

Coming Attractions

Will your new 32-bit gaming machine be your next movie player?

Years ago, when CDs first came onto the audio scene, many claimed they would never catch-on. The price was outrageous, the size was too small to support album art standards, and perhaps most of all they represented an unknown technology. They were wrong. Now, when a new high density CD format threatens to overhaul the home video industry, people are paying attention.

The technology for a high density disc or Digital Video Disc (DVD) has existed for some time now in two separate formats. One format from Philips (the inventor of the CD) is called the Multimedia CD and another from Sony is called Super Density (SD), but the industry, wiser from the VHS/Beta wars, has been reluctant to release more than one format into the market. The debate over format ended in September with Sony's Super Density format winning out.

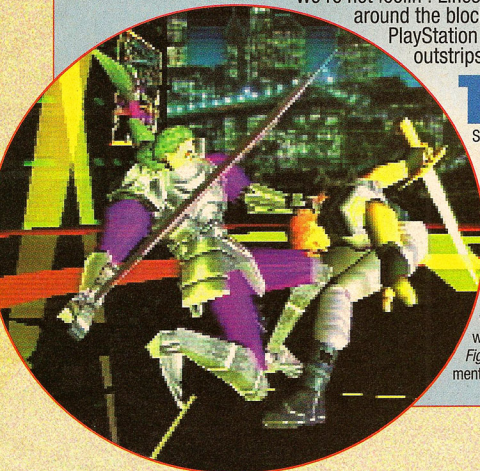
So what does all this mean for the gamer? There are already speculations that Sony's PlayStation will require only an inexpensive (somewhere in the \$150-\$200 range) peripheral to play the new discs transforming the gaming machine into a true multi-media console with the ability to play high-quality, full length movies. As for the Sega Saturn, sources within Sega say that the hardware was built to be upgradable and will be able to take advantage of such new advancements with add-on peripherals.

Sony Sells Out!

We're not foolin'. Lines form around the block as PlayStation demand far outstrips the supply

The Sony PlayStation went on sale September 9th, with 100,000 units shipping to over 15,000 retail outlets nationwide. In a feeding frenzy almost unparalleled in the video game industry, Sony's 32-bit wonder achieved 90 percent sell-through in all of two days, with many stores selling out completely before the weekend was even over.

Software sales were also pretty brisk, to say the least. *Battle Arena Toshinden* went completely out of stock by the end of the week, in spite of the fact that the extra controllers necessary for a two-player game were unavailable until at least a week after the title went on sale. Acclaim reports that *NBA Jam* and *Street Fighter: The Movie* also sold out, with an additional shipment hitting store shelves by the beginning of October.



Virtual Boy in the Red?

Is Virtual Boy a boom or a bust? What's going on?

The initial sales of Nintendo's Virtual Boy seem encouraging, but also somewhat confusing. A recent Nintendo press release stated that 100,000 units had been shipped to retailers, but oddly skated around saying exactly how many had actually been bought by consumers. This is unusual for Nintendo, who, for example, in another announcement the same week proudly stated that over one million copies of *Yoshi's Island* had been sold in Japan.

Their only indication of how well Virtual Boy was selling was the cryptic statement it had, "sold out at many retail locations." However, since many locations stock as few as one or two units, this is hardly a fair measure of sales strength. A representative of Electronics Boutique would only say it was doing, "surprisingly well."

What is known is that when Nintendo's Virtual Boy went on sale in Japan last July, initial sales were not impressive, followed

by a surprising rate of return (some sources claim that as many as half the Virtual Boys sold in Japan were taken back). The price of Virtual Boys in Japan has been cut dramatically after only three months, with one mail-order company dropping the price from 14,980 yen (about \$160) in July to only 9980 yen (about \$105) in October, and some going even lower.

So what's going on Stateside? The lack of hard figures is strange from a company who's never been afraid to brag, especially on the heels of a less than stellar launch in Japan. We will keep you posted as the holidays pass us by.



GAME GOSSIP

Ready for the latest gossip from our gurus of gaming gab? Well then, check out the latest info on the Sony PlayStation and other gaming goodies in... **GAME PLAYERS** Game Gossip! (Whew!)

Sony's Plan For World Domination

Can you imagine watching *Water World* or *Jurassic Park* on your Sony PlayStation and then, after the movie is over, playing a level from the upcoming game? It could happen sooner than you think if Sony's plans for the PlayStation are played out. With Sony and Toshiba finally

agreeing on a **Digital Video Disc** (DVD) standard, you could be watching movies on your Sony PlayStation within two years. Just take a look at the back of the machine and you'll discover a door that hides a possible DVD connection. Sources inside Sony say the machine has a **DVD card in the**

works that could be available as soon as Christmas of '96. The card is rumored to retail for around \$150.

Virtual Boy In The Red?

You've heard the saying, 'in the wrong place at the wrong time?' With the Virtual Boy occupying the same shelf space as those 'next generation' systems, it's hard for consumers to justify \$179 for a one-color portable. Nintendo is currently re-thinking their holiday marketing campaign. Expect **Virtual Boy to drop drastically in price** before the holidays (possibly as low as \$139 or \$129). • In other VB news, **Hudson Soft has moved to Seattle** to become a developer for the VB and Nintendo. Hudson Soft's VB title **Panic Bomber** has already been picked up by Nintendo. **Super Bomberman 3** is likely to be picked up by Nintendo — the product has already shipped in Japan.

The Mario RPG And Other Nintendo Stuff

The long-awaited **Mario RPG** that was rumored to release in the states this February will apparently be delayed and may not even come out at all. The 32-meg game features a special S-RAM chip, in addition to rendered characters like those in *DKC*. • Expect **Ultra 64 Mario Kart** to ship around the machine's launch, along with *Final Fantasy VII* from Square. • **'How long will Nintendo support the Super NES?'** Well, if the 8-bit NES (which just stopped production around a year ago) is any indication, Super NES fans needn't worry. However, sources inside Nintendo have warned us not to expect too many titles from now on. Bottom line: after the '96 holiday season, you'll still have good Super NES games to look forward to, but only once or twice a year. • Various rumors would

have you believe that the **Ultra 64** will be out anywhere between this Christmas to Christmas '96. One rumor on the internet stated that the U64 had been scrapped entirely for a cheaper 32-bit machine! Nintendo reps have stated that **100 brand-new Ultra 64s** will be given away as prizes at the Shoshinkai videogame trade-show to be held in Japan this November. And if Japanese gamers will be getting it as early as that, then...

Bits and Bytes

Possibly anticipating slow times until the launch of Ultra 64, Nintendo has laid off a number of people in the UK and in Redmond. Also, Capcom has reportedly laid off as many as 200 folks in Japan. • Having **problems beating NBA Jam** on the PlayStation? It seems that in the haste to get the product out on time, Acclaim goofed and reversed the difficulty levels, so easy is actually hard and vice-versa. • **Microsoft** is currently hand-picking programmers, artists and designers for their **new games division**. • Rumor has it that the **Windows '95 PC game Fury3** will make its way to the Saturn and PlayStation shortly. • **SNK may be calling it quits.**

With aging arcade technology and the **US Neo Geo CD most likely canceled**, there ain't much hope... • The Model 3 board



which is currently in development at Sega (for initial use in *VF3*) will add fog and smoke effects in addition to a bagful of other tricks to the arcade system. • **Martin/Marietta**, the company responsible for the Real 3-D engine used in *Daytona* and other arcade

titles, are currently working on a **sequel to Sega's Desert Tank**. • Sega's AM2 department in Japan is simultaneously developing **Fighting Vipers** for both the arcade and Saturn. • Look for **Toshinden 2** to be distributed by Capcom in the arcades. • Finally, in addition to *Mr. Do*, Namco has an **Arcade Classic Pack** for PlayStation on the way in Japan. The collection will include *Mappy Land*, *Galaga*, *Galaxian* and *Pac-Man*. But don't count on it coming to the states — Sony supposedly has a rule that all games must have endings or ultimately end, and we all know that *Pac-Man* has no ending... See you in thirty days!

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