

Nintendo announces VR gear

Recently Nintendo unveiled its new 32-bit hand-held unit at the Shoshinkai show in Japan. *Game Players* has been following the system since October of last year and now can confirm the many rumors that have been floating around.

The system, now officially called Virtual Boy, will retail for around \$195. Here are the facts we know already...

- The system will utilize a technology called 'private eye' consisting of 300 LED's and an oscillating mirror. The LEDs are scanned at 60 lines per second to produce a stereoscopic image. The technology is contained in a view-master-like housing.
- Players view the Virtual Boy from about arms length, just like a Game Boy. Nintendo chose this format because so little is known about virtual reality HMD's (Head-Mounted Displays) and their side effects.
- The system will have a 32-bit CPU and a 32-bit graphics processor.

- The screen consists of a 4-bit monochrome display, using Red, Black and White LEDs. Nintendo chose LEDs because they have a low power consumption — and that means longer game time.

- The system has been in development for over a year, and after it was acquired from an American company by the Japanese branch of Nintendo it was refined again by Nintendo's engineers. The original system was shown on a COMPAQ computer with an HMD; it ran a very preliminary helicopter program. The American office wasn't prepared to market the product.

- Using 4-bit gray scale graphics, the Virtual Boy has blazing fast graphics equal to a 64-bit machine.

- Finally, keep an eyeball peeled for games that feature first-person perspectives, like *Faceball 2000*, *Doom* or flight-sims to be produced exclusively for the unit.

