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Pokémon

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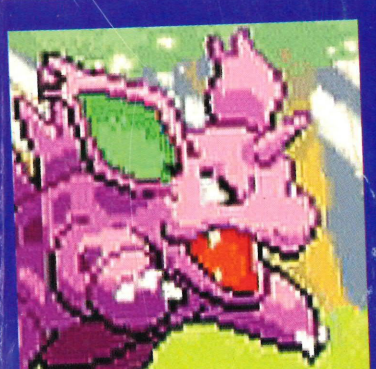
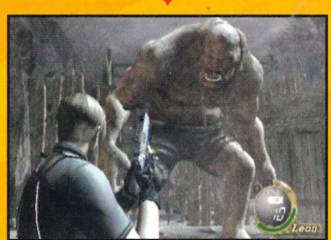


Red-hot new GBA shots!

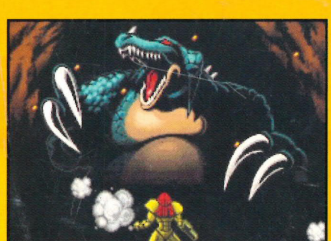
All-new info! It's 3D Pokémon!

Pikachu's back! First UK review!

GAMES EXPLOSION!



Resident Evil 4



Metroid Zero Mission

+ New shots of Four Swords

PLUS! • The best-ever NES games! • Prince of Persia tips fest! • Tons more Mario Kart tips • NOM's NES history plus loads more!

ISSUE 139 APRIL 2004 £3.75

RIL 2004

POKÉMON FIRE RED AND LEAF GREEN

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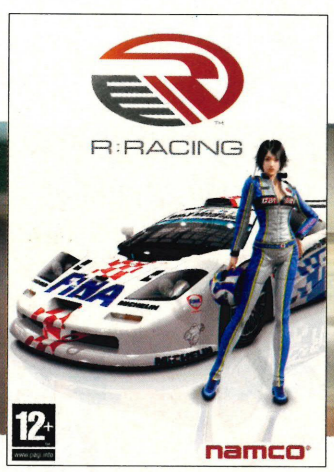
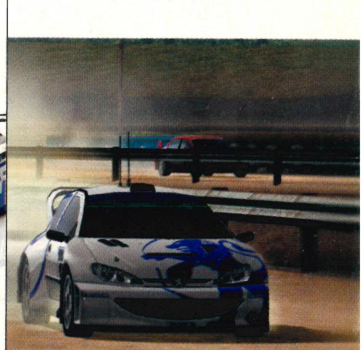
WHICH WOULD YOU PREFER TO TAKE HOME?





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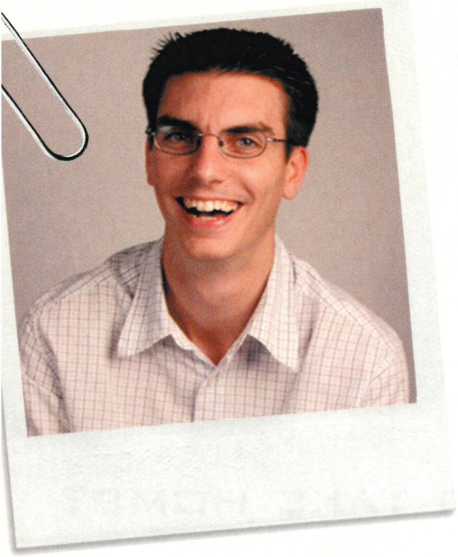

We're here for all things Nintendo... so if you love the NES you've come to the right place.

Everyone at *NOM UK* loves the NES too and if it wasn't for that console some of your fave stars probably wouldn't be here now.

It may look like a grey breeze block, but the NES was home to some of the biggest-ever games. Mario, Samus and Link all made their homes there and its impact can still be felt years down the line.

The original *Metroid* has been revamped for the GBA and as it has just had its 20th anniversary in Japan we couldn't resist showing you the NES games you need to own. Oh and there's also some guy who's finished nearly every NES game – 657 to be precise. That's more than Mike.

Enjoy the mag!

Tim Street

***Tim Street*, Editor**

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WHO DOES WHAT
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Editor Tim *Super Mario Bros.* Street
Deputy Editor Dean *Super Mario Bros. 3* Scott
Production Editor Kingsley *Elite* Singleton
Staff Writer Mike *Double Dragon* Jackson
Art Editor Mark *Duck Hunt* Sommer
Deputy Art Editor Dan *Donkey Kong* Payne

Thanks to... Chris Kohler, John Ricciardi, Barny Zoeller, Darren Fox, Frank Cifaldi, Tom Seymour, Claire Stocks-Wilson and James Honeywell.

Publisher Andy McVittie
Advertising Manager Nuria Taylor
Tel: 01733 288098
Marketing Manager Stuart Bell
Tel: 01733 288090
Promotions Executive Richard Woolley
Tel: 01733 288163
Editorial Enquiries Tel: 01733 237111
Ad Production Tel: 01733 288063

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ANSWERS TO THE ROCK-HARD QUIZ, p27

1) *Super Mario 64*, N64; 2) *Castlevania*, N64; 3) *Conker's Bad Fur Day*, N64; 4) *Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards*, N64; 5) *Turok Dinosaur Hunter*, N64; 6) *Yoshi's Story*, N64; 7) *Wavercace 64*, N64; 8) *Lylat Wars*, N64; 9) *Goldeneye 007*, N64;

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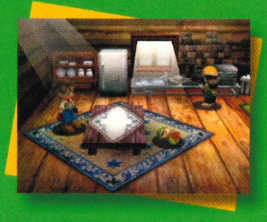

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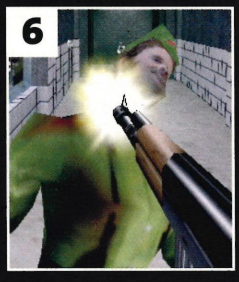
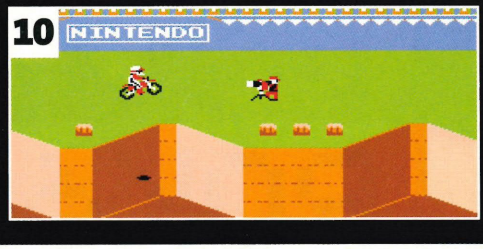
1. There's only one thing more frightening than a zombie – a hillbilly (*Resident Evil 4*, p40) **2.** Cartoon faces can surely feel the pain, too (*Naruto*, p34) **3.** Card-battles are the death of all video games (*PSOIII*, p50) **4.** There's a man in Maine who eats games (NEStravaganza, p62) **5.** We didn't need to break our fingers to get Samus out of her suit this time (*Metroid Zero Mission*, p66) **6.** *GoldenEye* is alive and kicking in the pages of *NOM UK* (World of Nintendo, p18/Nintendo Hall of Fame, p98/ Nintendo Classic, p112) **7.** Watching Pikachu watching TV is not the future of gaming (*Pokémon Channel*, p70) **8.** Riding a 2D Epona across Hyrule IS the future of gaming (*Zelda: Four Swords*, p100) **9.** The Deku Tree has taken up root on our letters page (Quill's Mail, p108) **10.** There's no love like 8-bit love (Famicom Mini games, p36)





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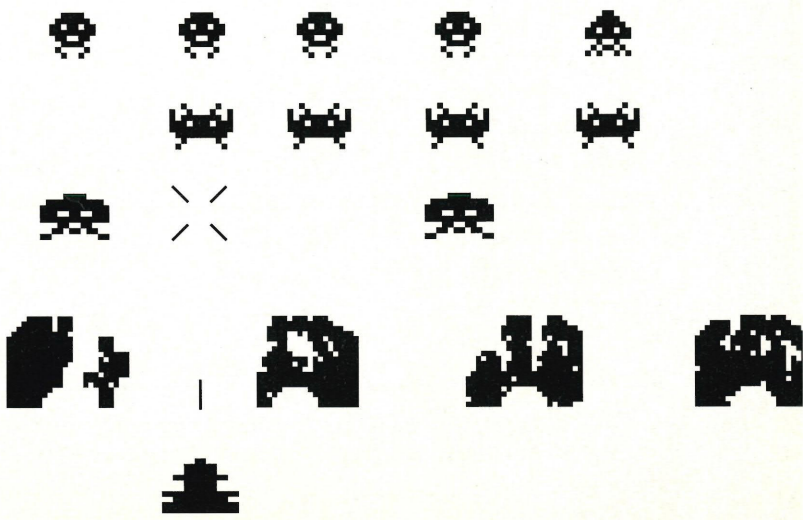


POKéMON FIRE RED

& LEAF GREEN

He wears a red cap and blue pants, but it isn't Mario... Ash's back with Pokémon to catch!

You thought you'd seen the last of Pikachu. That bright yellow face with its cheery smile and rosy red cheeks; it all seems a distant memory now. But you thought wrong, friend. Never underestimate the power of *Pokémon* 'cos you're going to see a lot more of that grin from now on. Dean didn't want to know and shoved the carts over to my side of the desk – that smile gives him the fear you see.

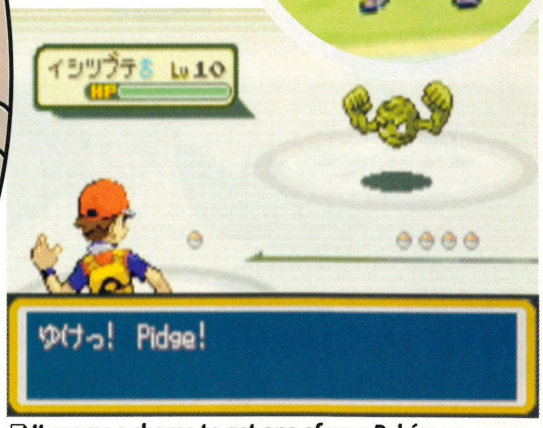
As you read these pages, *Fire Red & Leaf Green* will be all over Japan. Those bad boys will have already sold over one and a half million copies and there will be no stopping them. If the Japanese aren't sick of it the rest of the world will surely follow suit. Yells of "Smack him with your Electric Shock!" and "Check my Lv.15 Bulbasaur!" are coming back to a GBA near you and those shouts are going to make someone at Nintendo very happy.

Pokémon is the biggest games franchise the world has ever seen. Pikachu and his chums are MASSIVE and there's no way we could ignore the game until the UK release is announced. We couldn't let you wait any longer for another peek at the GBA quest, so here it is in all its glory – Pikachu's rosy chops and tons of new ideas that you'll discover on your way to the Pokémon League and your battle with the Elite Four. >>

We've been playing this game to death since last month and the gameplay's simply frantic. The PCs are filling up with discarded Pokémon and they're evolving all over the place. Weedles, an Ekans, plenty of Zubats and those stupid defend-against-all-odds Metapods are popping up in the long grass and it's levelling-up aplenty in the fields and routes all over Kanto. That feeling after learning a new move or catching a wild Pokémon in a Poké Ball has never really gone away. Just waiting for it to shake three times before the critter's caught is as nail-biting as ever. *Pokémon* is certainly back and eating up our every waking hour.

So what exactly has been discovered since last month's preview? Well, Nintendo has done the decent thing and included a boy and girl, unlike the original *Red* and *Blue* games. Play as the lad and you'll get a yellow rucksack, red cap and blue trousers, but switch to the lass and you'll sprout long dark hair and be forced to »

❑ Seconds later Ash impaled himself on the fence. Game Over for you



❑ It seems a shame to get one of your Pokémon messy fighting this grotty Geodude

Squirtle! I choose you!

All the way back in 1999 when the *Red* and *Blue* versions arrived, three Pokémon became household names almost overnight. Squirtle, Bulbasaur and Charmander were the real stars of the show – the first three Pokémon you could pick at the start of the game to build your all-conquering squad of monsters.

Internet boards were buzzing about which one was best, but Bulbasaur became the expert's choice as his levels rose quicker than the others and his attacks were stronger against the first two Gym Leaders, Brock and Misty.

What's more the ultra-cute Charmander was rubbish against those two while Dragon Type Pokémon could deal Squirtle some severe punishment.

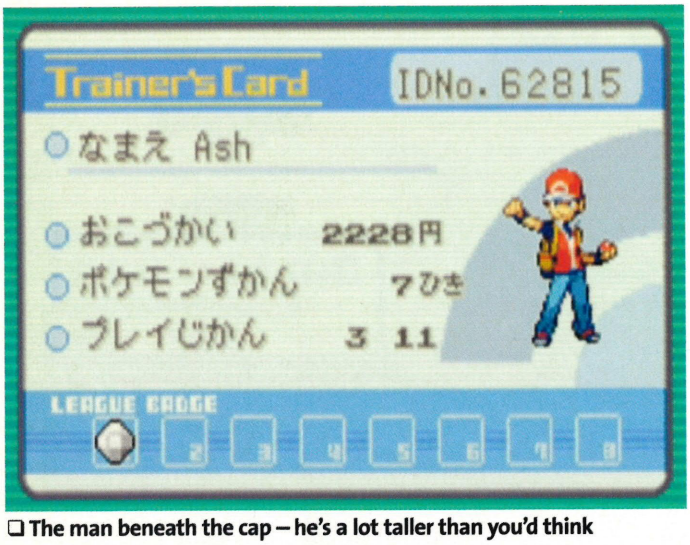
❑ Squirtle! Small, blue, bald and hungry for your love – just like all reptiles

❑ Bulbasaur! Look at the anger in his face, the violence. Clearly the expert's choice

❑ Charmander! Looked like he had a bright future, but turned out soft

"*Pokémon* is the biggest gaming franchise the world has ever seen."

❑ We wouldn't make some cheap fart gag about Pika. No way...



❑ The man beneath the cap – he's a lot taller than you'd think

❑ The terrifying Bulba can strip a human to the bone in less than a minute

Old vs New

Pokémon Fire Red & *Leaf Green* are GBA remakes of the first-ever Game Boy *Pokémon* quests – the *Green* version originally launching in Japan alongside *Pokémon Red*.

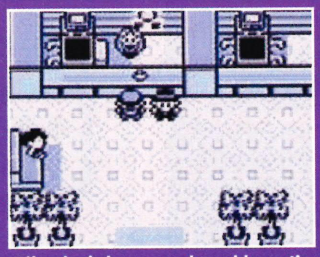
The *Red* and *Green* versions did so well that Nintendo released a third *Pokémon* game in Japan, *Pokémon Blue*, which launched here in the UK with the *Red* version in 1999.

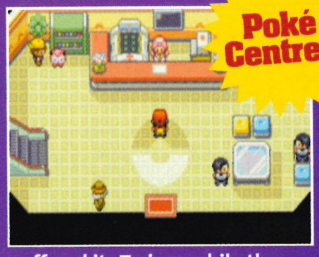
Even though many Pokémon can be found in the same places as before, Nintendo has given these remakes a new lease of life on the GBA. Now they're packed with colour and some places have had a new lick of paint...

Gym Leaders

Brock no longer looks like he's about to do a Page 3 shoot – he's actually got some clothes on this time.

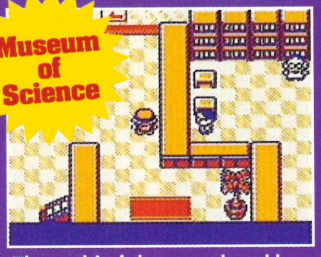
Poké Centres





Pikachu's been replaced by a Jigglypuff and its Trainer while the flooring has been ripped up for cool Poké Ball tiling.

Museum of Science

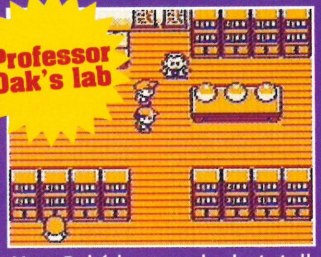


The cashier's been replaced by a chap with golden hair. The dork in the background has been standing on the same spot for five years.

Poké Marts

Don't you love it when they switch things around so you can't find them? Oh well, things look sweeter for it. Grab those Poké Balls!

Professor Oak's lab



Your Pokédex now looks totally different and check out Oak. We think he's been laying off the Big Macs.

Get evolved

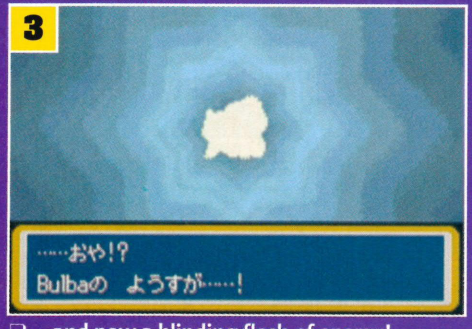
With all the hours you're going to spend training up your squad of pocket monsters, they'll be levelling-up more and more as you win those battles.

At certain levels your Pokémon will learn new moves and at others they will evolve in spectacular fashion, providing you with enhanced creatures and another entry in your Pokédex.

Some Pokémon don't evolve though. There are 24 of these creatures, including Mewtwo and the Legendary Birds – Articuno, Zapdos and Moltres. Just check out the new evolving animation though, it looks great, don't you think?

❑ Small, puny Bulba. Not very hard are you?

❑ But what's this? Small glowing blobs...



❑ ... and now a blinding flash of energy!

❑ Result? Big teeth and a flower. Rock hard.

wander Kanto with a round, white hat and a yellow satchel. Nice.

Whatever you decide, the Poké Bag that accompanies you on your journey is back to the simplicity of the original. It has three pockets – one for items, another for more important stuff and a third pocket for Poké Balls. Getting confused between an Elemental Stone and an Antidote will be a thing of the past, too – they now have their own icons for easier selection and in the heat of battle you'll be thanking those developers at Nintendo.

Walking through the forests and along the routes of *Pokémon* is just as exciting as it was back in 1999. Now it's been given a make-over worthy of sitting alongside *Ruby* and *Sapphire* making it look fantastic. Footprints appear on sand, your reflection shimmers in water, even the wild flowers that grow everywhere seem to dance along to that *Pokémon* music.

Towns themselves appear to have been knocked down by a rampaging pack of Golems. They've now been rebuilt and their coats of white paint gleam in the sunshine that never seems to go dim. The same locals as before still go about their business, offering you help if you ask, while Poké Centres and Marts have had the *Changing Rooms* team in, sporting new sliding doors and escalators. There's no need to click the Ⓐ button next to signposts either, just »

"The more we play it, the more we love it. A true classic is heading back to GBA."

❑ It's the battle of the bogies. Which green slimy critter will destroy the other? Come on the Bulbasaur!

❑ Can't remember what the Gyms look like? That's one!

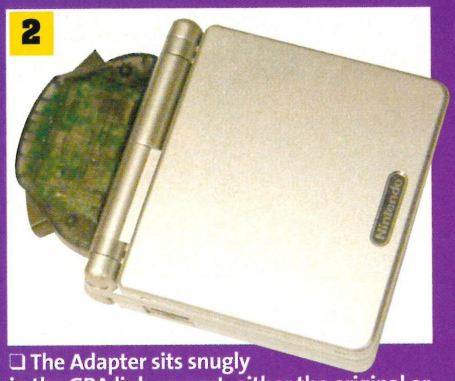
Look! No cables!

Sitting smugly in the *Fire Red* and *Leaf Green* Japanese boxes were two cheeky Wireless Communication Adapters that will consign your Link Cables to the games dustbin of history. Other first-party titles will utilise this new peripheral, not just the new *Pokémon* games – and this is how they'll work.

1

❑ Look at that Wireless Adapter. Doesn't it look cheeky? Prepare to ditch those crappy old Link Cables forever, guys!

2



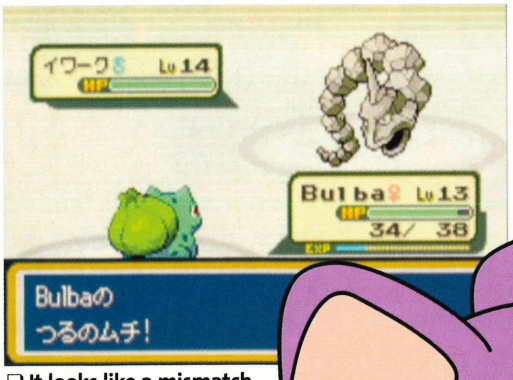
❑ The Adapter sits snugly in the GBA link-up port, either the original or an SP. The two arms on each side clip onto the two squares on each side of the port.

3

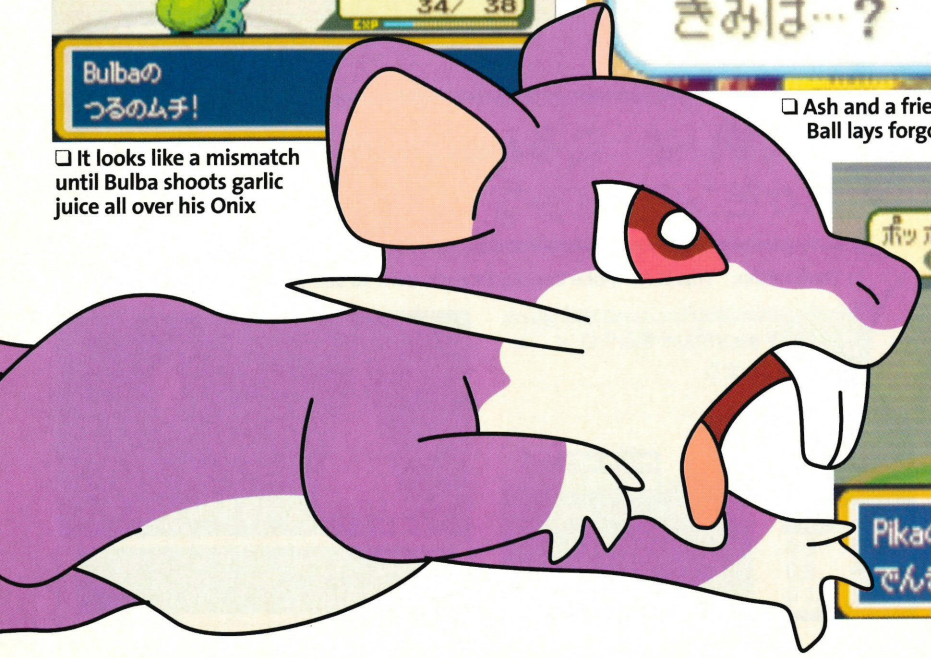
❑ Switch on and you're good to battle in the Union Room, found in Poké Centres across Kanto.

❑ Steal this guy's rock collection and laugh, ah ha ha!

❑ Ash and a friend discuss what it's like to wear hats while a Poké Ball lays forgotten in the corner. Priorities, guys!



❑ It looks like a mismatch until Bulba shoots garlic juice all over his Onix



SPOILER WARNING

Just when you thought it was all over...

To add even more gameplay to *Fire Red* and *Leaf Green* Nintendo has decided to add a whole new area to the game once you defeat the Elite Four.

The Mystery Islands is the new area's name and these outcrops of land just south of Kanto have tons more adventuring just waiting for you. There are loads of wild Pokémon to be caught, including Geodude and Ponyta as well as Horsea and Gyarados in the water. Pokémaniacs will be even more pleased to see the return of the Unown, but we aren't going to say any more on that until much later in the year!

❑ Search the seaweed to find more Pokémon for your squad

❑ Grass is one thing, but there are even caves to search

❑ That Psyduck is the coolest Pokémon ever. LOOK AT IT!

❑ Water Types can be found in the waves. Keep 'em peeled

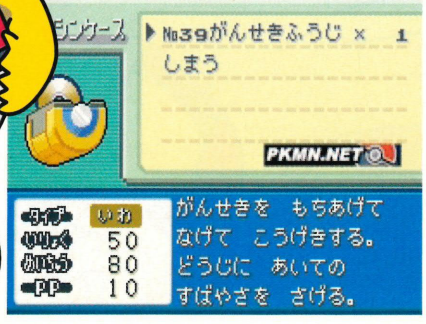
standing next to them will reveal its message.

Fire Red and *Leaf Green* have certainly taken the originals and mixed them up, adding new gameplay elements to help you out. Your TMs can now be stored in a carry case of sorts and further into your quest you'll be able to throw on a pair of trainers and go dashing about Kanto at double the speed. The bike is back too and should you collect the mobile phone en route to the Elite Four you'll be able to ring Oak and other Pokémon Trainers to badger them for advice.

One surprise we mentioned last month was the Teaching TV mode and, if our educated guess is anything to go by, we've found out what it is. While wandering the tall grasses of Viridian Forest you'll see a TV just lying in the dense undergrowth. Funny that! Switch it on and a reporter will offer you some handy Trainer tips.

Pokémon veterans won't need them, but those new to *Pokémon* might. »

❑ Translation: "This is MY Poké Centre. I never want to see you around here again!"



With all this good *Pokémon* news there was always going to be something that might upset Pokémaniacs. Sorry to break the news, but despite the graphical make-over and new features the clock feature from *Gold* and *Silver* isn't here. This means that certain Pokémon won't appear at particular times of the day. Instead you just need to search through miles of undergrowth to find those creatures and fill your Pokédex before trading with a friend to make sure you complete it 100%.

Completing that infamous Pokédex is going to take ages, but there are loads of rewarding Pokémon to be caught and some you never thought would be possible in *Fire Red* and *Leaf Green*. We won't go into too much detail for now but let's just say that the Legendary Birds are here as well as good old Psychic Type, Mewtwo. And it doesn't end there...

Even though the versions we've been playing are all in Japanese it's great to see these creatures back on Game Boy. With a whole new generation of *Pokémon* fans ready to take up the challenge of defeating the Elite Four those who think that *Pokémon* is dead are very much mistaken.

We'll have more news on the English version over the coming months, but for now feast your eyes on these screenshots. Pikachu's cheeky grin is heading home and we're sure you're gonna love it. ***Tim Street***

Pokémon want to play

Big or small, fast or slow, Pokémon love having fun and when they escape the confines of those Poké Balls they have a right old party.

A new feature that wasn't in the original are two mini-games that you'll find much later in your adventure. Between two and five people can play at any one time just by using the Wireless Adapters and so far we've found two of them.

❑ SKIPPING
You have to jump the vine. Clear it the most times and you're the winner.

❑ BERRY COLLECTING
Your Dodrio must gobble up the most Purple Berries. Just don't eat the Green ones!

"You'll search through miles of undergrowth to find those creatures and fill your Pokédex."

❑ Looks like Pika's having a tough time – better pull him out of there...

ESSENTIALS

THE DEVELOPER: NINTENDO
FAMOUS FOR:
•Every other *Pokémon* handheld game you've ever played and listening to the ideas of Satoshi Tajiri, the inventor of *Pokémon*.

MULTIPLAYER: 1-2 PLAYERS
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
RELEASE: LATE 2004
REVIEW: A WHILE TO GO YET

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION

PREDICTED SCORE

We've increased this score since last month because the more we play it, the more we love it. A true classic is heading back to GBA.

90%
PLUS

World of Nintendo

INSIDE
World of Nintendo

N5 CONFIRMED!
Pull out of hardware? Tell us another one, Captain Funny. 16

TOO MUCH INFO
Our unblinking eye of news focuses on monkeys. Again. 17

GOLDENEYE 2
It's actually true! But it's not really a sequel... 18

FUTURE FIVE
Games not yet available to buy, but which make us cry. 19

NINTENDO KNOW-IT-ALL
If you know stuff, prove it here and win respect. 20

NOM IDOL
We want you to come and work here. Not a joke. 26

SHOP NINTENDO
Wear Nintendo while playing Nintendo. 24

WIN METAL GEAR GEAR!
A specially made 'Cube and a fat TV up for grabs. Yes. 30

GAMECUBE 2: 2005

Nintendo commits to showing its next home console at next year's E3. Start screaming now.

After the Japanese press went berserk and claimed Nintendo was pulling out of the hardware business, the games giant responded with uncharacteristic bluntness. An open letter to the Japanese games media from Nintendo's global head of PR, Yasuhiro Minagawa, stated the next home console would be shown at E3 next year. Nintendo was not pulling out of the hardware business. End. Of. Story.

Former company chairman, Hiroshi Yamauchi, has plenty to say on the subject, claiming that gamers "aren't demanding high specs" for a new machine and that talk of the "next generation" is from "people who don't know games". The message seems to be that Nintendo sees graphics as having reached a plateau and that finding new ways to play is the key to keeping people interested.

What does that mean for GameCube in the meantime? Well, Nintendo had a few answers on that score as well, pointing to peripherals as being key to prolonging the life of the machine. At this year's E3 these add-ons will be unveiled, but we have absolutely no idea what Nintendo has up its sleeve.

The idea, obviously, is to pull out something with the rejuvenating effect of a dance mat or a camera like the PS2 enjoyed with EyeToy. Intriguing stuff indeed.

Equally cool were the outspoken Yamauchi's remarks on the upcoming Nintendo DS handheld. "It's something that I thought up a year and a half ago... if it's successful, I think it will reactivate the Japanese games market and that is Nintendo's mission.

"The next two years will decide Nintendo's fate," continued Yamauchi. "If the DS succeeds, we will rise to heaven. But if it fails, we will sink into hell." Nintendo clearly expects big things of the DS and the GameCube's successor. If we were any more excited about E3 this year, we'd explode.

Developers say D-YES!

There has been an enthusiastic industry reception for Nintendo's brand-new baby...

Nintendo DS fever is heating up, with game creators across the globe waxing lyrical about the new machine. Archer Maclean, head of UK studio Awesome Developments told us, "It sounds amazing. An endearingly cute little thing. We have a game in development that's blindingly perfect for the DS, so we'd definitely look at supporting it."

Japanese games bible, *Famitsu*, asked famous Japanese developers their thoughts and here are some edited highlights:

"My desire to develop for it has been stimulated. It's a new form of play."
Strategy game guru, Shibusawa Kou of Koei

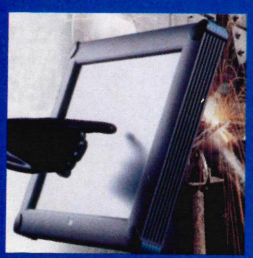
"We've been waiting for this! We would definitely like to have [a game released] for the launch."
Sonic Team's Yuji Naka

"This is a machine that will stimulate both the users' and the creators' desire to play. It should allow the birth of a whole host of new ideas.
Monkey Ball creator, Toshiro Nagoshi of Sega.

"Having two separately functioning screens suits the time perfectly – with users becoming increasingly multitasking. I expect this will also lead to the possibility of improving people's brains."
Former Sega studio head, Tetsuya Mizuguchi

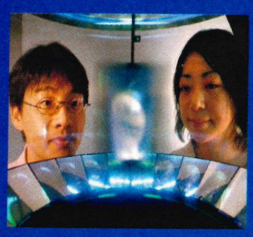
Touch me!

All the latest DS rumours sniffed out, assessed and rated by our experts...



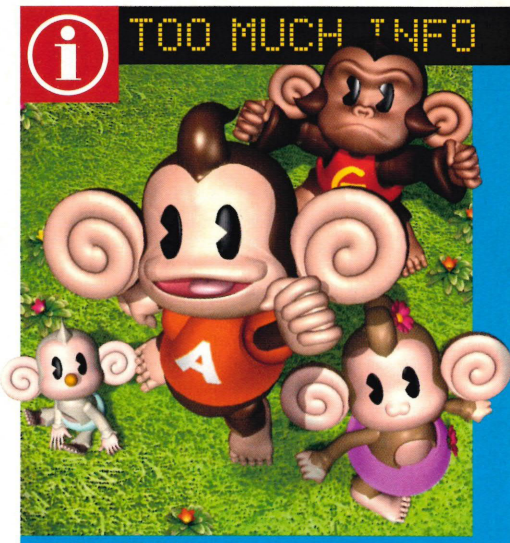
A TOUCH SCREEN
Why? Second screen plus n00b-friendly play controls equals touch screen controls, obviously. Thank god for the internet!
***NOM UK* says:** Can you imagine playing Mario with a touch screen? Behave!

BACKWARDS COMPATIBILITY
Why? One of the two processors is the same as in the GBA, the screen is the same ratio, so it looks an easy job.
***NOM UK* says:** Unlikely. Nintendo wants this to be a completely separate product line.



A 3D DISPLAY
Why? Nintendo is in partnership with Hitachi, which has developed a display that projects a 3D image like something out of *Minority Report*.
***NOM UK* says:** The prototype is six feet tall! Hardly 'portable'.

OUT NOVEMBER, $200
Why? A major US games retailer is already taking pre-orders at this price, with suggestions that Nintendo has tipped them the wink.
***NOM UK* says:** It seems a bit early, but the price point has the right whiff about it.



LESS MONKEY
In response to an online retailer listing *Super Monkey Ball 3* as a Q4 2004 release, Sega UK contacted us to deny the game's existence. But we're sceptical. Inventing games isn't Amazon's business, is it? And given that the first two rank in Sega's top five sellers on 'Cube, we'd be staggered if the third game isn't unveiled at E3.

MORE MONKEY
Reports out of Japan suggest that Nintendo has a new *Donkey Kong* game in the works and not just *Donkey Konga* as previously thought. An announcement is expected at E3, but *NOM UK* has a sneaky suspicion that this could show up on the Nintendo DS, as a cheeky nod to the twin-screen Game & Watch version from 1982.

PASS THE BATEN
Good news for RPG fans. It seems that a Namco killer RPG double bill of *Baten Kaitos* and *Tales of Symphonia* may see a UK release after all. The translation is obviously a big job, but Namco and Nintendo are knocking heads now. We understand that at the moment, *Baten Kaitos* looks the likelier of the two. Write to us! Make it happen!

THAT'S NOT FINAL
Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles was the fruit of Square and Nintendo being back on good terms. Their next game on 'Cube will remain a mystery until E3, but we've heard a brilliant rumour. Specifically, that the new game will bring Nintendo gamers up to speed in the *FF* universe, taking story elements from the seventh, eighth and ninth in the series, previously only seen on PlayStation. Unlikely we know, but cool.

BANG! GoldenEye 2!

Electronic Arts to surf on the rep of the best shooter ever.

There's going to be a sequel to the N64 classic *GoldenEye*, thanks to 007-licence holders Electronic Arts. But before you have a heart attack, we'll quickly run through the facts.

You don't play as James Bond. You're actually working AGAINST Bond, on the side of classic Bond villain Goldfinger. So it's hardly a sequel at all by the sounds of it, but EA are clearly hoping the name alone will be enough to send gamers off in a nostalgic Bond-buying frenzy.

■ **B-B-BANG! Go mental on the Z trigger and give this guy a machine gun face-lift**

■ **Remember the awesome train level? That won't be in the new one. That's great...**

■ **Stupid Natalya: if she makes a comeback, hopefully they'll give her a brain**

You're thinking Free Radical now, right? Well, dream on. The game is in the works at EA's new studio in Los Angeles. An odd decision since many of the original *GoldenEye* team are working at Free Radical on *TimeSplitters 3* – which will be published by Electronic Arts. In fact, EA went on the record to state that Free Radical aren't making *Bond* games.

"We've been working in secret for over a year to try and build a product that meets the expectations of consumers." explained EA's John Riccitiello. "It's a violent story-driven shooter. This isn't the same debonair kind of Bond we've been building for the last couple of years."

So all the rumours solidify into one confusing mass. There will be more on this at E3, but we're already pretty worried about the direction this is going in.

TEN REASONS WHY GOLDENEYE 2 IS A BAD IDEA

1... THE GAME ENDS WHERE THE FILM ENDS. THERE'S NOTHING ELSE TO SAY.

2... THEY CAN'T USE ANY LEVELS FROM THE ORIGINAL: THEY'RE NINTENDO'S. NO FACILITY? NO WAY!

3... RARE INVENTED GUNS LIKE THE KLOBB, SPECIFICALLY FOR THE GAME. THEY CAN'T USE THOSE, BECAUSE THEY WEREN'T IN THE MOVIE.

4... HALF THE FUN OF *GOLDENEYE* IS PEERING AT ENEMIES IN THE FOG.

5... THERE'S NO Z-BUTTON IN THE TRIGGER POSITION ON A GAMECUBE PAD.

6... THE BOND TIMELINE ALREADY TELLS US GOLDFINGER COULDN'T KILL JAMES BOND. SO, LIKE *TETRIS*, THIS IS ALREADY A GAME YOU CAN'T 'WIN'.

7... STUPID NATALYA MANAGED TO KILL HERSELF BUTTERING SOME TOAST LAST MONTH, SO SHE WON'T BE RETURNING.

8... FIRST PERSON SHOOTER CHARACTERS ARE NOW EXPECTED TO DO THIS AMAZING NEW TRICK CALLED 'JUMPING'. DON'T WORRY, IT'LL NEVER CATCH ON.

9... ANY MULTIPLAYER COULDN'T EVER TOP THE LATE NIGHTS YOU HAD WITH YOUR MATES ON THE ORIGINAL. DOES THAT CLOCK REALLY SAY 4AM?

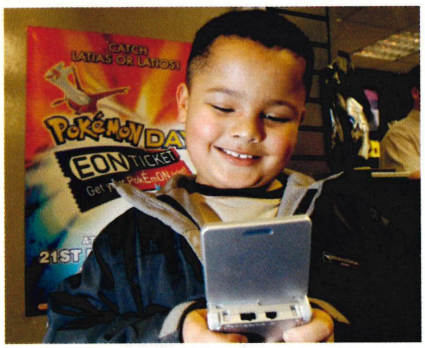
10... TO EVEN BE CONSIDERED HALF AS GOOD AS *GOLDENEYE*, EA WILL NEED TO IMPROVE ON THEIR CURRENT *BOND* GAMES BY ABOUT 735%.

EON Frenzy

Pokémaniacs clamour to visit Southern Island.

Predictably enough, the nation's *Pokémon* fans laid siege to Gamestation stores up and down the country to get their hands on the EON Ticket. Saturday February 21st saw 30 Gamestation outlets offering the download and gamers got a surprise if they thought it was an easy route to Southern Island once the Link Cable had been detached.

Players had to travel to Petalburg City to claim the EON ticket from Gym Leader, Norman, then had to take down the Elite Four and Pokémon League Champion. Only then could they board the SS Tidal at Lilycove City and head for Southern Island – home of Latias and Latios.



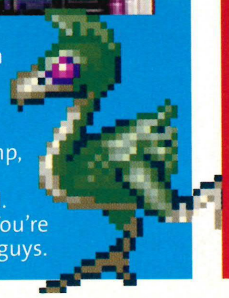
If you never got down to the shops that day, don't fret. If one of your mates did, you can download the EON Ticket from them. They can share the wealth around 100 times, so the Ticket will be spreading like wildfire now in playgrounds and office toilets everywhere.

Failing that, you'll get a good look at Latias and Latios in the fifth *Pokémon* movie, *Pokémon Heroes*.

UNSUNG HEROES

We're loving Etecoon and Dachora.

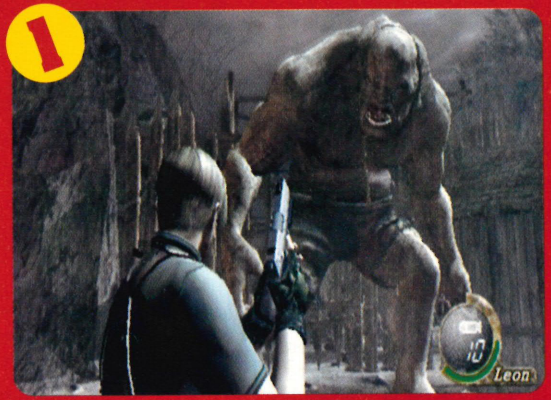
If your first reaction was to think "Who?" then you understand why we're here. Without these boys (or girls – it's hard to tell with small sprites), you'd be NOTHING. We're taking it as read that you play *Metroid* games. Etecoon taught you the wall jump, pinging up a shaft like a little furry mentalist. Dachora? Only the ULTRA JUMP that isn't even in the game manual. Feel bad for not knowing their names now? You should. You're disgusting. Repent with a solo round of applause for the guys.



FUTURE FIVE

Using the power of the Fortune Teller's crystal ball we took a look into the future and drooled over these games.

1



RESIDENT EVIL 4

We thought we knew what this was all about, but now we know the whole story, we're blown away. Out go the clunky old bits, in comes *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. We can't wait.

2

SECOND SIGHT

Second what? It's the newly-announced supernatural shooter from Free Radical – they of *TS2* fame. It looks sweet as hell. Oh and *TS3* IS coming to 'Cube by the way.

ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS

Knowing you get to ride a mini Epona has re-awoken our desire. It's too awesome! We'll be going hands on with the Japanese version next issue.

3

4

PANDORA TOMORROW

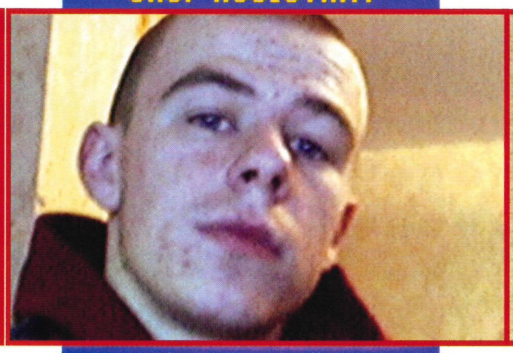
Oi! Fisher! How did you get into this list? You shot *Mario Golf*, hid the box and rappelled in through the window? Good skills. We can't get enough *Splinter Cell*.

UNITY

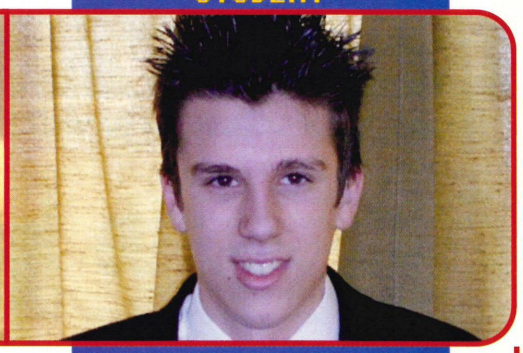
Little is known about this flashy, trippy shooter. It's being coded by Welsh llama enthusiast, Jeff Minter, who's famous for psychedelic games. Good ones, too.

5

Nintendo KNOW IT ALL



ANDREW MCEWAN, 19, SHOP ASSISTANT



THEO NEUMAN, 16, STUDENT

1 WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE BOXER IN *KILLER INSTINCT*?

"Is it Jax? No! Actually, is it Combo?" (1)
Luckily for you, you remembered *Killer Instinct* ISN'T *Mortal Kombat*.

"ERGH! I have no idea." (0)
Why "ergh"? What's "ergh" about this question. Oh, you have no idea.

2 WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE METALLIC, DRAGON YOU FIGHT IN *METROID PRIME*?

"He's called Ridley." (0)
Sorry Andrew, he's called Meta-Ridley. It's harsh, we know.

"Good question [huffs]. I haven't got that far yet." (0)
Good question, but not for you. The answer is Meta-Ridley.

3 IN WHICH MARIO GAME CAN YOU HOLD CROUCH TO CHARGE A HIGH JUMP?

"*Mario Bros. 2*." (1)
That's quite hardcore Mario knowledge. Well done.

"*Mario 64*?" (0)
Nope, there's no such move in *Super Mario 64*. You should know that.

4 IN *SUPER MARIO KART*, HOW MANY COINS WILL GIVE YOU FULL-SPEED?

"Is it ten? I'm sure it's ten." (1)
Three out of four correct. Respect to that score, son.

"99!" (0)
So sure, yet so wrong. You need some retro-revision, pal.

5 IN *MONKEY BALL*'S MONKEY TARGET, WHAT ARE THE GOLD TARGETS WORTH?

"I can't remember. I'm not sure, but I think it's 100." (0)
You're mistaken. The 100 targets are massive, easy targets.

"That's 500." (1)
That's your first point, too. But you've got some catching up to do.

6 IN WHICH N64 SPORTS GAME DO MARIO AND LUIGI APPEAR IN THE CROWD?

"Now this is a complete guess... *Waverace 64*." (0)
Good guess, but no score. *1080° Snowboarding* is what you needed.

"*Tennis 64*." (0)
There's no such game, mate. And no, that's not near enough to *Mario Tennis*. Which is wrong anyway.

7 WHAT POTION HEALS LIFE AND MAGIC POWER IN *A LINK TO THE PAST*?

"I'm guessing from *Ocarina of Time* that it's red." (0)
Funny that, because last time we checked, it was blue in *OoT* as well.

"I'll go blue." (1)
Why? Are you dead? Oh, the potion. That's the correct answer.

8 NAME THE SKULL-LOVING WIZARD IN THE *BANJO KAZOOIE* GAMES.

"No idea. I have no idea at all." (0)
Well that's no good, is it? You're letting yourself down now.

"I can't do that." (0)
You can. It's easy. You just open wide and say "Mumbo Jumbo". But you didn't, did you?

9 WHAT VEHICLE IN *ADVANCE WARS II* WAS NOT IN THE FIRST GAME?

"I'm guessing it's the Neo Tanks." (1)
Pretty good guess. That's another point on the score sheet for Andrew.

"Nope, sorry." (0)
No need to apologise, Theo. It isn't OUR reputation that's going downhill fast.

10 IN *PERFECT DARK* WHAT GUN CAN BE STUCK ON A WALL AS A SENTRY DRONE?

"Ahhhhh, I know this one. Laptop Gun! Err... I think." (1)
Don't doubt yourself. You clearly know your stuff.

"[Laughs]. I've never even heard of that game." (0)
That's no laughing matter. You've NEVER heard of *Perfect Dark*?!

FINAL SCORE

5 It's been a good run for Andrew. You made mincemeat of your opponent. Nice one.

2 No, Theo. No. It seems *Monkey Ball* is the ONLY good game you've ever played. Not good!

Want to have a go? Email **michael.jackson@emap.com** with your name and telephone number!

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Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK

READER SURVEY

DS will sell out

We asked: will Nintendo DS be a smash hit or an embarrassing flop?

POLL RESULT
YES 75%
NO 25%

■ Dual-screen technology opens the gaming world up to a whole new level of possibilities. Nintendo is making it. What could possibly go wrong?
WYNDHAM LIVESLEY

■ I think the DS will sell loads, but I'd rather have the next Game Boy Advance because two screens might be confusing.
HARRY SMITH

■ I believe that the DS will be a good console, but I think it will struggle to sell with PSP and the GBA out there, too.
GRANT MACDONALD

This month we ask:
• Are you looking forward to *Resi 4* or has the series had its day?

N64 remakes, please!

POLL RESULT
YES 100%
NO 0%

We asked: would you welcome more classic game remakes like *MGS*?

■ The *Resi* remake is one of my favourite 'Cube games and I'm sure *MGS* will be, too. How about *DK64* free with *Konga*?
GRANT MACDONALD

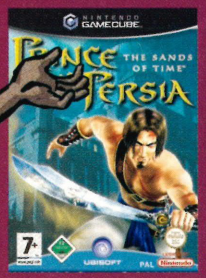
■ I hoped *Conker's Bad Fur Day* would be remade, but Rare has left us. I'm glad that *MGS* is coming to 'Cube. I can't wait.
COLIN MORGAN

■ If a game has already earned the classic status, it makes sense for it to be brought to a new generation of consoles.
ADAM MOSS

This month we ask:
• Will you buy *Fire Red/Leaf Green* even if you've finished *Red & Blue*?

Email YES or NO and a brief comment to: michael.jackson@emap.com – don't forget to include your name!

BEADLE'S BARGAINS

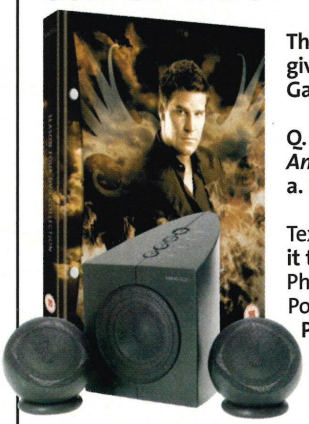


Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time
£22.49
(www.amazon.co.uk)

Iridion II
£14.99
(www.game.uk.com)

Season Four *Angel* DVDs and Herao 2.1 Speakers

WIN!



The *Angel* 6-disc DVD box set is out to buy NOW and we've got five to give away, along with five Herao 2.1 Speaker sets to hook up to your GameCube, thanks to Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment.*

Q. What's the name of the actor who plays Angel (Angelus) in the *Angel* TV series?
a. David Beckham b. David Boreanaz c. David Blaine

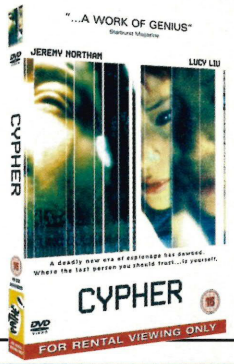
Text: Write 'nomcomp ANGEL', then the letter of your answer and send it to 83149
Phone: 0905 053 1102
Post: *Angel* Competition, *NOM UK*, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW

Cypher DVDs

Thanks to Pathe Distribution Ltd., we're giving away five copies of *Cypher* on DVD. It's out to rent on DVD and VHS from March 29th.*

Q: In the recent blockbuster movie, *Charlie's Angels*, which of these lovely ladies was NOT one of the Angels?
a. Lucy Liu b. Drew Barrymore c. Lisa Riley

Text: Write 'nomcomp CYPHER', then the letter of your answer and send it to 83149. Phone: 0905 053 1101. Post: *Cypher* Competition, *NOM UK*, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW



*YOU MUST BE 15 OR OVER TO ENTER. SEE TERMS AND CONDITIONS ON P4 BEFORE ENTERING

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Chris Kohler shows how Capcom's merchandising partners didn't quite get it.

THIS MONTH: *Street Fighter Ugly*

Sonic Boom Tank
Hasbro, 1993
Current asking price: around £10 boxed

At the height of *Street Fighter*'s popularity, all little American kids wanted was *SF* figures like they'd seen in the video games. So Capcom USA licensed its *Street Fighter* characters to Hasbro, who inexplicably made Ryu and co. part of its G.I. Joe figure line. Guile got a Sonic Boom Tank, which at least made more sense than Blanka's bazooka gun.

Chun Li plush doll
Ace Novelty, 1993
Current asking price: around £15

Nothing can compare to this cheaply-made – but officially licensed – Chun Li doll. It's entirely out of proportion, with an oversized head and fuzzy afro. Worse, the hideous US Chun Li artwork was silk-screened onto the head, making her look a bit like Robert DeNiro with breasts.

© 2004 Kellogg Company

Get the phone... it's Samus!

Yoshio Sakamoto talks about *Zero Mission*, *Metroid Prime 2* and the return of *Super Metroid*.

If you don't know who Yoshio Sakamoto is, listen up now. As the manager of Nintendo's prestigious R&D1 group, he is THE MAN behind such innovative titles as *Wario Ware, Inc.*, but he also stands as the longest-serving member of the whole *Metroid* development team. And considering how long the series has been going that's some achievement.

He started on the original NES version, directed *Super Metroid* on the Super NES (long considered one of the single best games ever made), supervised development of *Metroid Prime* while directing *Metroid Fusion* and, most recently, directed *Zero Mission* for the GBA.

In anticipation of the release of *Zero Mission*, our intrepid US correspondent, Chris Kohler, was invited to participate in a telephone roundtable Q&A session with Mr Sakamoto. Here's what transpired...

***NOM UK*: What was the thinking behind the *Zero Mission* project?**
Sakamoto: Our basic development concept was that we really wanted to return to the roots of *Metroid* gameplay.

Metroid Fusion was a different style to other *Metroid* games up to that point and so our concept was that we wanted to show people what the roots of the franchise were, to show them the style of game that *Metroid* sprang from and at the same time retell the story of Samus' original mission.

***NOM UK*: What was the greatest challenge faced by the development team during the production of *Zero Mission*, and how was this overcome?**
Sakamoto: There's always the possibility that it could've been received in a negative way – as a mere 'port' rather than a truly remade game. We had to find a way to add enough elements to make the game really feel like it was new, while still not straying so far from the original *Metroid* to lose the meaning behind what we were trying to do.

***NOM UK*: Does *Zero Mission* share any technology with *Metroid Fusion* that might have accelerated the game's development process?**
Sakamoto: We did use the *Fusion* system as a base for *Zero Mission*, but in the process we rebuilt portions of that engine, added some new parts and did a lot of fine tuning. Despite it being a similar game to *Fusion* we still spent quite a bit of time on the development.

***NOM UK*: What are you most pleased with, personally, now that this project has drawn to a close?**
Sakamoto: For me one of the biggest challenges was finding a way to implement a new style of *Metroid* gameplay at the end of the game, after you defeat Mother Brain. We spent a lot of time working on that and I feel that it turned out to be very good – something new that still feels like *Metroid*.

***NOM UK*: Was it decided from the start of the development of the original *Metroid* that Samus was going to be female, or was it something that arose during the development process?**
Sakamoto: We were part of the way through the development process when one of the staff members said, "Hey, wouldn't it be cool if the person inside this suit turned out to be a woman?" And so that's how we decided on it.

In *Zero Mission* we have tried to find ways to express her femininity a little more without turning her into a sex object. That's one of the larger things that we've added to the game – there's a period during which you'll see Samus operating outside her suit, in the latter stages of *Zero Mission*.

***NOM UK*: How do you feel the addition of cinematic sequences for *Zero Mission* changes the player's experience?**
Sakamoto: I am noticing this trend and I do think it's important to have a story line that goes along with the game, to complement it if you will. But in a game like *Metroid* that doesn't use a lot of language, it can be very difficult to convey the story accurately, in a way that the player can understand.

This time, one thing that we did try to

"We really wanted to show the roots of the series and retell the story of Samus."

do was flesh out the story with the cinematic scenes. We also tried to maintain a certain level of mystery in the story. But I do think that nowadays in video games, without a story to go along with the gameplay it's difficult for players to maintain interest.

***NOM UK*: Samus Aran is described as a bounty hunter. So are we ever going to see Samus in a non-linear adventure game, hunting down wanted criminals for money?**
Sakamoto: Obviously if we were to try to work that into a new game, it would be a very different style of game and a different style of gameplay.

So if there was an idea for a game like that and we were interested in doing such a game, that's a direction we could potentially go in.

***NOM UK*: Would you be interested in remaking games like the GB's *Metroid II* or *Super Metroid* on the Super NES?**
Sakamoto: If we were able to find something that we could add to those games, some way in which we could change them and make them fresher, we might be interested in doing something like that. And, if the fans wanted to play *Super Metroid* just the way it is on the Game Boy Advance, we might look at that and make a determination if there is a need to do that.

***NOM UK*: Are there any plans to connect *Zero Mission* to *Metroid Prime 2*, or the original *Metroid Prime*?**
Sakamoto: There is no connectivity to either of the 'Cube versions of *Metroid*. However, if you connect *Zero Mission* with *Fusion* using a link cable and two GBAs, you will be able to get a little something out of that connectivity.

***NOM UK*: Are you a producer on *Metroid Prime 2*? Can you give us any updates on its development?**
Sakamoto: I am working on *Metroid Prime 2* in a supervisory role, much like I did on *Prime*. I think you'll probably want to wait until E3, when we can give you more precise details on how things are coming along.

***NOM UK*: Are there any plans to make a *Metroid* game for the Nintendo DS?**
Sakamoto: Obviously, that's a very difficult question to answer at this point in time. But as with any hardware, what we like to do is look at how we can take advantage of it to add new gameplay elements. So if we're able to find something that allows us to do this, then we'll look at bringing the *Metroid* series to the Nintendo DS.

Now check out *NOM UK*'s definitive review of *Zero Mission* on p66...

Nom Idol

Have you got what it takes to work for the UK's favourite Nintendo magazine?

For many of you, working on a games magazine sounds like the job of your dreams. When the staff of *NOM UK* were younger, that was their dream, too. Well, now we're looking for someone to come and work on the magazine as a staff writer and we're asking the people who we think love Nintendo the most: that's you lot.

Obviously we want the best and most passionate person to get the job, so we're not making it easy for you. We want to see a 300-word review of a Nintendo game of your choice and you also need to write some funny captions and answer the questions on the application form below. Send those with your CV to the address below.

The plan is to invite the three outstanding applicants to work on a live issue of *NOM UK* and then poll the readers to decide who finally gets appointed to the team. So even if you're not planning on applying, you can still have your say on the matter.

To apply, you need to be able to come and work full time in sunny Peterborough from this summer. If you're midway through a university course, sorry, we can't wait. We can't have you bailing out of school for this either, so you'll need to be at least of school-leaving age. Academic qualifications are a major bonus, but it's more important that you demonstrate to us that you know video games inside out and can write like a ninja.

If that sounds like you, don't mess about. Deadline for the first round of applications is April 15th, which must be posted (no emails, please) to: Tim Street, *Nintendo Official Magazine UK*, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, PE2 5UW. Remember, we need to see a CV, your 300-word review and the completed application form below. Good luck!

NOM IDOL APPLICATION FORM

Name:

Age: **telephone number:**

The best Nintendo games ever made are:

1

2

3

My three new ideas for features in *Nintendo Official Magazine UK* are:

1

2

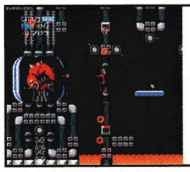
3

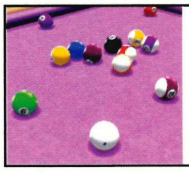
The question I'd most like to ask Shigeru Miyamoto is:

The last game I completed was:

My idea for a cool free gift for the magazine is:

Caption these screenshots below in less than 15 words:





THE ROCK-HARD Quiz

We've all seen Game Over screens, some more than others. Now name them or live in shame.

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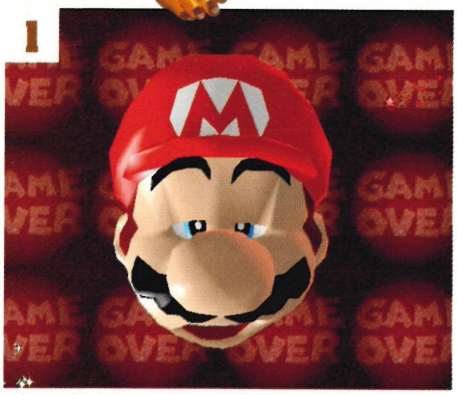

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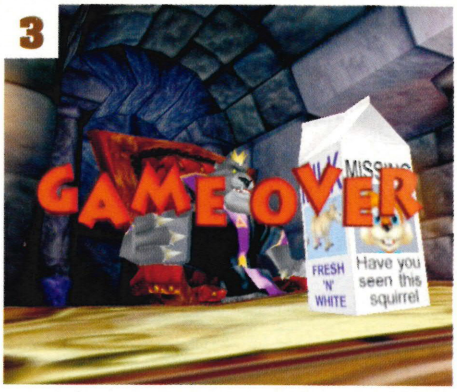

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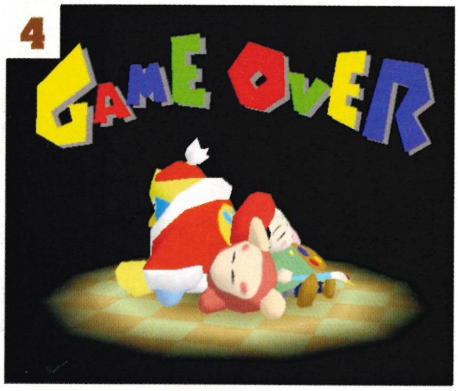

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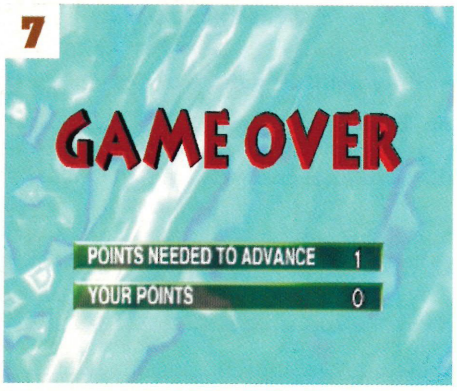

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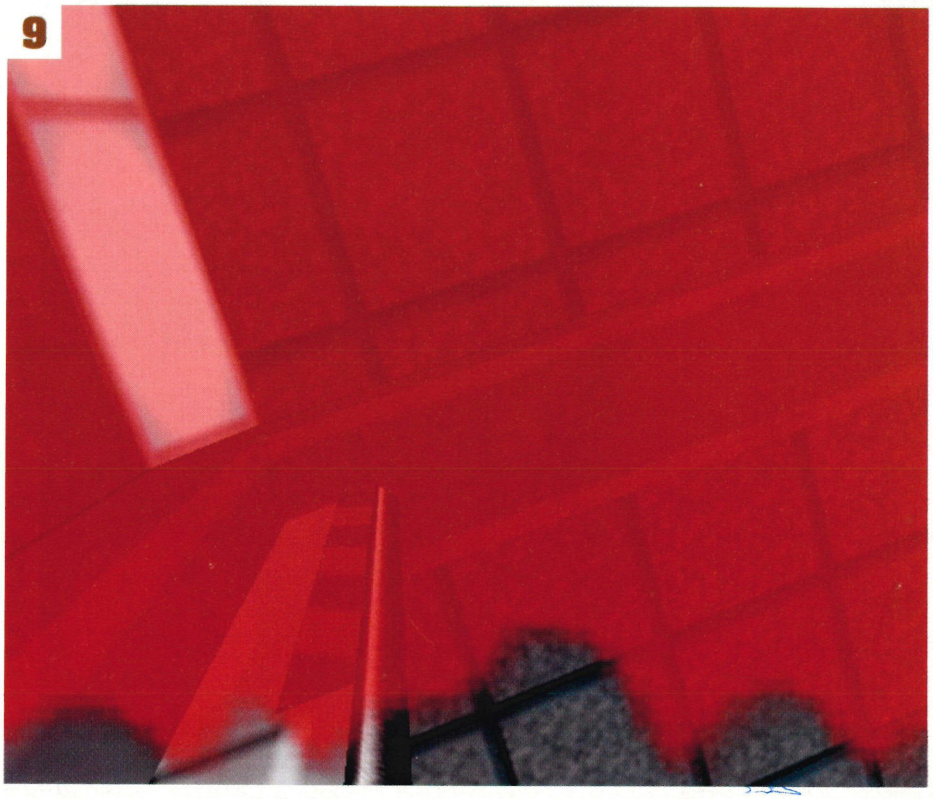

Is it Game Over for you? Check the answers on p4

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THE BIG METAL GEAR SOLID COMPETITION

TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION

METAL GEAR SOLID®

THE TWIN SNAKES

Later this month GameCube fans will be sneaking into military bases, shooting out security cameras and blasting off limbs with Nikita missiles. *MGS: The Twin Snakes* is here and we're celebrating, so feast your gaming eyes on these big-time prizes.

The main prize

The top-notch prizes just keep rolling in. Thanks to Konami we're giving away a slick-looking silver GameCube and a copy of *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes*.

For the ultimate stealth-fest though we've got a 32" Sony TV to chuck in with *MGS*. It's got crazy words like Wega and Trinitron in its title – that's how you know it kicks ass. And no top-notch TV looks right without a smart DVD player, so the star winner will also get one of Sony's latest DVD recorders. No more video tapes for one lucky *NOM UK* reader!

To stand a chance of winning, just answer this question...

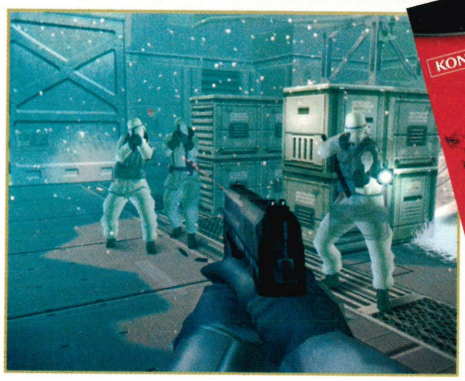
? QUESTION

Which two Nintendo characters appear as desk toys in *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes*?

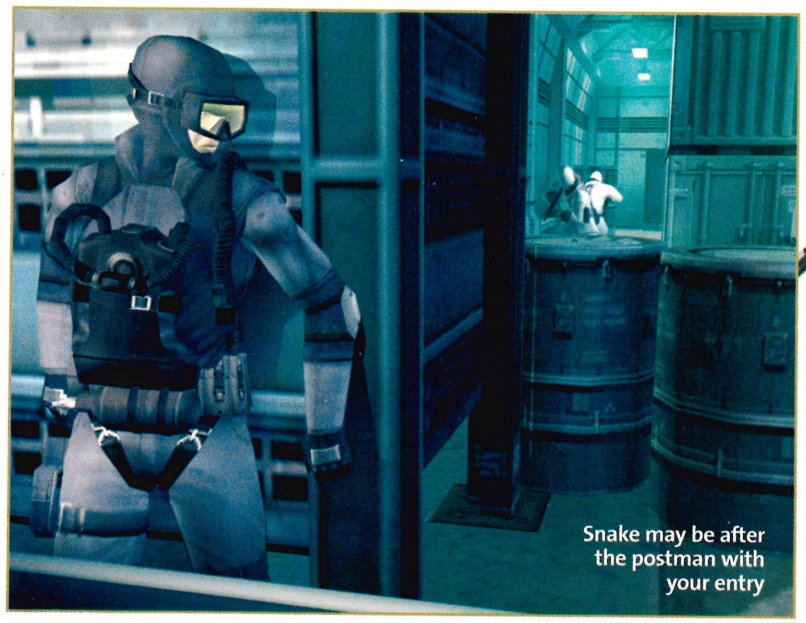
a. Mario and Yoshi
b. Kirby and Link
c. Pikachu and Samus

The runners-up

There's no doubt that everyone who enters this competition will have their hearts fixed on the gear in the main prize. But if you don't win that, we've got five copies of *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes* and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* for our runners-up. TWO cool games for free – that can't be bad, can it?



"This will be one of the most exciting games you'll play all year." *MGS:TTS* review (issue 138, 85%).


Snake may be after the postman with your entry

HOW TO ENTER

PHONE
Dial 0905 053 1103, answer the question and leave your name, address and telephone number. Then cross your fingers and keep them crossed.

POST
Write your answer on an envelope or postcard and send it to: *Metal Gear Solid* Competition, *NOM UK*, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 5UW.

TEXT
Text the words 'nomcomp GEAR' and the letter of your answer to 83149. Unfortunately, this service is not available for users of the Virgin network.

IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ! All entries for this competition must be received by 15/4/2004 to qualify.*

ISSUE 137 WINNERS

MARIO PARTY COMPETITION
- **Kevin E White, *Bristol* (First Prize)**
- **Sandra Pang, *Brighton***
- **Craig Nelson, *Middlesex***
- **Mike Cass, *Berkshire***
- **Adrian Farnworth, *Bury***

GBA SP TG RALLY COMPETITION
- **Christian Tozzo, *Basingstoke* (First Prize)**
- **Jack Parker, *Yorkshire***
- **Stuart Swain, *Birmingham***

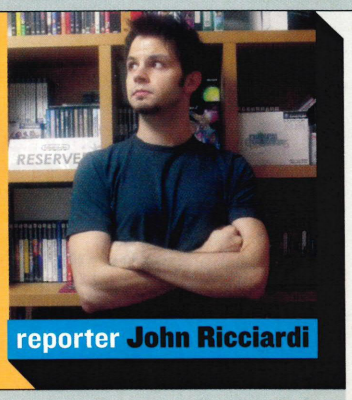
DVD BUNDLE COMPETITION
- **M Parish, *Nottinghamshire***
- **Craig Harris, *Dorset***
- **Jamie Elphick, *Dorset***
- **James Sehgal, *London***
- **Steve Lambeth, *Bath***

1080° AVALANCHE COMPETITION
- **Scott Dabell, *Leicestershire* (First Prize)**
- **Alex Crabtree, *Manchester***
- **Dean Wood, *Oxfordshire***

T.H.U.G. GEAR COMPETITION
- **Robert Crispin, *Devon* (First Prize)**
- **Ella Hammond, *London***
- **Ross McWilliam, *Moray***
- **Daniel Herd, *Devon***

*SEE TERMS AND CONDITIONS ON P4

Blip Japan



reporter **John Ricciardi**

● Famicom Mini hysteria ● Games shop catastrophe ● Bond beauty

RETRO GAME REVOLUTION

For the second year in a row, Nintendo chose Valentine's Day to kick off a major new sales push in Japan. Last year, it was the launch of the GBA SP; this year brought forth the new Famicom Color GBA SP and the Famicom Mini series of 8-bit games repackaged for GBA to mark the 20th anniversary of the Famicom (Japan's NES).

Anticipating a huge crowd, we trekked out bright and early on the morning of the 14th to wait in line at the famous Tsutaya store in Shibuya, but surprisingly, long lines were not to be found. Unlike the old days, when massive queues would form for the launch of any major Nintendo release, today's launches are becoming less and less of a spectacle, thanks largely to well-orchestrated pre-order campaigns, allowing gamers to reserve their copies well in advance of the street date.

Regardless, we stood for two hours in the cold to be among the first in the world to get our hands on the new GBA as well as the killer line-up of classic games and we're back with a gallery of pics for you to drool over. Enjoy!

◀ **Each comes in a special plastic case with a mini-sized box for the cartridge**

▲ **Famicom Color GBA SPs hit the shelves. You can almost smell the plasticky goodness**

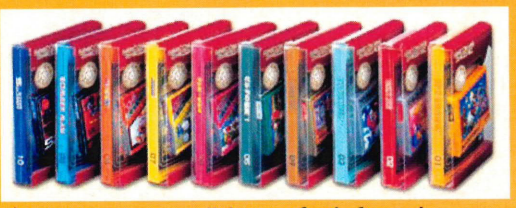
▼ **Another look at the box for the Famicom Color GBA SP. Is that not the coolest packaging ever?**

FAMICOM MINI LAUNCH LINE-UP

Although Nintendo hasn't announced any plans to release further titles in the Famicom Mini line-up after the initial batch of ten, we can always hope. For now, the available list looks like this:

Super Mario Bros.	(Nintendo)
Donkey Kong	(Nintendo)
Ice Climber	(Nintendo)
Excitebike	(Nintendo)
The Legend of Zelda	(Nintendo)
Pac-Man	(Namco)
Xevious	(Namco)
Mappy	(Namco)
Bomberman	(Hudson)
Star Soldier	(Hudson)

Each game includes the original packaging, as well as features like: sleep mode (wow!), high score saving (gasp!) and wireless link play using the new Wireless Adapter that shipped with *Fire Red* and *Leaf Green* (okay, that one really is pretty cool).



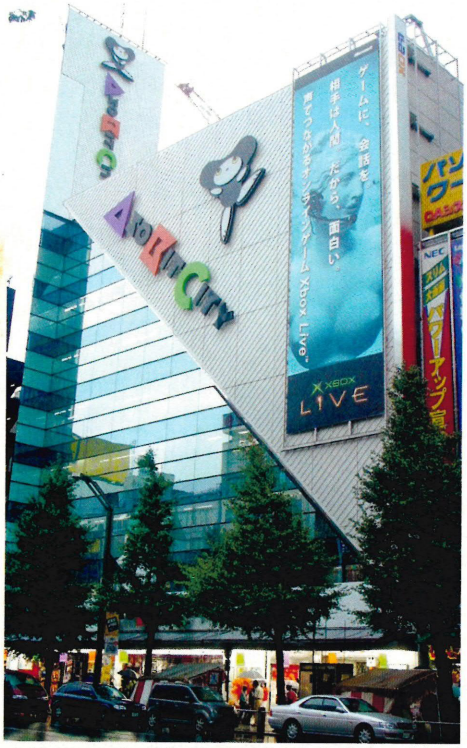
▲ **The tiny ten – small, but perfectly formed**

Akihabara Watch

■ There was a double dose of sad news this month from the heart of Akihabara, Japan's gaming mecca. First off, Yamagiwa Soft, a popular DVD, game and music shop that has been around for years, burned to a crisp on February 10th in a frightening blaze that surely saddened the hearts of countless manga video freaks across Tokyo.

As if this wasn't bad enough, the neighbouring Mr. Donut got caught in the blaze as well. Curses! Fortunately, no-one was hurt. To make matters worse for gamers, Asobit City, the massive gaming superstore we profiled a few months back, has announced that it'll be closing its doors for good in April due to lacklustre sales. What's happening to this place?!

▲ Yamagiwa ablaze! Luckily, firemen were on hand to save fleeing sprites and polygons

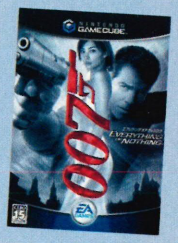


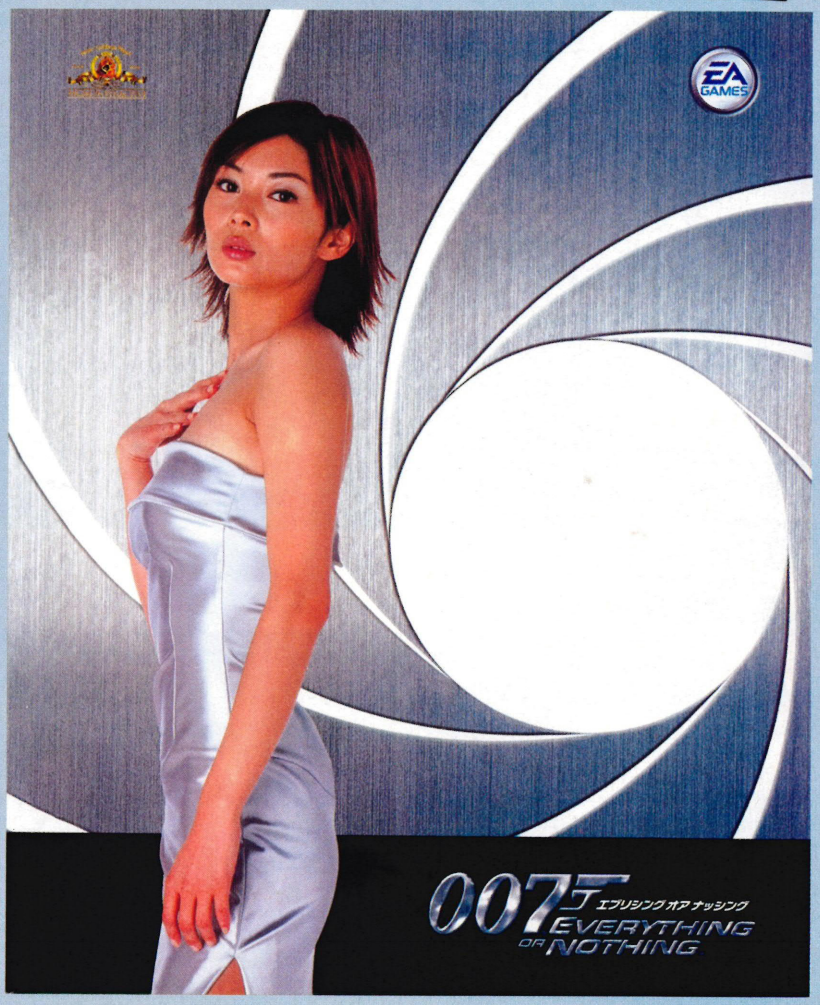
▲ How can Asobit City be closing? If they opened this in the UK we'd move in!

Licence to thrill

EA SCORES WITH HOT LADY

■ EA is easily the most successful Western company to publish games in Japan and it's not too hard to understand why. For the release of *Everything or Nothing*, the latest 007 game for GameCube and GBA, the company hired Misaki Ito, a super-hot Japanese model and TV actress, to be the official Bond Girl in all of the game's ads and promotional materials. This kind of media convergence is all the rage in Japan and it seems to be working for EA, as *EoN* managed to sell nearly 70,000 copies across all platforms in its opening weekend.

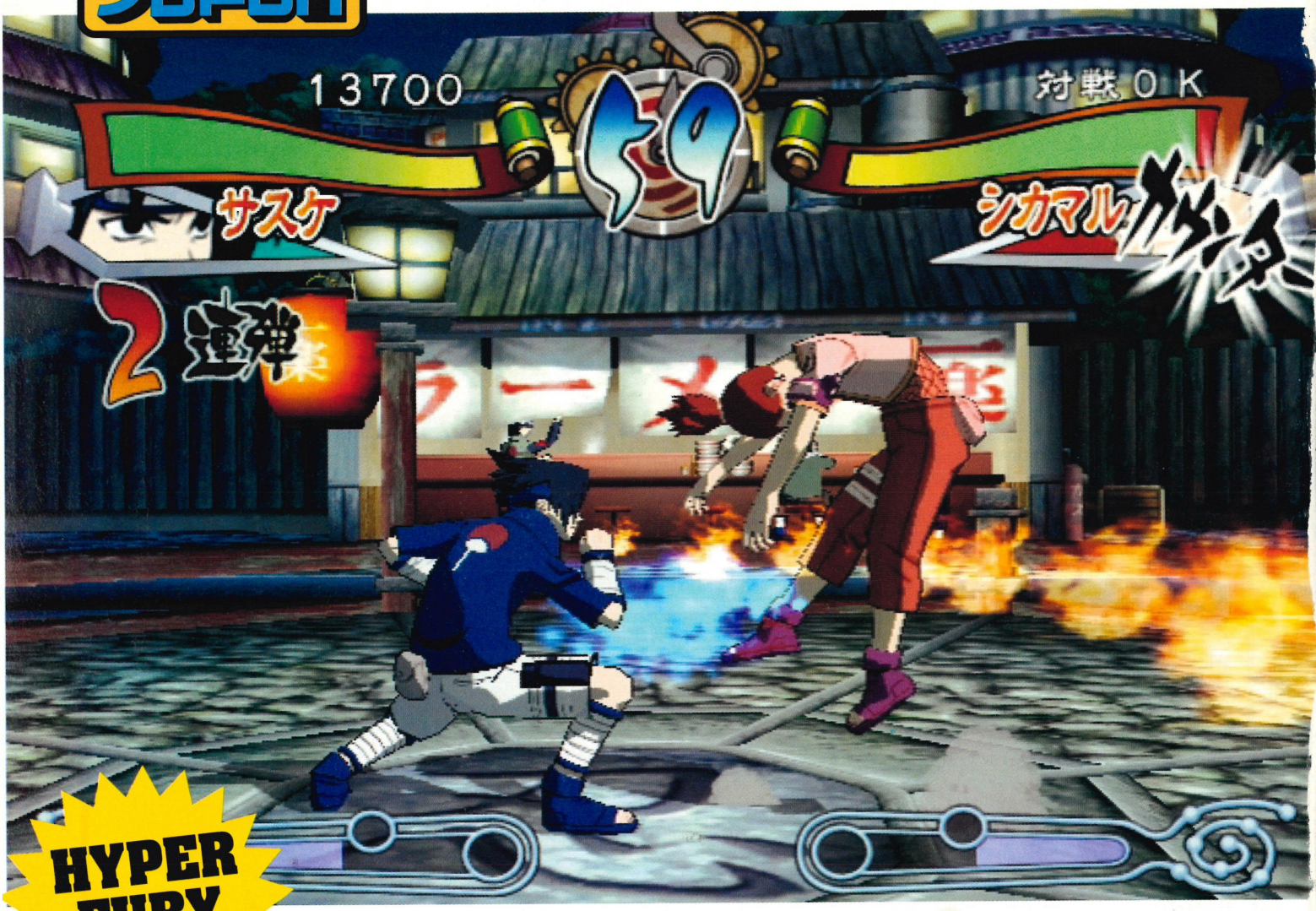




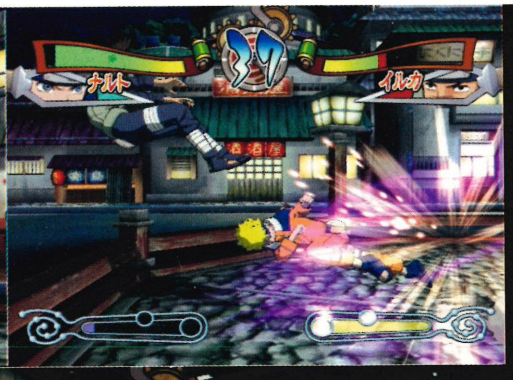
JAPAN TOP TEN

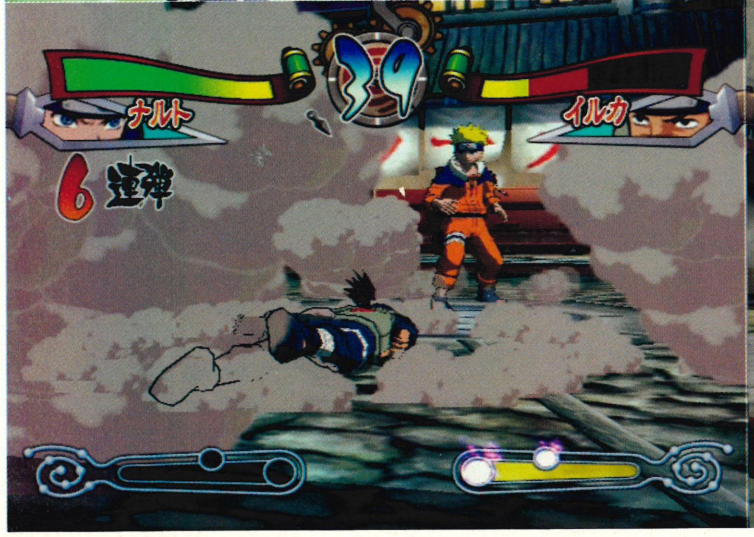
The current best-selling games on Nintendo platforms in Japan

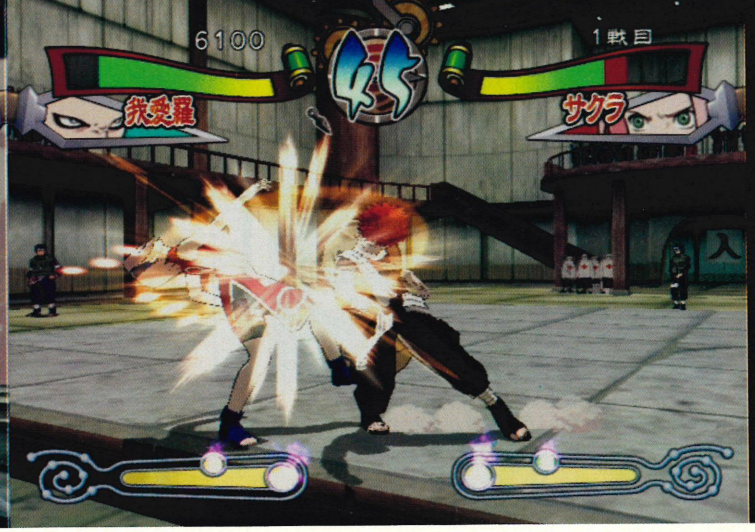
1	*Pokémon Fire Red & Leaf Green*	(Nintendo, GBA)
2	*Famicom Mini: Super Mario Bros.*	(Nintendo, GBA)
3	*Famicom Mini: The Legend of Zelda*	(Nintendo, GBA)
4	*Famicom Mini: Donkey Kong*	(Nintendo, GBA)
5	*Famicom Mini: Ice Climber*	(Nintendo, GBA)
6	*Famicom Mini: Xevious*	(Namco, GBA)
7	*Famicom Mini: Bomberman*	(Hudson, GBA)
8	*Famicom Mini: Mappy*	(Namco, GBA)
9	*Famicom Mini: Pac-Man*	(Namco, GBA)
10	*Famicom Mini: Excitebike*	(Nintendo, GBA)



HYPER FURY BLOWS



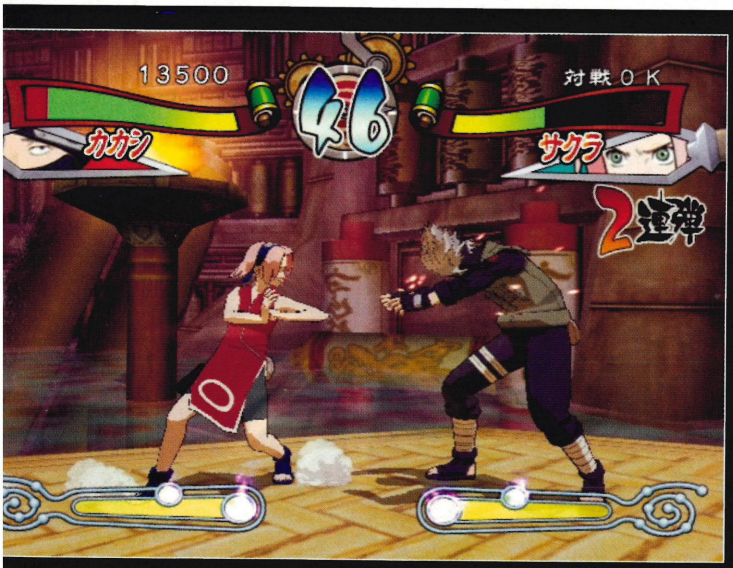




"Punch, chop, kick, uppercut, FIREBALL! Eat it! This is how fighting games should be."

PLAYED!

Naruto: Gekitou Ninja Taisen 2



In real life, if you want to smack a guy in the chops, it's easy – you just swing your arm fast and KLONK. Face pain. No complications (except for possible arrest).

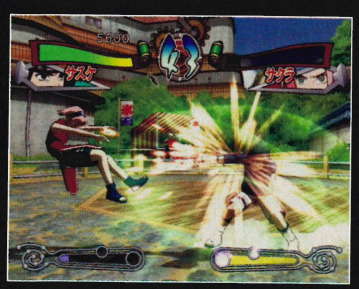
This is what *Naruto 2* is like. No complex quarter-circle-forward stuff. You tell your fighter what to do and he does it. It's more like actual fist fighting – see your opportunity and bust up a face. It's more about who has better fighting skills rather than who's got elephant memory.

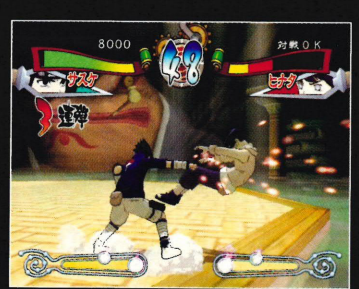
The moves are explosive. Simple Ⓐ and Ⓑ button combos unleash evil blows of fury. And they always finish off with a final satisfying ultra-KLONK. Punch, chop, kick, uppercut, FIREBALL! Eat it! This is how fighting games should be.

Don't let the simplicity of the moves fool you – there's a lot of depth. You can batter your opponent into the air and juggle them like a rag doll. There are also counter moves and parries to escape just about any attack. They're not hard to pull off, it's just about knowing when to use them.

Language barriers meant we couldn't understand the Story mode, but from what we can make out, everyone's pretty hacked off and wants to smack each other up. The footage from the *Naruto* Japanese anime looks awesome. Shame it's not looking likely to come to the UK. This game is so brilliant we just couldn't contain it on one shabby page.

Oh and you need to respect the kick-ass graphics. Sweet.



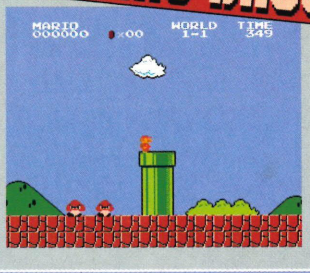


Famicom Mini Collection

TEN-GAME BLITZ

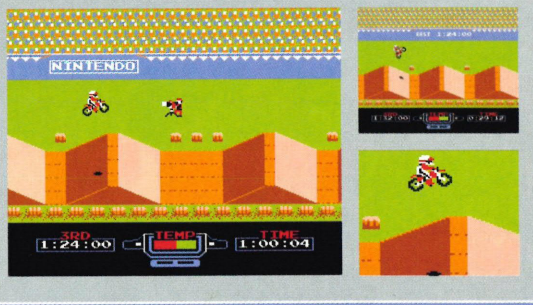
SUPER MARIO BROS.

The controls aren't as slick as *Super Mario World*, but you can't hate this. Headbutting blocks and squashing Goombas is in your genes. You don't think, you just do it. And the music, after all these years, is still magic.



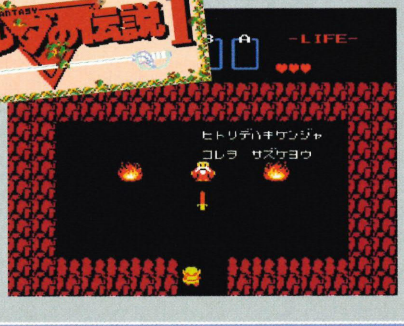
EXCITEBIKE

He's a small man on a bike. He can do a lap of a circuit without ever turning a corner and he can do wheelies. Just like in the N64 remake, the thrill of popping huge air off a jump is undiminished. But it's lonely out there on the mud on your own.



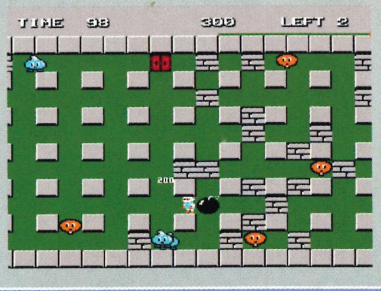
ゼルダの伝説1

You'll probably appreciate the history lesson, but wouldn't fork out cold hard moolah for this. Especially since the people in this speak a whole different language! The mystical language of Hyrule? Nope, Japanese.



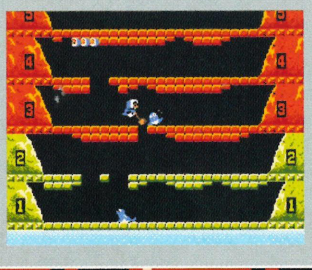
BOMBER MAN

Playing *Bomberman* on your own is like sending yourself a Valentine's card. It only highlights what a desperate loser you are. Without humans to incinerate, the poetry is lost. And Bomberman looks like a skinny div.



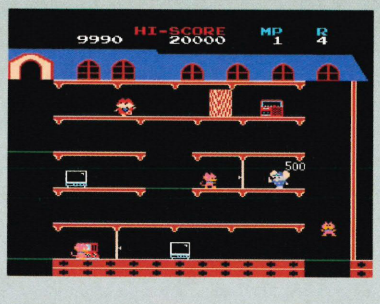
ICE CLIMBER

These boys are the unsung kings of games. There's a reason there has been no sequel to this ice-hacking, seal-hammering extravaganza: how could it possibly be improved? You already know how good Mario is, but *Ice Climber* is a surprise and a delight.



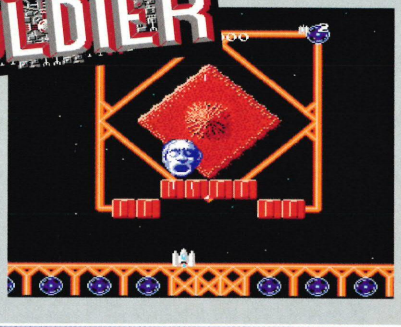
MAPPY

Unless you know what you're doing, Mappy kills in seconds. No messing about. It's like *Pac-Man*, but with trampolines, little cat-monkey things and you – a grey rat/elephant creature. It's fast and rock-hard to the core.



STAR SOLDIER

The pick of the shooters, but still not a killer. It's quality when you're tooled up, but not so cool when you haven't learned the attack waves and enemies swoop in too quickly to avoid. Try the 'Cube remake instead.

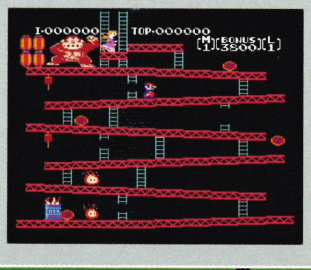


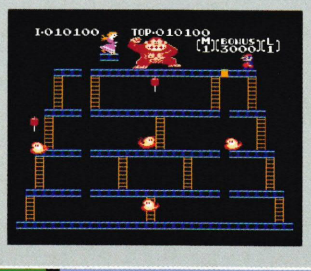
XEVIOUS

Destroy all the Polo Mints in this vertical shooter. We like that the B button lets you attack ground targets, but we hate the fact that the music is four seconds of shrill nonsense looped endlessly. Oi, Famicom, stick to platform games!

DONKEY KONG

It's missing a whole stage and a few animations from its arcade cousin, but the magic remains. When that stupid monkey starts zig-zagging the barrels down at you, you'll want to obliterate him and use his fur as a rug. Rage against the monkey. Ruin him.





PAC-MAN

Wakka-wakka-wakka. We've lost the ability to be critical about this game. *Pac-Man* is *Pac-Man*. It's not good or bad, it just... is. If those ghosts worked as a team, they could catch Pac in seconds. But they don't. Unless you're crap.

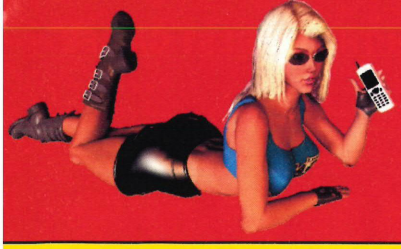
Dream Mix TV World Fighters

Imagine a fighter with some of video gaming's most famous heroes going at it, breaking free of the day-to-day platforming and adventure game grind for an old-fashioned tear up. They'd use their day-job skills in a brutal after-hours fight club. Oh, there it is: *Super Smash Bros. Melee*. Okay, imagine a load of has-beens, never-weres and nearly-men fighting. It's their last shot at the big time. It's called *Dream Mix TV World Fighters*.

The star of the show? Solid Snake (once you unlock him), or Optimus Prime from *Transformers*. As we run through the cast, watch it get worse. Simon Belmont, Bomberman, Twinbee, the guy in the Konami baseball games that wears the cap, the Higgins guy out of *Adventure Island*, some people we sort of vaguely recognise, but...

Anyway, the fighting's low budget compared to Nintendo's brawler, too. Bomberman can drop bombs and throw people or bombs. Usually it's people ONTO bombs. That's a fairly rigid skill set. Sheikh would tear him a new asshole in about eight seconds. If she did, she'd notice a cool thing. Dead Dream Mixers don't just die, they shrink as their soul floats up out of their body. If they can jump up and grab the soul back, they'll live on. If the enemy gets it, the scrap is over. We quite like the way a brawl suddenly switches to a test of virtuoso platform jumping.

Konami, Takara and Hudson have pooled their resources here. They should have quickly noticed it was a shallow pool and kicked the idea in the face. This versus the awesome *Super Smash Bros. Melee* is like *GoldenEye* Bond with twin Golden PP7s versus *Everything of Nothing* Bond with a water pistol – a massacre waiting to happen.



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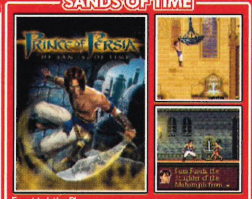

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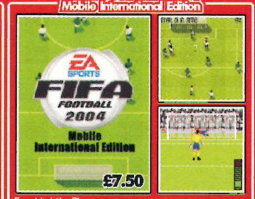

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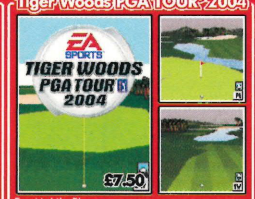

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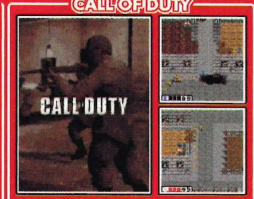

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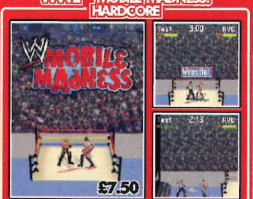

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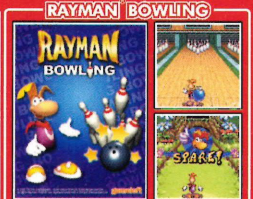

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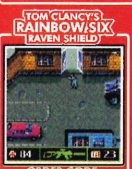
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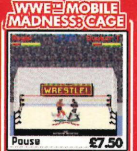

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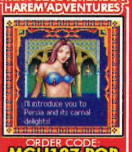

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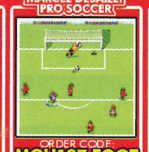
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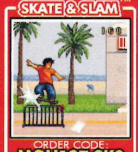
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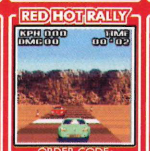
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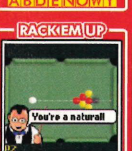

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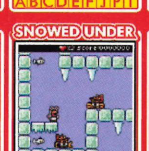
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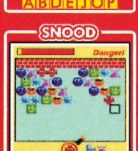

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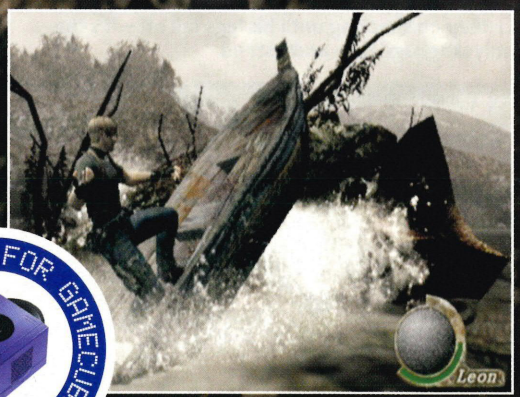
Previews

No train, no mansion, no police station; in fact there's nothing much at all. This place is deserted, just the odd farmhouse and acrid smoke filling the chilly night air from open fires. There's no-one around as your heavy boots crunch along the well-worn gravel paths that lead into a village at the foot of a mountain. There's no-one around, but you'll still feel the chill run down your spine and drop out of your ass. It might not look like the *Resi* games you've played down the years, but then a lot has changed with *Resident Evil 4*, not just the plot and we've bagged the UK exclusive to tell you all about it.

RESIDENT EVIL 4

Resi without any zombies?! Are they mad? Not when the fear factor has been turned up to 11 they're not.

❑ Leon's attempt to hit a passing wasp has tragic consequences for this poor bystander



❑ "Look, mum, no hands... aaaaarrgh!"

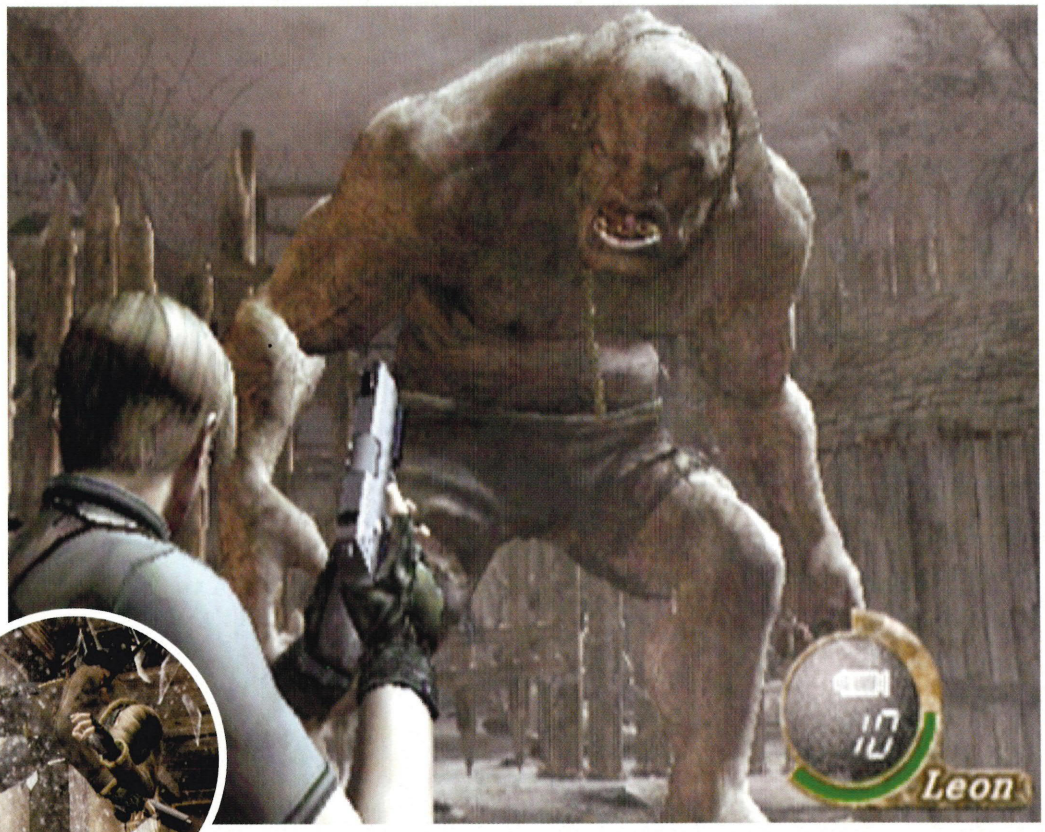
❑ Country folk – as welcoming as ever...

It's not due out until early next year, but *Resi 4* has gone back to the drawing board and has been reworked to give the defining horror genre of the last few years a new lease of life. *Resi 4* takes place in the middle of nowhere, a GameCube *Blair Witch Project* if you will. You play as *Resi 2*'s Leon Kennedy, now a personal guard to the President's daughter. Six years have past since the gruesome events that took place in *Resi 2*, but Leon's about to walk into a new nightmare where zombies and the Umbrella Corporation no longer exist.

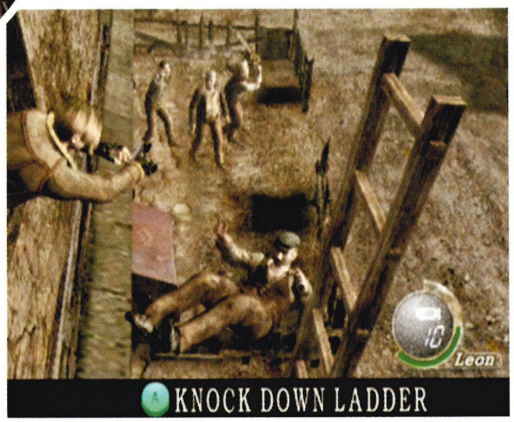
The events of *Resi 4* take a sinister turn when the President's daughter is kidnapped before Leon has a chance to take up his assignment. Now under guard somewhere in Europe, you've got to track her down and deal with the human savages who stand in your way.

These wild country folk will do anything to stop you as their trance turns them into an army of murderers. Burning you with torches is a favourite, but so too is stabbing you with scythes, axes and pitchforks. Then there's the chainsaw-wielding monster with a sack over his head. It's not safe in the forest; didn't your mum ever tell you that?

But Leon's a fearless special agent, the Jack Bauer of *Resident Evil 4* and a master with a gun in his hand. Handgun, sniper rifle, machine gun, Leon's got the lot at his disposal and with a good eye and excellent timing you can shoot the axes out of the air as they fizz towards your head.



❑ Keep on shooting until his legs fall off – it's the only language they understand



❑ "That's for leaving drool and bits of skin all over me windows!" These window cleaners are rubbish

No more of this gubbins

PRE-RENDERED BACKGROUNDS

❑ The entire world is in full 3D, so the pre-rendered backgrounds from previous games have been booted out. All the scenes are now rendered in real-time. Even the creaking-door cut-scenes are no more.

HEALTH AND AMMO MENU

❑ The controls remain the same in the series, but the health and ammo indicators will be on screen. Forget pausing the game to see your heart rate, it's now right in front of your eyes as you blast those freaks.

DODGY CAMERA ANGLES

❑ We've lost count of the amount of times we had trouble actually pointing the gun at a zombie. Now the camera pans behind you and with a laser sight you can choose where to hit enemies. Answer: the head, dumb-ass.

❑ "Aaaaargh, get the TCP!" Squeezing that annoying pimple backfires in a big way for Leon

❑ You can't leave dangerous stuff like that lying around!

Enemy bodies will also react to where you shoot them. Obviously a shotgun shell to the head will drench you in the red stuff, but shoot a foot or knee and they'll start hobbling. Get a good shot and they won't bother you anymore.

Guns aren't the only thing to save Leon's ass either because a quick press of the A button could get you out of some tight spots. Whether it's kicking someone off a ladder, leaping a fence or diving out of a second-floor window to escape a face hugging, some quick Action Button pressing will keep you alive. Leon's also got a special pair of binoculars and by moving the C-Stick (like the telescope in *The Wind Waker*) you can view what's happening in the distance and plan your moves.

But as with all *Resi* games it's the monsters you want to know about and the two we've seen so far look horrific. As you creep around during a thunderstorm you'll only get light from the moon so just about anything can appear out the darkness. One of the worst looks like a cave troll from the first *Lord of the Rings* film. It will attack you with its huge arms and muscly legs, smashing into the ground should you side-step in the nick of time. Just make sure you get ready to shift! This *Resi* game is much more action-orientated and you'll see this when you come face to face with a sea monster that

It happens when?

Resident Evil defined horror games in the 90s, but did you know *Resi 3* sits before *Resi 2* in the timeline? Here's a brief history of the dead...

RESIDENT EVIL ZERO

❑ It's one day before anything happens in Raccoon City. You're sent to find Billy Coen, an escaped prisoner. This featured user-friendly 'partner-zapping'. Nice.

RESIDENT EVIL

❑ RC locals are being mutilated. The roads are closed and Bravo Team moves in, crash landing en route. Alpha Team is next and get chased into a nearby mansion...

RESIDENT EVIL 3: NEMESIS

❑ You take control of Jill Valentine who survived the mansion. Now it's into the city, avoiding the deadly weapon known as the Nemesis who is stalking you throughout.

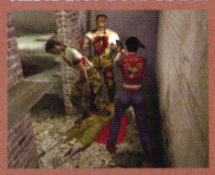
RESIDENT EVIL 2

❑ While events are in motion with Jill in the Nemesis, Leon Kennedy and Claire Redfield are elsewhere in the city fighting for their lives. Beware of the Lickers!

RESIDENT EVIL SURVIVOR

❑ Raccoon City isn't the only place being ravaged by the T-virus, so too is Sheena Island, the site for *Resi*'s First Person Shooter. Probably the weakest of the series.

RESIDENT EVIL CODE: VERONICA X



❑ It's back with Claire Redfield for the most recent GameCube *Resi* release as she battles marauding T-virus zombies in a South Atlantic island prison.

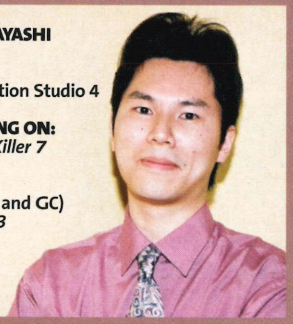
RESIDENT EVIL DEAD AIM

❑ There's light gun action all the way in this PS2 title – on board a ship. Bruce MacGavin was the special agent sent in to stop Umbrella as they hijacked the ship.

RESIDENT EVIL GAIDEN

❑ The hard-to-find black sheep of the family is a side-story with no real connection to the series. You wouldn't put the film into the series and this doesn't belong either.

He the man!



MR HIROYUKI KOBAYASHI

JOB:
Producer for Production Studio 4

CURRENTLY WORKING ON:
Resident Evil 4 and *Killer 7*

PREVIOUS GAMES:
Resident Evil (PSone and GC)
Devil May Cry, P.N.03
Dino Crisis 2 & 3

Q. Where does *Resident Evil 4* sit in the timeline of the *Resi* games?
A. The game takes place some years after *Resident Evil 2* and after *Code: Veronica*.

Q. We've heard you play Leon Kennedy. What happened to him between *Resi 2* and *4*?
A. Right after the end of *Resi 2*, Leon goes to work as a special agent for the President of the United States.

Q. Did the success of other horror games like *Silent Hill* and *Eternal Darkness* influence any drastic alterations to *Resident Evil 4*?
A. I wouldn't specifically cite these two titles as an influence, but yes we did look at other games and the direction they were taking when planning *Resident Evil 4*.

Q. We've heard that there's much more action in the game. Can you expand on this?
A. Leon can now perform a number of new moves that increase the action and pace of the game, such as jumping from the second floor of a building, kicking enemies and zooming in on objects in the distance with a pair of binoculars.

Q. The control system of previous *Resident Evil* games has been the subject of much debate in the gaming community. Will this be changed for the next game?
A. The control system remains basically the same as previous games in the series. However, we have made changes to the camera angles and I am very confident that players will notice and enjoy the difference this makes.

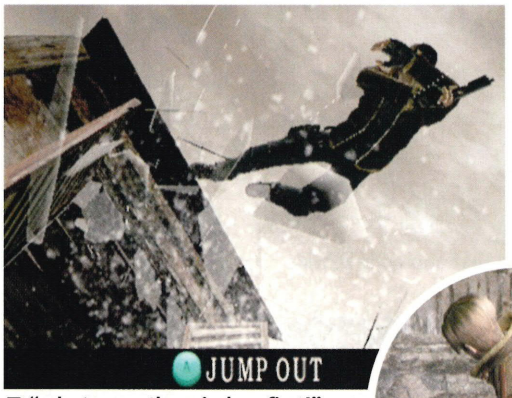
Q. We've had mutant spiders, dogs and sharks. What terrifying new enemies will there be and can we expect more mutant members of the animal kingdom?
A. Please check out the screenshots! They are just as terrifying as any of the enemies players have met before.

Q. Will Crimson Heads be making a return?
A. There will be no zombies in *RE4*, with players encountering brand-new enemies.

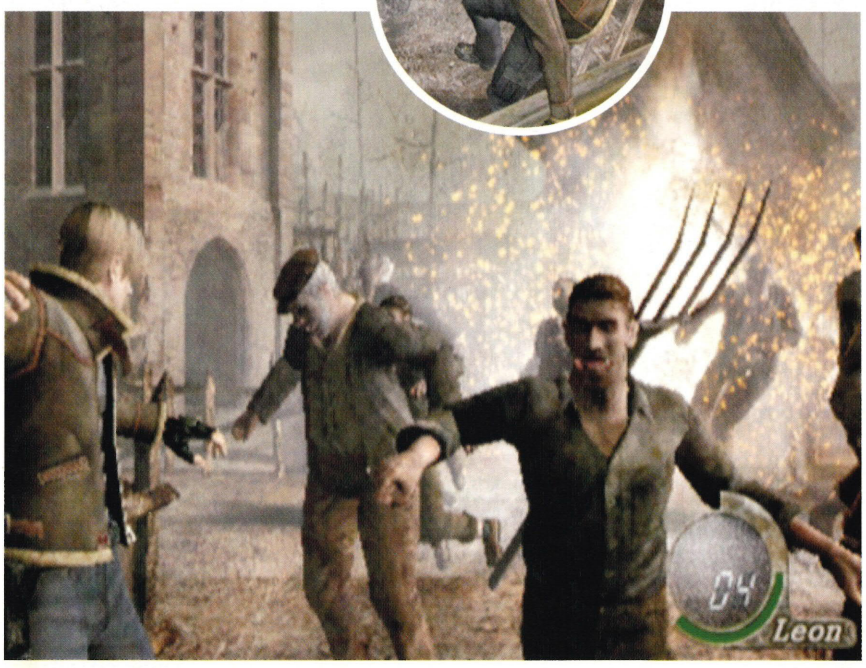
Q. Will there be any connectivity features with Game Boy Advance?
A. No.

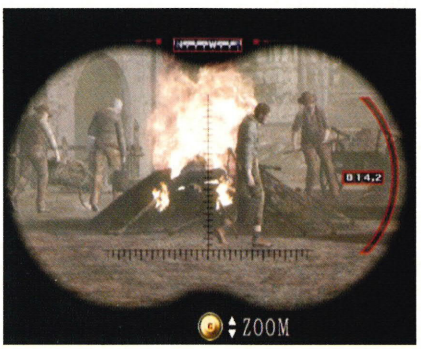
Q. Will this be the last GameCube *Resident Evil*? Will you be working on one for Nintendo's next home console?
A. I am dedicated to this game until its release so have no specific plan as yet.

❑ Your scything days are over, matey boy



❑ "... but open the window first!"





❑ Shunned by the grisly locals, poor Leon had to enjoy the barbecue from a distance

smashes you out of your speedboat on a mist-covered lake. You'll need to harpoon the beast to kill it, but if you get knocked out the boat you'll need to hammer the buttons *Track & Field*-style to swim to shore. It's like nothing you've seen in a *Resi* game before and it adds a whole new level to the horror adventure.

To help you out against the troll beast and others, the camera switches to give you a better view of what you need to take down. When this happens the third-person camera moves, taking Leon to the left side of the screen.

This effect leaves the rest of the screen to your enemy giving you a First Person Shooter-style view, something that will certainly improve the blasting sections of the game.

There are still months to go before we get a playable version of the next *Resi* game, but so far we are impressed. Gone are some of the problems that dragged down previous titles and there

❑ With so many locals holding a torch for him, Leon needs a gun to fight them off

❑ Leon revelled in his secondary role as a heavily-armed AA man

❑ You done fixed that there bridge good, Pa

❑ Step on one of these for a foot massage

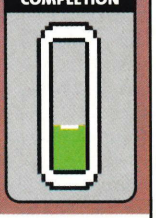
appears to be a lot more urgency to the proceedings – there's no need to trawl from one side of a mansion to the other just to pick up a pointless object. Fingers crossed there'll be a playable version at E3, but whether it's there or not, we'll be all over this bad boy until it staggers into range next year, blood oozing from every pore. ***Tim Street***

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: PRODUCTION STUDIO 4

FAMOUS FOR:
They were the geniuses behind *Viewtiful Joe*, but also worked on the underwhelming dance-shooter *P.N.03*.

PHIAL OF COMPLETION



MULTIPLAYER: NONE
PUBLISHER: CAPCOM
RELEASE: EARLY 2005
REVIEW: AROUND ISSUE 150

PREDICTED SCORE

It looks the biz, but so did *Zero* until we played it. *Resi 1* and *2* are the kings of survival horror and this could well be up there to match them.

80%
PLUS

One too many blueberry Pop-Tarts and a bumpy ride in the Poké Ball equals vomit city

POKéMON COLOSSEUM

GAMECUBE UPDATE

Rescue a lady, blow up a gang's HQ and rob Pokémon from other Trainers – all in a day's work in Scenario mode.

Look at *Pokémon* from a different angle and you could say it promotes animal cruelty. If you were to go down to the woods and smack some poor fox about until it was too weak to fight, then lock it in a small cage and only let it out to fight other foxes you'd probably be arrested. Or get kicked in by animal rights protesters.

That's why it's much safer to do it on your GBA. Very soon though you'll be able to force animals to fight on GameCube, too – from May 19th to be exact. This is our second look at what is going to be the first-ever fully 3D *Pokémon* adventure. Woo-hoo!

Pokémon Colosseum takes animal snatching one step further than previous games. In *Pokémon Ruby/Sapphire* and all the previous *Pokémon* games, you could only catch Pokémon that were out in the wild. But in *Colosseum*'s Scenario mode, you can use a new gadget called the Snatch Machine to grab Pokémon off other Trainers.

Thievery? That's another offence to add to the list of *Pokémon*'s undercover criminal influences. But then, in *Colosseum* it's okay to hijack Pokémon because you're taking them from bad people; a troublesome gang of trainers called Team Snatch.

Team Magma and Team Aqua were fools. Yes, flooding the world with water or lava would help the successful team and their favourite Pokémon, but what would happen to THEIR house? Where would they live? Where would they eat? All the PokéMacdonalds and Kentucky Fried Pikachu outlets would be destroyed. Stupid.

Team Snatch plan to gain superiority by stealing normal Pokémon and corrupting their hearts, turning them into Dark Pokémon and the ultimate fighters – a much wiser plan, we'd say. The intro to the Scenario mode shows you busting into Team Snatch's hideout and stealing the Snatch Machine. During the raid, you also blow their building to smithereens forcing the members of the gang to flee like chickens to other areas.

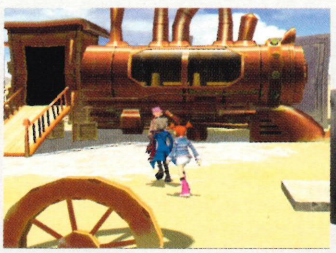
With the help of your Espeon and Umbreon, your mission is to track down the Team Snatch members, battle them and use the Snatch Machine to recapture all of the Dark Pokémon. Once caught, you've got to help cure their tortured souls by treating them well, winning fights with them and a bit of all-round nurturing.

Good things in big packages

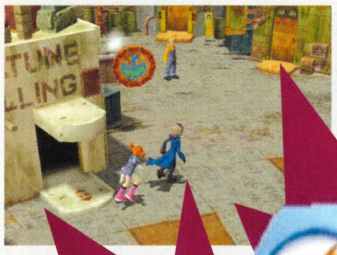
We strolled into Fenas City and saw some blokes hauling a big sack through town. We thought nothing of it at the time, but actually they were Team Snatch scoundrels and well up for a ruck. We ruined them.

They ran off, leaving the sack behind which turned out to contain a girl called Mirei. She has the ability to identify Dark Pokémon and follows your every move from there on. Sweet. Hey Mirei, after all this Pokémon-saving business, maybe we could have a meal, just me and you. No? You've got a date with Ash?! Oh.

"Flames and sparks light up the screen as Pokémon tear into battle."



"The visuals aren't quite what we expected."



❑ Is this some spectacular Poké power or an attacking swarm of flesh-eating fireflies. Either way, better get down the vet's

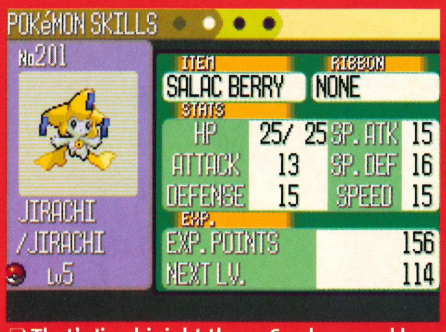
❑ Taunt foes in Japanese: "Ha! Your Pokémon are fat and lazy!"

Jirachi invades the US

Pokémon nuts in America are laughing all the way to the games shop because everyone who pre-orders a copy of *Pokémon Colosseum* will get a special bonus disk.

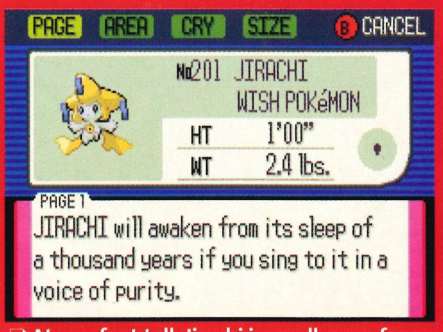
This disk contains the super-collectable, ultra-rare Jirachi Pokémon that can be downloaded to your team on your *Ruby/Sapphire* cart. It also contains a sneaky peak at the brand-new *Pokémon* movie, *Jirachi Wish Maker* and a preview of *Pokémon Colosseum*.

It seems we won't be getting the same offer here, but don't fret because Nintendo has promised that UK fans will get their fair share of Jirachi wealth in other ways. How? We're not sure yet, but as soon as we know you will, too.



❑ That's Jirachi right there. See how cool he is? No?! What's WRONG with you?!

❑ Jirachi can't be found anywhere else... even down the side of the sofa



❑ At one foot tall, Jirachi is small, even for a Pokémon – but we'll bet he's handy in a ruck

The first place you visit looks like an old steam train yard in the middle of a desert. It's a location unlike anything we've seen in other *Pokémon* games, all bland and dull in colour. After a quick look around, you'll come to find that members of Team Snatch are snooping around in the nearby Fenas City.

Running to the edge of the train yard area will bring up a map screen. A simple click on the Fenas City marker will take you to the city after a brief cut-scene of you on your hover bike – no trekking there manually. This is quick and easy, but some may argue it takes away the element of exploration.

It's not until you arrive in Fenas City that you'll feel like you're playing a 3D version of *Pokémon Ruby/Sapphire*. It's all in there – the Poké Mart and Poké Centre, known as Shop and PC buildings in *Colosseum*, the wandering locals, other Trainers and houses you can just stroll in and out of whenever you want.

However, after the first few glimpses of in-game graphics it became apparent that the visuals aren't quite what we'd expected. We'd have imagined a 3D Pokémon world to be a vivid, luscious-looking place, bursting with colour much like in *The Wind Waker*. But the environments in *Colosseum* appear quite bland and feel comparatively stiff and non-interactive. Doors open and there's flowing water here and there, but everything else is rigid.

Speaking of stiff, the game's human characters move about as smoothly as Pinocchio with arthritis. That's particularly hard to overlook when you see that the Pokémon animations during battles are beautifully fluid and some of the special effects for the attacks are dazzling. Bursting flames and electric sparks light up the screen as your Pokémon take shots at each other across the arena.

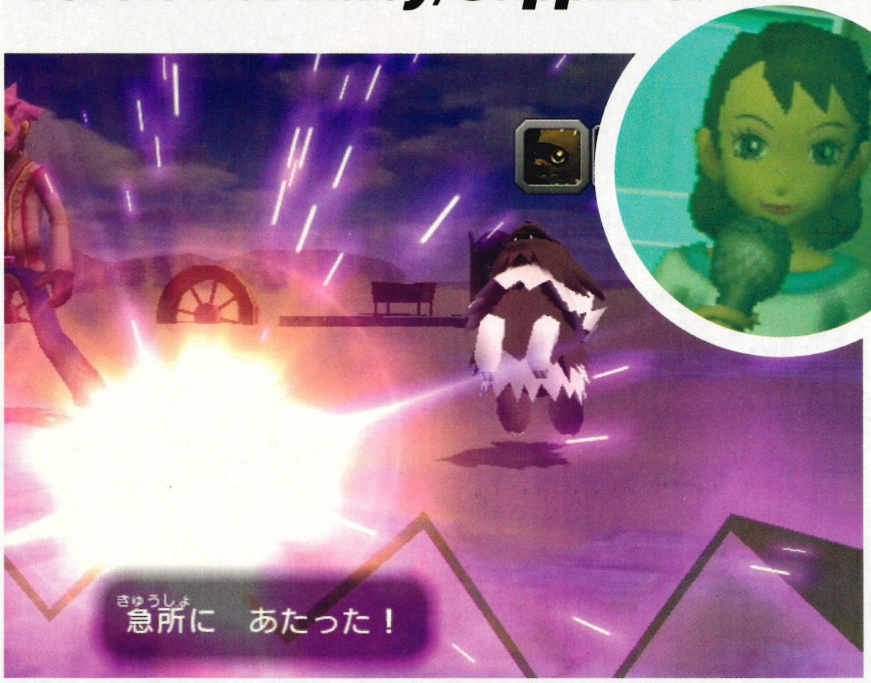
All the battles we fought were two-on-two face-offs and being as you've got to try and steal the other Trainer's Dark Pokémon, it can be quite tough. Stealing from another Trainer is a new aspect to Pokémon battling, but works in the same way – weaken the Pokémon you want before launching the Poké Ball and hope they don't break free.

Trouble is, your Espeon and Umbreon Pokémon start off at levels 25 and 26 and have really powerful attacks. We often accidentally KO'd the Dark Pokémon we were aiming to snag. We're not sure of the consequences when you defeat a Pokémon you're supposed to be catching, but it seems you can't just demand a rematch by speaking to them after you've won the fight.

On the other hand you might lose the battle, then it's back to the Poké Centre where you can heal. This is when it feels all too familiar to the handheld *Pokémon* games. The same woman standing by the healing desk. The same machine that she places your Poké Balls into to heal them. The same delightful five-note jingle as the machine does its wonder-work.

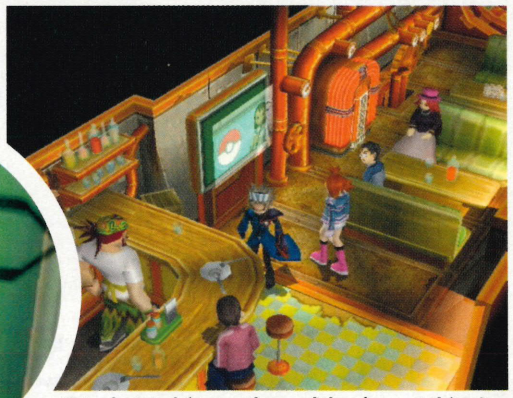
Even the background tune is a remix of the Game Boy original. So it seems we'll never escape that same Poké Centre tune. It has haunted our minds since we sat listening to it chirping out of the Mew download machines for over seven hours a day at the *NOM UK* Pokémon Tour 2001. We can hear it in our sleep. We've been scarred for life. *Pokémon* has ruined us all. ***Mike Jackson***

"You'll feel like you're in a 3D version of *Ruby/Sapphire*."



❑ With the power of GameCube you can really feel the pain your Pokémon inflict

❑ The shopkeeper seems unconcerned that you're sneaking in to rob his lazy ass



❑ Is that *Pokémon Channel* they're watching? No wonder the place is empty...

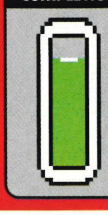
❑ Fenas City is more exciting than it looks – Poké drive-bys happen all the time...

ESSENTIALS

THE DEVELOPER: GENIUS SONORITY

FAMOUS FOR:
•This is their first GameCube game. Some of them worked on *Dragon Quest* though.

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



MULTIPLAYER: 1-4 PLAYERS
CONNECTIVITY: YES
PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
RELEASE: MAY 19TH
REVIEW: NEXT ISSUE

PREDICTED SCORE

This won't be the best *Pokémon*, but it's still one to look forward to. We'll know more once we've ploughed into a final UK version.

80% PLUS

PSO was a hit what it was originally released on Dreamcast a couple of years ago. Since then it seems to have lost its edge. This meant some serious changes had to be made for the third episode, something to re-vamp its appeal and re-ignite players' excitement.

Sonic Team's solution – turn it into a card-battle game. Hmm. We don't like to be bitter but what's the deal with card-battle games? They're not as action-packed as real-time combat games and mostly too random to be as enjoyable as *Advance Wars*.

The story behind *PSO Episode III* is that a new technology has been developed, allowing for items/weapons and animals to be stored in small card-shaped chips. These cards can then be taken into battle and used to materialise your weapons and fighters, ready for action.

There are two teams that you can be part of: the Hunters (hero side) are technically the goodies, who work for the Pioneer 2

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE EPISODE III: C.A.R.D. REVOLUTION

NEW FOR GAMECUBE

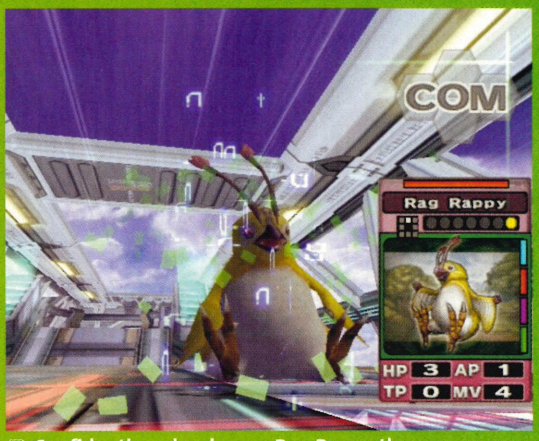
The already stat-heavy *PSO* gets even geekier with a shift to dreaded card-battling.

❑ What is this? The future or 1953? He Man's first assignment must be to get rid of that stupid flat-top

Same old, same old

The gameplay may have been deleted, but players of the previous two *PSO* games will still be at a slight advantage. All the weapons and beasts in *Episode III* are from *Episode I* and *II*. *PSO* fans will know instantly which of them are most powerful in certain situations. Although we doubt people who never cared about *PSO* when it was a sprawling RPG will suddenly take to it now it's a card game.

❑ With all those hit point bars and character names it's difficult to appreciate the saucy graphics



❑ Confidently unleash your Rag Rappy then cry as your opponents crush it and laugh at its yellow chubbiness

"*PSO* fans may be disappointed with the switch to card battling."

❑ The prospect of being offered out for a drunken card battle kept future pubs quiet

Principle Government; and the Arkz who are rebelling against the system, believing the people of Pioneer 2 need to be liberated from a corrupt leadership.

Whichever team you choose, you'll play as a commander. Your character (that you create at the start) doesn't actually fight, but deploys and gives orders to team members using the C.A.R.D. technology. The Hunters use Weapon Cards, making swords and guns their choice in battle. The Arkz bust up their enemies using Creature Cards, morphing up nasty beasts that are well into snapping bones and chewing eye balls – a bit like West Ham supporters.

Before beginning a battle you have the thrilling task of choosing the cards for each of your team members' decks. Setting the deck for each of your characters is the most crucial of your decisions. Balls that up and you stand no chance of winning.

Battles are a turn-based affair and each turn is split up into six phases. The first phase of your turn is the rolling of dice – the curse of randomness that nearly all card-battle games seem to inherit. This determines the number of Action Points you have to spend during that turn for actions you perform in the other five phases. These include equipping items and weapons, movement, attack, defence and swapping cards.

It all sounds pretty straightforward, but believe us, it isn't. The game's tutorial screen has NINE sections to it and that's just to explain the basics. There's so much to take in, we're not even going to begin to go into detail. There's just not enough room. Besides, you either won't remember, or don't care. We don't. ***Mike Jackson***

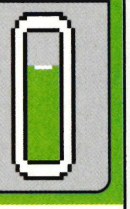
ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: SONIC TEAM

FAMOUS FOR:
Billy Hatcher and the Giant Egg (issue 135, 82%), *Phantasy Star Online Episode I & II* (issue 127, 85%), *Sonic Adventure DX Director's Cut* (issue 130, 71%)
Sonic Heroes (issue 137, 80%)

MULTIPLAYER: 1-4 PLAYERS
PUBLISHER: SEGA
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: SUMMERTIME, MAYBE

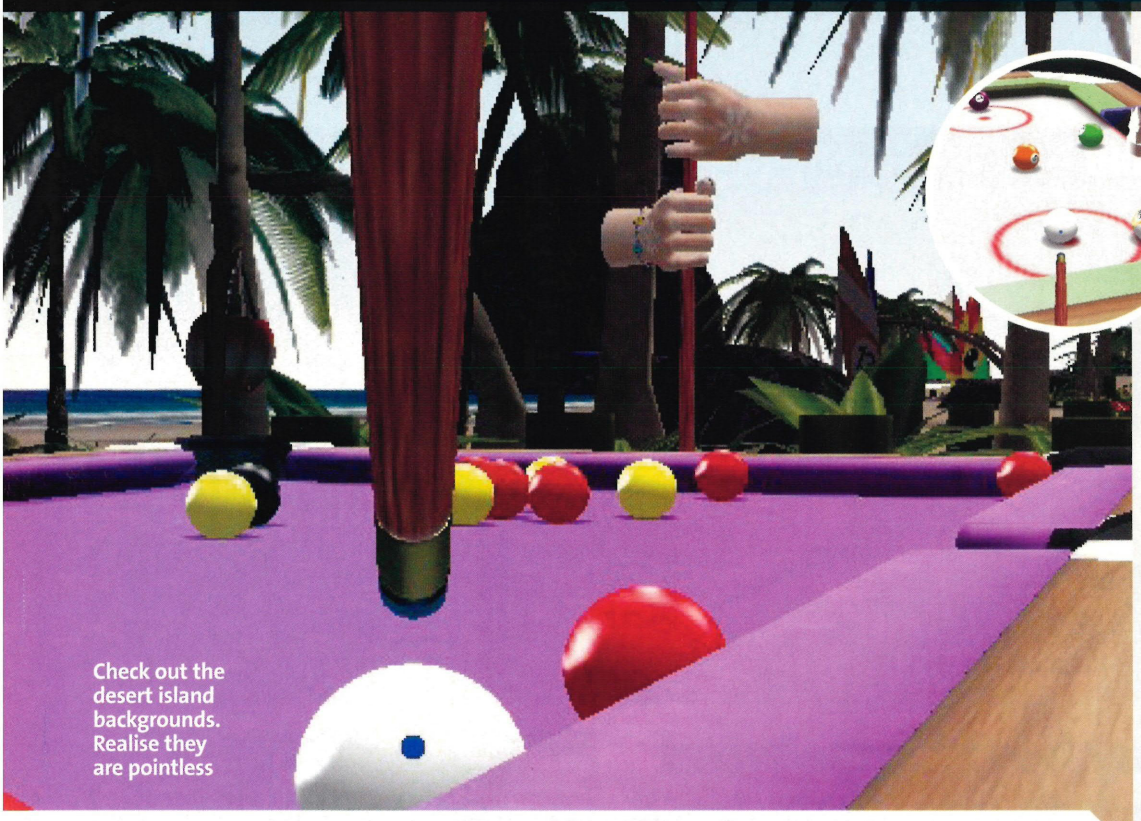
THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



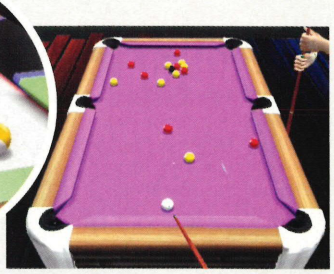
PREDICTED SCORE

It's a decent enough card-battle game, but you either love card games or you hate them. *PSO* fans may be disappointed by the switch.

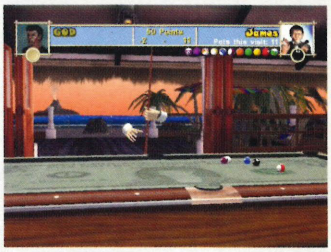
65% PLUS



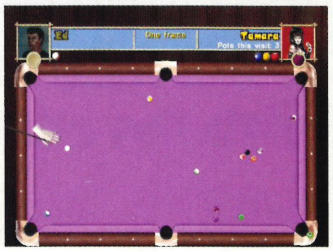
Check out the desert island backgrounds. Realise they are pointless



❑ Pick between reds and yellows...

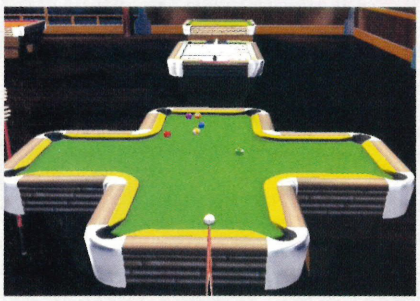


❑ ... and spots and stripes. Wow!



POOL PARADISE

No good at actual pool? Hide away in virtual reality.



❑ Unusual tables – frequented by morons

You lump the balls, they scatter all over the table and one drops in the pocket. You claim it was skill. No-one believes you. That's what pool games are all about. But to make the balls fly around the table in a natural way requires physics. A large van load of physics. Enough physics, in fact, to fry Stephen Hawking's brain and make him take up breakdancing.

The paradise all this takes place in is inconsequential. The back story hardly matters either. What's important is how the balls move. Example: we smash the cue ball as hard as possible on its bottom side and it leaps up off the baize and over the side of the table. We've hit object balls so hard they've flown off, too. You probably couldn't do this in the last pool game you played. It seems that if it can be done in reality, you can do it here: improbable feats of spin; awesome trick shots; embarrassing in-offs.

It's as realistic as 'virtual' is likely to get on GameCube, which is great. You play it with a pad on your TV though, which is the problem. The control is fluid, but it's not as instinctive as waving a stick around. There's a period of adjustment involved that might just be the undoing of your non-gamer mates – the people you would play at actual pool. Setting the power with a flick of the 3D Stick? Hmm, don't know about that.

It's not like a footy game, where you can pull off skills that your own fat body could never achieve. As crap at pool as you are, you've probably still doubled one in or got a tasty cannon and meant it. So to sweeten the deal there are mini-games here, including darts and a coconut shy.

You already know if a pool video game is something you need. We'll see how the amazing ball movement stands up to longer term scrutiny next month. We may also have stopped having nightmares about the disembodied hands that manipulate the cue by then. ***Dean Scott***

NEW FOR GAMECUBE

❑ Bonus mini-game! It's that one where you... um...

"If it can be done in reality, you can do it here... awesome trick shots, embarrassing in-offs."

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: AWESOME DEVELOPMENTS

FAMOUS FOR: Pool and snooker games, basically, including *Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker* (1991). Apparently it's going to make something that doesn't involve balls next...

MULTIPLAYER: ..... OF COURSE

PUBLISHER: ..... IGNITION

RELEASE: ..... APRIL

REVIEW: ..... NEXT ISSUE

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION

PREDICTED SCORE

It's pool, on GameCube. The desert island setting is fluff, basically. The real news is that the balls move brilliantly well and that's the boring truth.

70% PLUS

❑ That's what we like in a game – still images and lots of text

YU-GI-OH! WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT 2004

Yes! Another over-complicated card game!

It costs about six quid to buy a small pack of *Yu-Gi-Oh!* playing cards. What's more you'll need to get a small truck-load of those before getting anywhere near completing a full deck. Are you collecting them? If you're smart you'll stop now and just get this game instead.

For starters, you'll save quite a lot of you and your parents' money. Plus *WCT 2004* contains over 1,000 cards, 100 of which are totally new for this edition of the game. Win. No cards to get tatty or lost and no doubles that you just can't get rid of. Win, win. Just a GBA and a neat little cartridge, which is much cooler. Win, win, win!

This is an exact replica of the real card game with all the same rules and playing conditions. If you know it well, you'll recognise all the characters from the anime and every card you've ever seen is in here, too. The computer A.I. is supposed to be improved over past editions, not that you'll notice unless you're a hyper geek.

You'll be able to link with your mates to do battle, or swap cards with each other. What's more, Konami are organising a World Championship Tournament (in real life, that is) that anyone can take part in. The finals will be held in Los Angeles this summer. Think of the kudos you'd get if you won.

The only problem is if you're new to *Yu-Gi-Oh!* card battling, this game will do you no favours – there's no tutorial at all. Just like *Dungeondice Monsters*, you will have to study the instruction manual like a school book for ages before you even begin to understand what's going on. And it'll take a good couple of hours before you know how to play properly. You'll stand no chance if you try guessing your way through.

Whether this is laziness or a show of ignorance, we don't know, but we can't see any reason why Konami hasn't fixed it. But if you're already a Yu-Gi boffin, you won't care. This is the best version of the *Yu-Gi-Oh!* card battle games so far and when it's released, you'll want it, whether we tell you to or not. ***Mike Jackson***

❑ First move of battle: ditch the hippy

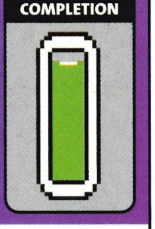
❑ Blue-Eyes White Dragon. Match over

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: KONAMI

FAMOUS FOR: *Yu-Gi-Oh! Stairway to the Destined Duel* (issue 129, 70%), *Yu-Gi-Oh! Dungeondice Monsters* (issue 136, 58%), *Metal Gear Solid: The Twin Snakes* (issue 138, 85%).

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION

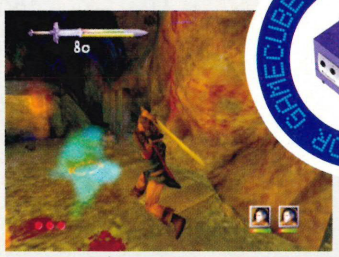


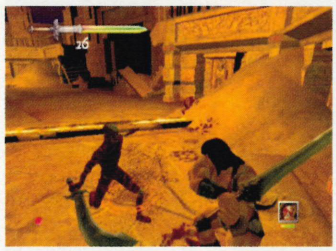
MULTIPLAYER: 1-2 PLAYERS
PUBLISHER: KONAMI
RELEASE: TBC
REVIEW: WHEN IT'S READY

PREDICTED SCORE

There are plenty of *Yu-Gi-Oh!* games for GBA, but if you want more, this'll be good news. Alternatively you could just start liking better games.

60% PLUS





CONAN

He's a 'cult hero' (from crappy books and films).

His name is Conan. You will fear him. He wears a Cher wig and runs like there's something seriously wrong with him. Whatever this ailment is, it stops him bending over to crouch or even climb up a ledge that barely rises above his waist. When enemies attack, he swings his sword with all the elegant grace of someone being electrocuted.

❑ "There's something stuck to your back."

Hmm, we don't recall the Schwarzenegger films being anything like this. The caves where your quest begins are so badly textured it feels like you're exploring a giant, hollowed-out Weetabix. Combat is basic hack 'n' slash, as you tap the buttons repeatedly. There's a lot of blood spilled, but not in a convincing way. Claret just pops onto the floor. If there'd been some kind of spray and splashing effect, it would have made a difference.

The people you're battering to death with your sword don't react much either. They should be torn apart. Arms should fly off. They should at least limp a bit after you've shattered their bones with a rusty battleaxe. There's this one beast that looks like a big green fart cloud. Somehow, although it's made of gas, its attacks smack muscleman Conan all over the shop.

Further into the game, the look improves dramatically. The medieval town of Kordava is beautifully realised and the pyramids at Stygia look great, too. Problem is, the gameplay is so repetitive the temptation is to give up before you get there. On this preview build Conan's movements are clumsy and imprecise, and the camera will decide it doesn't want to be moved just when you're struggling to get a better angle while tiptoeing through a trap. ***Dean Scott***

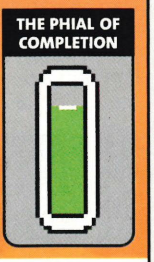
That's racism – they're all picking on the big ugly white guy

ESSENTIALS

DEVELOPER: CAULDRON

FAMOUS FOR:
Umm, nothing that we know of. These crazy Slovakian boys made their name crafting PC games.

THE PHIAL OF COMPLETION



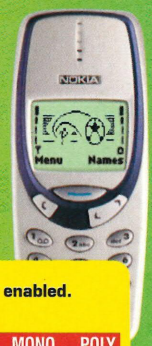
MULTIPLAYER: NO
PUBLISHER: TDK
RELEASE: APRIL 9TH
REVIEW: NEXT ISSUE

PREDICTED SCORE

This clumsy hack 'n' slash needs to show more finesse when finished. We're all for a next-gen *Golden Axe*, but we suspect this isn't it.

40%
PLUS

funk up your fone



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Mono & Polyphonic Ringtones

UPDATE YOUR PHONE WITH A ROCKING NEW TONE!

For polyphonics, phone must be wap enabled. For compatibility see below

CHART MUSIC	MONO	POLY
M Andrew/Gary Jules - Mad World	144334	143339
Darkness - Christmas Time	143532	144229
Ozzy / Kelly Osbourne - Changes	144029	126069
Bo Selecta - Proper Crimbo	144339	144227
The Idols - Happy Xmas	143533	144228
Will Young - Leave Right Now	126492	126075
The Black Eyed Peas - Shut Up	143649	126726
Atomic Kitten - Ladies Night	144310	143466
Shane Richie - I'm Your Man	143415	143335
Sugababes - Too Lost In You	144346	143349
Blue - Signed, Sealed Delivered	144259	143347
Ultrabeat - Feeling Fine	144307	143456
Cliff Richard - Santa's List	143537	143345
Westlife - Mandy	126487	126078
Cheeky Girls - Cheeky Christmas	144036	144037
Outkast - Hey Ya!	125601	126010
Katie Melua -Closest Thing To Crazy	143654	143661
Evanescence - My Immortal	144030	143471
UB40 - Swing Low	126393	125941
Girls Aloud - Jump	126491	126074
R n B	**MONO**	**POLY**
Ignition - R Kelly	116955	112674
In Da Club - 50 Cent	110152	111140
21 Questions - 50 Cent	120396	120009
No Letting Go - -Wayne Wonder	110352	120017
Know What U Want - Mariah /Busta	116187	117255
Favourtite Things - Big Brovaz	116213	116949
Rise & Fall - Craig & Sting	116196	116459
Hot In Herre - Nelly	102133	108203
Like I Love U - Justin Timberlake	107904	107860
Cant Nobody - Kelly Rowland	112602	116460
Mesmerize - Ja Rule & Ashanti	110349	111684
OLD SKOOL	**MONO**	**POLY**
Let Me Be Your Fantasy - Baby D	-	116148
Hanging On A String - Loose Ends	111755	111830
Gotta Have Your Love - Mantronix	111764	111839
Cant Hide ur Love - David Joseph	111734	111809
All Night Long - Mary Jane Girls	111779	111854
Kiss From A Rose - Seal	100078	108564
Gonna Go My Way - Lenny Kravitz	-	109352

FOOTBALL	MONO	POLY
Arsenal - Vi-erra	122960	122961
Arsenal - Amazing Reds	122962	122963
Aston Villa -Holteenders In The Sky	122964	122965
Aston Villa - Roll Along	122966	122967
Chelsea - Blue Is The Colour	122984	122985
Chelsea - Super Franky Lampard	122986	122987
Chelsea - We are the famous CFC	122988	122989
Everton - He was Just 17 (Rooney)	122990	122991
Everton - You Are My Everton	122992	122993
Leeds - We Had Joy	122998	122999
Liverpool - You'll Never Walk Alone	123006	123007
Liverpool - We All Live In A Red..	123008	123009
Man City - Blue Moon	123012	123013
Man United - Our Trophy Back	123016	123017
Man United - The Great Escape	123018	123019
Middlesborough - Boro Till I Die	123024	123025
Newcastle Utd - Blaydon Races	123026	123027
Newcastle Utd - 1 Alan Shearer	123028	123029
Southampton - Mr Eriksson	123034	123035
Southampton - When The Saints	123036	123037
Glory Glory	123038	123039
Spurs - We Are Tottenham	123040	123041
Wolves - King Kenny Miller	123042	123043
Wolves -Hey Jones 'E'	123044	123045
There's Only One....	123048	123049
We've Got That Double Feeling	123052	123053
Here We Go	123056	123057
Match Of The Day	123058	123059
ROCKIN'	**MONO**	**POLY**
Addicted to Love – RPalmer	111616	111514
No Letting Go - Wayne Wonder	110352	120017
Loneliness - Tomcraft	112714	116463
Bring Me To Life - Evanescence	110559	111603
Layla - Eric Clapton	101345	108349
I Want To Break Free - Queen	100795	109755
Living On A Prayer - Guns N Roses	101084	107012
Final Countdown - Bon Jovi	101543	112307
Highway To Hell - Ac Dc	116375	116376
Come As You Are - Nirvana	116435	109060
Hard Days Nite - Beatles	100800	108806

TV & FILM	MONO	POLY
Only Fools & Horses	101226	109069
Benny Hill	100013	108856
Mash	-	108935
Halloween	100048	109159
Good, Bad, Ugly	100689	108621
Mission Impossible	100142	107896
X Files	100160	109022
Godfather	100884	108582
Simpsons	102191	107052
Deer Hunter	100752	109109
Miami Vice	101308	109117
The Hulk	101155	109167
James Bond	100016	107023
Rainbow	108193	108301
Muppets	100064	108209
Lord Of The Rings	101158	108715
Dr Who	-	109127
Jaws	100764	109171
Terminator	101086	109255
Thunderbirds	100090	109258
Italian Job	100691	107026
Airwolf	100621	108213
A Team	100682	107898
Braveheart	101154	108470
Pulp Fiction	100695	108476
Star Wars	-	119735
Eye Of The Tiger	100687	108299
Axel F	100010	108195
Jackass	102708	117260
Eastenders	100029	108388
Friends	110615	108276
War Of The Worlds	100758	109133
Raiders Of The Lost Ark	100126	109223
INDIE	**MONO**	**POLY**
Clocks - Coldplay	108122	112591
The Scientist - Coldplay	116630	109056
7 Nation Army - White Stripes	116170	116168
Bitter Sweet Symphony - Verve	100097	108440
Songbird - Oasis	110379	110430
Fools Gold - Stone Roses	101484	116984

BEST SELLERS	MONO	POLY
Breathe - Blu Cantrell	120539	120508
Xtm & Dj Chucky -On The Wings	116215	118500
Lose Yourself - Eminem	108002	107810
Bring Me To Life - Evanescence	110559	111603
Clocks - Coldplay	108122	111125
Simply The Best - Tina Turner	100802	120612
Fields Of Athanray - Celtic	100381	108273
Great Escape	100382	123019
Never Walk Alone-Liverpool	100378	123007
Dambusters	100703	118331
Glory Glory Man Utd	100493	108278
Heaven - Dj Sammy	102511	107808
Summer Jam 2003	122562	125124
Scooby Doo	102302	107020
Phoenix Nights	102796	107872
Banana Splits	100804	108264
Rocky Iv Final Fight	101343	109230
Knight Rider	100131	107030
Matrix	120822	107800
Matrix Reloaded - Fluke	122608	126050
DANCE	**MONO**	**POLY**
Fly On The Wings Of - Xtm & Dj	116215	118500
Make Luv - Room 5	111639	111643
Weekend - Scooter	112641	112592
Children - Robert Miles	100111	108251
Ur A Superstar - Love Inc	109977	107822
Rubberneckin - Elvis Presley	124657	124635
Who Said - Planet Funk	122492	121696
All In My Head - Kosheen	121730	121533
Golden Path Chemical Brothers	124545	124338
Husan Bhangra Knights Vs Husan	116956	116678
Loneliness Tomcraft	112714	116463
Hollywood Madonna	117377	121448
Rhythm Is A Dancer 2003 Snap	116953	110493
Lose This Feeling - Dannii Minogue	117371	120222
Boys Of Summer - Dj Sammy	110321	110627
Danger - Katie Underwood	N/A	125099
Wasted - Cam Farrar	N/A	125102
Who Said - Planet Funk	122492	121696
Power Of Bhangra - Snap!	122538	N/A

fun wallpapers

123136

123181

143519

123144

123155

143516

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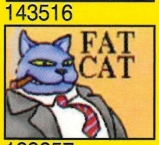

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Phone must be wap enabled. For compatibility see opposite

player wallpapers

Phone must be wap enabled. For compatibility see below

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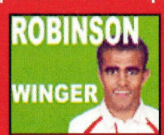

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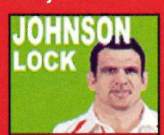

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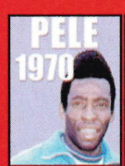

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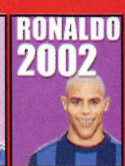

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• FROM THE CREATORS OF FINAL FANTASY •

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NEStravaganza

Everything you always wanted to know about the Nintendo Entertainment System... but were afraid to ask. Let us satiate your thirst for 8-bit trivia.

The NES. Our little grey boxy buddy. To the whole world over, it means 'video games'. It's the most successful and the most influential video game console ever. It's where most of our beloved characters and franchises got their start – or rocketed to worldwide popularity. It's the reason this magazine exists.

And it almost never existed.

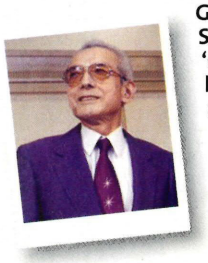
Come with us as we take a journey through Nintendo's formative years – the years that would define them as a company, forward-thinking yet conservative, brilliant yet risk-averse, family-friendly in the living room yet cutthroat in the courtroom. And in the middle of it all, the most adored pieces of computer software and hardware the world has ever known.

words: **Chris Kohler**

Origin of the species

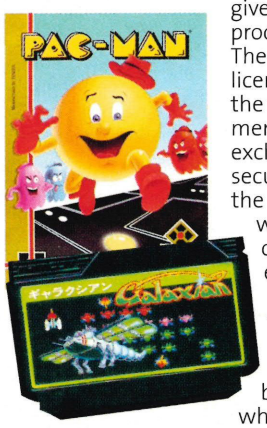
Forget *Space Invaders*, *Asteroids* and *Pong*, the gaming universe's Big Bang happened in 1983 and you can still feel the shock waves today.

The Nintendo Entertainment System was the brainchild of Nintendo's visionary president, Hiroshi Yamauchi, but its actual designer was Masayuki Uemura, who Nintendo's resident hardware genius, Gunpei Yokoi, had lured away from a sales position at the electronics giant Sharp. He had teamed up with Yokoi to create a line of electronic Beam Gun toys that used Sharp solar cells to 'shoot' beams of light at targets and later worked on a line of dedicated game consoles.



By 1982, Uemura had a new, major assignment – design a video game system that would be cheaper – and much more fun – than the dozen or so hardware systems that were already competing for the Japanese market.

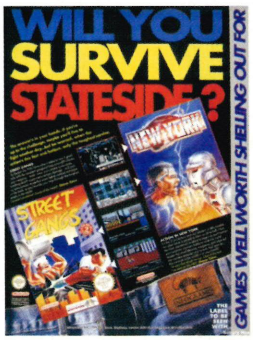
The Family Computer, or Famicom for short, was released on July 15th, 1983. It had three games at launch – *Popeye*, *Donkey Kong* and *Donkey Kong Jr.* – translations of three Nintendo arcade hits. *Mario Bros.*, the fourth Famicom title, would follow on September 9th. One day earlier, Sega entered the hardware race with a ¥15,000 system called the SG-1000 that played a few Sega arcade hits. The Famicom was the clear winner right off the bat, selling a whopping 500,000 units in the first two months, easily pulling ahead of Sega's, and everybody else's, system. Even a manufacturing glitch that resulted in a mass system recall couldn't stop the Famicom juggernaut.



Yamauchi knew that the collapse of the US video game market a year earlier was caused not only by poor marketing on the part of hardware makers, but also from an uncontrolled software glut that buried new, exciting titles in a flood of bargain-priced garbage. So he instituted a licensee system by which only approved companies would be given the technology to produce Famicom titles. The first few Famicom licensees initially balked at the terms, but their membership in this exclusive club would secure them positions as the most powerful and well-known software companies in Japan, even today.

The first third-party title, released on July 28th 1984, was *Nuts and Milk* from Hudson, but it's not known whether the Japanese found its title as hilarious as we do. The second third-party title, also from Hudson, was called *Lode Runner* and it became the Famicom's first million-selling title. Prior to this, the most copies of any computer game

"The Famicom sold 500,000 units in the first two months of its life."



■ Game adverts of yore – what were they thinking?

The Famicom Disk System

Copying games is illegal, unless you're Nintendo.

■ **The Famicom Disk System, an add-on that let Famicom owners play games on yellow magnetic floppy disks, promised to totally revolutionise the way people bought their games.**

Brand-new FDS titles were available for half the price of cartridge games and store owners with a Disk Writer machine could write brand-new titles to your old disks for only ¥500 each. The system was never released outside of Japan, although its impact was felt worldwide – major Nintendo franchises like *Zelda* and *Metroid* started as FDS games and the low-risk nature of FDS titles helped a young company called Square get off the ground.

Hudson had sold was ten thousand. Hudson and other companies took note of the lucrative profits that Famicom publishing could bring. Before the year was out, Namco would release *Galaxian*, *Pac-Man*, *Xevious* and *Mappy*.

While all this was going on, Yamauchi had been giving more thought to releasing the Famicom worldwide, starting in America. The success of the arcade *Donkey Kong* had put Nintendo of America on the map and they thought that licensing the Famicom to Atari, the kings of the US games market, would be the best course of action. But the deal fell through and Nintendo later found that Atari was only planning on sitting on the Famicom to eliminate it as a competitor. They had lucked out of a potential disaster, but they still had to go it alone.

By 1984, the US video game market had collapsed in on itself and Nintendo had a difficult time selling the Nintendo Entertainment System (originally called the Nintendo Advanced Video System or NAVS). To interest retail stores, it redesigned the system to make it look less like a traditional video game system. The standard controller, itself a revolutionary design, was secondary to the Zapper gun and the robot R.O.B. There were no 'game cartridges', there were 'game paks'. All this was crucial to persuade the toy store buyers, who had gotten burned by unsold Atari products.

This mattered little to the consumers, however. The NES was a smashing success in a Christmas 1985 test run in New York and was released nationwide in 1986. *Super Mario Bros.* by Shigeru Miyamoto lit up sales charts in both countries. *Super Mario*'s success brought with it a flurry of licensing opportunities and Mario became the most popular children's character of the time. In 1990, a poll revealed that Mario was recognised by more American children than Mickey Mouse! Nintendo capitalised on this popularity with stuffed toys, cartoons, a live-action movie... you name it. You could go your entire day using nothing but Mario products, boasted *Nintendo Power* magazine.

In 1987, Nintendo entered into a licensing agreement with Mattel to distribute the NES in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Italy. Later, Nintendo International would step up to handle the rest of Europe. This sort of haphazard distribution system contributed to Nintendo's early stumbling in Europe, although there were more than a few PAL-exclusive titles. Still, Nintendo wouldn't quite become a major force in Europe until the 1989 launch of the Game Boy.

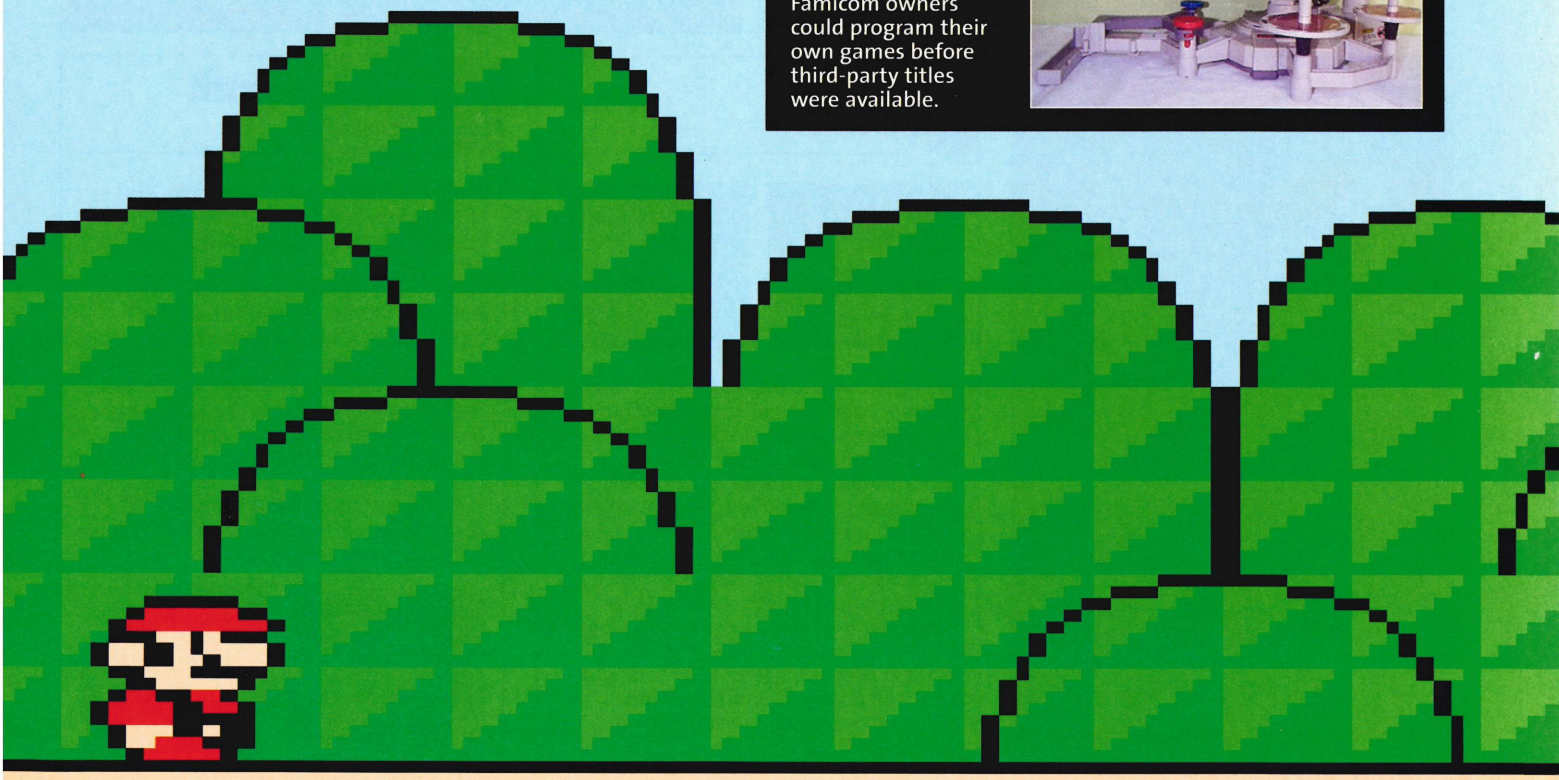
Nintendo introduced new models of the Famicom and NES in 1993, but the game was nearly up. The final NES titles were produced in 1994 – *Wario's Woods* in the US and *Adventure Island IV* in Japan. NES production wound down in 1995, but Nintendo continued to manufacture the Famicom in Japan until 2003... its 20th anniversary year.

Peripheral vision

These make e-Readers look dull.

■ **Designed in colourful red and white, the Famicom itself was a model of efficient, streamlined design, with all unnecessary parts left out of the box.**

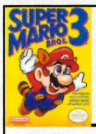
But the system had numerous expansion ports, making all sorts of accessories possible. The Family Robot and the Beam Gun were decidedly toy-like and thus were used to sell the NES to a sceptical American audience. But certain Japan-exclusive accessories made the Famicom more of a fully-fledged personal computer: a modem adapter let users dial into a online service and with the Family Basic Keyboard and BASIC programming cartridge, lucky Famicom owners could program their own games before third-party titles were available.



words: **Frank Cifaldi**

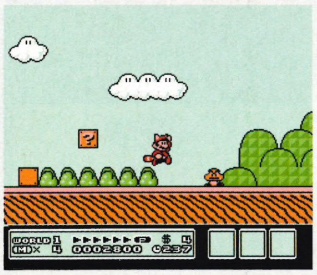
Best of the best

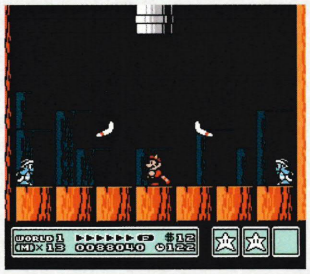
NOM UK presents... The 20 NES games you MUST play.



Super Mario Bros. 3
(Nintendo)

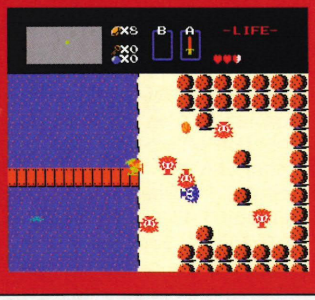
The first true, Miyamoto-driven sequel to *Super Mario Bros.* has aged graciously and remains not only the greatest NES game, but one of the greatest titles ever made. The vast, expansive world, unique power-ups and ingenious level design have been remade no less than twice, first for the Super NES and then in the GBA's *Super Mario Bros. Advance 4*. It continues to be popular amongst just about everyone with even the slightest interest in video games. If you haven't played this game yet, you probably shouldn't be reading this magazine.





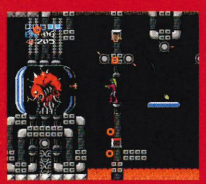
The Legend of Zelda
(Nintendo)

It is arguable that this introduced the world to the action-RPG genre, proving to us all that reflexes and strategy could work in harmony. Regardless of whether or not that's true, the first *Zelda* game remains one of the best in the series, and it's as enjoyable today as it was 18 years ago. In this adventure, Link must rescue Princess Zelda by traversing a vast landscape, obtaining weapons, and conquering dungeons, which is the approximate story line of every subsequent quest. And as if all this weren't enough, the game comes in a shiny gold cartridge, which is just beyond cool.

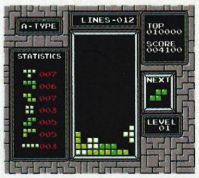


Metroid
(Nintendo)

When a game is completely remade from the ground up some 18 years later, it really says something. *Metroid* broke as many gaming boundaries of the day as *The Legend of Zelda*, which was actually released on the very same day. It introduced the potential of exploration, by giving the players a large, open world to improvise with, rather than holding our hands and guiding us down a linear path. It also, one might argue, introduced both the concept of a strong female lead and of multiple endings in a video game, and did so with such precision that we're still playing the same basic game today.



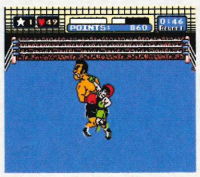
Tetris
(Nintendo)



Fitting geometric shapes together in an attempt to form solid lines might not seem like the most intriguing concept but, my God, does it work. *Tetris* is undoubtedly the most addictive video game ever made and we say that with no reservations whatsoever. The rules take mere moments to learn and yet *Tetris* is impossible to master. Part of its beauty is that *Tetris* demands that each player have their own experience and strategy within its limited confines. Put ten random people together in a room and they'll all play *Tetris* in a completely different way. And chances are, their scores will be comparable.

Punch-Out!!
(Nintendo)

Throughout the course of *Punch-Out!!*, Little Mac works his way through three boxing circuits by going toe-to-toe with, among others, a mystical Indian spellbinder, a grotesquely pink Russian man and deformed half-human, half-hippo-thing. A typical opponent will usually give a telling signal, be it a wink, glowing jewel, or what have you, before unleashing some sort of crazy, super-move. The game is one of anticipation, asking the player to know exactly what his opponent will do just before he does it. It's one of the most unrealistic sporting games ever made, which is why it's so damned appealing.



Probotector
(Konami)

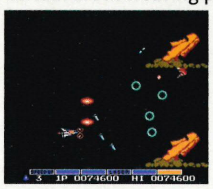
Probotector features big robots killing even bigger aliens using machine guns, energy zappers and flame throwers, which in itself is enough to make a good game great. Add to that a rocking soundtrack, knife-sharp controls and one of the best two-player simultaneous experiences ever, and you have one of the greatest games ever made. FACT!

Castlevania III
(Palcom/Konami)

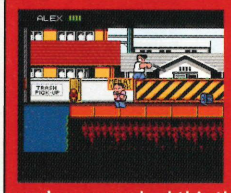
The third and final chapter in the NES *Castlevania* trilogy was by far the best, weaving its intricate story line together with strange new characters, tough bosses and one of the most memorable soundtracks to date. A plethora of involving levels and an altogether eerie atmosphere makes this an experience we'll never forget.

Gradius
(Konami)

It's one of the basic laws of gaming – flying around in a spaceship and blowing things up never gets old. Neither does *Gradius*. There's a certain art in weaving past obstacles while timing your shots accordingly and *Gradius* offers this with a level of performance and grace that is almost unparalleled even to this day. Oh, and it's really fun, too.



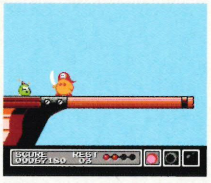
Street Gangs
(Infogrames)



Street Gangs is the only game in history where a fat midget can throw a trash can at another fat midget, steal his money and then run to the mall and buy some sushi. Trust us, we've researched this thoroughly. The game also features a unique way of learning new moves and an absolutely classic two-player Co-op mode.

Mr. Gimmick
(Sunsoft)

Though overlooked by many gamers when it premiered, Sunsoft's final entry into the NES catalogue is at long last being recognised as one of the system's best titles. The absolutely incredible attention to detail put into this little toy's adventure to find his owner serves as a reminder of just what the NES is capable of doing. And *Toy Story* clearly nicked the idea.



Mega Man 3
(Capcom)

Though the NES would eventually see three more sequels to follow this, *Mega Man 3* was quite simply the most polished and playable entry in the entire series. Playing it now takes us back to better times. Times when a good game didn't weigh us down with gimmicks and thrived only on being a joy to play. We cried a lot while writing this feature...

Maniac Mansion
(Jaleco)

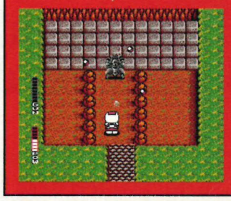
This mind-blowing game features one or more of the following: a mad scientist named Dr. Fred; a hamster in a microwave; the words "tuna head" used as an insult; and/or a tentacle that wants nothing more than to make it as a rock star. Actually, *Maniac Mansion* contains all four of these things and much, much more.

Nintendo World Cup
(Nintendo)

Nintendo World Cup takes the simple game of football, strips it down to its bare essentials and focuses on its violent side! This is the only football game we know of where launching the ball full-speed into an opponent's chest is part of a winning strategy. Plus there's nothing quite like playing around a dead body on the field!

Blaster Master
(Sunsoft)

For those of you who think games have become too easy, *Blaster Master* is exactly what you need to play. This unique adventure, which combines in each of its levels a side-scrolling exploration segment using a tank and an overhead action sequence using its driver, has caused more than a few broken controllers among us.

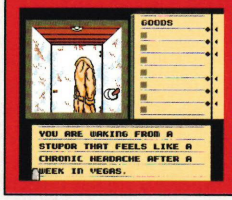


Batman
(Sunsoft)

This dates from a time when movie tie-ins weren't all rubbish. Thankfully, when making a game out of the 1989 *Batman* movie, Sunsoft didn't stick to its plot. Instead, this Batman runs, punches and wall-jumps through a dark, gritty Gotham City, battling a large array of bizarre and dangerous foes in one of the best action games ever to grace the NES.

Deja Vu
(Kemco)

Detective Ace Harding is a hard-boiled sleuth capable of cracking even the toughest cases. The trouble is, he doesn't remember this, let alone his own name. Putting together the pieces, solving the clues and piecing Ace's shattered life back together was a whole lot of fun. Plus, we got to shoot alligators in the sewer, which was kind of cool.

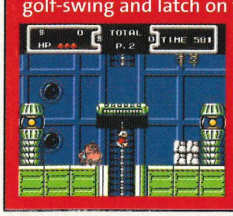


Bionic Commando
(Capcom)

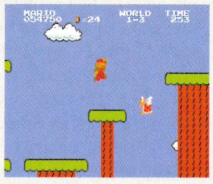
Playing as a guy with a gun is great, but give him a big robotic arm capable of stretching and swinging from platforms and you have the makings of an absolute classic. *Bionic Commando* had multi-tiered paths to follow, which was pretty impressive for the time and at the end we got to shoot Hitler! That's always nice.

Duck Tales
(Capcom)

Who would have thought that an aging duck with a cane could do so much damage? Playing as Uncle Scrooge McDuck, you pogo-jump, golf-swing and latch on to hooks in an attempt to find your way through colourful, detailed landscapes. It's your job to find the treasure and become the richest duck in Duckburg! Disney games used to be so cool...



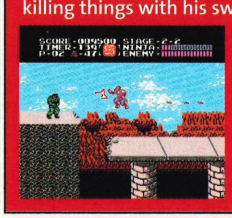
Super Mario Bros.
(Nintendo)



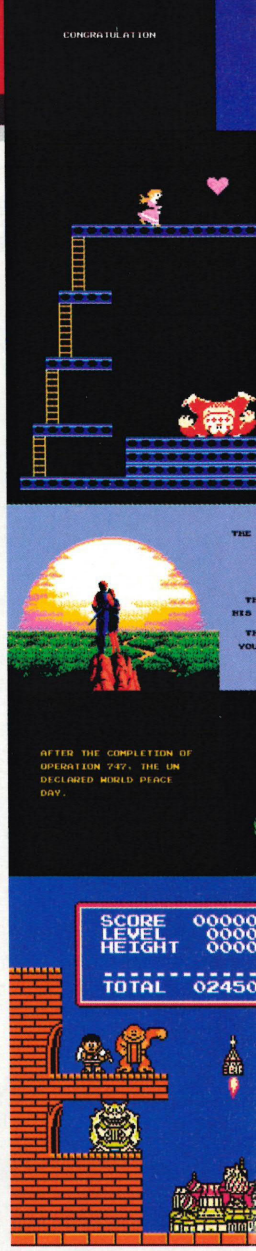
It's hard to imagine now, but the seemingly archaic *Super Mario Bros.* was an amazing breakthrough in its day. For the first time ever, a video game presented you with a truly epic quest. Minor effects such as daytime becoming night, the introduction of bosses and an actual ending to strive for made this a game of legends.

Shadow Warriors
(Tecmo)

Shadow Warriors tells the tale of a young ninja named Ryu Hayabusa and his quest to avenge his father's death. This mostly consisted of killing things with his sword. While the action itself was solid, what really made this game stand out was the stunning cinematic sequences in-between levels, fleshing out the simple story line like no game had ever done before.



Interview: **Frank Cifaldi**



Mr Hardcore

This man has completed 657 NES games. *NOM UK* reveals the extraordinary life of Adam Lamontagne.

It's cool to love games. It's one of the noblest things a human being can do with their life. But is it possible to love games too much? We thought we knew what hardcore was, but then we met American NES-addict Adam Lamontagne.

Lamontagne, a 30-year-old restaurant manager from South Port, Maine is just 17 titles away from having beaten EVERY game ever made for the NES. He's on a strict deadline now – his wife is due to give birth to twins in three months time and that means the gaming has to stop. We caught up with him to find out why a man seemingly of sound mind would do such a thing and why he's going to have to learn to play the piano pretty damn quickly.

***NOM UK*: Let's get this straight. You're 17 games away from having beaten EVERY game ever published for the NES?**
Adam Lamontagne: Yeah, just 17 left. It's been a long time coming. I've beaten 657 games so far. I got my NES in 1986 for Christmas and the first game I beat was *Super Mario Bros*. It was the first game I played that actually had an ending... most of the games for earlier systems didn't have endings, so I found it rewarding to play through these NES games. I started keeping track about a year later.

***NOM UK*: You're so close and now you have a deadline.**
AL: Yeah, my wife Amy and I have been trying to get pregnant for almost four years. Thanks to modern technology, we not only got pregnant, but made up for lost time by becoming pregnant with twins.

***NOM UK*: How much time do you have left before they're due?**
AL: The timer is definitely running down. They're due in June, but they'll probably come sooner. I need to get my butt in gear and take out the last few games before then.

***NOM UK*: Do you want to complete your quest before they're born?**
AL: I'd love to, but there is a major stumbling block involved by the name of the *Miracle Piano Teaching System*. Yeah, I'll have to learn some piano in order to be the NES Gamesmaster.

***NOM UK*: You have to admit, though, having the kids would be a great ending.**
AL: It will be an ending of sorts... an ending to my free time! It will definitely be worth it though. Sometimes I feel like stopping, but I'm so close it would be a shame.

***NOM UK*: So, what's the hardest NES game to beat?**
AL: The 17 I haven't beaten yet! Actually, in terms of just straight-forward "what the hell is going on here", *Overlord* would probably be that game. You have to colonise planets in real time while dealing with all kinds of other variables. I haven't actually mastered that one yet. As for hardest games I've beaten, *Ultima: Exodus* was time consuming. It took me three months to plough through that one.

Super Pitfall was another one... you're stuck in these caverns and there is no set direction to go in. You basically just blindly explore the caverns and hope to stumble upon items and keys that you need for other areas. *Legacy of the Wizard* and *Solomon's Key* are also pretty damn tough.

***NOM UK*: Tell us about your favourite endings.**
AL: I liked the ending to *8-Eyes*. You had to play through the game three times to get it, but when you finally beat it the third time there was this little alien telling you he can't believe you actually finished the game. *Rockin' Kats* also has an interesting ending. You beat the game, the credits roll... you think it is over. Then you have to fight the final boss. I bet a lot of people actually thought they beat that game, but didn't.

***NOM UK*: What do you think it is about beating games that keeps you going?**
AL: Probably the fact that I know a programmer and his crew put a

"I got my NES for Christmas in 1986... the first game I beat was *Super Mario Bros.*"

ton of time and effort into a creative project to make the game, so I want to see everything the game has to offer. I don't consider a game beaten by just finishing it on the Easy setting. A lot of games have different endings if you beat them on a Hard or Advanced difficulty setting, so I like to know that I took on everything the programmer had to throw at me.

***NOM UK*: Pop quiz time! We're going to throw five titles at you, one at a time and you have to describe the ending. *Bionic Commando*?**
AL: Good one. You have to make this leap of faith off a ledge and on your way down blast a shot through the cockpit window of a plane to kill Master D. It's quite a graphic ending as his face explodes. Then you have to hightail it out of the area to escape and rescue your buddy, Super Joe.

***NOM UK*: Well done. Okay, *Shadow Warriors*?**
AL: After battling through the castle you take on this boss that's being controlled by a demon in the middle of the room. You find out that the boss is actually your father being manipulated. You attack the demon then your father dies in your arms. You then have to fight two more bosses AFTER that. The only good thing about this is if you die fighting one of the bosses, you don't have to fight the other bosses before that one again.

***NOM UK*: You didn't mention the mushy love stuff! *Goonies II*?**
AL: *Goonies II*... you have to rescue this mermaid who is locked up by the Fratellis. Once you manage to find her there is a reporter giving the scoop on how the Goonies saved the day. Then you get the credits like most other Konami games.

***NOM UK*: Excellent. *Blaster Master*?**
AL: You have to fight this demon with a whip. He's pretty easy once you know his pattern. Anyway, you beat him, you rescue your frog, get this nice scene with you standing next to your vehicle looking at the sunset, then the credits roll.

***NOM UK*: Don't forget the line "VERY THANKS..!" on the last screen.**
AL: Yeah, I forgot about that.

***NOM UK*: Okay, last one, let's give you a challenge. *Little Nemo: The Dream Master*.**
AL: You've got me there. I honestly don't remember that one. I blew through that game in a one-day rental and I don't even remember much of it.

***NOM UK*: Nemo kills off the nightmare thing, Morpheus crowns him Prince of Slumberland and Camille gets all clingy. Then he wakes up and smiles. Anyway, four out of five. Not bad!**
AL: Thanks!

***NOM UK*: Well, thanks a lot, Adam. Good luck and be sure to keep in touch with us!**
AL: Will do. I'll let you know when I get down to the last three. It could be months from now. Actually it could be YEARS from now.

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MISSION: SURVIVAL.

The full story of Samus Aran's first mission finally unfolds. Blast your way through the maze-like caverns of planet Zebes and rid the universe of the Metroid menace. Will you be a hero, or zero?

OUT 9th APRIL

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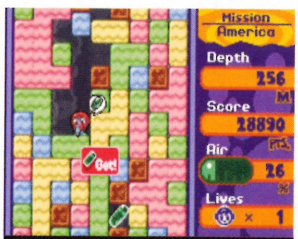
» Metroid Zero Mission » P.66

» Sonic Battle » P.83



» Mr Driller 2 » P.84

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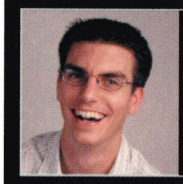
» Max Payne » P.78

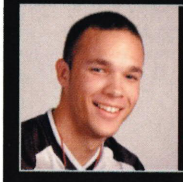
MEET THE TEAM

They write the words you love...



TIM STREET

Cackletta burst my brain and all hell broke loose on *Leaf Green* as I powered on to Mt. Moon. Watch me go!

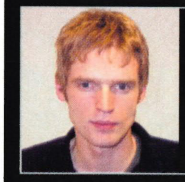


MIKE JACKSON

Pulling 19-hit combos and wrecking faces on *Naruto* made up for all the crappy card-battle games I played.

DEAN SCOTT

Because I wrote about the *Famicom Mini* games, I get to keep them. It's in the Geneva Convention.



KINGSLEY SINGLETON

I was supposed to be playing *House Fixer 3* all this month. But *Zero Mission* got in the way. It's the king.

SPECIAL THANKS TO...

CHRIS KOHLER
Lived in Japan for two years on some crazy American college scholarship. Owns Nintendo stuff you've never even heard of.

FRANK CIFALDI
Knows more about the NES than Nintendo do. His website, www.lostlevels.org, is proof of that. Also likes drinking alcohol.

DARREN FOX
He's not actually a fox. Oh no, he's really half man, half crab. It's a wonder he can type with those fleshy claws. No, a miracle.

SCORES AND AWARDS

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

■ Translation from mutant hiss: "oh, why did I evolve with such an obvious weak spot?"

A mind is a terrible thing to waste – unless it

■ The lovely Samus Aran. Almost naked under this three-inch thick battle suit

■ No, we wanted Ice Cream – damn Zebes shops...

■ Everyone remember where we parked

Game info

Price: **£29.99**
Publisher: **Nintendo**
Web: **www.nintendo.co.uk**
Players: **1**

Out Now

Metroid Zero Mission

happens to be Mother Brain's you're wasting.

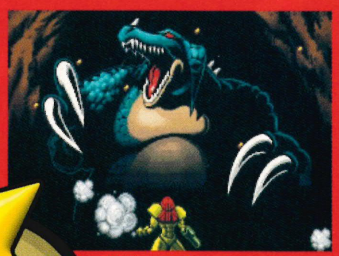
BOOM. A powerful blast opens a tiny crevice in the rock wall. In the dank cavern, a lone Skree hangs from the ceiling, its green maw dripping alien spittle. Remaining stock-still, the winged creature rolls its eyes hungrily toward the sound. It smells it, then sees it. Fresh prey. As the strange interloper moves closer, the Skree waits for its moment. At the last second, it swoops down from the ceiling. But before it even realises its fatal mistake, there's another blast. Then intense heat. Then nothing.

The planet is Zebes. The year is 20X5. The intruder is Samus Aran, intergalactic bounty hunter. Her orders from the Federation: exterminate the Metroids from planet SR388 and kill the leader of the Space Pirates, the life form known only as Mother Brain.

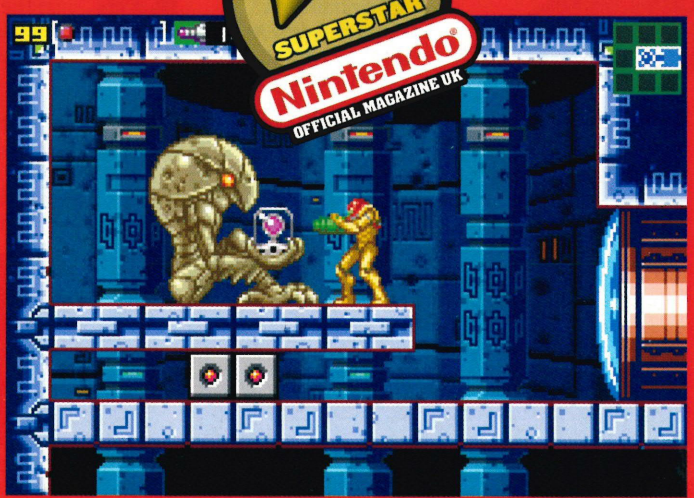
What the Federation doesn't know is that Samus Aran was raised on Zebes by the ancient race of the Chozo, who have since been exterminated but whose secret weaponry lies scattered in the planet's ruins, ready to enhance Samus' Chozo-designed Power Suit. The Federation thinks her mission is impossible. Samus will prove them wrong – but not before the most desperate fight of her life.

You've heard parts of this story before, no doubt – *Zero Mission* is a retelling of the original story of Samus and the Metroids that took place on the NES back in 1987. But throw out the notion that this is just a remake. The original NES *Metroid* was cool and is revered by the hardcore fans who loved it over a decade and a half ago – but for those who cut their teeth on *Prime* and *Fusion*, the series' ancient debut is off-puttingly primitive, not to mention startlingly difficult right from the word go: Samus is amazingly weak and dies every few minutes and the game is open-ended to the point that you have absolutely no idea where to go or what you're supposed to be doing.

Not so with *Zero*



■ "I'm going to pull your head off, because I don't like your head."



"The jaws of newbies and experts alike will hit the floor on seeing what happens after you defeat Mother Brain."

Compare and contrast

Metroid used to be pretty freaking hard, but don't just take our word for it

■ If you've played the original NES *Metroid*, you'll see the similarities here (as well as the differences) right off the bat. Although the general layout of the game map is pretty much the same, the long, featureless shafts of Zebes have been shortened and sexed-up with slimy alien growths and jutting rock formations. In short it looks wicked.

The boss fights have undergone a radical revision, too. Anyway, if you're not convinced of the differences, once you complete *Metroid Zero Mission*, you'll unlock the original game, so you can see the differences for yourself.

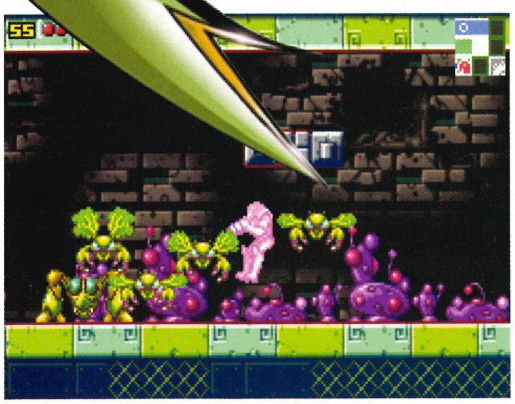
ORIGINAL NES *METROID*

Below is Kraid in the original NES game. Does it really need a tooled-up bounty hunter to deal with him? We reckon a squirt of bug spray would do the job just as easily.

NEW, IMPROVED *ZERO MISSION*

The remade Kraid. My how you've grown. Into a huge, scaly, death-dealing son of a bitch. New Varia Suit pants, please.

■ The harmless Murder-Death-Kill bird of Zebes – cruelly persecuted



"If all remakes were this good, we wouldn't need new games at all."

Mission. Although the game's design takes a minor clue from the elaborate hint systems of *Fusion* and *Prime* by adding Chozo Statues that mark your next destination on the map (oh yeah, there's a map now), it's usually the much more subtle touches that lead you in the right direction. And there are even brand-new areas to explore – early in the game, you'll leave Norfair and head to the planet's surface and to the *Prime*-inspired Chozo Ruins where you can recharge at your ship. All of this was impossible in the original game, but it blends in seamlessly here.

Between *Prime*'s 3D viewpoint and *Fusion*'s constricting linearity, we haven't had a game like this in a long time. Sure, recent *Castlevania* titles have appropriated *Metroid*'s design, but they're nothing compared to the masterwork of R&D1. *Zero*'s brilliant layout makes *Aria of Sorrow* its bitch. *Metroid*'s intricate chambers guide you in the right direction almost subconsciously, so you think you're simply exploring freely when in fact you're being manipulated to go just where the designers want you to.

And that's even true when you're trying to go where you're not supposed to. You can do this in three ways: first, it's possible to get infinite height from bomb jumping (placing bombs in perfect rhythm so they blast you straight up one after the other); second is from wall-jumping (with perfect timing, you can bounce Samus off a wall, over and over, climbing up narrow shafts and, theoretically, right up a single wall, a bit at a time); third, once Samus acquires the Speed Booster and the High Jump, she can speed along for a short time while in Morph Ball form, allowing her to access seemingly impassable areas.

The amazing thing is that no matter

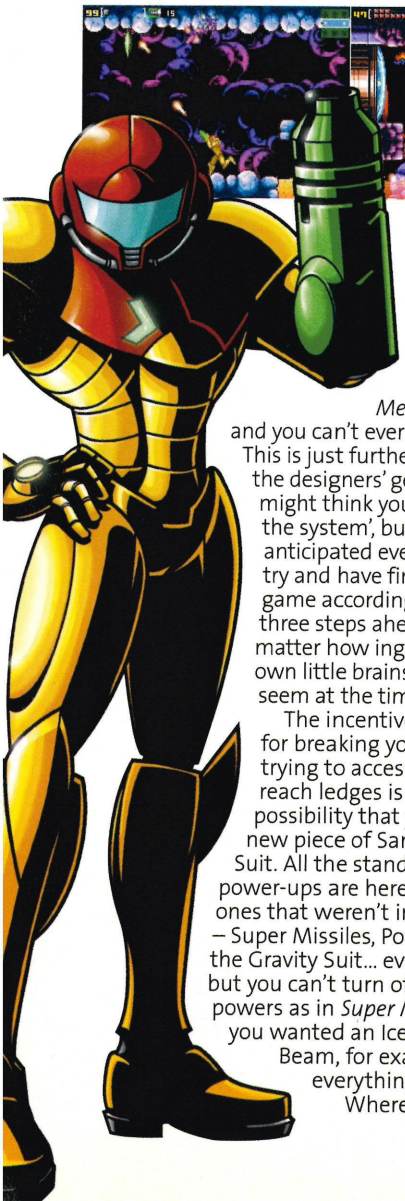
■ Smash through walls to reach hidden areas...

■ ... somersault from time to time (it looks good)...

■ ... but most importantly, kill everything that moves

■ Stamp all over the exotic wildlife

■ He needed a nose job anyway



what you try and how many areas you access out-of-order, you can't get *Metroid* to glitch and you can't ever get 'stuck'. This is just further proof of the designers' genius – you might think you're 'breaking the system', but they've anticipated every move you try and have fine-tuned the game accordingly. They're three steps ahead, no matter how ingenious your own little brainstorms might seem at the time.

The incentive, of course, for breaking your neck trying to access out-of-reach ledges is the possibility that you'll get a new piece of Samus' Power Suit. All the standard *Metroid* power-ups are here, even all the ones that weren't in the original – Super Missiles, Power Bombs, the Gravity Suit... everything – but you can't turn off individual powers as in *Super Metroid* (if you wanted an Ice-less Wave Beam, for example). Here, everything's on.

Where *Zero* fails to achieve perfection is in that it's short and somewhat easy. Yes, the original was even smaller and shorter – but it was so hard that you had to play the levels over and over. With *Zero* it's possible that, like us, you'll finish the game on the first day. But even then there's replay value: in addition to finding all the Missile Upgrades for 100% (and a surprise at the end), there's an unlockable Hard mode and an emulated version of the original.

There's something for everybody in *Zero*. The newly anointed will appreciate playing Samus' first adventure in a far more graphically and structurally appealing form – not to mention the opportunity to check out a classic. Old-skool fans will love the sly references to the original's secrets, like the Energy Tank in the third room. And the jaws of newbies and experts alike will hit the floor on seeing what happens after you destroy Mother Brain.

That's right – as you'll see in this issue's Q&A with *Metroid* director Yoshio Sakamoto, the biggest chunk of new content comes after the climactic Mother Brain fight and it's one of the most amazing, enjoyable and difficult parts of any *Metroid* game, ever. We're not going to spoil it for you – let's just say you won't have to type in a secret passcode to <crackle... the rest of this report was jammed...>. ***Chris Kohler***

So, should you buy it?

Yes if...

You happen to enjoy video games that are God damned amazing.

No if...

You picked up this magazine by mistake, thinking it was about cat grooming.

You'll love it if you like...

A perfect balance between action, puzzle-solving and exploration.

GRAPHICS 9

Astounding. Bright characters and objects stand out even on old GBAs.

SOUND 8

Some great remixes of *Metroid*'s tunes along with creepy ambient sounds.

GAMEPLAY 10

Controlling Samus is natural and flawless, like it should be.

LIFE SPAN 7

Loads of secrets, Hard mode and the original NES *Metroid*. Pretty good really.

VERDICT

> The only thing wrong with *Zero Mission* is that it's quite short and a bit on the easy side – but that's only if you don't seek out all the secrets. Otherwise it might be the best GBA game yet.

BEST BIT: Defeating Mother Brain is not the end!

WORST BIT: Even with extra content, it still ends too quickly.

SECOND OPINION

> I never played the NES *Metroid*, so this was all new. It feels more like *Super Metroid* than *Fusion* did and made the six hours I spent finishing it the best of the month. ***Dean Scott***

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"TIMELESS"

93%

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

Pokémon Channel

Television is a drug (so is *Pokémon*). This should be great (it isn't).

Game info

Out Apr 2nd

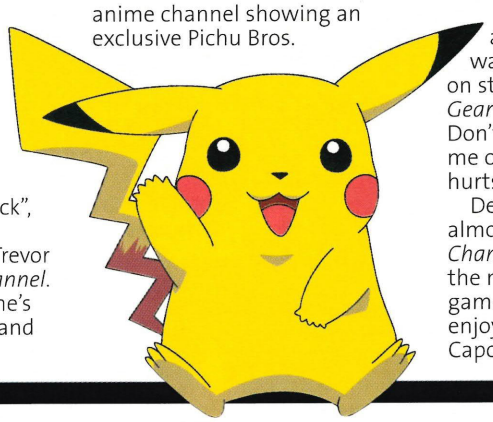
Price: **£39.99**
Publisher: **Nintendo**
Web: **www.nintendo.co.uk**
Players: **1**
Memory: **22 blocks**

Thank God. They finally made a game where you can sit and watch crap television programmes with Pikachu for ages. Pikachu loves TV. You try and go outside, and he closes the patio door. More TV. You try and show him some other stuff in the house and he gets annoyed and demands you watch more TV. If you switch the TV off, he does his nut.

That's *Pokémon Channel*, a bizarre non-game that'll confuse the hell out of even the most die-hard Pokémaniacs. The plot basically goes like this: "Hi! I'm Professor Oak. Watch my TV. Watch it with Pikachu. Thanks, goodbye!" He does little tests to make sure you've watched everything. It's like you're the subject of an experiment even more cruel than sealing wild animals in red and white balls approximately a quarter of their size.

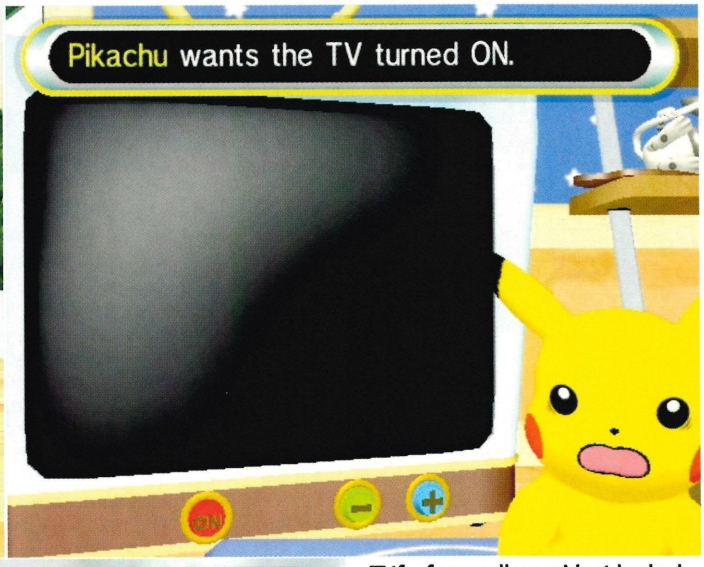
What's on TV? Pokémon shows. Squirtle hosts a cheesy TV shopping channel. Psyduck keeps repeating the word "Psyduck", but apparently that's still enough for him to be the Trevor McDonald of *Pokémon Channel*. Meowth must be gutted: he's the only one that can talk and he's stuck doing location reports. If we didn't know better, we'd imagine there's some kind of casting couch procedure governing who gets the top Poké media jobs. Meowth's got an ideal face for radio, if you see what we mean.

There's a fitness channel, an anime channel showing an exclusive Pichu Bros. cartoon (be excited!) and a quiz channel. On the quiz channel, you watch other Pokémon get questions wrong about Pokémon. We thought our brains had given up and this was all some sort of games overdose hallucination.

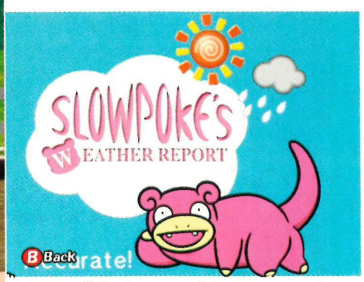


But no, it's all true. This is a game where all you do is watch and occasionally click on stuff. So it's a bit like *Metal Gear Solid*. Just kidding, readers. Don't write cruel words about me on a forum, because it really hurts, you know?

Despite the fact that you do almost nothing, *Pokémon Channel* still manages not to be the most shatteringly awful game ever. It's much more enjoyable than, for example, Capcom's TRAGIC Mickey Mouse



■ If a furry yellow midget barked orders, would YOU take them?

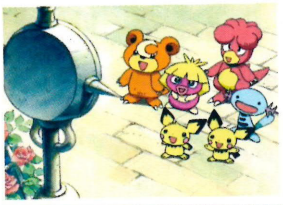


■ Well, he's got a bit more cred than the rubbish on GMTV...

Better than Sky

■ Your essential guide to tonight's viewing on the Pokémon Channel

7pm



PICHU BROS PARTY PANIC
Watching Pokémon animes on the TV for free is for LOSERS. Pay £40 and watch this. It's like having Sky.

8pm

SMOOCHUM SHAPE-UP
Attempt to get fitter by copying exercise moves from creatures that are a different species from yourself, performing movements humans can't.

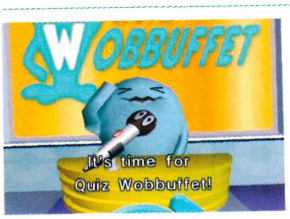
9pm

PNF POKÉMON NEWS
Psyduck anchors the news. All he'll say is "Psyduck!", but whoever's doing the subtitles will bail him out.

10pm

PROF. OAK'S REPORT CHANNEL
"How do you like my prototype TV show?" asks the Professor. "Dude, it's CRAP!" you'll holler in unison.

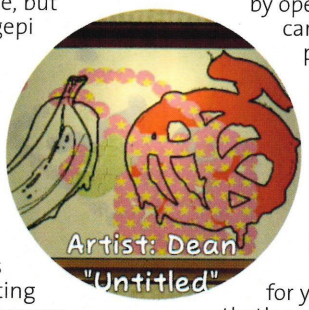
11pm



QUIZ WOBBUFFET
Where do they get these idiots from anyway? The answer's OBVIOUSLY TOGEPI. Diglett, you're a retard.

games. Pikachu's over there watching TV and I'm over here writing the review. I have a Wavebird, his brain is slowly rotting away. Everyone's a winner. Actually, he's a wild Pokémon. He better not take a dump on my pillow.

Pokémon are cool, you see. If you hate Pikachu, you must also hate life. Some of them are a bit stupid it's true, but the likes of Charmander, Togepi and Slakoth are GAMING HEROES. But until we worked out the single TV show we hadn't watched, it looked like we might have to hire some people to come and re-program the game so we could make Pikachu die.



You see he wouldn't let us go outside and we were getting cabin fever pretty bad. If willpower alone could have imagined up an extra KILL PIKACHU WITH A HAMMER button, well, he'd be a Deadachu.

But outside, there's glory. Seeds to plant that grow into flowers. Wild Pokémon that ask you questions about themselves that you have to answer. Every small triumph in this little world is rewarded with a Pokémon card.

You might decide you've Gotta Catch 'Em All(™), but we were content with a few. Possibly because Pikachu annoyed us by opening the package with the card binder in when the postman came. Don't you hate it when someone opens your mail and it's something awesome? Or even just a yellow binder you bought with money that wasn't yours from a Squirtle on a pretend Pokémon TV show.

That's *Pokémon Channel* for you. A well-executed... thing that's somehow being mis-sold as a video game. Either somebody at Nintendo is a certifiable maniac, or this is the future of video games. We're pretty sure it's the former. ***Dean Scott***

So, should you buy it?

Yes if...

You don't have a TV licence, but want to cheat the system and watch TV.

No if...

You require your games to feature 'gameplay'. Ha, ha. What's that?

You'll love it if you like...

Pikachu. And you've always wanted him as a pet. To watch TV with. Oh dear.

GRAPHICS 7

Very bright, but there are a few sharp edges on the Pokémon models.

SOUND 6

"PSYDUCK!" "PSYDUCK!" "PSYDUCK!" You get the idea.

GAMEPLAY 3

Aside from the *Pokémon Mini*, there's very little real interaction.

LIFE SPAN 3

You can watch all of the basic TV shows in a day. Unless your Wavebird dies.

VERDICT

> It's hard to judge as a game, because it's not really a game. But this is a games magazine, so we have to. It's bad. You won't hate it, but you'll realise immediately there's basically no point.

BEST BIT: When you first let Pika into your house and watch the first show.

WORST BIT: Most of what follows. Especially when Pika starts to run your life.

SECOND OPINION

> Dean, where's the game? There's no game, Dean! I can't find the game. Why can't I find the game? I've found the Pikachu watching the TV, but where's the game? ***Mike Jackson***

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...
"BAFFLING"

41%

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

Game info

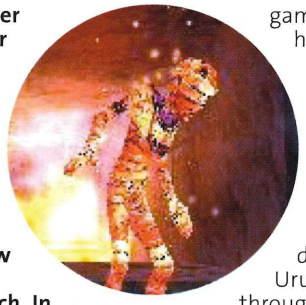
Out Now

Price: **£39.99**
Publisher: **THQ**
Web: **www.thq.com/sphinx**
Players: **1**
Memory: **20 blocks**

Sphinx and the Cursed Mummy

It's bigger than the Pyramids and smarter than the Sphinx.

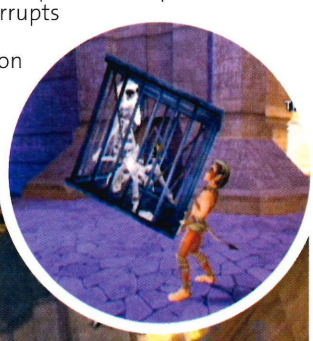
If you had to snog either minted *Pop Idol* winner Michelle or penniless-but-pretty reject Roxanne, who would you choose? Going with Michelle is the more rewarding option if you want to be kept in bling for the rest of your days, but far more challenging as you'd need to fight the urge to throw up every time she swung her giant moon face in for a smooch. In this way, *Sphinx* is a bit like Michelle. It's rewarding to play, but you have to be willing to put in a lot of effort. Thankfully though, it's a whole lot prettier to snuggle up with.



Sphinx is colossal. It's a hulking great mutha of an action game. Set in a kind of alternate reality Ancient Egypt, playing the game is like taking an extended holiday around the sprawling cities, lush valleys and fusty tombs of an incredible ancient world. The adventure begins when your main hero, Sphinx, is sent to retrieve the Blade of Osiris to help protect the land from an encroaching darkness from the evil land of Uruk. As you monkey your way through lava-spewing levels, deftly avoiding spiked traps with moves to rival those in *Prince Of Persia*, the story of a second hero is introduced.

While Sphinx is mucking about on one side of the Ancient World, Prince Tutankhamen is merrily skipping around his palace on his birthday. However, there's dramatic plotting afoot and someone in Tut's own family wants him out of the picture. A bit like *EastEnders* then, but with more sand. Alternating between cut-scenes and action sequences, you play as both characters in the opening hours. As Sphinx, you'll be exploring an elaborate tomb, trying to find the means to warp your ass out of there as soon as possible. As Tut you have to explore the palace, trying to find out who's got it in for you.

There's plenty to keep you hooked in these opening hours, but they are essentially one giant prologue to the real meat of the proper game. Victorious at the end of his level, Sphinx is warped to a new land and interrupts the wicked mummification ceremony where poor Tut is having



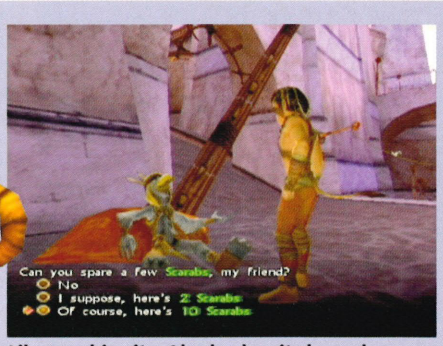
■ Handy on-screen hints stop you from having to use your brain

Abydos 'appiness

Step out in the cities and reveal *Sphinx*'s hidden depths

■ *Sphinx* throws things at you that you really don't expect to see in a platform game. It starts out feeling like a pure platformer and then you hit your first city. All of a sudden you start caring about its inhabitants and want to explore every inch of the place to help them out.

Check out some of the challenges that await you in Abydos alone and you'll realise that there's a lot of love and effort put in to making *Sphinx* one of the most rewarding game experiences out there.



Like any big city, Abydos has its homeless folk. You can't attack these ones though

It's certainly prettier than a day out in Manchester – plus less threat of rain

Check out the region's monsters at Abydos museum and make donations of your own

There are underwater canals to explore beneath the city, too

"*Sphinx* is great, an example of how to roll loads of game ideas into one, and one of the most enjoyable hybrids ever."

the life sucked from his bones. Chaos ensues, monsters attack and warp gates start sucking people in at random, spitting them out Ra only knows where. Sphinx is charged with the task of finding and rescuing Mummy and then annihilating those responsible.

It's at this point that *Sphinx and the Cursed Mummy* becomes truly epic. Sphinx's earlier gameplay in dark tombs, with precise enormo-puzzles to bust soon gives way to exploring an entire world. Even the first city you come across, Abydos, is a bewildering arrangement of grand avenues and sleazy back streets. Each place you visit is in a real fix, too. In Abydos the museum has been robbed and there are electric eels preventing safe passage in its waterways. In Heliopolis a spell has turned the land from oasis to desert wasteland and all the townsfolk are starving. You need to help the locals out as well as getting on with your own quest. It's arguably a bigger and more complex game than *The Wind Waker* and a terrifying prospect if all you're used to is exploring one mansion and a lab, *Resident Evil*-style.

Every step of the way is a challenge. There are mini-games to play, but many of these remain unavailable until you've found and learnt how to use the correct weapon or item. Even something as simple as the trusty double jump has to be discovered and earned before you can use it. There are optional extra quests, too, like handing money to the tramp in Abydos who'll eventually reward you with an extra

■ Sadly the cut-scene ends before this solarium fills with Egyptian girls

■ Stop your whining! Check out *Harvest Moon* (p76) if you want to see hard graft

■ Zip lines have officially been voted the coolest things ever – look it up if you don't believe us

Fight Box

There's always something, isn't there...

■ The fighting in *Sphinx* is perhaps the weakest part of the whole game, but that's only because the rest of the adventure stands out so well. In comparison to the rest of the game, the fights are fun, but average. Sadly, there's no lock-on targeting system, so you're often forced to repeatedly hammer the button with very little strategy involved.

The way the musical score reacts to each hit you land on an opponent certainly spices things up, but the fights should have been so much more given the cool enemy characters you face.

Even these simple skeletons can cause you grief if caught unaware

Visual effects are matched by cool orchestration as you slash and slice

Careful when you're facing multiple foes – they'll attack you from behind

Assign the shield to a quick button press to protect from physical attacks

health-ankh, but its safe to say that everything in the game is there to try you. Unfortunately, if you die you are returned to your last save, however long ago it was. It certainly adds to the tension knowing you're not going to be handily respawned just before you snuffed it, but also increases frustration if you haven't got the skills needed to stay alive.

This is the one real problem with *Sphinx*: it's probably just a bit too hard. It's so challenging and so huge that it's easy to get distracted from your main quests by smaller but equally essential side-missions so that you're not sure where to go next and what to do even if you make it there. This isn't helped by the fact, despite giving you a giant world to explore, you never get the same sense of place that *Wind Waker* does so well. Warping around from city to tomb, with lots of long load times to boot, is about as far removed from the graceful sailing from island to island as seen in Link's

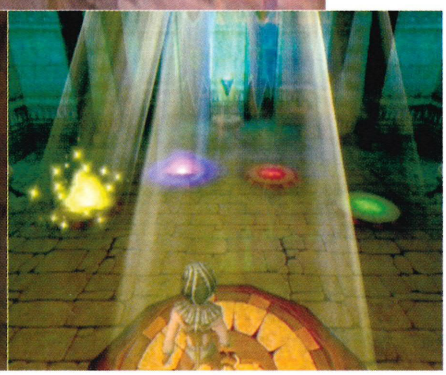
■ Shuttlecock Birds, mocked by other avians, for their ugliness and stupid name

■ The ancient Egyptians employed fantastic contraptions to dry their armpits

■ Actually love, your plastic 'tache has fallen off

■ Those crazy pendulums – is there anything they can't do?

■ Egyptian hieroglyphics never made mention of deadly lasers – but here they are!



■ Ancient games of Simon Says were huge and took months to play

"It's arguably a bigger and more complex game than *The Wind Waker*."

GameCube adventure as you can get.

But even if you are stuck at any point and left to ponder your next step without much help from the locals, you can at least while away some time gawping at the graphics. For the most part *Sphinx* looks amazing. It's super-smooth, very fast and some of the exterior cityscapes are breathtaking, although close up the textures are sometimes very plain. The Sphinx and Mummy characters are perfectly animated and full of character. The different races of townsfolk you meet are great fun, too. It's weird that there's no spoken voice acting though, especially as everyone's mouth moves as if there should be words coming out.

If the Sphinx levels were all the game offered it would still be a great adventure, but in keeping with the game's bigger-is-better mentality, you can play as Mummy, too. You have to wait a while until the first Mummy level tickles you with its grubby bandages. In fact it took us about eight hours, but it's well worth the wait.

Mummy's not quite dead you see, but just dead enough to take a thorough battering in the name of getting his soul back. To solve the puzzles in the Mummy levels you need to burn, break, shred and flatten Mummy to negotiate the level. Split him in three for instance and you can control three Mummies and pull three sneaky switches. Flatten him and he'll fit through narrow bars to access hidden areas.

These cruel and hilarious effects only last a limited time, adding a real sense of urgency. The difference between Sphinx's careful investigation of tombs and thorough exploration of towns and the Mummy's frantic dashes through perilous caverns only makes the Mummy levels more enjoyable.

It all adds up to make *Sphinx* a great game and a perfect example of how to roll loads of game ideas into one to make one of the most enjoyable action game/role-player/platformer hybrids ever and the second best game of its type after *The Wind Waker* on GameCube. Nuff said. ***Darren Fox***

So, should you buy it?

Yes if...

You love exploring and think you're up to the challenge of the game's rock-hard puzzles.

No if...

You prefer more compact levels and don't want to feel stumped at every step.

You'll love it if you like...

The Wind Waker, *Beyond Good & Evil* and GBA *Castlevania* games.

GRAPHICS 8

Huge levels that run super-smooth, but the textures are a bit plain in places.

SOUND 7

Moody Egyptian soundtrack and cool fighting effects, but no voice acting at all.

GAMEPLAY 8

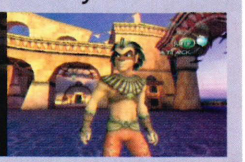
Big, clever puzzles, sub-quests and missions, but the fighting's a bit clumsy.

LIFE SPAN 8

It's huge and probably too daunting for some, but there's loads to see and do.

VERDICT

> It's like having an entire sunshine-filled land inside your TV and you get to explore it with two very different heroes. A huge game, that's fun and totally compelling, but only if you can take its severe difficulty level.



BEST BIT: Gaining new abilities and items to help you explore.

WORST BIT: It's not often clear where you should be going next.

SECOND OPINION

> The Mummy's parts are best. If this was my game, I'd delete Sphinx because he's a bit boring and make it *Curse of the Stupid Mummy*. That's better. ***Mike Jackson***

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"A TREASURE"

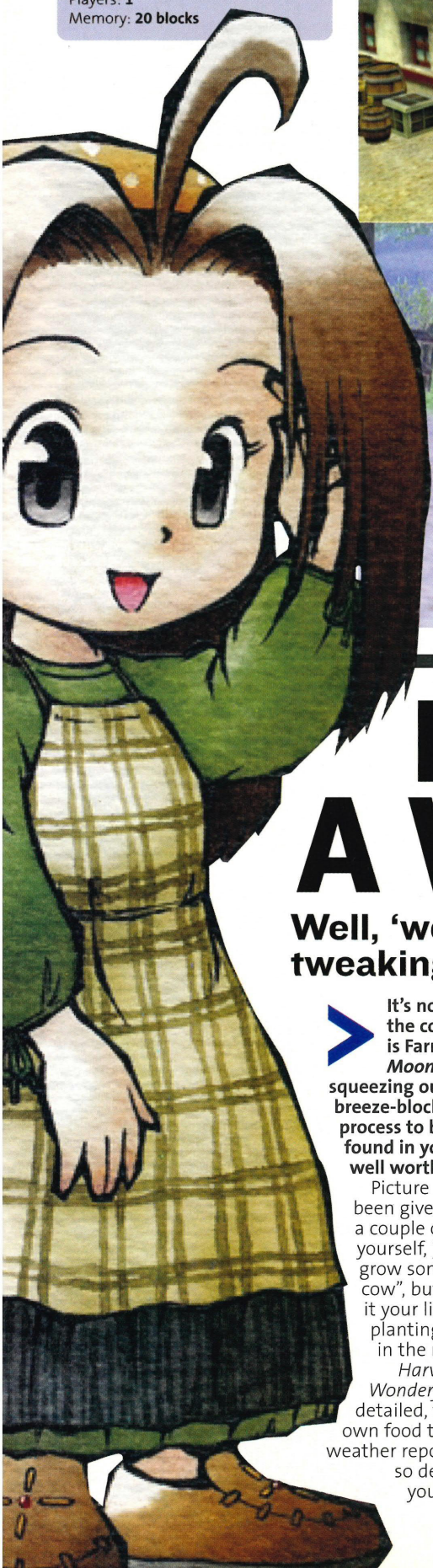
88%

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

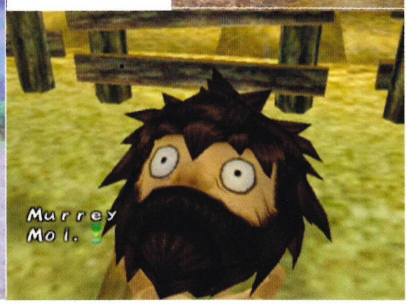
Game info

Out Mar 19th

Price: £39.99
Publisher: Ubisoft
Web: www.ubisoft.com
Players: 1
Memory: 20 blocks



■ Is he smiling after a hard day's graft or sniffing the cow poo?



Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life

Well, 'wonderful' if you like planting turnips, tweaking cow teats and a distinct lack of guns.

It's not a coincidence that the cockney slang for piles is Farmer Giles, as *Harvest Moon* is much like squeezing out a well formed breeze-block; a slow and painful process to be sure, but the relief found in your achievement is well worth it.

Picture the scene: you have been given a farm, a cow and a couple of tools, you say to yourself, "looks like fun, I can grow some stuff and milk a cow", but before you realise it your little character is planting potatoes at four in the morning.

Harvest Moon: A Wonderful Life is incredibly detailed, from cooking your own food to catching up with weather reports on the telly. It's so detailed in fact that you find that managing the hours in the day to get all your chores done becomes increasingly difficult. The amount of care and attention you need to pay to your animals and crops is huge. Every little thing has to be taken into consideration, which makes playing a bit of a chore.

The game is split into six chapters, each marking a major event in your busy life. By the end of 30 years you've got to get your farm running like a well-oiled machine, marry and have some kids. You then hand the farm down to your kids before you die. *A Wonderful Life* improves on its predecessors with increased varieties of fruit, veg, tools, building extensions and animals – that's just in case you're one of the five people in the UK who've played these games before.

In order to make your farm successful you need to sell produce, like eggs, milk and wool. You start off with a cow, but you'll soon need to order in some more animals ranging from sheep to chickens. Each breed of animal you purchase plays a vital role in getting you through the weeks of back-breaking labour ahead. Keeping them happy can mean the difference between failure and success, so occasionally showing your sheep some love won't be frowned upon here.

The other major source of revenue is crops. Selling or eating your crops is another major part of progressing through the game. Pick the wrong season to plant your carrots and your crops will fail, which is a sod after you've spent ages looking after the damn things. However, paying

Can't cook, can't cook

Never mind 'won't cook'. We would if we had some oofing ingredients

■ To keep your little chappy happy, you've got to give him naps and feed him regularly. You'll find that if you haven't fed him properly then he won't be able to do as much manual labour, resulting in him falling asleep on the job, making the game tougher than it was in the first place.

What you can cook depends on the food you've managed to grow. After combining three ingredients in your cooking menu you can make a choice of either soup or salad for a starter. But that's not good when all you have is some milk and a couple of weeds you pulled up outside.

Hot food, cold beer and a TV. How the hell are you going to get any FARMING done?

"If you can't be bothered to put the effort in, you'll probably hate this... it's loads of hard work and no action."

careful attention to your animals and crops eventually pays off. It sounds sad, but it is strangely satisfying to see your vegetables thriving, it gives you a real sense of accomplishment.

Once your farm has gathered a bit of pace you can Oompa Loompa it up a bit by hiring workers called Sprites. They'll tend to the fields and animals, freeing up time for you to have a drink at the local bar, do a spot of fishing or visit *A Wonderful Life*'s sister game *Friends of Mineral Town* via your Game Boy Advance. The connectivity feature allows you to get special items from travelling salesmen, making it easier for you in the long run. Let's face it, you're going to need all the help you can get because this one's a marathon.

The A.I. in *A Wonderful Life* is surprisingly good. The people of the village go about their lives with complete independence, randomly choosing randomly to visit you, take a stroll or get on with their own work. You can strike deals with people in the village as well as try and impress one of three potential brides with the size of your turnip.

All this depends on how much effort you're willing to put in to the game. If you really want to spend five hours nurturing a spud, go ahead. It's your life, after all. If you don't want to put the effort in, you'll hate this. It simulates a farming experience, loads of work and no action. You just have to decide whether you want to come home from a hard day and turn on your 'Cube for an even harder one. ***Tom Seymor***

So, should you buy it?

Yes if...

You're a big *Gardener's World* fan and have a huge amount of free time.

No if...

You need a quick fix. This one has got about as much action as a bowls match.

You'll love it if you like...

Any of the previous *Harvest Moon* games, or an RPG-style game that's a bit different.

GRAPHICS 7

As colourful as one of the Osbourne family's vocabulary.

SOUND 7

Some of the animal noises can become annoying, but altogether cosy.

GAMEPLAY 7

Long-winded, but satisfaction's guaranteed after the pain.

LIFE SPAN 9

You'll be playing through 30 game years, so it's certainly not a weekend jobby.

VERDICT

> It can be a struggle to keep up the effort needed to progress, but this is great at what it does. It's realistic without being totally boring and just a shame that progress is so slow to start with.

BEST BIT: Seeing your first tomato bud sprout up... ah, the miracle of creation.

WORST BIT: The really annoying sound that the text makes on screen.

SECOND OPINION

> It stinks of ridiculous Japaneseness from the second you press Start. It's snail-pace gaming from the off, but uniquely rewarding and charming as hell. ***Dean Scott***

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"YOU'LL DIG IT"

78%

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

Max Payne

Big guns, bad guys and explosions. Oh my!

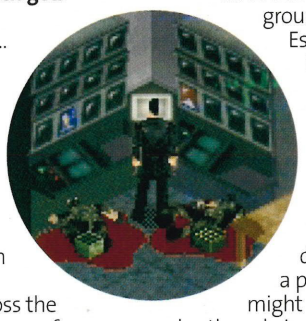
Game info

Out Now

Price: **£29.99**
Publisher: **Rockstar Games**
Web: **www.rockstargames.com**
Players: **1**

Everyone's favourite M9-totin', time-slowin', dead-family-avengin' cop gone sour makes his debut on GBA. Payne's first adventure can be played out in a seedy bar, the back of a classroom, or just about anywhere using a new 2D, isometric viewpoint. How much gets lost in translation? Not a lot.

The first thing you'll notice... well, the company logo. After that, though, Payne narrates the game's intro, in surprising clarity. In all, over 30 minutes of speech have been crammed in. This can either be a blessing or a curse, depending on what you think of lines like, "the sun went down with practiced bravado. Twilight crawled across the sky, laden with foreboding". Some of you might be into that kind of thing. For the rest of us, the A button will happily oblige in skipping past the cut-scenes.



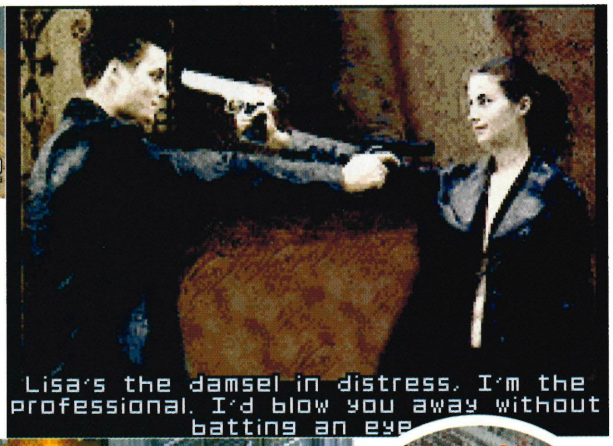
The gameplay itself works surprisingly well in this new format and is easier to handle than its 3D big brother. Like the original, using the Bullet Time feature to dive and shoot in slow motion is absolutely essential to survival. Max becomes temporarily immune to bullets and blasts at enemies with increased accuracy and speed.

Subsequently, and also akin to the original, Bullet Time is the only thing keeping this game from mediocrity. It's a great gimmick though and even after playing through the game three times, diving from behind a crate and picking off three bank robbers before hitting the ground is still a lot of fun. Especially when your stray bullets manage to shatter an inanimate object.

Is it worth it? That depends on what you're looking for. If you're looking to recreate the thrill of the PC original wherever you go, you'll probably be disappointed. But if you want a portable John Woo movie, this might make your day. Just the one day though, in all likelihood.

In its butterfly life span of four hours, it delivers challenge and excitement by the bucket load. Second time though, skills fully honed, it isn't much fun at all. ***Frank Cifaldi***

■ Stuck in pools of jam, Max was unable to save the identical twins



■ This helicopter was carrying a Nintendo DS to your house. Nooooo!

So, should you buy it?

Yes if...

You've got enough money to blow on a few hours fun, or if you prefer quick games.

No if...

You thought Max was kind of cute. Those tiny 3D models get pretty badly pixelated.

You'll love it if you like...

The original *Max Payne*, cheesy old crime dramas, or if you just enjoy shooting stuff.

GRAPHICS 8

The backgrounds look nice and gritty, and the characters are fluidly animated in 3D.

SOUND 6

You'll probably miss the cut-scenes after turning down the dreary music.

GAMEPLAY 8

Off-screen enemies get on your nerves, but otherwise it's really well-balanced.

LIFE SPAN 5

Lots of fun on the first run-through, but almost no replay value whatsoever.

VERDICT

> This is the dodgy thriller movie of video games. It's a fun ride, delivering all the action, excitement and explosions that you'd expect. Unfortunately, it also has a cheap movie's quality of only being fun once.

BEST BIT: The Bullet Time. And it's not in a *Matrix* game, so that's good, too.

WORST BIT: Once finished you'll need a lobotomy to enjoy it again.

SECOND OPINION

> Warning One: get off the bus playing this and the streets are a sea of Bullet Time prey. Warning Two: you'll have finished it by the time you get home. ***Kingsley Singleton***

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"BLOODY SHORT"

70%

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

■ You wouldn't catch Mario swinging from Donkey Kong's snot

Pitfall: The Lost Expedition

Game info

Out Now

Price: **£29.99**
Publisher: **Activision**
Web: **www.pitfallharry.com**
Players: **1**
Memory: **51 blocks**

Jump on crocs, swim with piranha, punch monkeys... this is Steve Irwin gone mad.

Pitfall Harry hasn't tried teasing a crocodile with a baby, so Steve Irwin wins in the 'almost feed infant to lethal predator' category. Everything else Harry wins hands down.

Feed crocodiles? PAH! Harry gets himself SWALLOWED by one, then forces open its jaws and leaps out without a scratch. But then, Irwin only has one life. One mistake and the next programme he'd appear in would be *The World's Funniest Deaths... EVER*. Harry breaks the rules. He respawns at the entrance unharmed. And his retries are unlimited, too.

But that's not the only rule he breaks. Falls from great heights are no threat to him. He must be Spider-man's distant cousin. Just as well though, because falling is something you'll be doing a lot. This is one of those platform games. It'll have you trying desperately to swing from a vine and land on a thin branch. Each time you fail you fall down, back to the start of the jungle-style obstacle course. Try again. And again. And again.

The camera isn't very free. Apart from a stationary first-person view, you can only shift your view left or right. When swinging on vines, it's fixed closely behind you. You're denied the privilege of setting up the best possible viewing angle for that daring leap.

But then, we weren't exactly expecting a *Mario Sunshine* beater anyway. This is just your average run-of-the-mill platformer. The levels are mostly linear, with areas that you'll have to come back to once you've discovered new items and abilities.

They've tried to include as many features from the original *Pitfall* games as possible – rolling logs, crocodiles, vines etc. Then they've added some sleeping monkeys that scream for help when you wake them, a few new moves for Harry, some polygons and stopped there. ***Mike Jackson***

So, should you buy it?

Yes if...

You're easy to please – anything better than *Universal Studios* will make you happy.

No if...

You already have *Mario Sunshine* and know better. This would be a backward step.

You'll love it if you like...

'Witty' American humour that's not funny. The cut-scenes are full of it.

GRAPHICS 7

The environments are pretty detailed, but you won't see anything spectacular.

SOUND 5

The effects are alright, but *Pitfall*'s background music is crap.

GAMEPLAY 6

Bog-standard. The camera could be better – but what else is new?

LIFE SPAN 6

May take a while to complete, but then you may switch off before the end.

VERDICT

> There probably won't be anything in *Pitfall: The Lost Expedition* to inspire you, but if you're not into complications and just want to run and jump for a while, this isn't all that bad.

BEST BIT: Harry's shifty Use Hand. Watch it twiddling away merrily.

WORST BIT: Falling off the same branch repeatedly. Foul language was used.

SECOND OPINION

> The best thing about this is that they've included the original. But you can pick up an Atari 2600 and the game at a car boot sale for less than £29.99. ***Kingsley Singleton***

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

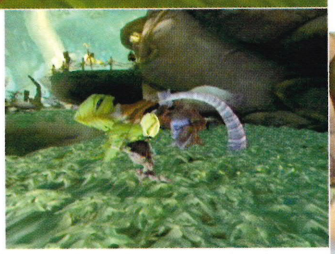
"PRATFALL"

67%

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

■ These chicken worshippers hate Tak and like to slap him around

■ The bad boys: Tlaloc and his henchmen, Pins and Needles



■ Orang-utans will smack you if you get too near, but help you if you're cautious

■ You have to find three of these annoying Nobu plants in each area. One would be enough

■ Take out these nests or the bad guys just keep on coming

Tak and the Power of Juju

And the bleat goes on in this sheep-tastic trek through the Juju jungle.

Game info

Out Now

Price: **£39.99**
Publisher: **THQ**
Web: **www.takgame.com**
Players: **1**
Memory: **38 blocks**

Animals are funny. We know this because you can watch endless home movie clips of dogs knocking over children and bulls trying to hump farmers every Saturday night on *Kirsty's Home Videos*. But if you'd rather spend your money on games than blow it all on cable TV, you can still witness muchos animal madness by playing *Tak*.

The entire Pupanunu tribe have been turned into sheep by the evil Tlaloc and only a handful remain, including Tak and the tribe's Shaman, Jibolba. Only the legendary hero Lok can retrieve all the magical artefacts needed to restore his people to their usual, non-grass chomping, form. Trouble is, Lok has been trampled to death by the very men-sheep he was trying to save. So it's up to you and your on-screen pot-bellied buddy Tak, to help sort things out. Being quite the opposite of a legendary hero and lacking Lok's strength however, Tak's approach to saving his brothers and sisters is a touch more ingenious than steaming through the jungle, Indiana Jones style.

Set in the video game equivalent of the *I'm A Celebrity* camp, the setting is so jungly you half expect pint-sized idiots Ant and Dec to pop up and force Tak to eat some cockroach larvae. But rather than eat the animals, to help him explore, Tak needs to use them in his task of retrieving the magical thingamy-bobs that Jibolba needs to work his Juju magic. This is where *Tak and the Power of Juju* really shines. The original way you use your jungle buddies helps the game twinkle like a majestically greased python compared to the crusty dry old skin of other, more average platform games.

The game has a simple logic in getting the jungle brutes to do your bidding. Sheep can be used for cover and as distractions, while orang-utans will catapult Tak to new areas. Tak gains new abilities as you guide him through the world and all of these help you communicate further with the jungle critters. Use the blowpipe to make monkeys hiding in trees angry, then they'll lob melons.

The melons will activate switches or hit other animals, creating chain reactions of animal magic that Dr Dolittle

Sheep handling 101

The animal of a thousand uses...

■ If you thought sheep were only good for making jumpers and stinking of poo, think again. Tak has many uses for the bleaters and you need to experiment at every opportunity. You can carry sheep and shuffle around using their woolly coats as cover. Rams usually defend doorways and send Tak flying, but lob a sheep at a ram and it'll become so distracted with gooey, unnatural feelings for the man-sheep that it'll forget all about you and let you pass. You can even set them up to power treadmills providing you wallop them hard enough.

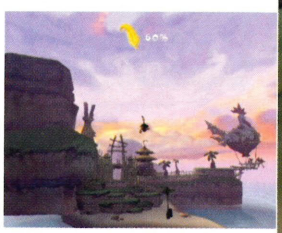
Make like a sheep and sneak past these Tak-hating chicken men

Things get a bit racy in sheep land

Run! If he slows down, hit him with your stick again

Approach an ape and he'll nick your sheep

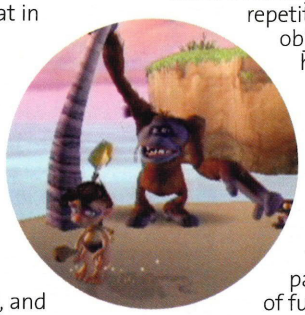
■ You need to find 100 of these balls to help Lok. That's just too many damn it!



■ Once catapulted, sit back and enjoy the scenery

would be proud to see. Tak can ride rhinos to smash open new areas and, much later, even don animal costumes like the genuinely hilarious chicken suit to dupe members of rival tribes.

The ideas in *Tak* are so great in fact, that it's even more of a shame that the game is let down by a few fairly big flaws that really get in the way of you enjoying it to its fullest. The biggest is that, despite looking and feeling like a kids' game (it's even a joint venture between Nickelodeon and THQ), the lack of a lock-on targeting system for fighting, and the sheer difficulty of duffing up baddies will likely make it far too frustrating for kids. It's also much too imprecise for hardened gamers reared on the likes of *Zelda* and *Mario*.



The Juju powers you receive, like speed boosts and warps to the Spirit World are fantastic fun, but the game waits far too long before it lets you have them. Instead you're forced to go on repetitive monster bashing and object collecting missions for hours until the good stuff happens. It's fair to say that many players will have given up before Tak flashes his special stuff at all.

It is charming though, and certainly quirky and fun enough for more patient players to have a lot of fun with it. It's just a shame that the controls and difficulty level haven't been polished quite as expertly as the rest of the game, but this is still heaps better than much of the platforming competition out there. ***Darren Fox***

So, should you buy it?

Yes if...

You enjoy huge platform games and don't mind retreading ground on your quest.

No if...

You get frustrated easily or don't care for kiddie-looking action games.

You'll love it if you like...

The idea of having another platformer even if you already own *Sunshine* or *Rayman*.

GRAPHICS 9

Beautiful settings and superb characters make this a genuine treat to watch.

SOUND 7

Jungle drums on a loop aren't much fun, but the voice acting is spot on.

GAMEPLAY 7

There's too much object collecting before the good stuff really kicks in, but it's fun.

LIFE SPAN 8

Early areas are annoying, but stick with it and you'll be hooked. It's a big 'un, too!

VERDICT

> There's some real magic here, but you have to hack through thick jungle vines of frustration and annoyance to find it. It is just about worth the effort though. It could have been a real classic with a bit more work.

BEST BIT: The way you have to use the animals along the way.

WORST BIT: It takes a long time for most of the good stuff to happen.

SECOND OPINION

> The cut-scenes are awesome and the animal-related puzzles are a really neat idea. Other than that, though, it's just your average platformer. ***Mike Jackson***

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"QUIRKY FUN"

74%

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

Sabre Wulf

Conspiracy theory: is Microsoft taking the good bits out of Rare's GBA games now?

Game info

Out Now

Price: **£29.99**
Publisher: **THQ**
Web: **www.rare.co.uk**
Players: **1**

It has become fashionable in Nintendo circles to slag Rare off. To conveniently forget the genre-topping shooters *GoldenEye 007* and *Perfect Dark* and the amazing platformers starring Banjo and Conker. Give Rare its dues: those were amazing games. But this isn't.

Based on a long-forgotten ZX Spectrum game, *Sabre Wulf* is an odd mix of the puzzle classic *Lemmings* and *Donkey Kong Country*. In each stage you have to guide Sabreman to an artefact being guarded by the Wulf. Pull a fat bear out of your inventory to bounce up to a high ledge. Use a hovering dragon as a platform or an exploding one to take out obstacles.

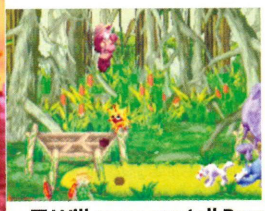
Get to the Wulf and it all changes. Now it's a chase back to the exit with all the obstacles removed. All that stands between glory and you becoming Wulf food is your high-speed platform-leaping skills. It's quite exciting, except for where you can't see far enough ahead to prevent a fall that sees Sabreman stumble and get savaged. Learning the exact layout of the levels? How very 1985.

The biggest problem here is 'who cares?' You won't be bothered if Sabreman lives or dies. There's a village full of soldiers with spears and yet they've decided the best way to stop the Wulf is to let him chase you around. Why not, you know, just KILL IT? Getting to the Wulf is a chore most of the time and your reward is a short serving of real action. As a mix of game styles it just doesn't inspire you.

Speaking of inspiration: floating dragons, Rare? As platforms? You're having a laugh. We remember when they used to have good ideas. Like the turd monster in *Bad Fur Day* and the CamSpy in *Perfect Dark*... ***Dean Scott***

■ **What is THAT supposed to be? No amount of mist can cover up sloppy sprites**

■ **(Left) Eating beetroot and puking on your GBA will achieve similar results to this**



■ **Will someone tell Rare it doesn't have to use so many colours?**

So, should you buy it?

Yes if...

You are regularly chased by wolves and need to practice your escapes.

No if...

You still approach Rare games with N64-era expectation levels.

You'll love it if you like...

The ZX Spectrum original. Although this is a completely different kind of game.

GRAPHICS 5

The *DKC*-style rendered look is rubbish on GBA. For awesomeness, see *Astro Boy*.

SOUND 6

Bouncy, annoying themes and 'comedy' sound effects. That's what Rare do now.

GAMEPLAY 6

The puzzling is all pretty obvious and the platforming is short lived.

LIFE SPAN 7

It lets you resume at the start of a chase if you die. Much appreciated.

VERDICT

> Where's that Rare magic that used to light up our lives? This should've been Gandalf, but it's more like Paul Daniels without his wig on. Our nostalgic minds recall a classic little adventure game that's been wronged.

BEST BIT: The chases in which you can see where you're going.

WORST BIT: The puzzle bits just seem so forced it's a bit embarrassing.

SECOND OPINION

> If dead musicians were treated with as much reverence as old games we'd have seen Elvis' corpse puppeteered on *TOTP* years ago. That'd be cool. Unlike this. ***Kingsley Singleton***

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...

"NO BITE"

67%

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

Sonic Battle

Special attack: curl up into a ball and hope your assailant wanders off.

Game info

Price: **£29.99**
Publisher: **THQ**
Web: **www.sega.com/sonic**
Players: **1-4**

Out Now

Man versus hedgehog is a complete and total mismatch. The small animal rolls up into a ball and you flatten it with a spade. The word 'perfect' flashes up as your time bonus is calculated. But when hedgehogs fight their own kind something strange happens. They put in much more effort, doing flying spin-attacks and booting each other into the air.

Sonic Battle badly wants to be *Super Smash Bros. Melee* in the Green Hill Zone, but doesn't quite manage it. The brawls take place on a cool-looking 3D map, but getting the characters to come together and fight is like tilting a bowl with two marbles inside and trying to get them to bash together. The fighters move like hippos on rollerskates and even when a few millimetres apart still swing at each other and miss.

If you're playing in four-player link-up mode, that's not really a problem. The imprecise chaos of it all makes for some cracking multiplayer gaming, but in single player, it'll do your head in. Especially when you come across characters who fight dirty, with attacks that can't be blocked. Had it been as beautifully balanced as *Melee*, we could have been looking at a decent game here.

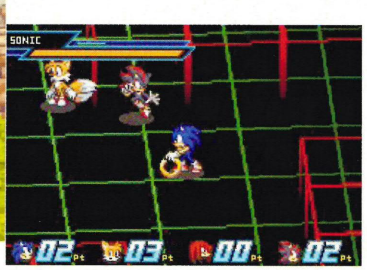
Hardcore *Hedgehog* fans still might get a kick out of teaching the slow robot Emerl to fight, or smacking Rouge the Bat in the chest. Us, we're just itching to get our hands on a proper Sonic game, like *Sonic Advance 3*.

Surely the next logical step is to incorporate these characters into a Sega vs Nintendo fighting game on GameCube? With a few more buttons to play with you could have a broader list of moves for the Hedgehog and also a decent amount of control. We'd pay to see Mario and Sonic fight. We'd pay £39.99, in fact. Anybody listening? ***Dean Scott***

■ Shadow – clearly a radical departure from the Sonic mould

■ Come on, we've all wanted to smash Tails in the mouth at some point, the dirty little mutant freak

■ Look at them go! If you see this in your back garden close all your doors and windows



■ *Tron* with small mammals? No!

So, should you buy it?

Yes if...

You'd have liked *Super Smash Bros. Melee* to play worse and star a blue hedgehog.

No if...

You like fighting games with a decent moves list and some precision involved.

You'll love it if you like...

Sonic, but are so blinkered that you think even his duff games are amazing.

GRAPHICS 8

For once, there's a 3D effect on GBA that actually adds something to the game.

SOUND 7

Typically jolly Sonic music, but a bit light on sound effects.

GAMEPLAY 5

Clumsy movement, poor character balance and limited attacks.

LIFE SPAN 7

The length of the fights makes Story mode a decent-sized quest.

VERDICT

> Sonic's not a fighter. He's a little guy that runs around collecting rings. That's where he really gets your blood pumping, not in patchy fighting games like this. Get back to doing what you're good at, Sonic.

BEST BIT: The multiplayer, no question – fighting and the cool mini-games.

WORST BIT: The inertia on the characters as you move them around. Yuk.

SECOND OPINION

> This is basically animal cruelty. Sonic Team are punishing the poor creature that made them by forcing him into games he's not meant to star in. ***Mike Jackson***

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS...
"WRONG"

68%

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

Mini-reviews: now

Mr Driller 2

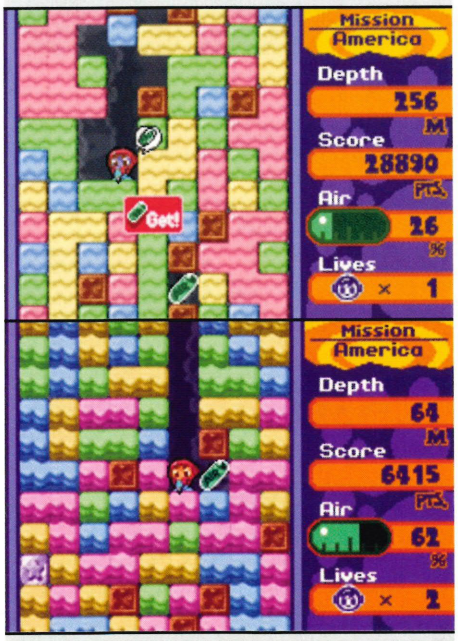
Publisher: **Atari**
Release date: **Out now**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1**
Game Save: **Cart**

Finally, we get to drill. Forever downwards, until the air runs out, the well collapses in on us, or, occasionally, we get to the bottom and feel like a king. We already know drilling is the new block rotating, because we've played *Drill Land* on GameCube to death. You, however, might need some more convincing.

So you're Mr Driller. There's a deep well full of blocks you have drill down through. You tap, tap, tap on the A button, trying to be fast enough to avoid death by landslide or suffocation, but also cautious enough to avoid committing suicide. There are chain reactions as like-coloured blocks collide and vanish, air capsules to grab to keep you alive and an out of control machine that's churning these cake-type blocks out.

The Japanese GC game has stacks of variety, but here it's just your basic drilling. That's still enough for this to be one of the best action/puzzle games ever seen on Game Boy though.

Some people don't 'get' *Mr Driller*. Please don't be one of those people. If you see this knocking around for twenty quid or less, join us in the *Driller* trance. Pop, pop, pop.



Nintendo Official Magazine UK says... "DRILLIANT" **83%**

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

Carmen Sandiego

Publisher: **Acclaim**
Release date: **Out now**
Price: **£19.99**
Players: **1**
Memory Card: **8 blocks**

Who says video games can't be educational? From *GoldenEye 007* we learned that shooting a man in the throat will drop him to his knees gargling blood. A blast in those knees leads to a comedic hobble. All good knowledge for when guns and killing are made legal. *Carmen Sandiego* educates for the here and now though, mixing *Metal Gear*, *Prince of Persia* and modern history.

As an intro to every city you meet, you get told a few interesting facts. The origins of the Statue of Liberty, for example. Then you get into the level and there are robots running around everywhere shooting lasers. It's practically a tourist ad for New York City. You have to sneak up on the robots to kill them, but they'll forget they ever saw you if you run around the corner. It's stealth for kids basically.

The platform traversing puts you in mind of *Prince of Persia*, only with a handy pole you can whip out to vault over large gaps. It doesn't show the same levels of genius as Ubisoft's game, but it's still reasonably good fun for the younger player.

Nintendo Official Magazine UK says... "PERSIA JUNIOR" **68%**

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

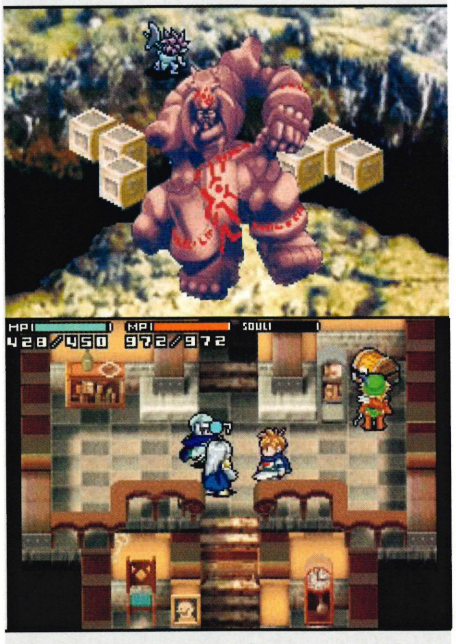
Shining Soul II

Publisher: **THQ/Sega**
Release date: **Out now**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1-4**
Game Save: **Cart**

***Shining Soul II*. Say it to yourself. Doesn't it conjure up images of total RPG tedium? Pages of stat screens, boring turn-based battles, magical rings, imprisoned princesses and spell points. Christ, pass us some sleeping pills – we need perking up.**

But *Shining Soul II* isn't that. Sega should have called it *Super Awesome Quest*, because that's more like it. It has got most of the boring stuff you'd expect, but sneaks into the movie theatre of your affections with its long overcoat of action. It's not a million miles from a *Zelda* game with all the running about and hacking people – and even closer to a class PC action RPG called *Diablo*. Ever heard of that?

There are stat points to spend, but it's well integrated into the action. The story is a bit long winded of course, but it's split into little missions to keep you hooked. The crowning glory is a co-operative multiplayer game that's every bit as thrilling as the GBA's *Four Swords*. It's hardcore, but accessible. Its RPG roots mean it's never quite as exciting as *A Link to the Past*, but action RPG nuts need to investigate this.



Nintendo Official Magazine UK says... "SHINES BRIGHT" **80%**

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

includes good games!

Puyo Pop

Publisher: **THQ/Sega**
Release date: **Out now**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1-2**
Game Save: **Cart**

The world is a crazy place. Last month, we hammered GameCube's *Puyo Pop Fever* to within an inch of its stupid life. Yet here, on GBA, we're saying it's a game well worth considering. It's as though with the GC version, they gave us a poo-covered spade to eat a little gourmet treat. Now we have the right utensils, it all makes sense.

As a GBA game, we see the point. Little blobs, chain reactions, all that. It helps enormously, of course, that this mini-version is slicker to play, has a better theme tune to urge you along and even looks better. No polygons plus better art direction equals cooler. And anyway, Jesus intended action puzzle games to be played on a handheld. If you tell us you enjoyed *Tetris* even half as much on a TV as you have on the tiny, monochrome Game Boy screen you're either a liar or a fool.

So, where does this rank in the GBA pantheon? Well, we'd still rather link gems in *Puzzle Fighter* than link blobs here and the mental gymnastics required to be good at this will deter the casual *Tetris* player. But still, it's enjoyable stuff.

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS... **"MORE POPULAR"** **78%**

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

Powerpuff Girls: Relish Rampage

Publisher: **Acclaim**
Release date: **Out now**
Price: **£19.99**
Players: **1**
Game Save: **2 blocks**

The television programme is very funny. It looks like it must be for little girls, but it'll crack you up like *Johnny Bravo*. So we thought we'd get a grin from this, but no. We're convinced the people that write the TV series didn't write this, instead handing it over to someone chronically unfunny. Like Neil Morrissey.

It's not awful. You point the stick and the girls fly. It works, but it's quite tedious. Basically a big floaty arrow guides you to a target *Crazy Taxi*-style, where you make a delivery, pick something up, or mash someone's face in. Lock-on, strafe around, you know the drill by now. The digital Townsville is pleasant enough, but the lack of variety in the tasks ensures that dullness will prevail.

There's almost no difficulty either. Unless there's a timer on your mission, you'll find it easier to turn wine into water than to actually fail.

Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS... **"BORED"** **48%**

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

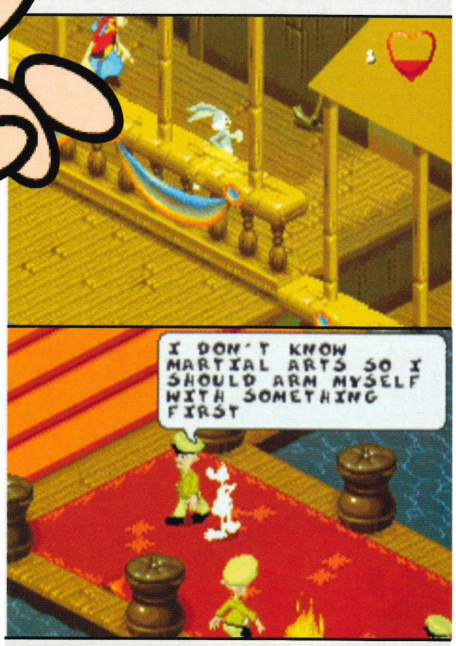
Looney Tunes: Back in Action

Publisher: **Electronic Arts**
Release date: **Out now**
Price: **£29.99**
Players: **1**
Game Save: **Cart**

***Back in Action* is as predictable as the sun coming up: it's a movie tie-in; it's a platformer; it fails to live up to the (not particularly dazzling) heights of its base material. It's almost like they didn't WANT to make a good game.**

You control either Bugs or Daffy in the search for a big, magical diamond before the sinister Acme Corporation can get its dirty hands on it. The two characters are interchangeable at any time and each has their own abilities, needed in order to progress. The action is seen from an isometric viewpoint and the graphics, especially the rendered sprites, aren't bad. The music is, as you'd expect, simple little plinkety-plink ditties.

Looney Tunes' main problem lies within the mechanics of its gameplay: it's just so repetitive. Most of the time you collect money while avoiding pattern-walking guards in a desperate attempt to finish the level, as that's the only point at which you can save. The dated controls make even this frustrating, so it's not one that we'd recommend.



Nintendo OFFICIAL MAGAZINE UK SAYS... **"STILL BORED"** **51%**

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"No! Like this!"

You've bought them, now tell us how you'd change 'em.

HOW TO ENTER

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- *Email!* Write no more than 40 words, to tim.street@emap.com, adding your name and town.
- *Web!* Check out the nintendomagazine.co.uk forums and tell us your thoughts.

Mario Kart: Double Dash

You lot just won't shut up about this one!

■ We think *Mario Kart* games are great, but here are three things that should be added. First you should be able to change costumes, secondly there should be a Boo House track and there should be a special weapon for Mario, like his red cap or something.
Richard Santhouse and Arron Locke, via email

■ I think single-player mode really lets this game down. The only way to race against computer opponents is to go into Grand Prix mode; why isn't there a single race option? The game is way too easy. I had everything unlocked in five days! If it wasn't for multiplayer mode (which rules) I wouldn't have enjoyed it at all! More lastability next time please.
Thomas Bent, Richmond, Co. Tipperary

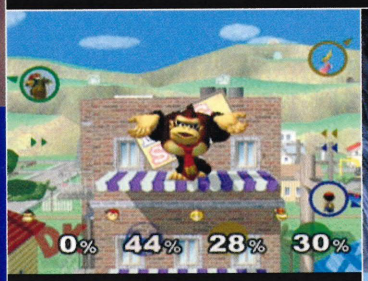
■ It took time getting to GC and when it did I wasn't all that impressed. Seeing as it's becoming a bit of a fashion at Nintendo to do remakes of old games I reckon that they should do the same as they did with the *Zelda Collector's Edition* disc and bring back the Super NES and N64 versions.
James Moss, via email

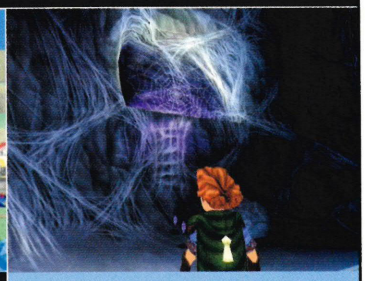
F-Zero GX

■ I think that *F-Zero GX* was a big letdown, especially if you are comparing it to the last one. The biggest problem was that the controls were just too sensitive. I reckon it was no better than *WipEout* on the PlayStation and that's ancient.
Declan Gillespie, London

"*WWE XIX* is nearly perfect except for the lack of wrestlers to unlock! Even, *X8* has more than this!"

Sam Wheel, Gowerton





Super Smash Bros. Melee

■ Luigi should have his vacuum and Goldeen shouldn't be the flapping-about-useless-fish-Pokémon – it should be Magikarp, of course! And there should be a *Luigi's Mansion* stage!
Pooka, via email

Star Wars: Rebel Strike

■ I started single player on *Rebel Strike* and my view is that the third-person levels are crap, with the exception of one or two levels (Hoth kicks ass). Do it right or don't do it at all.
Alex Marshall, via email

■ There weren't enough levels and I think that the next *Rogue Squadron* game needs to be based after *Return of the Jedi*. There must be more flying stages and why don't they introduce the V-Wing?
Tom Yarnold, via email

The Hobbit

■ I recognised some of the scenes from the book, but the thing is it's rock hard at times. At one place you're up against 12 undead spirit knight whatchamacallits, and oh, what's this? A goblin archer firing at you at the same time. It's so annoying!
Nicholas Baldie, via email

True Crime: Streets of LA

■ This just doesn't have enough decent missions. It needs more shooting/beat-'em-up missions not just driving ones. They should add more cars and guns, too.
Dave Stanley, Lincoln

■ I was so disappointed with *True Crime* – it was supposed to be better than *GTA*. I thought your review must have been a mistake, but that's a valuable lesson: always trust in *NOM UK*.
Gareth Wright, via email

"Superstar Saga: I've said this once and I'll say it again, get rid of the Mario Bros. multiplayer mode! It's rubbish! Give us some cool mini-games instead."
Tom Campbell, via email

Dragonball Z: The Legacy of Goku II

■ It's much better than the first with a good choice of characters, but it could use some battle scenes.
Matt Dingsdale, via email

■ The music's awesome, but the fighting's too basic. They should make it like *Golden Sun* so you have to think. The puzzles are far too easy.
Scott Nicks, Corby

Mario & Luigi Superstar Saga

■ I loved this game, there are so many bits of Nintendo history thrown in to make it loads of fun for Nintendo fans. If Nintendo decides to make a sequel it should make it much less linear. There are too many maps to look at and signposts to tell you where to go – I finished it in a weekend!
Harry Collins, *via email*

■ I'd vote this the best game of last year, but how about having more playable characters in a sequel? *Super Mario RPG* had loads, including Geno, Mallow, Bowser and Mario. What about having them again? That would be awesome, especially as the Super NES game never came to the UK.
Jake Gardens, *via email*

Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire

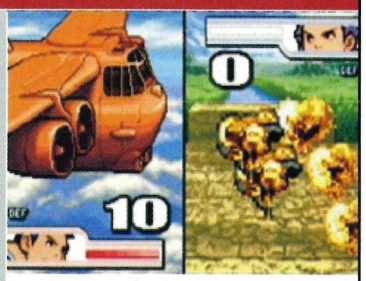
■ I've been playing *Pokémon Ruby* and *Sapphire* with my brother a lot, but the thing that I miss from the previous games is the day and night effects. They made *Gold* and *Silver* much more adventurous.
Anon, *NOM UK* forums

■ *Pokémon Ruby* seems to have taken one step forward and two steps back. I'm getting tired of eight gyms, a Pokémon-stealing gang, a rival and an Elite Four. I think it's time for a new story line. The battles are as cool as ever, but I don't know why they took out the night time mode, the pre-battle animations (like in *Crystal*) and the clock adjust. Bring them back please!
Alun Haines, *NOM UK* forums

■ The quest to become a Pokémon Master is still going strong, but not strong enough. Sure, the graphics and sound have been improved, but there's less *Pokémon* magic. *Gold* and *Silver* introduced time, so why set the clock if day and night don't change?

For the next game, the story line must be a lot longer. What's more, eight gyms is not enough and the Trainers need to be much stronger than the Elite Four if it's gonna last.
Chris Harriott, *NOM UK* forums

"I'd really love to see a Pokémon game that has multiplayer link-up features. When you do the Colosseum or trading, you could see your buddy on your screen. That would be too cool!"
'Mr Spack', via email



Advance Wars 2

■ This has got to go down as one of Nintendo's most absorbing and entertaining achievements. The only thing I would add is the ability to customise your team's colour, name, badge and machinery. That would add a whole new element of depth. Apart from that, it's a blinder!
Adam Moss, *NOM UK* forums

FIFA Football '04

■ I think that the A.I. on the game should be turned up a notch. Even on World Class, I'm able to beat Madrid a comfy 7-0. I think going back to the isometric view like in the old Mega Drive games would help the gameplay a lot and may even get some older gamers to play for a bit of nostalgia.
Chris Wright, *NOM UK* forums

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We want to know your views on any or all of the following games...

1•• *James Bond 007: Everything or Nothing*
2•• *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time*
3•• *Sonic Heroes*
4•• *Yu-Gi-Oh! The Sacred Cards*
5•• *Sphinx and The Cursed Mummy*
6•• *Harvest Moon*

REMEMBER, YOU CAN WRITE, TEXT OR EMAIL US USING THE DETAILS ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE.

Masterclass

Busting the hardest parts

How to...

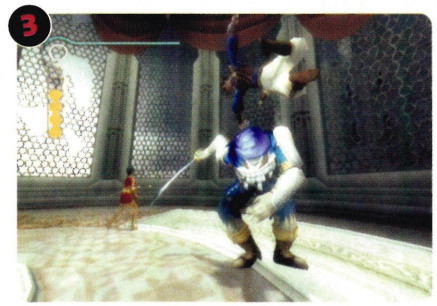
Outwit bosses and conquer obstacles like an Arabian ninja

Cruise through the toughest sections and solve the brain-busting puzzles in *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time*.

1 The Sand King

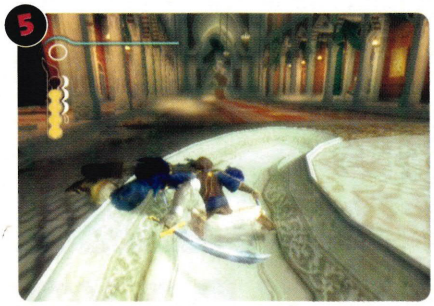
Before trying to kill the Sand King make sure you clear the hall of demons. Vault attack the reds first and wall-jump the blue ones.

The Sand King will block nearly all normal attacks. As soon as he moves to attack, lunge with your sword to get a quick strike.



He'll usually block vault and wall attacks, but his defence isn't perfect. In-between blocking try vaulting over his head.

If you get in one vault attack you can keep repeating it. His health takes a long time to fall, so don't worry if this fight takes time.

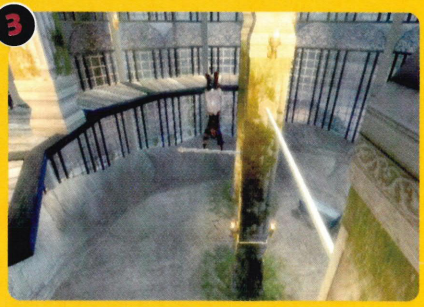


Eventually you'll knock him down. Quickly stab him with the Dagger of Time to finish the contest.

2 The Sultan's Zoo

Use the tree to get to the top and a branch to swing onto the wall. Drop down the other side.

Stand on the pad and move the crate in the small room. The Princess will open a door.



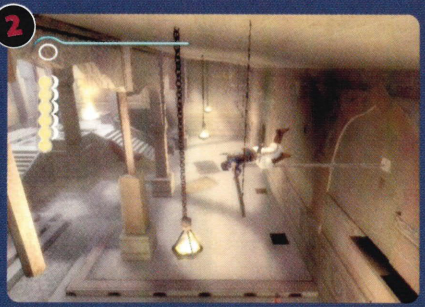
Swing around the pole and jump off the wall to the one above. Swing across and climb up.

Run along the walls, grab a pole and use it to get to the next platform. Jump to the ledge outside, bounce off the wall and grab the branch.

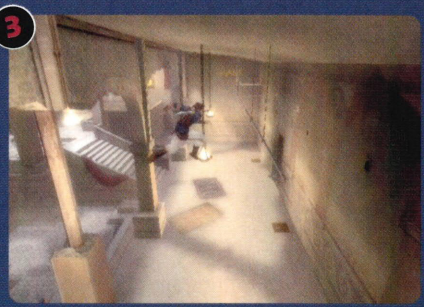
Swing onto the roof and pull the lever. Jump to the Save Point, drop off the side and swing to the switch. Pull it, allowing the Princess to climb.

3 "There's something glowing up there"

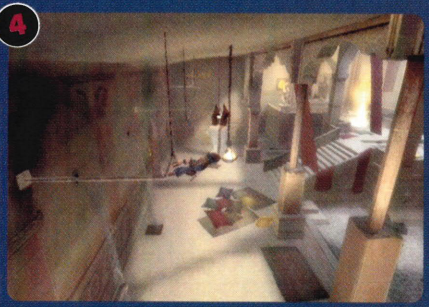
Push statue into switch. Climb for next switch. Have Farrah stand on the switch in the water.



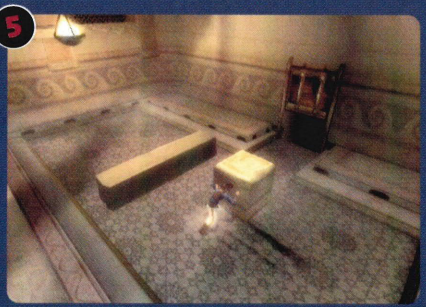
Run left under the gate. Push the lever. Exit and run up the far wall to the ledge.



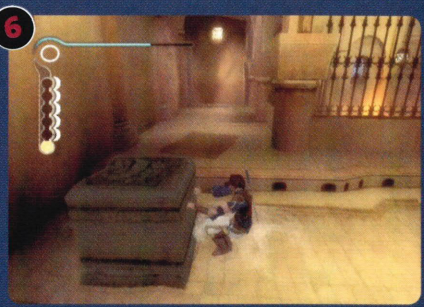
Jump off ledge. Grab pole. Swing onto pillar. Leap to next. Swing over and pull ceiling lever.



This half opens a gate. Cross to the other side of the room and swing across the poles and pillars. Pull the second lever to open the gate.



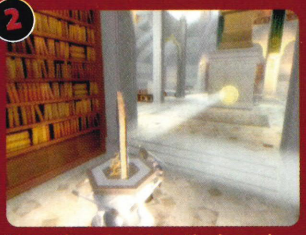
Push the white block through. Make your way back to the previous room. Push the block into the water then up against the wall.



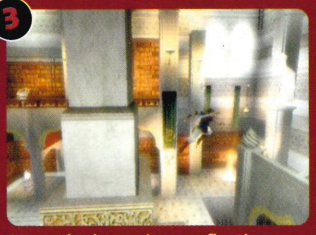
Use the block to reach the ladder. Follow the path to the sword upgrade, allowing you to smash through some doors and cracked walls.

4 Hall of Mirrors

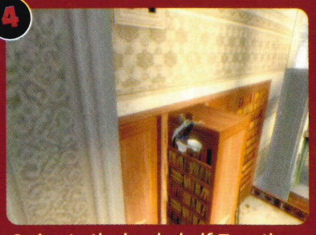
Turn the starting mirror 180°. Smash the wall to the left to make a hole. Follow the light beam and move the mirror to intersect it.



Move the mirror into the beam's path then go back to the start and angle the next mirror, shining light through the hole in the wall.



Move the last mirror, reflecting light onto the symbol. Climb the column and leap to the broken arch. From here, jump to the wall.



Swing to the book shelf. Turn the mirror so it faces the room. Use the switch then climb the book shelf and go to the corner.

Go to the platform in the centre and shine light to the far side. Use joists to access the far side.

Reflect it back across the room at the light pole and through the floor, hitting the wall symbol.

Run across the wall to the side and go back across once more. Use the platforms protruding into the room to grab a swinging chain. Swing across and grab the ledges.

Jump onto the ladder. At the top, smash through the walls. There's a red mirror inside. Move it out to the ledge in line with the two mirrors from earlier.

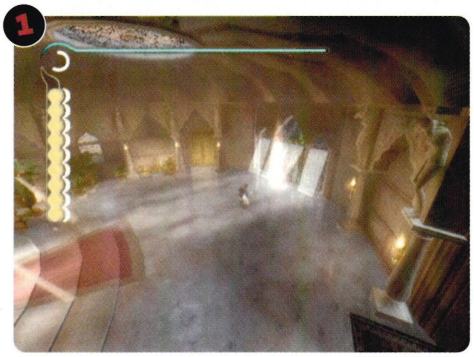
Intersect the light beam from the middle and send it back towards the new mirror.

With the new mirror, angle the light through the broken walls. This unlocks the door below.

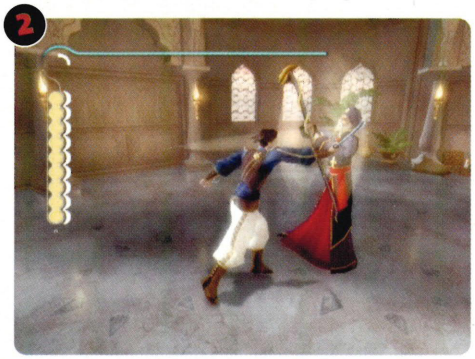
5 Sanctuary

You must enter the correct door, they're all identical. The trick? Stand near one and if you can hear dripping water, go in there.

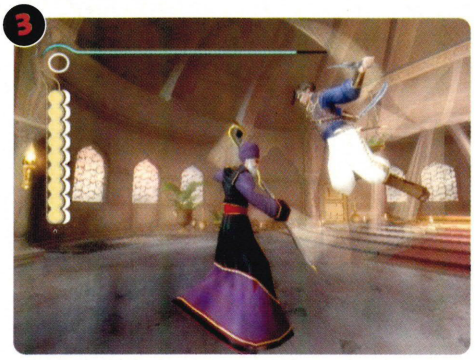
7 Whack Jaffar



The final boss will summon a doppelgänger to fight for him. The best way to hurt the body double is to use the standard leaping attack.



At the start it blocks everything. Wait for it to strike then attack. Ten strikes should down a double. The boss will summon another clone.

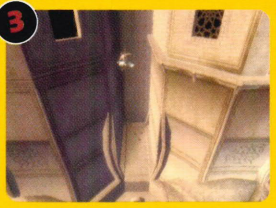


Dispatch it in the same way. When it's dead, wait for the third and repeat the process. As soon as it's dead attack the real boss to finish the game.

6 Climbing the Tower of Dawn

Wall jump to the pole. Swing off and bounce off the wall to the one above. Go up again and leap to the thin beam on the other side.

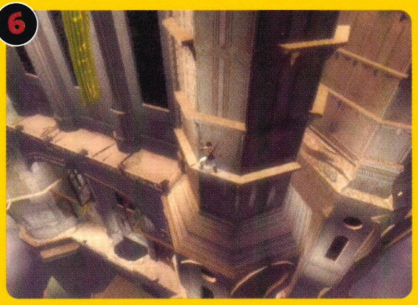
Hug wall and jump back. Grab a pillar and jump to the next one. Turn and leap off. Hit A a split-second after touching the wall to climb.



Go around the ledge. Wall-jump up the gap. Head around at the top, then use beams to get to the far side. You'll need to swing and wall-jump to go up.

Move around the ledge and cross the beams to another wall-jump section. If you fall here you'll need to start again right from the beginning, so timing is critical.

When you make the leap you should press A a fraction of a second later then your instinct tells you. Grab the ledge at the top and move right.



Pull yourself up the ledges, jump back over and make your way to the other side. After crossing four poles you'll reach a ruined tower.

Make your way around to the far side. If you fall you'll need to restart. Wall jump down the large gap between the buildings.

You need to time your button presses perfectly to avoid death. Press it a fraction of a second after you hit the wall and repeat to the bottom. That's the hardest part of the game.

Bean me up!

Check out our bird's-eye view of *Superstar Saga*'s Beanbean Castle Town and find all the secrets. Sweet.

HOW TO...

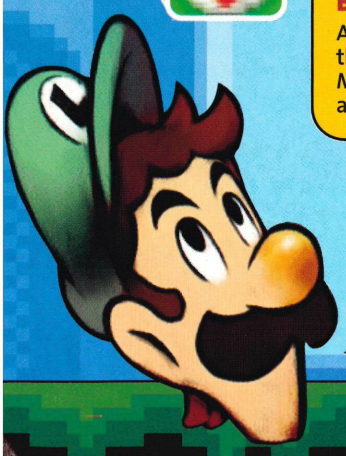
Get cool stuff in Beanbean Castle Town

1 Dig the Beanstones

Tracking down the Beanstones is time-consuming, but with this map you won't have any trouble – just whack Mario on the bonce and the miniaturised plumb-king will react with a large '!' sign whenever he walks over the buried treasure. Next, bash Luigi into the ground in the same spot and jump out with the Beanstone, just like you would with a Bean. Head back and receive the Bros. Rock Badge for your troubles (+20 BP, +20 POW – very handy early in the game).

2 Grab the Beanlets

Getting the Beanlets mainly uses the brothers' famous jumping skills, but some of them are sneakily hidden. Could they fool *NOM UK*, though? No chance. Look, you can find all five of them on the map below, so stop going on about it! Get all five and head back to the bean dude who sent you. He'll give you a Golden Mushroom for your troubles – providing Mario or Luigi with maximum Hit Points and Bros. Points just when they need it most.



BE STRONGER LONGER

A Red Pepper will increase your POW and weight for a few turns. During the effect, let the brother who ate the Pepper get KO'd. Now use a 1-UP Mushroom to revive him. The effect will continue for the whole battle and not wear off – especially useful against tough bosses.

MONEY FROM NOTHING

Make Mario small, then jump using Luigi's High Jump and, when he's in the air, jump with Mario. Jump over and over again, keeping Luigi in the air. Every time Luigi is hit you'll get a Coin. Luigi will lose one Hit Point every time, but his health can't go below one anyway.

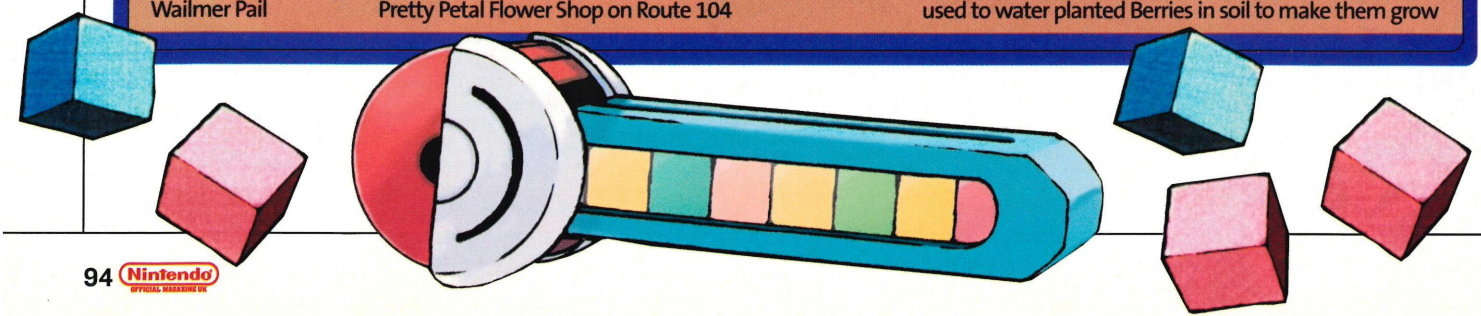
HOW TO...

Get fully equipped in Hoenn

Gotta grab it all

Where's the Mystery Egg? Where are the Go-Goggles? Where's the S.S Tick... SILENCE! Here's everything you need for *Ruby* and *Sapphire*...

KEY ITEM	HOW/WHERE	USE
Acro Bike	Rydel's Cycles in Mauville City	for travelling around and performing snazzy tricks
Basement Key	Mauville City	unlocks the door to New Mauville, the Electrical Plant
Blue Orb	Mt. Pyre	used to awaken Kyogre in *Pokémon Sapphire* only
Claw Fossil	Desert on Route 111	fossil of an ancient Pokémon – can be transformed into Anorith
Coin Case	trade Harbour Mail with a lady in Mauville City	allows you to carry up to 9,999 Coins
Contest Pass	Contest Hall in Verdanturf Town	allows you to enter your Pokémon into the many contests
Devon Goods	from Team Magma or Aqua Grunt in Rusturf Tunnel	a parcel that must be delivered to Capt. Stern in Slateport City
Devon Scope	from Steven on Route 120	will enable you to encounter invisible Pokémon
Go-Goggles	from Brendan or May in Lavaridge Town	they allow you to see in – and pass through – sand storms
Good Rod	Route 118	capable of catching higher level Pokémon than the Old Rod
Itemfinder	from Brendan or May on Route 110	makes an alarm sound to alert you to secret items nearby
Letter	Devon Corporation in Rustboro City	written by the president of the Devon Corporation for Steven
Mach Bike	Rydel's Cycles in Mauville City	this bike is faster than the Acro Bike, but cannot perform tricks
Meteorite	Meteor Falls	exchange it with Professor Cosmos for TM 27 Return
Mystery Egg	Lavaridge Town	hatch it to get a Wynaut, which is a baby Wobbuffet
Old Rod	Dewford Town	the standard rod for catching Pokémon from water
Pokéblock Case	Contest Hall in Slateport City	used to carry Pokéblocks (obviously)
Pokédex	Prof. Birch in Oldale Town	will record statistics on every Pokémon you encounter
Pokénav	Devon Corporation in Rustboro City	records Trainers fought, reports Conditions and it's a map of Hoenn
Red Orb	Mt. Pyre	used to awaken Groudon in *Pokémon Ruby* only
Rm. 1 Key	Abandoned Ship	unlocks a door on the Abandoned Ship
Rm. 2 Key	Abandoned Ship	unlocks a door on the Abandoned Ship
Rm. 4 Key	Abandoned Ship	unlocks a door on the Abandoned Ship
Rm. 6 Key	Abandoned Ship	unlocks a door on the Abandoned Ship
Root Fossil	Desert on Route 111	fossil of an ancient Pokémon – can be transformed into Lileep
Running Shoes	from Mum in Oldale Town	makes you run faster than normal when holding B
S.S. Ticket	from Dad in Oldale Town	your ticket to board the S.S. Tidal for a ride to the Battle Tower
Scanner	Abandoned Ship	this belongs to Capt. Stern – you just have to rescue it
Soot Sack	Glass Workshop on Route 113	holds the ash in Route 113 that can be processed at the Glass Workshop
Storage Key	Abandoned Ship	unlocks the door to the storage room on the Abandoned Ship
Super Rod	Mossdeep City	capable of catching higher level Pokémon than the Good Rod
Wailmer Pail	Pretty Petal Flower Shop on Route 104	used to water planted Berries in soil to make them grow



Straight sliding

HOW TO...
Gain ultimate turbo skills

In *MK:DD* every second counts. Master Mini-Turbos on straights and you'll rule.

1

You should know the score with Mini-Turbos – counter-steer twice during a power slide and Bob's your uncle. The trick is, if you're quick enough you can do them on straights, too. We'll use Baby Park as an example.

2

Slide right around the bend, getting your blue flame to boost into the straight. As soon as you release R, hit it again, sliding to the left and instantly counter-steer to the right.

3

Counter-steering will keep you on the straight. Steer left twice to get a blue flame, release R for the boost, then instantly start your slide.

4

On longer courses, perform multiple turbos on one long straight. Be quick with the steering, sliding left and right rapidly. You'll be king.

The best Party trick

Let the 'Cube work for you.

HOW TO...
Get mini-games by not playing

Instead of unlocking *Mario Party 5*'s mini-games the hard way, start up the Party mode and switch all players to CPU control. The 'Cube will play itself and every game it plays will unlock.

Dodge shots like Neo

No longer will you fear homing Shells.

HOW TO...
Nip away from Red and Blue Shells

Using a Mushroom and some ninja timing, boost just as the Shell is about to hit. With a little luck it'll miss. This is tough, especially with Blue Shells, but can be done easier if you boost on a bend.

If you have a masterful tip, trick or tactic, why not e-mail it to michael.jackson@emap.com or send it by post to Readers' Tips at the usual address. If we get an exceptionally awesome tip, we'll print it and even give the sender a free game.

Nintendo® Official Cheats

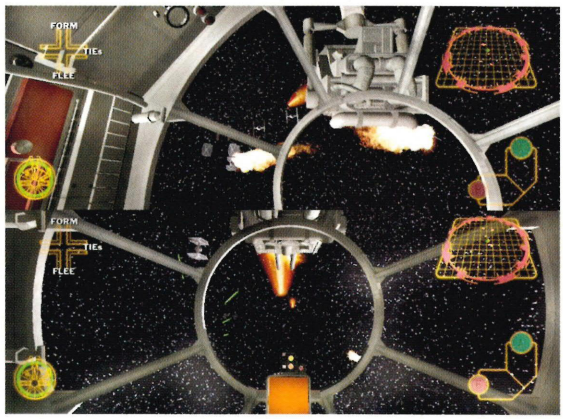
More cheats. More unlockables. More games ripped wide open, courtesy of *NOM UK*. Enjoy.

STAR WARS ROGUE SQUADRON III: REBEL STRIKE

Use the Force, or just cheat...

To get these beautiful babies working their magic, enter them on the Passcodes screen. All manner of goodness awaits you, from unlocking every regular mission to flying the Millennium Falcon. You can even play in black and white, if you're mad.

Unlock...	Passcode(s)...
All single-player regular missions	HYWSC!WS then NONGAMER
Asteroid Field mission	RWALPIGC then NOWAYOUT
Co-op mode Endurance mission	WPX?FGC! then EXCERSIZ
Infinite lives	IIOUAOYE then WIMPIAM!
TIE Advance ship	VDX?WK!H then ANOKSHIP
End Credits	LOOKMOM!
Documentary	THEDUDES
Ace mode	YNMSFY?P then YOUDAMAN
All regular missions in Co-op mode	SWGRCQPL then UCHEATED
Beggar's Canyon Race	FRLL!CSF then FARMBOY?
Black and White mode	NOCOLOR?
Death Star Escape in Co-op mode	YFCEDFRH then DSAGAIN?
The Empire Strikes Back arcade game	!H!F?HXS then KOOLSTUF
Star Wars arcade game	RTJPFC!G then TIMEWARP
Art Gallery	!KOOLART
Millennium Falcon ship	QZCRPTG! then HANSRIDE
Music Hall	HARKHARK
TIE fighter in Co-op mode	MCKEMAKD then ONESHOT!
Tie bomber	JASDJWFA then !DABOMB!



THE SIMPSONS: HIT & RUN

Every cheat there is

We've printed a few *Hit & Run* cheats before and now here's a load more. Hold L and R on the Options menu and tap in these button-codes.

Cheat activated...	Hold L and R and press...
Alternate credits music	A, X, X, Y
More secret cars	B, B, Y, X
Blow up vehicles instantly	Y, Y, X, X
Faster cars	X, X, X, X
Fastest cars	Y, Y, Y, Y
Grid mode	B, A, B, Y
Invincible car	Y, A, Y, A
More camera angles	B, B, B, A
Press horn to jump	X, X, X, Y
Psychedelic view	Y, B, Y, B
Show speedometer	Y, Y, B, X
All cars	A, B, A, B

FINDING NEMO

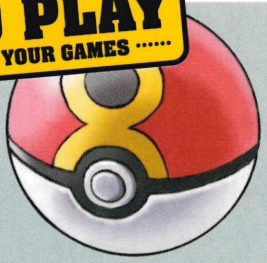
Fishy passwords

This GBA game has been selling by the boat load, so here's a net full of level-unlocking passwords for you to try if you can't be bothered to reach them the conventional way. Don't ask us why it's selling so well – we gave it 46%...

Level...	Password...
Two	HZ5I
Three	ZZ5I
Four	806I
Five	7KPI
Six	8JPI
Seven	3N6J
Eight	MP3K
Nine	L67K
Ten	45ZK
Eleven	3NGH
Twelve	4PHC

NEW WAYS TO PLAY

..... HOW TO GET THE MOST FUN OUT OF YOUR GAMES .....



THE SCENARIO: POKÉ BALL MELEE, *SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE*

By Jonathan Hill, Hertfordshire

Melee action with a twist. You and mate go up against each other as normal, only in this battle you're only allowed to attack with the Poké Ball item. So, it's a mad scramble for the Balls and carnage once their powers are unleashed. NO OTHER ATTACKS ARE ALLOWED. Punch, kick or shoot and you're disqualified.

THE SETTINGS

Melee Vs Mode: Customise the rules to turn off all items except the Poké Ball and set every player's Stock to 20. The match will last longer that way.

Two or more players: The more the better. Simply trying to grab a Poké Ball with four players in the arena is a challenge.

Hyrule Temple stage: It's one of my favourite levels, plus it has lots of space where tons of Poké Balls can scatter around.

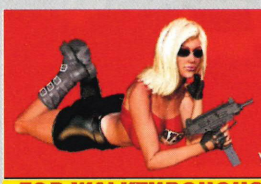
LAST TIME WE PLAYED

Who played: Mike, Tim, Dean and Dan at *NOM UK*

What happened: Jonathan Hill wrote in, so we had a go at *NOM UK*. Mike grabbed the first Ball. LAUNCH! Tim was caught in the flames. Mike shouldn't have done that – Tim's the boss. Dean hits him almost straight after. Dan laughs ecstatically, pointing at Tim. Timmy sees red and busts out dirty punches of fury. CHEAT! YOU'RE OUT, TIM! The boss switches off the GameCube and tells everyone to get back to work. Damn.

GET INVOLVED

What happened: Do you have any wacky ways of getting more out of your games? Let us know. Tell us your idea in the same way as above and send it to New Ways to Play at the usual address, or e-mail michael.jackson@emap.com, with your mug shot attached. Get your thinking caps on, Nintendoids.



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Beyblade
Billy Hatcher and Giant Egg
Blood Omen 2
BloodRayne
BMX XXX
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Burnout
Dark Alliance, Baldur's Gate
Defender
Die Hard: Vendetta
Disney Sports Football
Driver 3*
Eternal Darkness
FIFA 2004
Finding Nemo
Fire Blade
Freekstyle
F-Zero GX
Ghost Recon
Gotcha Force*
Harry Potter & Ch.of Secrets
Hit & Run, The Simpsons
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hulk
Italian Job: L.A. Heist
James Bond 007: Nightfire
James Bond: Agent Under F.
Jedi Knight 2: Jedi Outcast
Leg. of Zelda: Master Quest
Leg. of Zelda: Wind Waker
Legends of Wrestling 2
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers
Luigi's Mansion
Mario Kart: Double Dash
Mario Sunshine
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Metroid Prime
Minority Report
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
Need for Speed Undergr'nd
Ocarina of Time: Zelda
Pikmin 2*
Rayman 3
Rebel Strike, R. Squadron 3
Reign Of Fire
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X*
Resident Evil
Resident Evil Zero
Rocky
Rogue Leader
Rogue Ops
Scooby Doo: Night of 100 F.
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Simpsons: Road Rage
Sims: Bustin' Out
Skies of Arcadia Legends
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Sonic Adventure DX
Sonic Heroes
Sonic Mega Collection
Soul Calibur 2
Sphinx & Cursed Mummy*
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Splinter Cell
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
Star Wars: Rebel Strike
Star Wars: Rogue Leader
Starfox Adventures
Super Mario Sunshine
Super Smash Bros Melee
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The L. of Zelda: WindWaker
The Scorpion King
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The Sims: Bustin Out
Tiger Woods '03
Tiger Woods '04
Time Splitters 2
Tony Hawk's 3
Tony Hawk's Undergr'nd
Top Gun: Cpmb. Zones
True Crime: Str. of LA
Turok, Evolution
Viewtiful Joe
Wind Waker
Wolverine's Rev.
WWE Wr'mania X8
WWE Wr'mania XIX
XIII (Thirteen)
X-Men 2: Wolverine's R.
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Nintendo

MONTHS UNTIL THE END OF THE LEAGUE

03

HALL OF FAME

ALL TIME GREATS

input your initials _ _ _

Player	Credit(s)
1. John Zeepvat	34
2. Daniel Lamb	22
3. Adam Moss	12
4. Dave Every	10
5. David Jones	06

Player	Credit(s)
=. Ryan O'Conner	06
7. Catherine Goode	03
8. Ben La Brooy	03
9. Dustin Bothwell	03
10. Mike Jackson	03

ISSUE 138 ♥♥♥ SCORE RANKINGS

LEVEL	NO	NAME	SCORE
MARIO KART PEACH BEACH	1st.	John Zeepvat	1:41:026
	2nd.	Ryan O'Conner	1:41:688
.....	3rd.	Dave Every	1:43:748
	=	Ben La Brooy	1:43:748
POKéMON PINBALL SAPPHIRE TABLE	1st.	Daniel Lamb	1,378,880,580
	2nd.	David Jones	1,378,596,937
.....	3rd.	Catherine Goode	977,414,229
1080 AVALANCHE SKI SCHOOL	1st.	Daniel Lamb	0'48''64
	2nd.	John Zeepvat	0'48''83
.....	3rd.	Dustin Bothwell	0'49''14
F-ZERO GX: RUBY CUP, SAND OCEAN, SURFACE SLIDE	1st.	John Zeepvat	01'44''564
	2nd.	Dave Every	02'01''056
	3rd.	Mike Jackson	02'02''177
DONKEY KONG 64 RAMBI'S ARENA	1st.	Adam Moss	200
	2nd.	John Zeepvat	196
.....	3rd.	Tim Street	194

NEW CHALLENGES

NO 1.
MARIO KART:DOUBLE DASH
Fastest time on Mushroom Bridge course.
Qualifying time: 1:47:000.

NO 2.
TIMESPLITTERS 2
Fastest time in Adios Amigos Deathmatch.
Qualifying score: 1:20:00.

NO 3.
F-ZERO GX
Fastest time on Ruby Cup, Vegas Palace, Split Oval.
Qualifying time: 1:25:000.

NO 4.
SUPER MONKEY BALL
Get the top score on Advanced level.
Qualifying score: 500,000.

★ RETRO CHALLENGE
GOLDENEYE 007
Cradle level. Most kills in 20 minutes.
Qualifying score: 250.

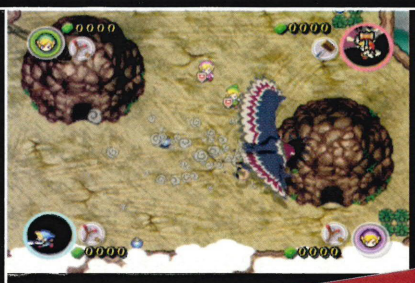
INSERT COIN(s)

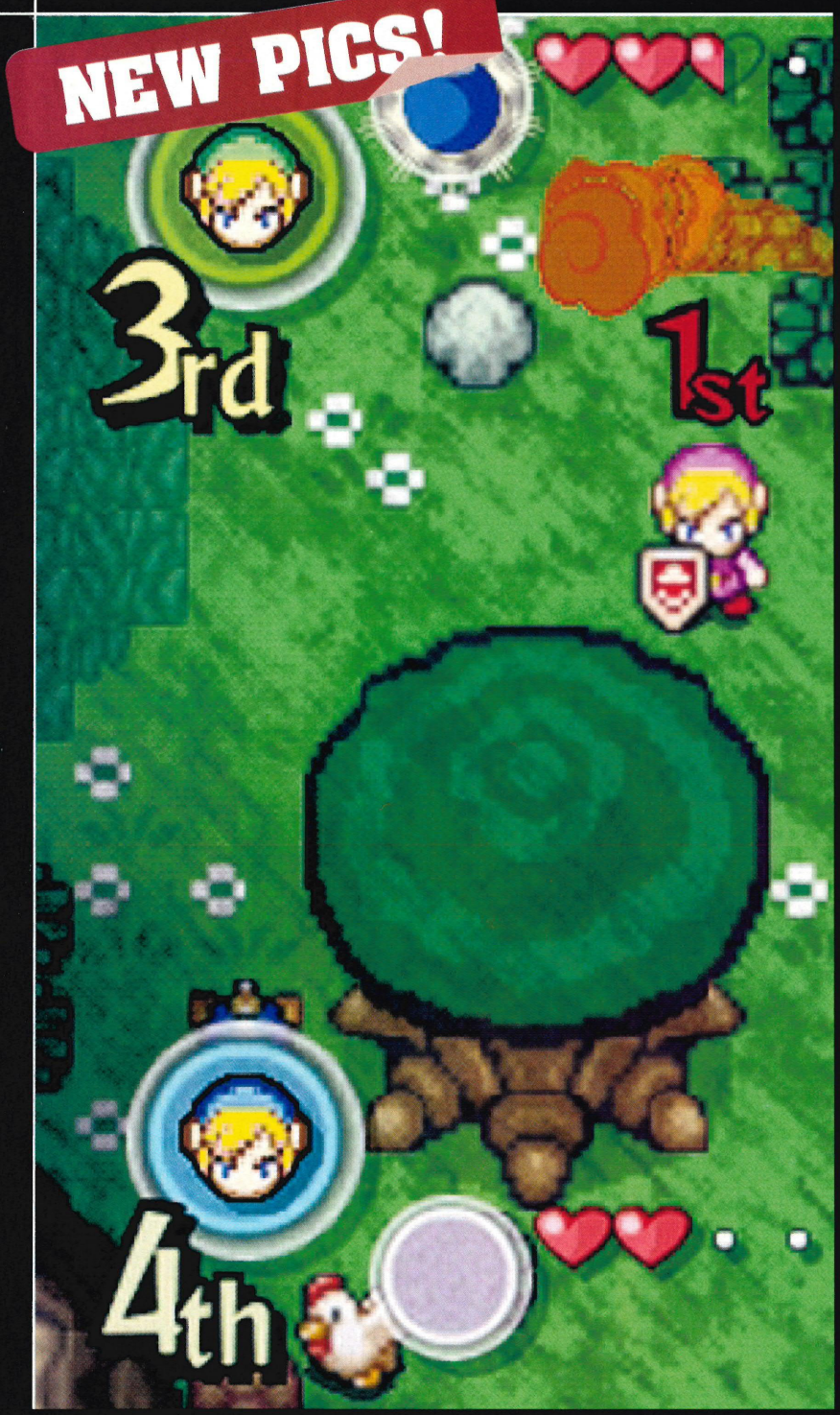
Every four months, NOM UK will crown the top player and award them a mystery prize. Players finishing the league in second and third place will also get a prize. You won't win anything for winning a monthly competition, but your Credits will count towards your grand total.

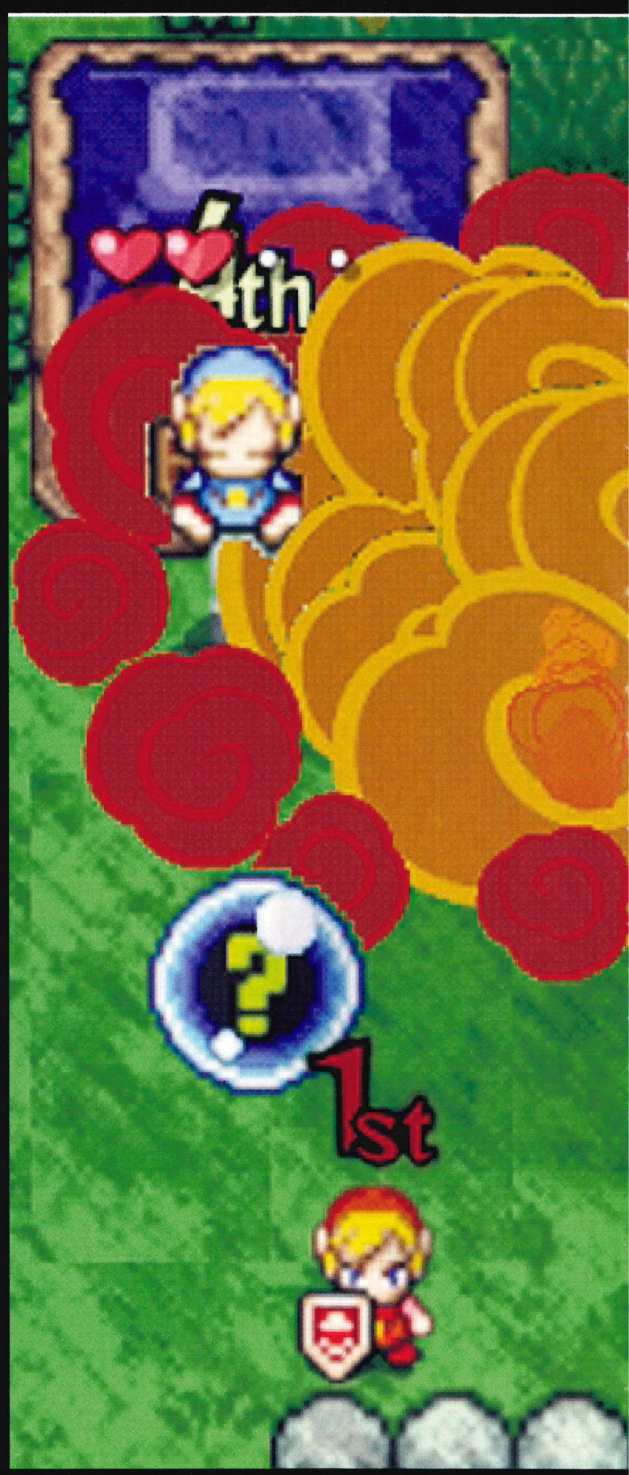
How Credits are scored...
First Place 10
Second Place 5
Third Place 2
Qualify 1

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 March 25th! Send your entries to Nintendo Official Magazine UK, Emap Active, Bushfield House, Orton Centre, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 5UW. Alternatively you can send them to kingsley.singleton@emap.com. Make sure you include a picture or you won't get you mug in the mag.

We Can't Wait

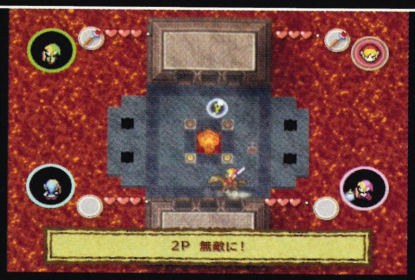






For These...

MORE NEXT MONTH!



The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords

Look! There are the Lost Woods, the chickens, the Battleships dude from *Wind Waker*, even Link riding a Super NES-era Epona! It's Hyrule brought to life with tons of faces and creatures you love and we're gearing up for what could be the surprise 'Cube package of 2004.
As mentioned last issue, the surprise in *Four Swords* is a *Bomberman*-style multiplayer – a battle to the death with other Links as you chuck bombs, fire arrows and put your opponents to the sword. If you don't like the sound of that then there's something wrong with you. Throw in Hyrule Adventure (a new version of the GBA's *Four Swords*) complete with classic *Zelda* locations and Navi's Trackers (a giant Hyrule treasure hunt) and you've got a winner.

Sonic Advance 3 (GBA)

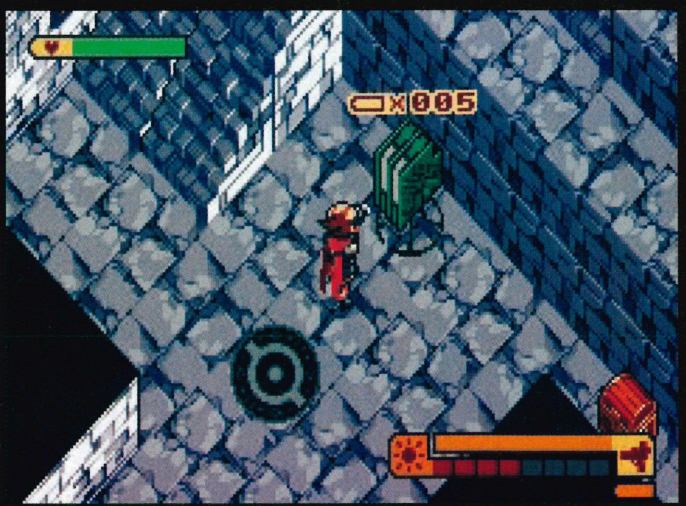
Will Dr Eggman ever give up? Surely after two attempts at GBA domination he'd be thinking about packing it in. But no, he wants to bust the world into seven bits and the classic team of Sonic and Tails is back to stop him. Knuckles, Amy and Cream are playable, too, giving you a choice of skills for different puzzles, like speed, jumping and power. It'll be out in time for the summer.

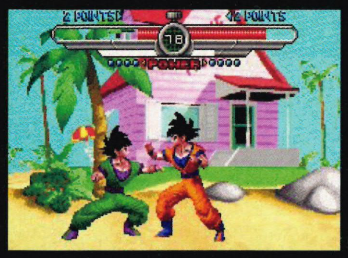
Euro 2004

We'll be going footy mental in June and, typically, EA is tagging along for the ride with the tournament's official game. There's good news for readers on the Faroe Islands 'cos EA has included some of Europe's worst sides this time, too. Morale now affects your performance, so if Calamity James has a howler in the first five minutes, you might as well give up.

Boktai (GBA)

It's high time you saw some new pics of *Boktai*, which has been pushed back to a May release, coinciding with Britain's fortnight of sunshine. Charge up the solar panel on the cart and dish out lightgun pain to Drac and his pals in this isometric adventure. A *Boktai* sequel has also been announced, which will use the solar sensor more than the original.





Dragon Ball Z Taiketsu (GBA)

With a pink beach house like that, you're bound to get some abuse from the locals. So, why not sort them out with some old-fashioned fighting? Well you can, in this, the first *Dragon Ball Z* fighting game produced by the makers of the *Legend of Goku* games.
All the faces from the cartoon are on hand for some punishment in locations including Orange Star City and Master Roshi's Island.
Taiketsu will have to go some way to beat the GBA fighting daddy, *Street Fighter*, but fans of the TV show might well be impressed.
More next month.

Kirby Star: Great Labyrinth of the Mirror (GBA)

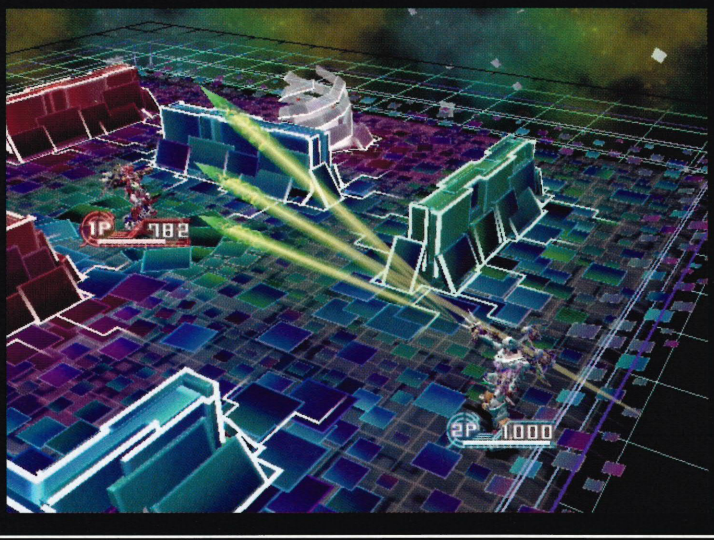
Nightmare in Dreamland stank. It'd seen better days and if you see it in a charity shop window don't be surprised 'cos Mike put it there.
Now Kirby's set to take on GBA once again and so far it looks encouraging with a host of new moves to suck up and use, including tornado, fire, angel, missile, cutter, fighter and sword! Blimey! How big are his lungs?
Throw in some cool mini-games from *Kirby Star: Super Deluxe*, such as ground pounding and maybe, just maybe, Kirby's got a winner.

Mario and Donkey Kong (GBA)

Nintendo has been quiet on this since last year's E3, but we hear it'll be out in the US on May 24th, the same day as *Mario Golf Advance Tour*. This sees you stealing back mini-Marios that Donkey Kong has nicked from Mario's new toy factory. One more thing: it's gonna be sweet.

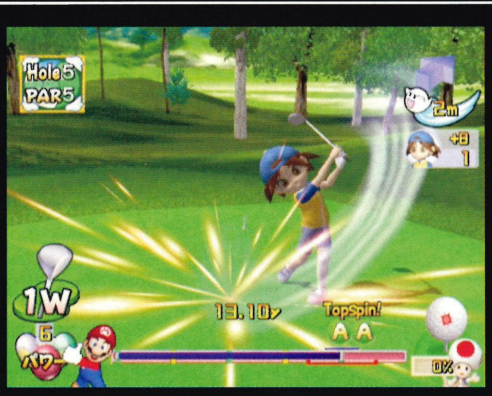
Custom Robo: Battle Revolution

Look! It's another E3 game making a comeback! Here's a bunch of sweet shots of the GameCube robot-'em-up we first saw months ago – the sequel to the Japanese-only N64 original.
It looks cooler than *Gotcha Force* and with some relentless weapon attacks and all strategy flying out of the window, you'll be fighting for survival in futuristic death arenas. Expect two and four-player carnage and hours more fun that you'd get from a full series of *Robot Wars*.



Mario Golf Toadstool Tour

It's coming. No, seriously it is. The tickets have been booked for the *Toadstool Tour* and you can expect this before the summer kicks in.
With that in mind we thought we'd show you what you can expect, especially with the added cuties you can play on GBA and upload to your GameCube tournament. Tim still chuckles at the thought of his hole-in-one during a session last year. Grab this and you'll be laughing, too.



Serious Sam

An all-new FPS arrives all guns blazing late next month thanks to the UK's Climax Studios. *Serious Sam* looks like a mix between *Turok* and *Armorines* – hideous beasts to eat your bullets and combos to rack-up *Lylat Wars*-style before unleashing a killing spree. Add the fact that you can burn around in a combine harvester and we reckon you're gonna love it.

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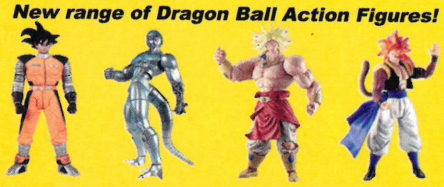

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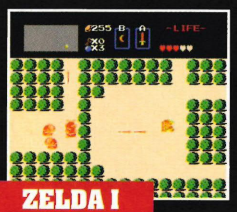
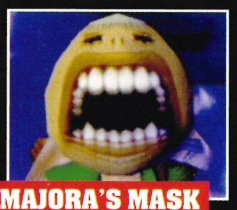
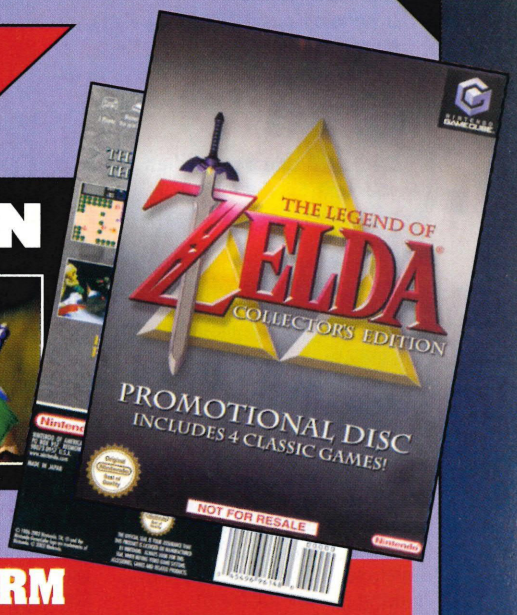

ZELDA I

ZELDA II


MAJORA'S MASK

OCARINA



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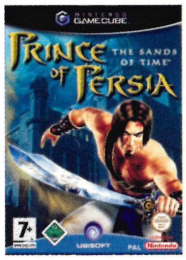
Win! Win! Win! Win!
Thanks to Ubisoft, the Letter of the Month wins *Prince of Persia* plus a GameCube. Runners-up just get a copy of the game.



It's not fair

>> I have been a fan of Nintendo since the days of the NES and the original Game Boy. However, I feel that Nintendo is slowly losing the plot. It was once the best company in video gaming, but they don't seem to care nowadays. It seems it is happy to accept third place to Sony and Microsoft and it's also battering third-party developers so no-one is really making games for them anymore. It's all gone a bit pear shaped.
Scott Saunders, NOM forums

Nintendo is renowned for its innovation and quality – just look at how many gamers still rave about *Ocarina* and *SM64*. Nintendo was the first to introduce Rumble Paks and wireless controllers, so you can bet your GameCube collection that the next-gen machines will have some awesome new ideas – just look at the Nintendo DS. Only a handful of companies have stopped making games and the biggest players like EA, Capcom, Ubi Soft and Activision are still committed. Oh, and there's the small matter of Nintendo's in-house games. *Wind Waker 2*? *Prime 2* maybe? We rest our case.

I hate Japan!

>> Why is it that Nintendo abandons Europe? Japan has better games stores as well as merchandise and cartoons that we can't get like *F-Zero* and *Zelda* Gashapon. I'm not even going to talk about their Stars Catalogue because some of the stuff we get is rubbish. I don't want a crap screensaver, I want a Famicom calendar and a Mario cap!
Alex Dochery, Newcastle-under-Lyme
We hear what you're saying. The whole *NOM* crew love the stuff you can get in Japan and it's fair to say that getting hold of *Zelda* Gashapon can cost the earth. Is anyone else annoyed about the lack of decent gifts on NoE's Stars Catalogue? If so, let us know and we'll pass everything on to the bosses at Nintendo.

Melee Mum

>> It's probably not very cool to get a letter from a mum, but I thought the *SSBM* CD was brilliant.
Anne Friston, Rickmansworth

Mums are cool. Mums buy games for Christmas and birthdays and if they love *Melee* then all the better we say. Hats off to you, Anne, and everyone else who wrote in saying they loved the *Melee* CD. In no particular order: Mark Hogg (we liked the surname), Charlotte Jones (nice handwriting) and Daniel Hughes (who drew a wicked *Worms 3D* picture).

Cheaters

>> On the *Mario Kart* challenges you said no cheat discs, but you can see that it's clearly used on the Waluigi Stadium and Peach Beach tracks. I think you should take action and start disqualifying cheats from the challenges.
Duvane Farrell, Birmingham
We had tons of emails about this, so we invited the 'culprits' down to *NOM* to show us their skills behind the wheel. We'll report on our findings soon.

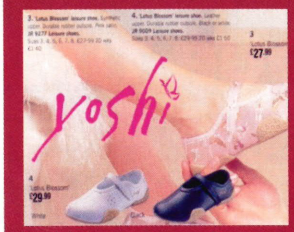
Stop the rip off

>> Why doesn't Nintendo introduce the iQue over here so that it can be used to play classic games that the younger generation like myself didn't get the chance to play properly. Games like *Super Metroid*, *Secret of Mana* and *Chrono Trigger*? Nintendo doesn't need to charge us £35

Spotted!

Yoshi shoes!

>> We were browsing through a Littlewoods catalogue recently and found this. We thought you'd find it funny because we certainly did!
Natalie and Cameron Milton, Andover
Is that what he's been doing since *Double Dash*?



Yoshi shoes: strangely not available in green

Call to action!

Check me out! You asked for people to send in pictures of their *NOM* collection so here's mine. I started collecting them in 1997 and have never missed and issue since. I've now got 75 issues in pristine condition.
Peter Curtis, Tonbridge
Well there goes the gauntlet being slammed down. If any of you reckon you can top Peter's collection, we want to see a picture of it. Send them into the usual address and you might win a prize. Useless fact #131: Tim started on the *Diddy Kong Racing* issue (I'm getting old – Ed)

STAR LETTER

for Super NES ports like it's been doing, it could give them to us through the iQue for a fiver!
Dean Hailstone, NOM forums
We asked a Nintendo spokesperson and were told that the iQue IS now going to be released outside of China, but probably only in Asia and South America.

RUNNER-UP

I'm no thug

>> It's so unfair. My mum wouldn't get me *Tony Hawk's Underground* because of the age rating and 'cos it's shortened name is *T.H.U.G.* I'm a huge fan of the *Legend of Zelda* games, but if the next one comes out with a high age rating I won't be able to get it. Why do games need an age rating anyway?
Paul Hollis, Streatham
Age ratings are there to help parents decide if a game has suitable content for specific ages – such as violence and bad language. There's no need to worry about the next *Zelda* game though. Past games have been for all ages and there's no reason to expect that to change.

RUNNER-UP

Sun songs

>> The CDs you've given away have been excellent but why, why, why have you not done a CD of *Golden Sun* music yet? Surely this musical marvel would be great to put on a CD. Please do one soon.
James Bailey, Hextable
The *Golden Sun* tracks are epic, James, that's for sure, but would it appeal to all Nintendo fans? Maybe we're wrong, so why not let us know what you want to hear next. *Mario* classics? *Metroid*? The choice is yours. Just drop us a letter at the usual *NOM UK* address.

A Mini adventure

>> I'm sick of Nintendo. It released limited-edition *Pokémon Ruby* and *Sapphire* Game Boy Paks and I can't find them anywhere. Then I see there are Venusaur GBAs on the internet and then there's the Famicom Mini you showed last month. Why don't we get cool stuff like this? It's not fair!
Fiona Brown, Birmingham
We'd love to see more limited-edition GBAs in the UK 'cos they look cool and any *Pokémon* fan is bound to want one. As for the Famicom Mini, you could win one in this issue's competition so why not try entering?

RUNNER-UP

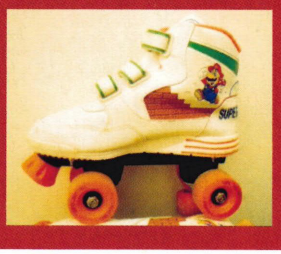
Bring on the N5

>> What should the N5s new name be? I think it should be the Nintendo Shockwave.
Austin Tomlinson, NOM forums
We like the name, it's better than Mike's Nintendo Salmon because "they codenamed GameCube the Dolphin". His brain then kicked in and he came up with Nintendo Nexus instead.

Spotted!

Too cool for school?

>> I was just clearing out the shed one day when I came across these *Super Mario Bros.* rollerskates. I was going to send them in, but for some reason my younger brother wanted to keep them. Are they rare or does everyone in Japan have some?
Karim Selim, London
It's a good thing you didn't send them – we'd never have sent them back!



You were wrong

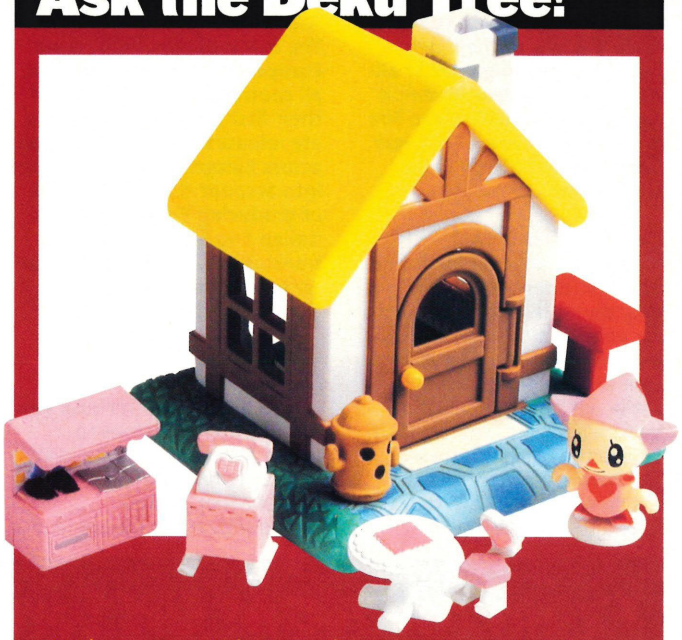
>> Now then, Dean, I can honestly say that your score was WRONG! *Sonic Heroes* introduced a new game mechanic and it makes for a great game, yet you punish it for the camera alone.
Alun Haines, NOM forums
We scored the game 80%, which is hardly punishing the game, even if the camera angles are dodgy. We do say 80% is 'great fun, but hardly ground breaking' which sums up *Sonic Heroes*.

RUNNER-UP

It ain't for kids

>> Anyone who thinks *Pokémon* is for kids can kiss my ass! *Pokémon* is one of the most in-depth adventures I've ever played and I've had loads of fun linking-up Game Boys and battling with my friends. Oh, and I'm 17, not eight.
Matt Thorpe, via email

Ask the Deku Tree!



Q: Where can I get the *Animal Crossing* toys?
Greg Adams, Biggleswade
A: Hunt them down on eBay or try import websites like www.gkworld.zoovy.com.

Q: I love sports games and was wondering if a GameCube rugby game is in development? *Alan Francis, Elland*
A: There are no plans for our Aussie beaters to appear on GameCube. What about *Mario Rugby* though? Hmm...

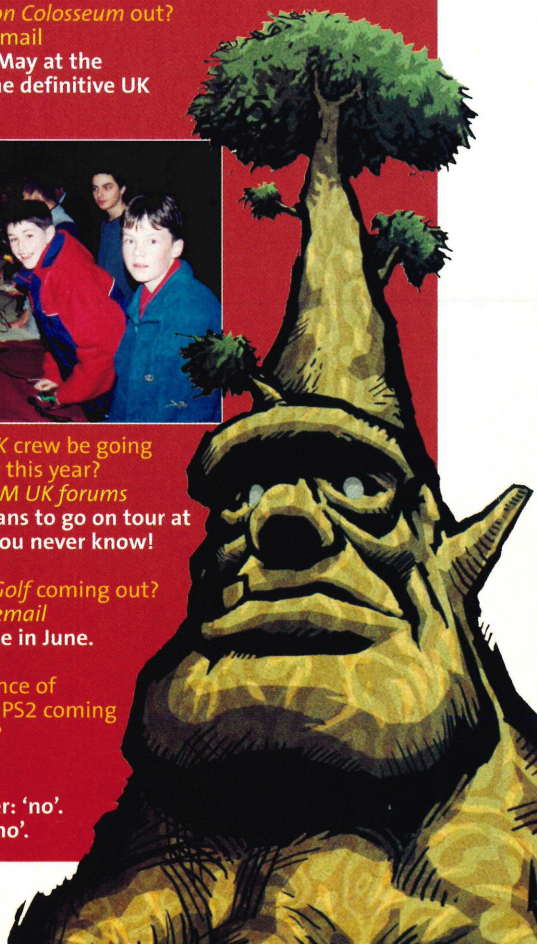
Q: Will any earlier *Final Fantasy* games be re-released for GameCube? *Michael McAllister, Tyanee, Co. Antrim*
A: *Chronicles* and *Tactics* are the only *Final Fantasy* games out now, but there may be more news at E3....

Q: When is *Pokémon Colosseum* out?
Adrian Foster, via email
A: It's looking like May at the moment. Expect the definitive UK review next issue.

Q: Will the *NOM UK* crew be going on a Pokémon Tour this year?
Ed Lenartowicz, NOM UK forums
A: We've got no plans to go on tour at the moment, but you never know!

Q: When is *Mario Golf* coming out?
Sean Williams, via email
A: It'll be some time in June.

Q: Is there any chance of *Whiplash* from the PS2 coming out on GameCube?
Joel Lewis, Brockley, South London
A: The short answer: 'no'. The long answer: 'no'.



Quill's Mail

***Pokémon* is one of those games you either love or hate and nothing is going to change that. It is one of the most important video games of all-time and with new *Pokémon* games in the pipeline like *Fire Red* and *Leaf Green*, *Pokémon* fans have got plenty to get excited about.**

Fore &%*!'s sake!

>> You probably get loads and loads of letters about this, but why do we have to wait ages for games to come to the UK? I've waited months for *Mario Golf* on GameCube which came out in the USA last summer! We get some games before the rest of the world, like *Mario Kart*, but most of the time we just have to sit here and wait. Come on Nintendo, sort it out!
Vicki Street, via email [no relation – Ed]

The real problem, Vicki, is our European friends, because not all countries speak English as their first language. As games are released simultaneously all across Europe you have to take into account the complexities of producing French, German, Italian and Spanish translations. *Mario Golf* will be with us before the summer though, so sit tight.

Once you've had the best...

>> In a few of your reviews you have compared games to "what Nintendo gaming is all about". I don't think it's fair to expect other games manufacturers to live up to Nintendo's standards. Out of the three console-making heavyweights, Ninty is the only one with a key (and celebrated) internal development company. Once you begin measuring all games against the "Nintendo way" you run the risk of missing the point. Compare a game to its peers and predecessors, not to a development ethos or style.
David Grinski, Derby

But when that "ethos or style" is consistently the best in the business it's tough not to compare. For us "Nintendo gaming" just means top class, not a particular genre or style. You can see it in the range of games that Ninty produces – *Eternal Darkness* to *Mario*. It's up to other manufacturers to raise their game.

One in a million

>> I just wanted to thank you for constantly giving away the best cover gifts of any games magazine... ever. The soundtrack CDs are such high quality that I'd rather have them than some dodgy old demo or cheats disc. If I wanted to try a game before buying I'd go and rent it. You don't need demo discs to sell you mag as it's top quality.
Frances Hannon, Hampshire

It's a good thing you wrote in Frances – we were just about to put a demo disc on this month's cover when we got your letter.

Hot head

>> My friend and I are very disappointed to hear that there's a new *Pokémon* game

From the *NOM UK* forums...

Get over to www.nintendomagazine.co.uk and get involved.

■ N5 Game Boy Player

dy_M
What do you think the chances are of the N5 having a GB Player built in? It might just raise sales. I'd rather this than a DVD player considering most people probably have one. It might push the console price up £20-£30, but it would be worth it I reckon.

Mush_Monster
Which Game Boy? Is it true that Ninty are releasing two portable consoles?

994wemj
Hmm, tbh, I'd prefer a GB Player too. If it's gonna be backwards compatible (as Ninty have already hinted) then there would be no point in me buying a GB Player for my 'Cube. Seeing as I don't really need one anyway and have many DVD players this would save me £30.

994wemj
Hmm, tbh, I'd prefer a GB Player too. If it's gonna be backwards compatible (as Ninty have already hinted) then there would be no point in me buying a GB Player for my 'Cube. Seeing as I don't really need one anyway and have many DVD players this would save me £30.

Ady_M
Thanks for telling us what you think TWICE!

994wemj
well sorry if it's a bugged forum!

Knucklix
If they were to include one, they'd give all this huge hype about it and then release a new GB that runs off mini discs so that you can't use them in the Player.
I really hope that it has big discs but can run the smaller ones. That way, Sony lovers won't say it's rubbish just because they're smaller discs. And it could have a DVD player, too.

gamecube150
I think the N5 should have big discs so it would not be the odd one out, but still play GameCube games and also play DVDs because Xbox and PS2 do that.

gamecube150
also a Game Boy Player built in would be nice but they really need to make one anyway to buy in the shops and fit on.

Ady_M
Is it possible for a console to play different disc sizes?

Sha_Kri_Augdon
Probably – DVDs come in two sizes. If N5 came with a built in GB Player, then GB sales would suffer, which would not be wise, as the GBA SP is Nintendo's main source of income at the moment. I wouldn't mind having one built in. How about two models? Or would that be too expensive? DS Player...?

Ady_M
GBA SPs have already sold extremely well, so the sales wouldn't suffer that much because most people already have one. However, a in-built DS? Then the DS sales WOULD suffer!

Knucklix
"Most people already have one"? In my school, I'm the only person with one. I must move to another school. Then again, in my house, I'm one of four people, so maybe there are lots of crazy gaming families like mine out there to make up for it.

Ady_M
The plain old GBA and swanky new SP have sold millions of units in this country. That means most gamers in the Nintendo market probably have one by now. And remember we're not talking about 'PS2 or Xbox only' owners here.

Oi! Why not chat to other Nintendoids on the forums at www.nintendomagazine.co.uk

Text the Editor

Speak your Mother Brains...

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:

* metroid tunes 4 nxt giveaway cd please! U know u wnt 2...

* I have to say, the Super Smash Bros. Melee CD in the Feb issue is OUTSTANDING, and a fine companion to the Zelda CD. You've made my month! - Jamie Egerton.

* I thrashed Mike on the Pokemon Tour last time. Wanna ave annuva go, mate?

* I now hav da nu pokemon games (in jap), and da nu metroid on gba. I can say dat all 3 rok n they r proof dat gba will always b no.1

* I've now got exactly 100 issues of nom. I luv u guys!

* Bring on the next Mario game. I cant wait for N5.

* i played f zero ax and it kicks ass! I met a guy named eddles who managed to get up to 4,087 km/h on the sonic oval track! Can anyone beat that?

* Why can't anyone make a decent Harry Potter video game?

coming out. We hate these games as they are for babies. We also think that any game that gets below 40% should not appear in the mag and *Yu-Gi-Oh!* games should be banned! They are soooo bad. There should be more games like the PC's *Age of Empires* – maybe even a *Zelda* version! That would rule.
Tomas Crosse and Paul Allen, Midlothian
A *Zelda* strategy game might be cool, but you're so wrong about *Pokémon*. Now we're gonna send Groudon round to stamp on your heads.

Taking liberties

>> Did you know that Nintendo is name-checked by Liberty X? If you don't believe me it's on the album *Being Somebody*, track 12 – *I Just Wanna*. The exact words are "play me like the new Nintendo". Do they mean GameCube or GBA SP?
Matthew Wright, Nottingham
We're not sure, Matthew. Maybe they're secretly working on the N5... and besides, Tim only listens to *Mario* tunes in the car.

Spotted!

That sure sucks!

>> When I go to my hairdresser's [*surely you mean barber's, Michael*] on Burton Road in Lincoln I always pass a particular shop. As you can see from the photos, it's Kirby! I didn't think it had anything to do with Nintendo's creation until I peaked in the window and saw all the vacuum cleaners. I just had to take a photo and send it in to *NOM UK*.
Michael Haines, Lincoln

Shigsy regularly visits historic Lincoln and gets all his ideas there...

CLUB NOM

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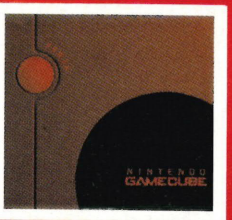


Free! Games release updates

Free! Exclusive competitions

Sign up to Club NOM now and you could win a copy of *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles

*Existing *Club NOM* members will automatically be entered into the *Final Fantasy: Crystal Chronicles* prize draw.

To join, just begin your text with 'CLUB', then include your name and age. All that's left is to send it to 84070 and you're fully signed up to *Club NOM*.

Terms and Conditions: the cost to join *Club NOM* is 25p. This is a one-off charge to join the club. You will then receive a text message from *Club NOM* asking you to select your favourite games genre. You reply to *Club NOM*, selecting your genre. There is no charge for this second message or additional texts from *Club NOM*. Please note that your own operator (O2, Vodafone, T-Mobile, Orange, etc) may charge you to send and receive texts as part of your mobile package.
The service currently doesn't work on the Virgin network.

Nintendo
CLASSIC

#4 GoldenEye 007

Dearly beloved. We are gathered here today to remember Dominic Wint. You may have noticed a certain Wintlessness in *NOM UK* these past two issues, as our senior writer Dominic left for pastures new. Here are his parting words, a touching tribute to the game that made him the man he is: *GoldenEye 007* on N64. Rock on, Winty.

"It's the reason I bought an N64. It's the reason my friends wanted to talk to me. It's the reason I missed half of my lectures at university. It's the reason I can't walk past a CCTV camera without pretending to shoot it. Even now, I still feel a rush of excitement when the metallic Nintendo lozenge bursts onto the screen and the Bond theme music kicks in.

GoldenEye 007 is as close to perfection as a game can get. The single-player is sublime; combining brilliant level design with clinical controls, a real sense of actually 'being' James Bond and an amazing amount of stealth.

Multiplayer is equally good. In gaming terms, nothing comes close to the rush of a four-player shoot-out in the Basement. Turbo mode, no radar, pistols, one-shot kills. Paintball mode if you're feeling fruity. You know it's the truth.

But it's more than that. *GoldenEye 007* got under my skin. Give me a pen and I could draw the layout of the Facility, or any other stage for that matter. It even reached the point where I would go to sleep, stuck on a level and wake up with the answer. We're talking true obsession here. It's not that I felt like Bond. Whenever this game is on, I *am* Bond."

Next Month

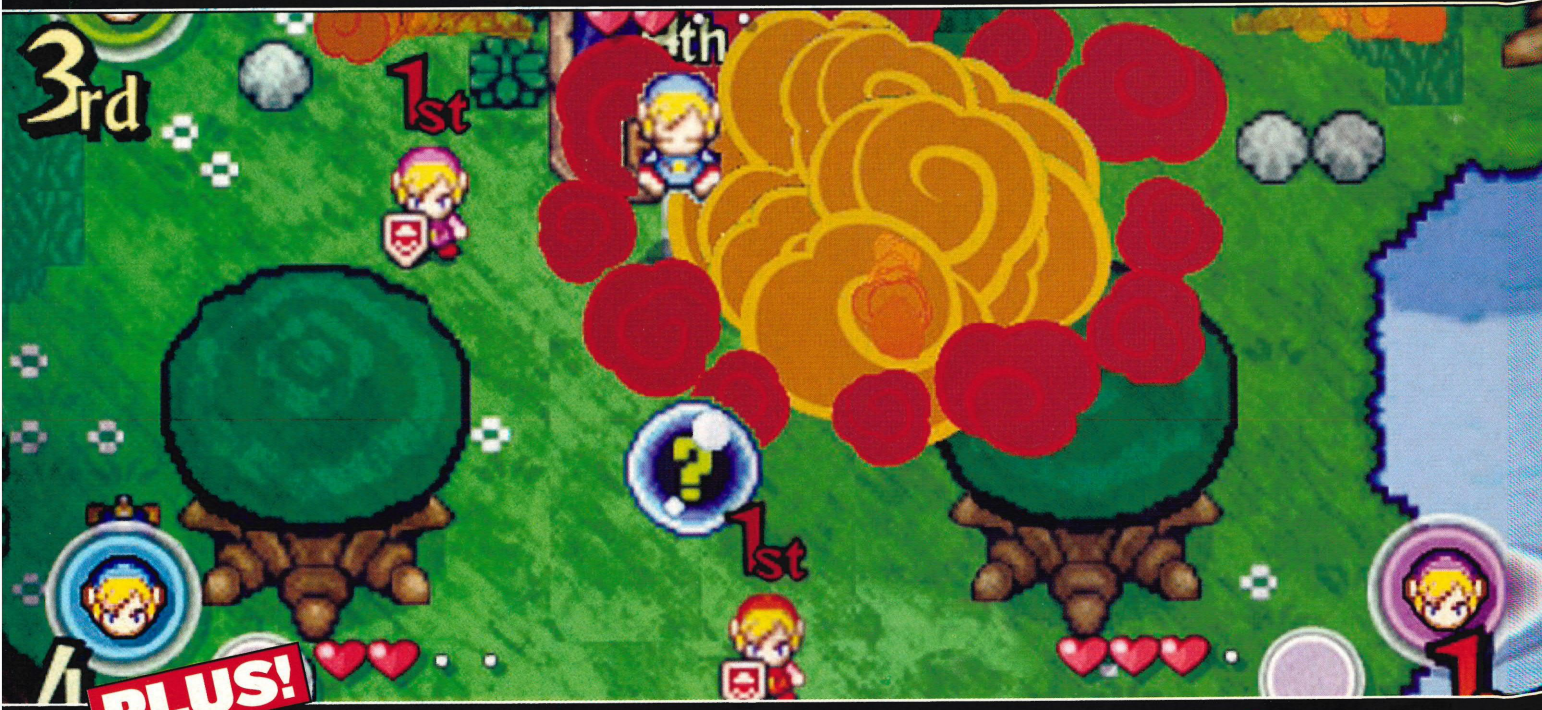
Pokémon Colosseum

The first UK review. Only in *NOM UK* next month

The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords

PLUS!

We slice open Link's next 'Cube slash-'em-up



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X-BOX

Broken Sword 3: S. Dragon
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Champ. Manager '01/'02
Championship Manager '02
Colin McRae Rally 4
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Desert Storm
Die Hard: Vendetta
Driver 3*
Grabbed by the Ghoulies
Grand Theft Auto 3
Grand Theft Auto: V. City
Halo
Halo 2*
Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb
James Bond: E. or Nothing*
LMA Manager 2004*
Lord of the Rings: F. of Ring
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Need for Speed Undergr'nd
Operation Flashpoint*
Project Gotham Racing 2
Rainbow Six 3
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Rogue Ops
Secret W. Over Normandy
Sega GT 2002
Sims: Bustin' Out
Spawn: Armageddon
Spiderman The Movie
Splinter Cell
Splinter Cell 2: P.Tomorrow*
SSX 3
Star Wars: Jedi Academy
Star Wars: Knights Old Rep.
Terminator 3 R.of Machines
The Thing
Tony Hawk's Underground
Total Club Manager 2004
True Crime: Streets of LA
X-Files: Resist or Serve*

Plus Many More...

GAMEBOY ADVANCE

Advance Wars 2
Banjo Kazooie: Grunty's Rev.
Beyblade: Ult. Blader Jam
Bionicle
Breath of Fire
Bruce Lee: Return of Legend
Buffy Vampire Slayer: WDK
Crash Bandicoot2 n-Tranced
Dragonball Z: L. of Goku 2
Ecks vs Sever
Final Fantasy Tactics
Golden Sun
Golden Sun 2
Harry Potter & Ch.of Secrets
Harvest Moon: F.of M.Town
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Mario & Luigi: S'star Saga
Max Payne
Medal of Honor: Infiltrator
Mega Man Battle Network 4
Need for Speed Undergr'nd
Nightfire
Pokemon Pinball: Ruby & S.
Pokemon Ruby
Pokemon Sapphire
Ruby Pokemon
Sapphire Pokemon
Sims: Bustin' Out
Sonic Advance
Sonic Advance 2
Sonic Battle
The Two Towers
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Monsters 7
Yu-Gi-Oh!: Sacred Cards
Yu-Gi-Oh!: World C.T.2004
Yu-Gi-Oh!: World Wide Ed.
Zelda: A Link to the Past

Plus Many More...

PS2

Angel of Darkness
Baldur's Gate: D. Alliance 2
Broken Sword 3: S. Dragon
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Dark Cloud 2
Die Hard: Vendetta
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai 2
Dynasty Warriors 3
Enter the Matrix
Escape from Monkey Island
Evil Dead: Fist. of Boomstick
FIFA 2004
Final Fantasy 10
Final Fantasy X-2
Fire Warrior
Freedom Fighters
Getaway
Ghost Hunter
Gran Turismo 3
Grand Theft Auto 3
Grand Theft Auto: V. City
Great Escape
Harry Potter & Ch.of Secrets
Headhunter: Redemption*
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Indiana Jones: Emp.'s Tomb
Jak 2: Renegade
James Bond: Agent Under F.
James Bond: E. or Nothing*
Kya: Dark Lineage
Lara Croft: Ang.of Darkness
Legacy of Kain: Defiance
LMA Manager 2003
LMA Manager 2004*
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Mafia
Manhunt
Max Payne 2
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Metal Gear Solid 2
Mission Impossible:O.Surma
Need for Speed Undergr.
No One Lives Forever
Primal
Prince of Persia: S. of Time
Pro Evolution Soccer 3
Project Zero 2
Ratchet and Clank
Ratchet and Clank 2
Red Faction
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Return to Castle Wolfenstein
Rogue Ops
R-Type Final
Secret W. Over Normandy
Silent Hill 2
Silent Hill 3
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Sims: Bustin' Out
Smackdown! 5: H.C.T.Pain
SOCOM 2: US Navy Seals
Sonic Heroes
Soul Reaver 2
Spawn: Armageddon
Splinter Cell
Spy Hunter 2
Syphon Filter: Omega St.*
Terminator 3 R.of Machines
The Getaway
The Simpsons: Hit & Run
The Sims
The Sims: Bustin Out
The Suffering*
The Thing
Tiger Woods Golf 2004
Time Splitters 2
TOCA Race Driver
Tom Clancy's Jungle Storm*
Tomb Raider: Angel of Dark.
Tony Hawk's Underground
Total Club Manager 2004
True Crime: Streets of LA
Turok, Evolution
WWE Smackdown! 5: HCTP
XIII (Thirteen)
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duellists of Roses

Plus Many More...

GAME CUBE

A = 0 1
A Goddess Reborn
Ace Golf
Agent Under Fire
Aggressive Inline
American Pro Trucker
Animal Crossing
Aquaman: Battle for Atlantis
ATV Quad Racing 2
Avalanche - 1080*
B = 0 2
Back in Action
Back to Baghdad
Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance
Barbarian
Batman: Dark Tomorrow
Batman: Rise of Sin Tzu
Battle for Atlantis
Battle Houshin
Battle, Sonic Adventure 2
Battlecry, Robotech
Beach Bandits Rocket Power
Beach Spikers
Beyblade
Big Air Freestyle
Big Mutha Truckers
Billy Hatcher and Giant Egg
Black and Bruised
Blood Omen 2
BloodRayne
Blue Storm, Wave Race
BMX XXX
Bomberman Generation*
Bond 007: Agent Under Fire
Bond 007: E. or Nothing*
Bond 007: Nightfire
Bounty Hunter, Star Wars
Budokai - Dragon Ball Z
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Burnout
Burnout 2 Point of Impact
Bust a Move 2
Bustin' Out, The Sims
C = 0 3
Capcom vs. SNK: EO
Casper: Spirit Dimensions
Cel Damage
Celebrity Deathmatch
Chamber of Secrets
Chaos Bleeds
Clone Wars, Star Wars
Combat Zones, Top Gun
Conflict: Desert Storm
Conflict: Desert Storm 2
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
Crash Nitro Kart
Crush Hour, WWE
D = 0 4
Dakar 2
Dark Alliance, Baldur's Gate
Dark Legacy
Dark Tomorrow, Batman
Darkened Skye
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX 2
Dead to Rights
Deadly Alliance
Def Jam Vendetta
Defender
Desert Storm
Desert Storm 2
Destroy All Monsters
Die Hard: Vendetta
Dinosaur Planet
Disney Sports Football
Disney's Magical Mirror
Donald Duck: Quack Attack
Doshin the Giant
Double Dash, Mario Kart
Dr. Muto
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai
Dredd vs Death
Driven
Driver 3*
E = 0 5
Eggo Mania
Eighteen Wheeler
End Game
Enter the Dragonfly
Enter the Matrix
ESPN Int. Winter Sports '02
Eternal Darkness
Everything or Nothing: 007*
Evolution Skateboarding
Evolution, Turok
Extra Large, Shrek
F = 0 6
F1 2002
Fantasy Star Online 1 & 2
Fellowship of the Ring
FIFA 2002
FIFA 2003
FIFA 2004
FIFA World Cup 2002
Fighting Live
Finding Nemo
Fire Blade
Fox McCloud in StarFox Adv.
Freaky Flyers
Freedom Fighters
Freekstyle
Freeride, Tarzan
Frontline, Medal of Honor
F-Zero GX
G = 0 7
Ghost Recon
Gladiator: S. of Vengeance
Gladius
Glitch in the System
Goddess Reborn
Godzilla: Destroy all Monst.
Gotcha Force*
Grand Heat, Burnout
Groove Adventure Rave
H = 0 8
Harry Potter & Ch.of Secrets
Harry Potter: Quidditch Cup
Haunted Mansion
Hit & Run, The Simpsons
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hobbit
Hoodlum Havoc
Hot Pursuit 2
Hot Wheels: Velocity X
Hulk
Hunter: The Reckoning
I = 0 9
Ikaruga
Incredible Hulk
I-Ninja
Inter. Superstar Soccer 2
Inter. Superstar Soccer 3
Inter. Winter Sports 2002
Italian Job: L.A. Heist
J = 1 0
James Bond 007: Nightfire
James Bond: Agent Under F.
James Bond: E. or Nothing*
Jedi Knight 2: Jedi Outcast
Jeremy McGrath's S'cross W.
Judge Dredd:Dredd v Death
K = 1 1
Kelly Slater's Pro Surfer
Kinnuku Man 2-Yo
Kirby's Air Ride
L = 1 2
L.A. Heist, The Italian Job
Leg. of Kain: Blood Omen 2
Leg. of Zelda: Master Quest
Leg. of Zelda: Ocarina of T.
Leg. of Zelda: Wind Waker
Leg.of Zelda: Majora's Mask
Legends of Wrestling
Legends of Wrestling 2
Lode Runner*
Looney Tunes:Back in Action
Lord of the Rings: F. of Ring
Lord of the Rings: R.of King
Lord of the Rings: T. Towers
Lost Kingdoms
Lost Kingdoms II: Rune
Luigi's Mansion
M = 1 3
Madden NFL 2002
Madden NFL 2004
Magical Mirror
Majora's Mask
Mario Golf: Toadstool Tour
Mario Kart: Double Dash
Mario Party 4*
Mario Party 5
Mario Sunshine
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2
Matrix, Enter the
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: R. Sun
Mega Man Network Tran.
Men In Black 2 Alien Escape
Metal Arms:Glitch in System
Metroid Prime
Micro Machines
Minority Report
Mission Impossible:O.Surma
Monsters Inc. Scream Arena
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
MTV's Celebrity Deathmatch
MX Superfly
Mystic Heroes
N = 1 4
NASCAR Thunder 2003
NASCAR Thunder 2004
NBA 2K3
NBA Live 2003
NBA Live 2004
NBA Street Volume 2
Need for Speed Undergr'nd
Need for Speed: H.Pursuit 2
Nemesis, Resident Evil 3
Network Transmission
Next Dimension, X-Men
NFL Blitz 2002
NFL Quarterback Club '02
NFL Street
NHL 2003
NHL 2004
NHL Hitz 2002
Night of 100 Frights
Nightfire
O = 1 5
Ocarina of Time: Master
Ocarina of Time: Zelda
OO7 Agent Under Fire
OO7 Everything or Nothin'*
OO7 Nightfire
Operation Surma, M.I.
Outlaw Golf
P = 1 6
P.N 03
Pac-Man World 2
Paris-Dakar Rally 2
PGA Tour 2004
Phantasy Star Online
Pikmin
Pikmin 2*
Point of Impact
R = 1 8
Rayman 3
Rebel Strike, R. Squadron 3
Red Faction 2
Reign Of Fire
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X*
Resident Evil
Resident Evil 2
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
Resident Evil Zero
Return of the King
Rise of the Akkadian
Robotech: Battlecry
Rocky
Rogue Leader
Rogue Ops
S = 1 9
Sanity's Requiem
S'Bob S'Pants: R.F.Dutchman
Scooby Doo: Night of 100 F.
Scorpion King
Scream Arena, Monsters Inc
Sega Soccer Slam
Shrek: Extra Large
Silent Assassin, Hitman 2
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Simpsons: Road Rage
Sims
Sims: Bustin' Out
Skies of Arcadia Legends
Smugglers Run 2: Warzone
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle
Sonic Adventure DX
Sonic Heroes
Sonic Mega Collection
Soul Calibur 2
Speed Kings
Sphinx & Cursed Mummy*
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Underground, N. for Speed
Underground, Tony Hawk's
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V = 2 2
Viewtiful Joe
V-Rally 3
W = 2 3
Wario World
Wind Waker
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World Cup 2002
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WWE Wrestlemania X8
WWE Wrestlemania XIX
X = 2 4
XIII (Thirteen)
X-Men 2: Wolverine's Rev.
X-Men: Next Dimension
Z = 2 6
Zelda: Majora's Mask
Zelda: Master Quest
Zelda: Ocarina of Time
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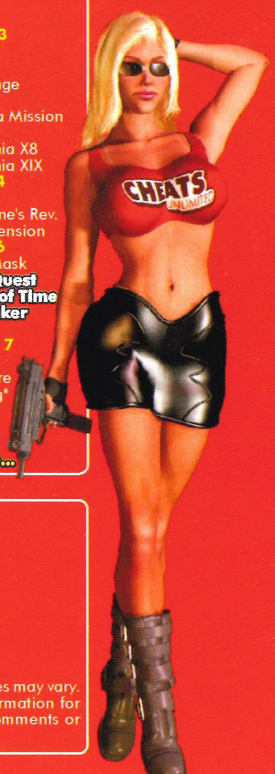

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