

DOVING KONG &
SAMPURON FROM JUNGLE
STRATEGY GUIDE
INSIDE!

FIRST PICTURES OF NINTENDO'S NEW 16-BIT SUPER NES VIRTUA FIGHTER BATTLE

SUPER NES • GENESIS • SEGA CD • DUO • NEO-Geo • 3DO • CD-I • JAGUAR • 32X • GAME BOY • GAME GEAR • ARCADES

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY



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NINTENDO'S VIRTUAL BOY!

EXCLUSIVE PIX & DETAILS INSIDE!

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NINTENDO STUMBLES WITH VIRTUAL BOY INTRO!

At Nintendo of Japan's annual trade extravaganza, the Shoshinkai Show, Nintendo demonstrated their new 32-Bit, 3-D portable video game system called the Virtual Boy. It sounded intriguing. But after getting to play it for a while, I have a really hard time believing that U.S. players will welcome this new system with open arms.

The details are spelled out in our Shoshinkai special section elsewhere in this issue, but the screens aren't color, the games are mediocre, it will cost about \$200 and it hardly is portable.

Not going to some kind of a color screen is the first major problem with the system. For \$200 you get a two-color screen—red and black. Why? Probably cost. This is 3-D and you need two screens. As we saw with the old TurboExpress from NEC, good quality, high-resolution LCD screens are VERY expensive. So Nintendo is going to keep costs down by giving us red LCDs on a black background. One would have thought that they learned their lesson from their no-color Game Boy. Strike one.

The games that were shown were nothing to get excited about. The fighting game—Teleroboxer, had the best 3-D imaging. Essentially it was Super Punch-Out with aliens. Their pinball game had a backward sloping playfield, kind of like their just-released Super Pinball for the Super NES. And, the best for last! It is no secret that Nintendo always launched their new game systems with a Mario game. For this system they didn't even have the courtesy to create something new. We get the ORIGINAL Mario game! Remember that one? Mario and Luigi jump up and punch the girders which flip the enemy over (remember the crabs?), and then they kick off the 3-D potential of the system. Strike two.

Portable? Did anybody say portable? Perhaps. It will give you seven hours of play time on six AA batteries, but where do you put it? You need your hands free to hold the controller and with the tripod mount you need a table to set it up on. Kind of tough to play it in the car on a trip. I heard rumors going around that there will be a chest-mounted tri-pod, but with the system completely covering your eyes, you just can't see anything but the game. I can picture the headlines in the tabloids—"Boy walks in front of car while playing game!" Nice design Nintendo. Strike three.

Last but not least, the price—\$200. You would expect to get a lot more for that kind of money. Granted there has to be two of everything, as you literally need an independent system for each eye. But Nintendo knew this going in, and why they let it develop this far is anybody's guess. Things may change by the time the winter CES rolls around. But based on what was available at the Shoshinkai Show, this system needs work ... a lot of work.

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EGM!

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GAMING GOSSIP

...MORTAL KOMBAT III EXCLUSIVE!...
...NBA JAM TOURNAMENT SLAM!...
...DIDDY TO BE SEQUEL STAR!...
...VIRTUA BOY BITES THE BIG ONE!...
...SATURN TO MELD WITH 32X?...
...SONIC GETS CHAOTIC ON 32X!...
...NEPTUNE TAKES SEGA PORTABLE!...

...Forget about modulating the deflectors and get ready to go to warp with the latest interstellar edition of the only gossip column with phasers strong enough to burn a hole through the bad guys and get at the dirt. So put on your power-ups, get rid of the Supervolts and welcome to the one place you'll see Sega and Nintendo in the same sentence! We're dishing up the over-the-counter gossip here ... The Q-Mann has the right prescription to start you out, beginning with confirmation that NBA Jam Tournament Edition has been fully coded and submitted to Nintendo and Sega for approval. Acclaim is readying their big marketing machine to slam dunk the game onto store shelves with ads planned to line the airwaves and stretch under every rock around ... Out of the Nintendo camp, the Q is hearing that the Big N is resting on its Donkey Kong glory for too long, with plans already under way to upgrade Diddy Kong from sidekick to gaming superstar with another ACM Silicon Graphics gaming miracle that might even push the 40-Meg barrier. Put it on your list now kiddies, as the Q-Mann hears that Diddy will strike hard next November in a store near you...

...While we're on the subject of DK, Sigeru Miyamoto, the man behind Donkey Kong Country and the Mario Brothers games, is coming to the United States to work on Pilotwings 2 with Paradime Simulations. They used to be a defense contractor, making aircraft simulators, and they're now packing some high-tech flight simulation tools that Nintendo and Sigeru intend on utilizing for the newest Pilotwings (did the Q hear someone mention aerial dogfights?) ... In other rumors dawning from the Land of the Rising Sun, Virtua Bomb, er, I mean Virtua Boy, that new techno-cheap, two-colored unit that doubles as a headrest left the Quartermann looking for his Intellivision. The unit will ring in at around \$200 next April with three titles, including the original Mario Brothers title, Space Pinball and Telero-Boxer, a boxing game. No major licensees have signed on to make games for the portable and they don't have any plans to. Yours truly hears the word on the street in Tokyo is that the Virtua Boy will blow up real good when it comes to market...

...In other news from the Godzillas of gaming, it turns out that Capcom's main man Joe Morici or Sega's main man Tom Kalinske may be trading in their Blasters for Mouse ears. The industry is buzzing over talk that one of these wonder white shirts will be taking over the reigns of the vacant president's chair at Disney ... Time to tune into the continuing Sega Saturn saga. This month's chapter has Sega spinning so fast they're almost invisible, with rumors flying that the company intends on trying to make the 32X compatible with the Saturn. We'll know for certain when the Saturn is released in April. The Q got the inside scoop from a source close to the development that the U.S. release will be decided upon based on the number of titles available for release ... Staying in Sonic's court, Sonic Chaotic, the working title for Sega's 32X Sonic game, has been in the works for over a year and now has a tentative release date of June of this year! The soft bricks Sonic, Knuckles, Tails and Red Sonic together in a title that the Q hears Sega is trying to make strong on play. Sonic Chaotic will be programmed on Silicon Graphics workstations and be the premiere title to use a new technology that the big 'S' is hoping will knock out Diddy Kong next year ... Also new for the 32X, Sega programmers have told the Q that a new version of Tomcat Alley is under development that will take gamers to new heights and will utilize all of the 250,000-polygons-per-second rendering powers of the 32X in tandem with the Genesis and Sega CD...

...As I told you in an earlier edition of Q News, the Neptune, Sega's name for their 32X stand-alone configuration, will hit next Christmas for \$149.99 and will be packaged with Sonic Chaotic and/or Tomcat Alley ... Sega's new 16-Bit portable, to be called Venus, is coming into sharper focus. The unit will play Game Gear and 16-Bit Genesis cartridges and will cost \$179.99; it's basically a Mega Jet with a screen of Turbo Express quality and resolution. The system specs are in hand and if it can withstand the steep price and cluttered shelves, then the Q predicts well-deserved success for this long-overdue dream machine ... Mortal Kombat III will have a new look with 12 new characters and four old ones! Each character will come equipped with 10 moves rather than the four of their predecessors. Hitting arcades in March, only Soria, Kano and Liu Kang are now known by the Q to be returning. We are also hearing that Liu Kang's cousin may have to appear in Liu Kang's place, because legal problems may keep Liu Kang out of the game. Johnny Cage will not be in Mortal Kombat III, his character has been taken out of the sequel completely ... The countdown continues until the next generation of EGM hits in just 30 days. Till we chow down again on the greatest gaming gossip in the business, I remain the professional guru of gaming gossip—not a used cartridge salesman—with the news that some hate, many love, but only I get to do...

- QUARTERMANN

SPECIAL FEATURE!



The Virtual Boy consists of two LCD screens set into a wrap-around visor.

NINTENDO UNVEILS NEW SYSTEM AND GAMES AT SHOSHINKAI SHOW!



On Nov. 15 and 16 Nintendo of Japan held their annual trade event called the Shoshinkai Show. At this show Nintendo normally introduces the world to some of the new products that they have been working on.

This time the hot new item was their Virtual Boy. It is a true 3-D, 32-Bit, portable game system that will be coming out in the U.S. in April and will sell for \$200. Technically it is a portable, as it will run on 6 AA batteries (for seven hours), but considering the size and weight of the unit, few people will want to use it as such. The systems at the show were running off an AC power supply, so it should be available at launch as an option. It is running on a 32-Bit RISC processor but



The VB controller has the same wing shape as the PlayStation's one. It also has the third dimensional "toward and away from you" buttons on the back of the controller!

with two screens; this CPU has to do double duty. The screens are called "mirror scanning LEDs" but they are just very

detailed red LEDs on a black background. The sound is worth talking about, as it is true stereo, and the demos sounded great! Three games were playable at the show and two more will be ready by launch—all from Nintendo.

Nintendo also had a game with a working title of Fighting Polygon. It utilizes the FX chip and is for the Super NES. When completed it should be 16-Meg. It played well and was only 40 percent done.

Other significant games at the show include: Mega Man 7 for the Super NES (You knew he would be back, right?); Kirby 2 for the Game Boy; Super Bomberman 3 for the Super NES and SimCity 2000 for the Super NES.

Check out the following pages for a closer look at the show's hottest games. Watch for more in the January issue of *EGM*!



The VB is too heavy to strap onto your head, so it sits on a minitripod.

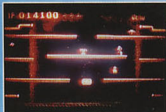
3-D ZOOM EFFECTS!



Nintendo uses the 3-D zoom effect wherever and whenever possible. Here in the system start-up screen each of the letters in Virtual Boy zoom toward the player.

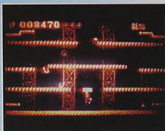
About the screen shots: Both Nintendo Japan and U.S. had nothing available at the show. At this magazine's deadline there still is nothing. They told us that they are trying to figure out how to take pictures. We did our best by recording the game through special 3-D glasses while it was being demonstrated on a large screen TV in a faculty black room. Not an easy task! When better pictures are available we will run them.

THE FIRST VIRTUAL BOY GAMES!



Well, Nintendo does always launch a new system with a Mario game, but come on Nintendo, the original Mario game? Couldn't you have done better? This cart is so old, though, that there probably is a whole new generation of game players who have never seen this version of the game. Hmmm. Anyway, Mario and Luigi are back (?) in an adventure that keeps them hopping and jumping from level to level trying to wipe out some mean turtles, crabs and other

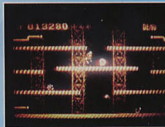
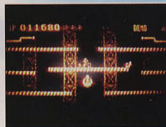
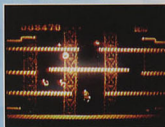
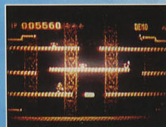
MARIO BROS. VB



nasties. The way you do this is to wait until an enemy is directly above you and then jump up and punch the bottom of the floor above you. This causes



the enemy to flip over and not move. You then jump up to that level and kick the enemy off the level for points. Coins occasionally appear and they should be picked up. Rumor has it several of the VBs can be linked together and if so, you can then play a two-player game. Not an original, but fun anyway.



PINBALL VB

We've seen similar games before on the NES and Super NES that have the playfield sloping away from you. This is more of the same with great sound effects and reasonably good playfield action. The game was a very early copy and the 3-D effects were minimal at best. We'll have to come back to this one when it is more complete.



TELEROBOXER

Picture Super Punch-Out with aliens that punch out of the screen at you and you have a good idea as to what Teleroboxer is all about. It is a fun game for a portable system and like SPO there are numerous opponents who get smarter and harder to beat. As for 3-D effects, other than the alien's fists and arms that smoothly zoom out at you and your fist that zooms in for your punch, there aren't a whole lot of spectacular effects in this game. As for sound effects, there aren't a whole lot, but hey, this is a boxing game, what do you expect? It should be noted though, that this was a work-in-progress game that wasn't 100 percent complete and knowing how hard Nintendo works on a game, they could very well add a lot of additional 3-D special effects to this cart by the time it is released here in America in April.

