgets, like the Poltergust 5000, I will only be able to reply to those questions used in the magazine.

PLAYER'S CHOICE

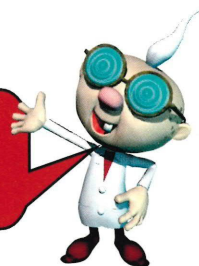
It seems strange to me that when Sonic developed his uncanny speed it was the same day that I lost my Super Speed Sneakers. They helped me run around my lab at 100mph, so I could get things done quicker.

To unlock the Kart Racing game in *Sonic Adventure 2 Battle* complete the Tails driving quest and the Rouge Chase mission in Dark Side Story mode. To unlock the two-



player kart racing, finish both Route 101 in Hero and Route 280 in Dark Side.

Plus to unlock all the Jewel Races, complete them in Story mode and then collect the emblem.



Heki heki! Aren't monkeys the most amusing things you've ever seen? They really are nature's clowns. I just hope that DK won't be angry with me for giving you all these tips!

Donkey Kong

Donkey Kong Country (GBA)

Imagine an actual country that was full of apes. If there was enough of them there'd be a whole planet of the apes! Image a film of that? It would be the best!



❑ Don't get an actual monkey to input the codes. It may crap on your GBA

UNLOCKABLE...

HOW...

Bonus stage	Main menu. Hit ST , hold SELECT then B , ▲ , B , B , A
Sound Test	Start screen. Hold SELECT , press B , A , L , L , A , ▼
50 lives	File select. Hold SELECT , press B , A , R , R , A , L
Hero mode	beat the game with 90% completion

Donkey Kong 64

Chup chup! I didn't know Donkey Kong was 64-years-old! Apes must age well. Unlike me – I'm only 21! Check out these great unlockables. They're not easy to get, though.



❑ These boys are all about the unlockables

UNLOCKABLE...

HOW...

Unlimited items	photograph two Banana Fairies
Jetpac game	photograph six Banana Fairies
Krusha in multiplayer	photograph 15 Banana Fairies
Donkey Kong Theatre	photograph 20 Banana Fairies
Special Ending	collect all 201 gold bananas and beat King K. Rool

Donkey Kong Country (Super NES)

I once kept some monkeys in giant balls... hey, that's a great idea for a game! I'm on fire!



CODE...

WHAT YOU GET...

Pick save file, press L , R , R , L , R , R , L , R , L , R and type 'LIVES'	50 lives
... as above, but type 'MERRY'	Christmas bonus game
... as above, but type 'MUSIC'	Sound Test
... as above, but type 'HARDR'	harder difficulty

Donkey Kong

You damn dirty ape! Stop throwing barrels at my head. Perhaps these tips will help...

- Never try and jump a flame. It can't be done
- Don't always go for the hammer, it'll slow you down
- If Mario falls more than his height and a half he'll die
- You get a bonus for speed and extra lives for every million points



❑ The fire is not for jumping

PROF OAK'S POKÉ-CORNER

Your Poké-problems solved by the Professor!

Hello there, Pokémon Trainers. I know it's sometimes hard to battle your Pokémon or find those TMs you really need. But don't fret because each month I'll answer your Pokémon queries.

Q. I've beaten the Elite Four and I'm trying to raise Eevee so it evolves into Umbreon. But I don't know how to do this without the day and night time effects from Gold and Silver.

Alex Stewart, Colchester

Ah, a tricky one indeed, Alex. I've had a lot of people asking me how to evolve their Eevee into different forms. One young man even asked me if it would turn into a Jigglypuff. Ridiculous! To make your Eevee evolve into the Dark Pokémon Umbreon, just make sure you increase its happiness levels and level it up through experience while playing at night.

Q. I have an Onix on Lv 72, but it won't evolve. Please tell me when it will evolve.

Conor Ryan, Ireland

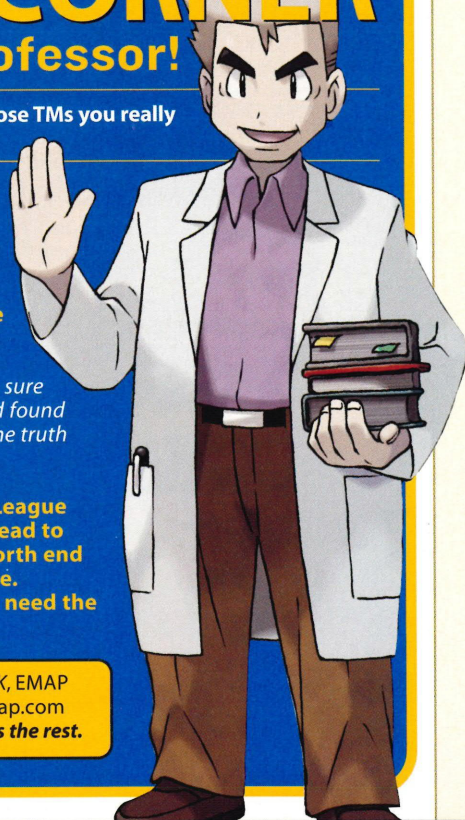
I think Onix is probably one of my favourite Pokémon. When I was training as

a Pokémon professor I used to play with one all the time – they're very friendly. Anyway, back to the point, Ryan. To make your Onix evolve into Steelix it needs to be holding the Metal Coat item when you trade it with another Trainer.

Q. Is Mewtwo in Pokémon FireRed? I'm sure one of the kids at my school said he had found Mewtwo the other day. Was he telling the truth because I NEED Mewtwo?

Martin Goldsmith, via email

After becoming the Pokémon League Champion and helping Celio, head to Route Four and take off from the north end of the bridge to reach Cerulean Cave. Inside is a Lv 70 Mewtwo, but you'll need the Master Ball to be able to catch it.



If you want to ask me a Pokémon-related question please write to Prof Oak's Poké-corner, NOM UK, EMAP Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 5UW. Or email rob.burman@emap.com
Unfortunately I can only reply to those questions printed in the magazine, because my Mudkip eats the rest.

TOP 5 TIPS

Tips of justice just for you... and every other reader.

1 PAPER MARIO 2
To unlock the Tube Parlour Game complete the "Important Thing" sidequest given to you by Frankie.

2 SUPER MONKEY BALL
To unlock the Master levels play through the Expert levels and the Expert extra levels without using a continue.

3 TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2
Beat the Classic mode on Sick difficulty setting to unlock Bigfoot as a playable skater.

4 NFS UNDERGROUND 2
To unlock the Nissan Skyline, you'll need to have racked up 500 miles about town.

5 LOTR: THE THIRD AGE
To unlock the Fall of Isengard level play through Hard mode on Evil setting.

To choose the games you want to see tipped here, email rob.burman@emap.com
Make sure you put the subject heading Top 5 Tips. Or write to Top 5 Tips, NOM UK, EMAP Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 5UW.

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Crash Bandicoot XS	Need for Speed: Undergr.	Spider-Man: The Movie 2
Dark Alliance, Baldur's Gate	Need for Speed: Undergr. 2	Star Wars: Bounty Hunter
Def Jam Vendetta	Paper Mario: 1000 Yr Door	Star Wars: Clone Wars
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Enter the Matrix	Pokemon Crystal	Starfox Adventures
Godzilla: Destroy all Monst.	Pokemon Fire Red	Street Fighter Alpha 3
Golden Sun	Pokemon Gold	Tales of Symphonia
Golden Sun 2	Pokemon Leaf Green	The Return of King
Goldeneye: Rogue Agent	Pokemon Red	Tony Hawk's 2
Grand Theft Auto Advance	Pokemon Ruby	Tony Hawk's 4
H. Potter & Pris. of Azkaban	Pokemon Sapphire	Ty Tasmanian Tiger
Harvest Moon 2: Wond. Life	Pokemon Silver	Urbz: Sims in City*
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin	Primal Fury, Bloody Roar	X-Men Legends
Inter. Track & Field 2000	Rayman 3	Yu-Gi-Oh! F Kingdom
James Bond 007: Nightfire	Res. Evil: Code Veronica X	Yu-Gi-Oh! Sacred Cards
James Bond: Goldeneye	Resident Evil	Yu-Gi-Oh! R. of Destr.
Last Kingdoms II: Rune	Resident Evil Zero	Zelda: Majora's Mask
Mario Golf: Advance Tour	Simpsons: Hit & Run	Zelda: Ocarina of Time
Mario Kart: Double Dash	Simpsons Tree Horror	Zelda: The Minish Cap
Medal of Honor Frontline	Sims in the City (The Urbz)*	Zelda: Wind Waker
Medal of Honor: R. Sun	Sims: Bustin' Out	Plus Many More...

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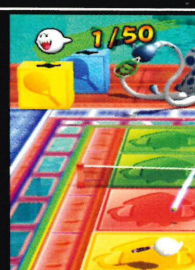
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We Can't Wait



For These...



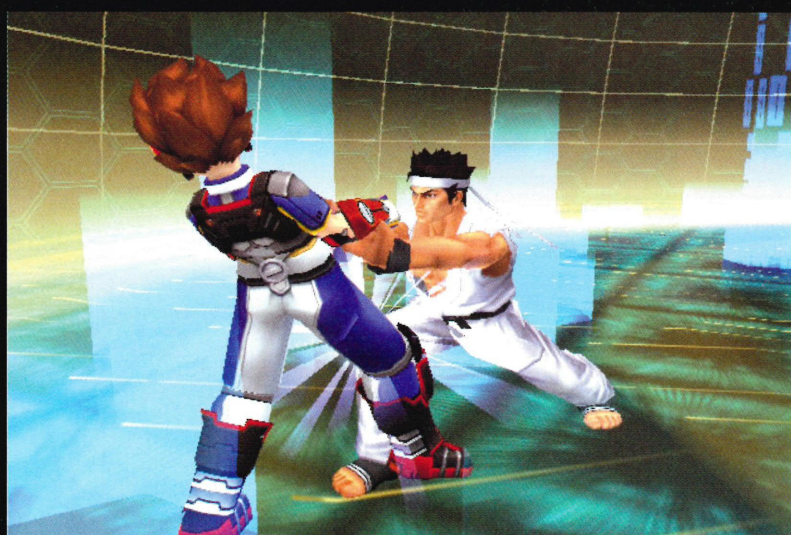
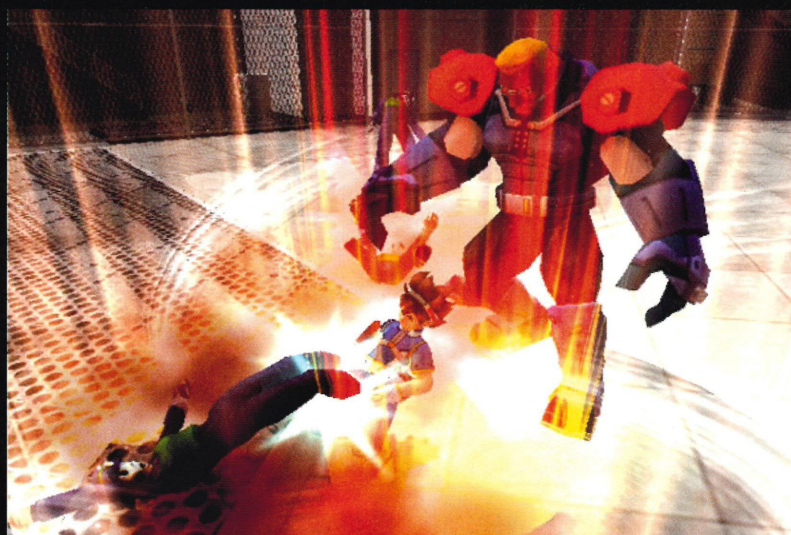
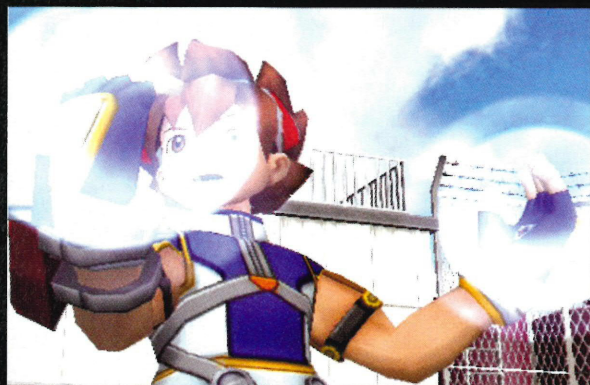
Mario Power Tennis (GC)

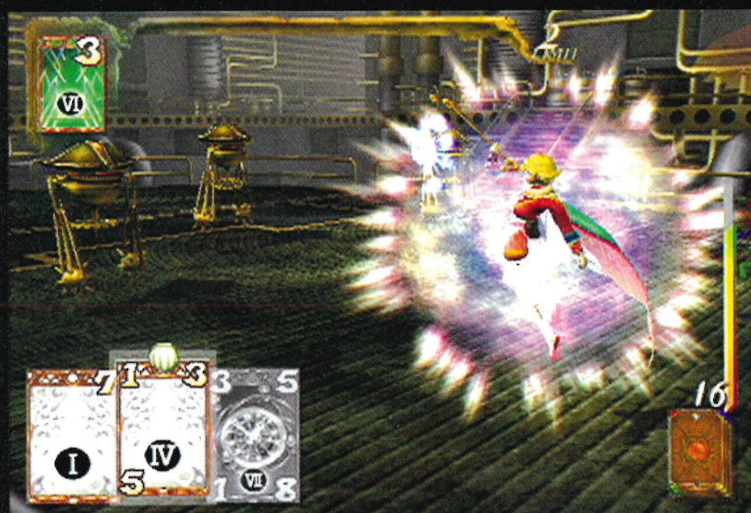
You see the “power” in the title of this latest Mario sports fest? That means you need to start expecting a lot from this game – Nintendo even considered calling it *Mario Awesome Tennis*. The mini-games are looking really special, the best of which sees you feeding a bunch of hungry Chain Chomps some tennis balls. But watch out because if you accidentally feed one a bomb, it’ll fly into a rage and chase after you! Another sees you battling ghosts that keep popping out of the paintings from *Luigi’s Mansion*. You’ll be running around like a headless chicken trying to hit them with tennis balls before they escape from their portraits. Keep your eyes on the ball because we’ll be reviewing *Mario Power Tennis* next month.



| Virtua Quest (GC)

Taking *Virtua Fighter* – one of the best-known fighters ever – and turning it into a sub-RPG adventure seems like a strange move and, to be honest, we're not sure whether it'll pay off. In typical RPG style, your character is a young boy who must go on a quest to save a planet, or whatever. Along the way you'll learn all manner of spectacular moves so you can have your opponents crying like babies. One thing we're pretty sure of from these screens is that it's looking good. But until we get our hands on it there's just no knowing what it plays like...

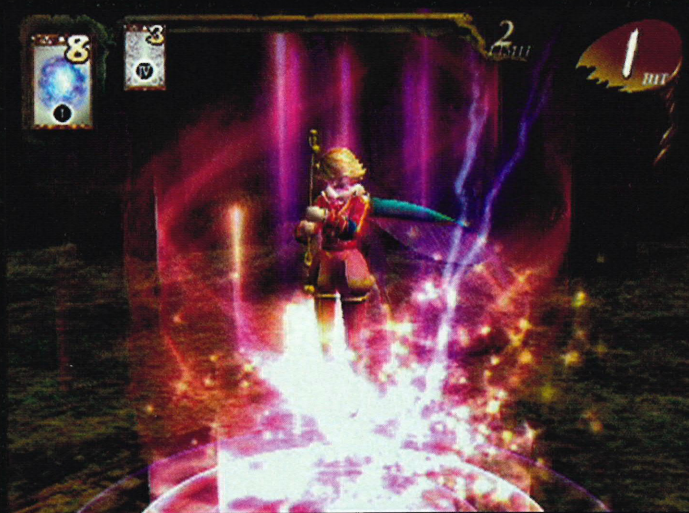




| Baten Kaitos (GC)

The closest we get to "card battling" is when it all kicks off after someone loses their lunch money during a particularly savage game of Uno. So *Baten Kaitos'* card wizardry leaves us a bit puzzled really. Keeping things locked inside cards? Eh? But surely cards are only paper thin?

But we can forget all about this strange card business by just looking at the stunning graphics. They're so luscious and vibrant that we wouldn't be surprised if you glued this page to your eyes just so you can stare at them for the rest of time.



| Klonoa 2 (GBA)

The original escaped a lot of people and that's a shame 'cos its blend of puzzling and platforming worked well. *Klonoa 2* is your chance to make up for that mistake! Playing as some long-eared creature you have to inflate even stranger creatures with an air gun and use them to trampoline around the levels. Kirby probably won't be too happy about that. In between levels you'll have to race up waterfalls while the inflatable things roll towards spiky machines. Eek!

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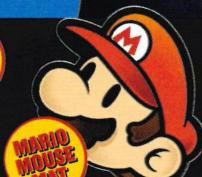
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WIN! WIN! WIN!

This month the Star Letter plucked from Quill's bulging mail bag wins a copy of *Donkey Kong Jungle Beat* and a shiny new GameCube to play it on. Three runners-up win a copy of the game!



>> Revolution a no-go?

Why does everyone think that the Revolution will be so good? I think it's a trick. After all, what do dolphins have to do with GameCube?

Absolutely nothing and I think it's the same name trick Nintendo is pulling with the Revolution.

Thomas Fletcher, Northfield
What, would you have preferred the GameCube to be fish-shaped and spit water? Dolphin was a working title. It was not a trick and neither is the name Revolution. But Nintendo is promising something special. We believe them, too.

>> My DS Rules

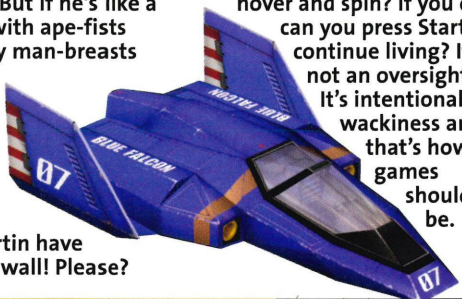
I just received my Nintendo DS and it's every bit as good as I had imagined. The touch screen works perfectly for *Metroid Prime Hunters*. The graphics are much better in motion than any screenshots I've seen and it fits comfortably in your hand. Another amazing console from Nintendo.

Lee Hutchinson, via email
You know it. We couldn't wait to get our hands on the DS and now we can't put it down. UK Ninty nuts will be joining the dual-screen gang soon. Then you can have big PictoChat parties, or something.

>> Nintendo DIY

Hi guys. I love Nintendo and I wanted to paint a large picture of Paper Mario on my white wall. But I'm not allowed 'cos my dad says Nintendo is stupid. He's so wrong. Please come to my house and kick my dad up the ass, then paint Paper Mario on my wall. You probably won't come, but my address is...

Martin Edgar, Northallerton
How big is your dad? If you've got a little Diddy Kong dad we'll 'ave 'im. But if he's like a monster dad with ape-fists and big muscly man-breasts like Donkey Kong, we'll play it safe with a message for him in the mag: Oi, Papa Edgar! Let Martin have a Paper Mario wall! Please?



>> Hover-daft

If *F-Zero* ships float ABOVE the tracks, how can they be affected by ice, grit, lava and healing pads? All these things are on the ground and the *F-Zero* cars don't touch them. They all add fun to the game, but I think the Big N overlooked something there.

William Naameh, London
Don't try to make sense of the video games world. Does touching a leaf make you grow a raccoon tail? Do coins hover and spin? If you die, can you press Start to continue living? It's not an oversight. It's intentional wackiness and that's how games should be.

>> Free stuff is good

I praise you for your free gifts over the past two years. They are so cool, so I'm asking you not to do what every other magazine does by giving away a DVD every month. Your gifts are something special like the NES key chain and the Chain Chomp beach ball, so please don't stop those great free gifts coming.

Callum Nicholls, via email
Don't worry Callum – our loyal readers can look forward to blagging loads more cool stuff with NOM. We can't do demos because Nintendo don't want you guys playing incomplete, shoddy versions of games, but if you have any cool gift ideas, hit us with them. We want to know!



>> Prime Vs. Halo

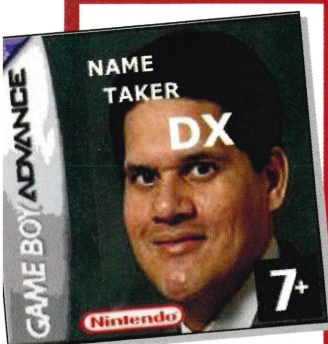
I was watching a games programme on TV that gave *Metroid Prime 2* four-out-of-five because of a lack of originality. WHAT?! This same programme had previously said *Halo 2* (rip-off sequel) was one of the greatest games of all time.

Alias: AnglArmtg, via email
Halo 2 is pretty much the same as the first – same weapons, enemies and even setting. *Prime 2* has new guns, new abilities, new suits, ALL NEW enemies, new, shinier graphics and it's set on a different planet with a completely unique plot. They need to realise. They're a bunch of plonkers.



GAME or LAME?

Get your crazy cap on and dream up an awesome new game. Draw the box for it with master skills and you'll see it here. Simple...



Gaze into those eyes and feel the terror of office juniors

Name Taker DX

by Tom Lambert, Bath

• WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

Playing as Reggie Fils-Aime you patrol the Nintendo offices kicking the royal crap out of lazy programmers.

• WHO'S IN IT?

The big man himself plays the main role in the game. Although a super-kicking Miyamoto character is unlockable.

• OUR FAVOURITE IDEA?

Having mini-games that play better if you whip the programmers into shape well enough in the main game.

• NOM RECKONS... GAME!

With all the *Melee 2* entries we get, this original idea really caught our eye.

Star Wars Rock Band

by Steffan Morgan, Thornhill

• WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

The legendary *Star Wars* characters bin fighting in favour of forming a rock band.

• WHO'S IN IT?

You can create your own band with a choice of characters, including Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker and Chewbacca.

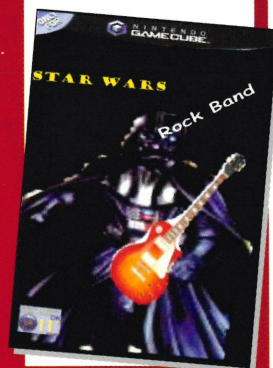
• OUR LEAST FAVOURITE IDEA?

That Luke and Darth could rock like they're... MATES? That guitars are cooler than blasters? No way, dude.

• NOM RECKONS... LAME!

It's original. But rubbish. *Star Wars* is great. A rock band game isn't. Even Yoda couldn't turn this from the Dark Side.

A game that surely even LucasArts wouldn't touch...



Nintendo is bonkers!

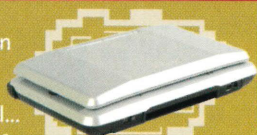
STAR LETTER

Nintendo has always been innovative and a little crazy. But recently it's gone absolutely mental... AND I LOVE IT! Bongos, microphones, dual-screens and games like *Wario Ware*

DS that make you blow into someone's ear... amazing! PS2 and Xbox

have got nothing similar apart from the Eye Toy, which is rubbish. Yet I still see staff in games shops telling mums to buy Xbox for their kids. It's crazy, I tells ya!

Gavin Spence, Scotland
We hear shoppers getting all kinds of stupid advice 'cos staff have little idea what they're on about. You're better. You're like Sahasrahla, the wise man of Hyrule. You have the knowledge – Nintendo is rocking the gaming boat and you're part of it.



>> No more VR flops

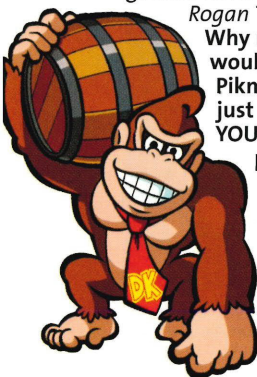
In response to Philip Donkersley's letter about the Revolution being like Virtual Boy in *NOM*#147, I think virtual reality would be a bad idea, 'cos many genres of games wouldn't work well on it. Also, designing a decent controller would be tough. Virtual Reality would be fun, but Nintendo has had one VR flop. Why risk another?

Scott Bass, Cherry Hinton
Good point. But we think if Nintendo was to make another VR machine it would learn from its previous mistakes. It would be far more advanced than the Virtual Boy, with full-colour graphics and probably wouldn't make your head feel like it's being battered to pieces by a Hammer Brother.

>> A Shigeru world

What exactly is going on inside Shigeru Miyamoto's head? Fat Italians stomping on turtles? Let's all hope that his vision of the Earth being invaded by tiny carrot-looking people, walking mushrooms and big, barrel-throwing gorillas never comes true.

Rogan Tonks, via email
Why not? Real life would be like a game. Pikmin aren't scary – just make sure YOU'RE the one to pick them. If an ape ever threw a barrel at us, we'd jump it. 100 points would come out of our heads and we'd be the kings.



RUNNER-UP

>> You guys are OLD

You guys always give games for a younger audience bad scores 'cos you're not young yourselves. Get real guys – all *Yu-Gi-Oh!* games rule! If you had a younger critic – someone who appreciated those games (like me) – they would get the scores that they deserve.

Lewis Thompson, West Cranmore
Check your style – your technique for asking for a job is to cuss our reviewing skills. Nice. Still, we give games like *Yu-Gi-Oh!* bad scores because they're really crap games. There's no other reason. If they made a good *Bob the Builder* game, we'd say it's good even if our mates threatened to hit us. Trust us.

>> I can't go on without a Sony PSP!

I have been a die-hard Nintendo fan for the past ten years. At the moment though I have a problem, I WILL be getting a DS, but a small part of me also wants a Sony PSP. But if I buy one it will feel like I'm helping to kill a member of my family. Please can you tell me that I don't need a PSP. I am in crisis.

Ryan Walter, Carshalton
Fill a glass with water and put it in the fridge. Now, every time your brain starts thinking it wants a PSP, take out the cold water and tip it over your head. If that stops working, move onto putting ice down your pants or flushing your head down the toilet. You don't need a PSP.

Ask the Deku Tree!

Q: *Metroid* games are too cool and always have been. So why isn't Samus in games like *Mario Kart: Double Dash*?

Anthony Briscoe, Blackpool

A: Hear the key words "*Mario Kart*". That's karting in the world of Mario. I've never seen Samus in the Mushroom Kingdom, have you?

Q: I was browsing a website that said Nintendo had been sued because Mario looks like Saddam Hussein! Is this true?

Jory Peters, Dundee

A: No, silly child.

Q: I read that *San Andreas* will be coming out on GameCube and a new *GTA* for DS will appear soon. Are they lies?

Samantha Lee, Kent

A: What websites do you crazy guys visit, www.dirtynintendolies.com/foridiots/?

Q: My dad brought me a DS from America, but I can't plug in the charger. The plug is messed up. Now my DS is dead!

Anthony Thomas, Milton Keynes

A: Have you got a GBA SP? If you have, use the charger for that. The charge ports are the same. If not, get a plug converter from an electrical shop. They're pennies to buy.

Q: If you put GBA games into a DS, can you use the touch screen to play them? My mate says you can.

Dean Winters, Lincolnshire

A: The words "My mate says..." are usually followed by lies. These are my words of wisdom for you, son. Your mate lied.

Q: My GameCube is ill! I set up everything right but no matter what disc I put in, it won't read it!

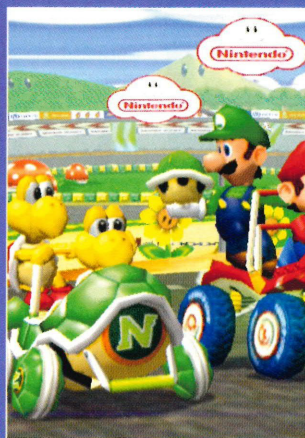
Alex Howarth, Penwortham

A: It's broken, man. If it's less than two years old, Nintendo will fix it for free (if you still have the receipt). If not, it'll cost you just over £30, providing you didn't drop it. Call the Nintendo Service Centre on 0870 60 60 247 for more details.

Q: Is there a *Mario Kart* arcade machine anywhere? I'd love to play Nintendo's racing classics in public, just so I could show everyone my mad skills.

Dionne Palma, London

A: No. You'll have to rig up your 'Cube on a TV at your nearby Dixons and do your thing before you get thrown out.



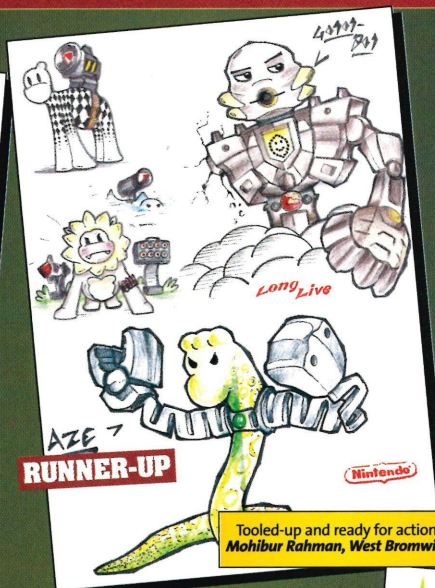
My Hero!

We asked you crazy guys to come up with a hero for the next Nintendo generation. Thanks to everyone who sent pics in!*

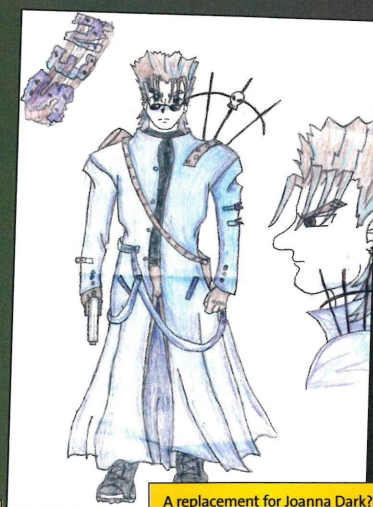
*we get hundreds of pictures each month, making it impossible to send them back. If you desperately want to keep your pics, send us a photocopy or a stamped addressed envelope!



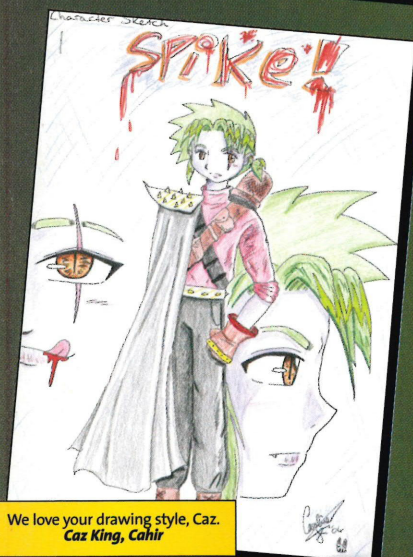
Bi-Bob Psycho. A crazy creation.
Mitchel Nelson, Swindon



Tooled-up and ready for action.
Mohibur Rahman, West Bromwich



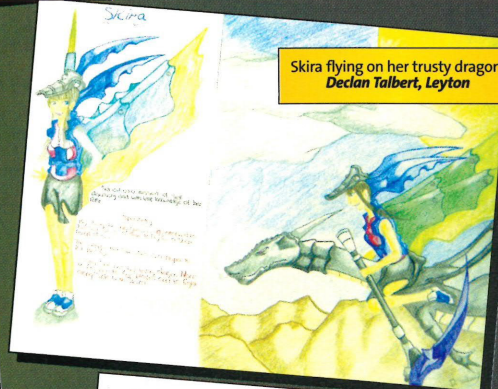
A replacement for Joanna Dark?
Sarah Ball, Southport



We love your drawing style, Caz.
Caz King, Cahir



Meet Ramon Cougar — a big bird.
Emma Durrant, Yateley



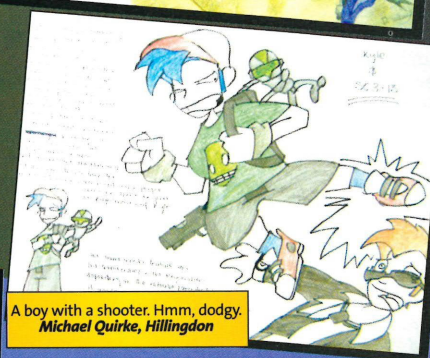
Skira flying on her trusty dragon.
Declan Talbert, Leyton



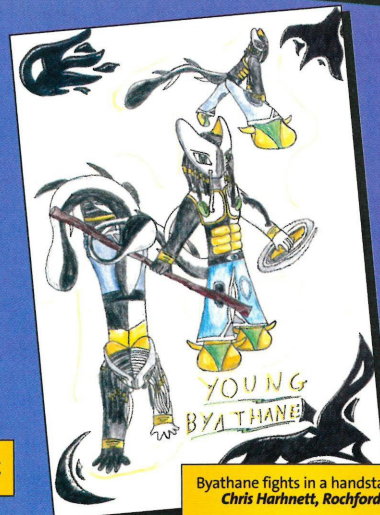
What an awesome character!
Murray Maynard, Twickenham



Hubba Hubba! That's good work.
Thomas Gordon, Ballymagroarty



A boy with a shooter. Hmm, dodgy.
Michael Quirke, Hillingdon



Byathane fights in a handstand.
Chris Harhnett, Rochford



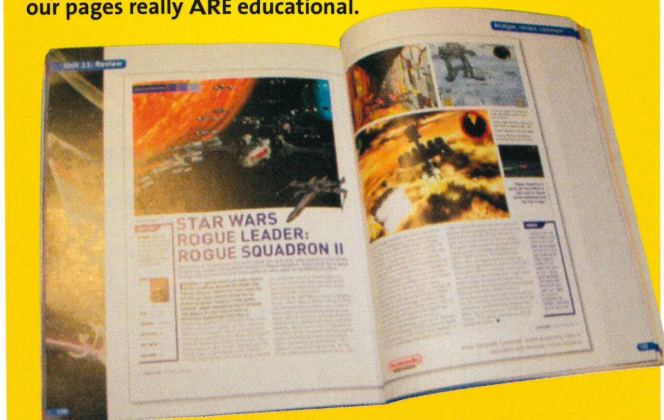
SPOTTED!

Learn from the professionals

I was looking through my new English textbook a few days ago, when I came across a *NOM* review of *Star Wars Rogue Leader: Rogue Squadron II* in the Analyse, Review and Comment chapter. Finally, English becomes interesting!

Aneurin Pyle, London

What an amazing find. Next time your parents tell you to do homework instead of reading *NOM*, now you can prove that our pages really ARE educational.



>> Multiplayer Metroid

Metroid Prime 3 should have a two to four-player co-operative mode for the main adventure, with one player being Samus and another three being Galactic Federation Troopers. That would be SO cool. Also, what are the chances of Ninty releasing a *Zelda* for DS with a Master Sword Stylus?

Nick Marsh, Bedford

A co-op mode in a *Metroid* game? It could be cool, but really the series has always been about the lone-warrior Samus who's such a bad ass she doesn't need help. As for *Zelda*, there's a *Four Swords* DS game coming, and a Master Sword stylus would be the absolute NUTS! Nintendo, DO IT PLEASE!



Text the Editor

Tell us what's on your Mother 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:

* i hope they will SOON make a NINTENDO console with online multiplaying action

* CANT WAIT TILL ISSUE 150 COMES OUT WEN U DO THE NINTENDO TOP 100! HOPE U COUNTED MY VOTES! LOTS OF LUV FROM JACK WALKER

* just think, the legend of zelda ocarina of time DS, with multiplayer death matches riding on eponas back taking out ur mates... If only... Jon westlake

* Nom - what does that mean?

* They should make a Paper Kirby game

* mi leaf 9reen pkmn kik ass any 1 fink der man enuf bring it

* Hi nom MP:2 is amazin little tip 4 every one out there - if u havent got it get it NOW!

THE QUILL'S MAIL WISH-LIST

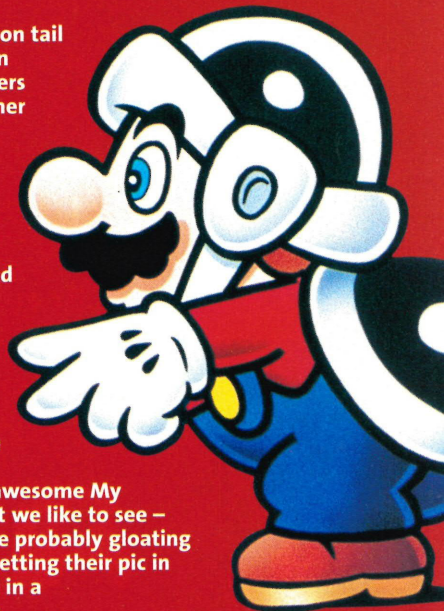
Can't think what to send in?
Here are some ideas...

SUITED AND BOOTED

Mario can fly with a raccoon tail or a cape. He can throw an infinite number of hammers when he wears the Hammer Suit, or lob fireballs like Ryu when he touches flowers. He's got loads of special powers but it's time he got a few more.

We want you to get your stationery kit out and scribble Mario a new suit of power. Tell us what it does. Be as wacky as you like - it doesn't have to make sense, it just has to be cool. Raccoons can't fly, in case you didn't know.

Check out all of those awesome My Hero pictures. That's what we like to see - quality art. Those guys are probably gloating to all their mates about getting their pic in *NOM*. They're kings. Send in a masterpiece and you'll be a king, too.



SAMUS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Did you get *Metroid Prime 2* for Christmas? If you did, you'll either be hard at work slaughtering the Ing and fixing Aether, or if you're a bounty hunting NINJA, you'll have finished the game. Samus looks awesome, doesn't she? We want to see your pictures of her in action on the planet of Aether. We're looking for pictures that are full of action and detail - both in Samus and the scenery around her! Try and make this the best picture you've ever drawn.

DON'T FORGET...
make sure to label each of your entries correctly!

Send us your entries by Feb 5th

Email: nintendoletters@emap.com (mark entries by category)

Post: Quill's Mail, *NOM* UK, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW

Don't forget to add your name, address and phone number!

Nintendo

MONTHS
UNTIL
THE END
OF THIS
LEAGUE

0
1

Come on
there's only one
month left. Do
you want Every
to win again?
Do you?!

HALL OF FAME

ALL TIME GREATS

input your initials__

Player.....Credit(s)

1. Dave Every.....63
2. Stephen Dale.....31
3. Laurence Armitage.....26
4. Ben La Brooy.....24
5. Dan Craig.....22

Player.....Credit(s)

6. Chris Halcrow.....22
7. David Haynes.....11
- =. Sam Miles.....11
- =. Matt Dixon.....11
10. D Harrison, M Dormer.....9



ISSUE 148 CHALLENGE RESULTS

LEVEL	RANK	NAME	SCORE
LOZ: WIND WAKER, BEST LENGTH, BIRDMAN COMP	1st.	Stephen Dale	416
	2nd.	Dan Craig	309
	3rd.	Dave Every	268
SMB2, BEST SCORE, MONKEY TARGET	1st.	Dave Every	29,750
	2nd.	Jack Kingsman	21,680
	3rd.	Chris Halcrow	17,580
F-ZERO GX, BEST TIME, SAPPHIRE CUP	1st.	Matt Dixon	7'57''481
	2nd.	Dave Every	8'53''725
	3rd.	Ben La Brooy	9'14''437
T.H.U.G. 2, ARCADE CHALLENGE, BERLIN	1st.	Laurence Armitage	15,375,322
	2nd.	Chris Marsh	10,100,390
	3rd.	Mark Davis	4,324,564
RIDGE RACER 64, BEST LAP, STAGE TWO, ANY CAR	1st.	Rob Burman	2'50''00
	2nd.	Brian Haversham	2'56''04
	3rd.	Mark Davis	3'12''40



NEW LEAGUE CHALLENGES

- NO 1.
DONKEY KONGA
Highest score, Alright,
Chimp difficulty
To qualify: 25,000
- NO 2.
MARIO VS. DONKEY KONG
Highest score, Donkey Kong
Jungle, level 2-3
To qualify: 30,000
- NO 3.
F-ZERO GX
Best lap time, Green Plant
Mobius Ring
To qualify: 2'00''00
- NO 4.
TIMESPLITTERS 2
Highest score, Challenge
Mode, Monkey Mayhem
To qualify: 2,000
- ★★★RETRO CHALLENGE★★★
POKEMON STADIUM
Highest score, Ekans
Hoop Hurl
To qualify: 10

INSERT COIN(S)

Every four months, NOM UK will crown the top player and award them a mystery prize. Players finishing the league in second and third place will also get a prize. You won't win anything for topping a monthly competition, but your Credits will count towards your ALL TIME GREATS total. This month's scores are the third standings of the new league.

How Credits are scored...
First Place 10
Second Place 5
Third Place 2
Qualify 1

NOM UK requires proof of your exploits - a photo, print-out or video will do, but make sure we can clearly see the score.
No cheating is allowed and any suspicious

entries will be fireballed by Mario.
The closing date for this issue's challenges is noon on Jan 24th! Send entries to Hall of Fame, Nintendo Official Magazine UK, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 5UW. Alternatively you can email them to rob.burman@emap.com, with Hall of Fame as your subject. Also, include a picture or you won't get your mug in the mag.



POINTS: 2010

2:43
Round 1

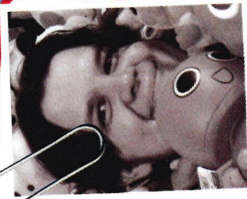


#13 Punch-Out!!

Chris Kohler lives in California scrapping a living as a games journalist and has just written a book, *Power-Up: How Japanese Video Games Gave the World an Extra Life*. His aim is to be president of Nintendo.

"Punch-Out!! is the Best NES Game To Ever Totally Rock. You're a tiny boxer named Little Mac. Your opponents are massive fighters whose fists are twice the size of your torso. You beat them, somehow.

"Punch-Out!! didn't try to be a boxing sim. It was an arcade game of attack patterns and quick fingers. Boxers came out in succession and you'd take a beating until you learned when to hit them back. Best, it taught ethnic stereotypes – the French are cowardly and Russians drink a lot of 'soda'. But you could skip all that by typing in a password that I'll remember 'til the day I die (007 373 5963), jump to the end and get humped by the boss. In the first version of the game this was Mike Tyson, until he lost the plot and bit some bloke's ear off. Happy days."



Next Month



IN THE BAG

IN THE MAG

**MARIO AND
LUIGI GBA
HARD
COVERS!**

**CELEBRATE
NOM'S
BIRTHDAY!**



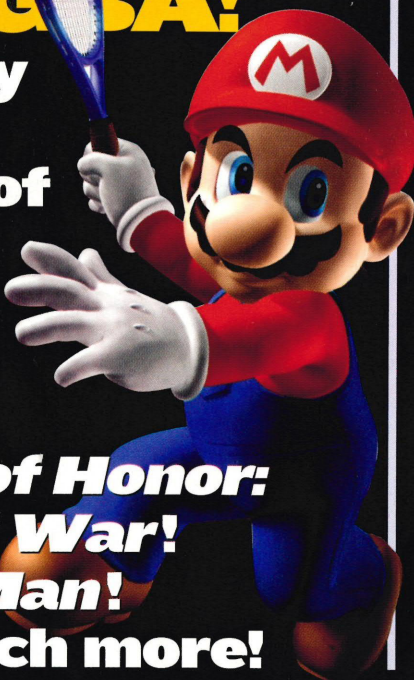
- **Your 100 Greatest Games of All Time! Will Ocarina win again?**
- **The first issue!**
- **And loads more!**

PLUS! DONKEY KONGA MEGA CHALLENGE



EVEN MORE ON GAME CUBE AND GBA!

- The only official review of **Mario Power Tennis!**
- **Resi 4!**
- **Medal of Honor: Dogs of War!**
- **Mega Man!**
- And much more!



YEP! EVEN MORE TO SEE ON NINTENDO DS!



MARIO 64!



PUYO POP!



CRYSTAL DRIVE!

FINAL Who will be King of the Bongos?



My New Year's resolution to be kinder to people lasted for approximately two seconds. Then I remembered how everyone makes me puke with rage when I think about their gurning idiot faces and flapping lips babbling nonsense to me.

2005 = THE FUTURE?

Seal predicts what the new year has in store for you! That's right, YOU!!

NINTENDO REVOLUTION

This isn't a console, you fools. Nintendo is planning to take over the world in 2005. They've already designed a 500ft high Pikachu robot that shatters your bones by squealing "Pika" and shoots electric bolts out of its ass. You puny humans will be forced to wash Tingle's sweat encrusted body stockings and pick the fleas out of Diddy Kong's fur before eating them.



DONKEY KAZOO

Nintendo will release an electronic kazoo for Donkey Kong's next game. The kazoo will be made of lead and you'll have to pay someone to hold it for you, while you wheeze into it for five minutes, producing a single note that lasts up to a second. Up to the minute "tunez" like *Agadoo* and a reworking of *Smells Like Teen Spirit* by X Factor stars, G4, will be featured in the game.



KIRBY ONLINE

Gamers expecting a *Pokémon* online game will be bitterly disappointed when *Kirby Online* is released and even more upset when they play it. The game will be a glorified dating service in which one "lucky" person can win a date with Kirby. Unfortunately Kirby will actually be a grumpy man trapped inside a giant pink ball, who can't speak English, but just keeps sucking in everything.



SEAL'S REGRETS

My biggest regret of last year is starting this stupid column. I don't even get paid! Dean just keeps promising me a shiny penny. Anyway, here are my other big disappointments of 2004.

1 I broke my DS after trying to cut the fruit on *Wario Ware* with a real knife.

2 Buying the *Donkey Konga* soundtrack and thinking it would be a hit at one of my swinging parties.

3 Losing the rights to publish *Factory Job DS* and *Touching Cloth*.

4 Kidnapping three children with GBAs and making them play *Four Swords* with me.

5 Refusing to plead guilty during the court case and pulling a gun on the judge.

6 Stalking a man who looked like Miyamoto and asking him

to make a new Mario game.

7 Buying Sky because I thought *Pokémon Channel* would be a new TV show.

8 Creating an inflatable Samus doll and taking her out to posh restaurants.

9 Growing a Mario style moustache and telling people I was Osama Bin Laden.

10 Buying a monkey then letting it suffocate when I locked it inside a ball.



TEXT SEAL

STOP BOTHERING ME, IDIOTS!

* U r the best seal. I love ur songs and thnk u shld make a comeback.

* I am not Miyamoto please stop sending me your ideas for new Mario games.

* i cant buy bent coppers ds anywhere. Can u tell me whr to get it from?

* Ive made an add on for the DS that lets u play GBA games on it. Its only the size of a book. It cost me 2000 quid to make and has taken me 4 months.

* will u b my friend Seal?

* Sorry for asking u 2 b my friend. Cld u please send my kitten back please?

* Win! Win! Just txt "I want a free axe" to 088007878876264 do it now

* my dad sed u have to get special glasses 2 look at both ds screens at once. Is that true?

* I saw you going through my rubbish this morning. I am not Miyamoto! My name is Lee Branson and I'm an accountant. Please leave me alone, you're scaring my children.

Games

**TO ORDER A PRODUCT
CALL
09077 078513
(UK Only)**

HOT TONES

HOT TONES		HOT TONES		HOT TONES		HOT TONES		
	MONO	POLY		MONO	POLY		POLY	
BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE - blk eyed peas	115094	125094	THE WEEKEND - michael gray	114868	124868	MISUNDERSTOOD - robbie williams	114955	124955
YOU KNOWS I LOVE YOU - goldie f chain	115099	125099	I LOVE THEM HDBS - eamon	114088	124088	BRIDGING THE GAP - nas	114995	124995
JUST LOSE IT - eminem	114789	124789	UNWRITTEN - hatake deadfield	114771	124771	FEED THE WORLD - band aid 20	115008	125008
LOSE MY BREATH - destiny's child	114703	124703	I BELIEVE IN YOU - kylie minogue	114900	124900	RADIO GA-GA - electric six	115014	125014
YOU CAN DO IT - ice cube	114816	124816	CURTAIN FALLS - blue	114930	124930	IF THERE'S ANY JUSTICE - lemar	115028	125028
MY BOO - usher and alicia keys	114730	124730	RIDE IT - geri halliwell	114897	124897	A LITTLE BIT OF ACTION - nadia	115034	125034
I'LL STAND BY YOU - girls aloud	114898	124898	SUNDAY MORNING - maroon 5	114866	124866	PROTOTYPE - outkast	115036	125036
TILT YA HEAD BACK - nelly & christina	114869	124869	GHETTOMUSICK - outkast	114635	124635	MOON RIVER - westlife	115046	125046
HUNGRY EYES - eyeopener	114945	124945	BABY IT'S YOUR - jojo feat bow wow	114899	124899	ANGELS - jessica simpson	114966	124966
NOTHING I WON'T DO - special d	114411	124411	COULD WE BE IN - the streets	114941	124941	FIRST DAY OF MY LIFE - the rasmus	114907	124907

YES!!! ALL RINGTONES LISTED are available as POLYPHONIC and MONOPHONIC

CHART		WORLD	POLY	NU METAL		WORLD	POLY	FOOTBALL		WORLD	POLY
KILLAMANAGIRO · babyshambles	115216	125216	I MISS YOU · blink 182	113552	123552	MATCH OF THE DAY · match of the day	111126	121126			
RIP IT UP · Razorlight	115214	125214	MY IMMORTAL · evanescence	113277	123277	SOCCER AM CATWALK · jean knight	112559	122559			
LEAVE (GET OUT) · jojo	114198	124198	ALWAYS · blink 182	114629	124629	YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE · gerry R.	113551	121351			
NOBODY'S HOME · avril lavigne	114700	124700	SPECIAL K · placebo	114911	124911	12 CANTONA'S · man utd terraces	114826	124821			
WELCOME TO MY TRUTH · anastacia	114721	124721	BRING BLUE EYES · limp bizkit	113309	123309	GEORDIES ARE THE PRIDE · newcastle	113860	123860			
THESE WORDS ARE MY OWN · n bedingfield	114346	124346	BEHIND ME TO LIFE · evanescence	112651	122651	GOOD OLD ARSENAL · arsenal terraces	114678	124678			
YOU STOOD UP · v	115000	125000	TAINTED LOVE · marilyn manson	111898	121898	PRIDE OF ALL EUROPE · man utd terraces	114827	124827			
LA BOMBA · ricky martin	115001	125001	BREAKING THE HABIT · linkin park	113955	123955						
CINNAMON GIRL · prince	115039	125039				CHILLOUT		WORLD		POLY	
SHADOW · ashlee simpson	115007	125007	INDIE	WORLD	POLY	CHILDREN · robert miles	111361	121361			
DREAMING · frankie and calvin	115010	125010	MARY · scissor sisters	114541	124541	UNFINISHED SYMPATHY · massive attack	112438	122438			
MY PREROGATIVE · britney spears	114715	124715	SPITTING GAMES · snow patrol	114350	124350	NOW WE ARE FREE · gladiator feat izzy	113918	123918			
LOVE MACHINE · girls aloud	114506	124506	THE LOVE OF RICHARD NIXON · manic's	114884	124884	PROTECTION · massive attack	113965	123965			
LEFT OUTSIDE ALONE · anastacia	113616	123616	DON'T EVER THINK · the zutons	114887	124887	RIISING SUN · massive attack	113966	123966			
RADIO · robbie williams	114717	124717	ALT AOP	WORLD	POLY	SOMMERSAULT · zero 7	114225	124225			
SICK AND TIRED · anastacia	114205	124205	BREATHE STRETCH SHAKE · mase	114939	124939						
MORE MORE MORE · rachel stevens	114661	124661	YOUR MOTHER'S GOT A... g. l. chain	114925	124925	R & B		WORLD		POLY	
DJ · jamelia	114680	124680	DROP IT LIKE ITS HOT · snoopy dogg	114879	124879	MY NECK MY BACK · khia	112416	122416			
SUMMER RAIN · sinkee mixx	114487	124487	THE WORKOUT PLAN · kanye west	114724	124724	SHE'S GOT ME · daniel merriweather	114800	124800			
ROUND HERE · george michael	115018	125018	MY PLACE · nelly	114500	124500	HAPPY PEOPLE · r kelly	114184	124184			
OUT OF THE BLUE · delta goodrem	114580	124580	I KNOW WHAT GIRLS LIKE · jay z	114985	124985	BEAR · usher	113800	123800			
THESE KIDS · joel turner	114786	124786	MILLIONAIRE · kells	114458	124458	YAH · usher feat ludacris & lil jon	113546	123546			
LADY BUMP · kath & kim	114138	124138	BALLA BABY · chingy	114978	124978	I DON'T WANT YOU BACK · eamon	113519	123519			
EVERY TIME · britney spears	114022	124022	STOP BEING GREEDY · dmX	114980	124980	I DON'T WANT TO KNOW · m winans	113805	123805			
SCAR · missy higgins	114486	124486	OYE MI CANTO · n.o.r.e	114987	124987						
TOXIC · britney spears	113435	123435	GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE... g. l. chain	114564	124564	GRUNGE		WORLD		POLY	
KICK IN THE HEAD · westlife	114830	124830	YOU GOT WHAT I WANT · snoopy dogg	114809	124809	AMERICAN IDIOT · green day	114628	124628			
MANIAC · westlife	113939	123939	WONDERFUL · roberta choby	114043	124043	THE DAY I TRIED TO LIVE · soundgarden	114728	124728			
						GET ACTIVATED · garden	114782	124782			

Artist - Album	11/22/12	12/22/12	WONDERFUL - Joe Raposo & Kelly Rowland	11/24/12	12/24/12	GET ACTIVATED - getting up	11/24/12	12/24/12
CHRISTMAS	MONO	POLY	DANCE	MONO	POLY	THEMES	MONO	POLY
JINGLE BELLS - christmas	111529	121529	CALL ON ME - eric prydz	114436	124436	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	111121	121121
MERRY CHRISTMAS - slade	111552	121552	MISS YOU LESS SEE... - faithless	114981	124981	ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES	111369	121369
FAIRYTALE OF N.Y. - the pogues &...	113148	121348	GIVE ME YOUR LOVE - xtm ft chucky	113389	123389	X FACTOR	114836	124836
ROCKIN AROUND THE XMAS... - m. smith	113146	121346	TAKE ME AWAY - stonebriker ft therese	114940	124940	THE SIMPSONS	111132	121132
SANTA'S LIST - cliff richard	113363	123363	PUMP IT UP - daniel	114845	124845	ROCKY - jogging theme	112481	122481
DO YOU KNOW ITS XMAS - band aid	114546	124546	GET IT ON - intenso project ft lisa...	114926	124926	DIRECT DANCING	112149	121249
ALL I WANT FOR XMAS - mariah carey	114651	124651	JUST BE - tiesto	114929	124929	AXEL F - beverly hills cop	111601	121601
DRIVING HOME FOR XMAS - chris ree	113707	123707	BACK FOR ME - candee jay	114860	124860	EXORCIST	111871	121871
ROCK	MONO	POLY	SILENCE 2004 - delirium	114979	124979	GOODBY NIGHTS	112364	122364
SWEET CHILD O MINE - guns n roses	111258	121258	WONDERFUL TONIGHT - fatboy slim	114984	124984	PHOEN BAD AND THE UGLY	111181	121181
SHE WILL BE LOVED - maroon 5	114236	124236	RIGHT ABOUT NOW - mouse t	114969	124969	MUPPETS	111314	121314
BAT OUT OF HELL - meat loaf	111286	121286	DO YOU KNOW- angel city	114819	124819	ALWAYS LOOK ON THE ... - m. python	113865	123865
BLACK BETTY - spiderbait	113761	123761	FLASHDANCE - deep dish	114673	124673	THE BODYGUARD - whittney houston	114274	124274
NOVEMBER RAIN - guns n roses	112586	122586	FREAK ON - stonebriker feat ultra nate	114912	124912	JAMES BOND	111119	121119
LIVING ON A PRAYER - bon jovi	111376	121376	COME WITH ME - special d	113678	123678	TOP GUN	111860	121860

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Logos

England 	Wales 	Scotland 	Ireland 
131810	131244	131576	131596
Wales Off Saturday Day	WHAT?EVA!	CLIFFHANGER	
131583	131758	131182	131692
Easy Tiger!	Chad, Paul & Roger The Professional	SHAKE THE PHONE TO GET A CALL	BOY RACER
131784	131693	131791	131723
RUDE BOY	ERT ALERT	FOOTBALL	BREAK GLASS HERE
131615	131726	131858	131141
SPEED DEMON	ALL THE WAY	I AM THE DRAGON	PLAY FOREVER WORK FOREVER
131614	131676	131127	131665
	MOVING DAY (MUSIC) EIGHT WINDS (MUSIC)	NOT A FUNNY	TOO DAMN FAST
131797	131688	131200	131666

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254148	254147	251111	250009	250002	250011	250196	250391	250640	250013	250015	258149	253886
												
254148	254147	251111	250009	250002	250011	250196	250391	250640	250013	250015	258149	253886

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