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NEXT GENERATION VIDEO GAME MAGAZINE

VOLUME 3 • ISSUE 7

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STREET FIGHTER ALPHA

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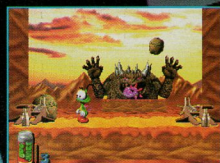
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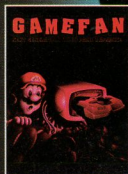


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VIRTUAL BOY



The Virtual Boy Makes It's GameFan Debut.
GameFan goes where no magazine has gone before. Read all about it in our exclusive special report
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COVER STORY

COME JOIN US AS WE IMMERSE OURSELVES IN NINTENDO'S NEW VIRTUAL BOY FOR THE FIRST TIME. GAMEFAN TAKES YOU UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL INTO GUMPEI YOKOI'S AMAZING 3D GAME SYSTEM



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Terry Wolfinger

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Heolo:
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Hudson Soft:
3D Bomberman
Vertical Force

Keimco:
Virtual Baseball
Ocean:
Waterworld
Pack-in Video:
Virtual Fishing

VIRTUAL BOY

GameFan Editor

in Chief, Dave

Halverson takes

Nintendo's hot

new Virtual Boy

for a spin (and

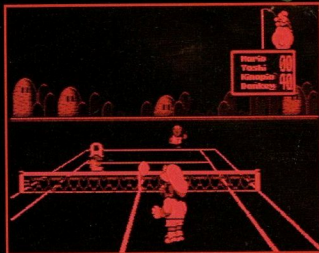
vice-versa).

So what type of hardware creates these intricate virtual worlds?

A custom 32-bit RISC (Reduced-Instruction-Set Computing) architecture with NEC's 20MHz, 32-bit V-810 chip at the helm. This chip is a slightly less powerful version of the CPU used in NEC's new PC-FX home system. The actual LED, or light-emitting diode, display was designed by the Waltham, Massachusetts-based Reflection Technologies, Inc., a leader in the world of miniaturized display products. The Virtual Boy's sound hardware is a much improved version of Nintendo's stereophonic

8-bit FM music system, but the VB is accentuated with the ability to play PCM samples. The system has three external inputs: the AC power adapter jack, the link-up cable input and a controller port. Speaking of the VB's controller, it's a joy to both hold and behold - the streamlined, elegant double-grip pad is very comfortable and the inclusion of two cross-keys and two additional buttons on the rear of the unit - making for six in all - is quite an evolution towards 3D control in the design of the familiar game pad.

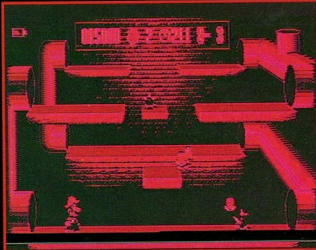




Mario's Dream Tennis

Since the announcement of Nintendo's groundbreaking 3D game machine, the Virtual Boy, the critics have been anything but kind. Truth is, no one really knows what this great little system is all about. Now, GameFan will shed some light on Mr. Gumpel Yokoi's vision of the future. The Virtual Boy creates a sort of inner sanctum for the game player. The sharp red and black color scheme coupled with the intense 3D environment give you a keen sense of immersion. For the first time ever you feel like you're actually IN the game. Not like the slogans have said in the past, but actually IN the environment. It's hard to explain. Try to imagine strapping a tiny room on to your head that's thirty feet long.

Contrary to what you may have heard or imagined, based on what you've read, VR Boy graphics are not all wire frame. Indeed some are, but for the most part the visuals are comprised of 32-bit, bit-mapped images. The level of detail obtainable through this medium astounds me. It was hard to imagine detailed red and black graphics before I played the VR Boy. But after sampling the seven launch titles, I can tell you first hand, you will be amazed at how sharp and detailed the graphics are. These effects are obtained mostly through clever shading and of course, good art.



Mario Clash

The Virtual Boy sound reminds me of a Game Boy on steroids, with one additional channel for samples. It's not exactly SNES quality, but it's gamey and sort of catchy in a Nintendo sort of way, if you know what I mean. The speech and sound



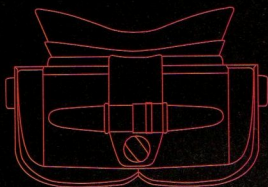
Teleroboxer

day that the Virtual Boy is released I will be the first in line. To my surprise everyone in our office, right down to the toughest critics, loved this lil' red ultimate toy. In fact, once they sat down and stuck their face in, it was hard to pry them away!

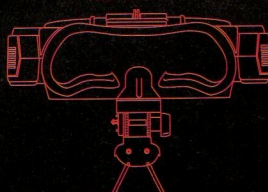
The Virtual Boy creates a sort of inner sanctum for the game player

With any 3D device there's always the question "Will it give me a blazin' migraine?" The answer is absolutely not. Even after extended play I felt no side effects whatsoever. Of course readjusting to the real world takes a minute or two after an intense 3D battle, but no pain is involved. The VR Boy has two adjustments on the top of the unit so you can tailor the screens to your personal comfort level.

In closing I'd like to quote that famous GameFan law: "Never judge a system until it has had a year to prove itself". And never judge based on first looks. Game development doesn't happen overnight, especially when new hardware is involved. Of course once the Virtual Boy is released, all the critics who are cutting it down now will jump on the old band wagon, foot inserted neatly in mouth. Hey, that's the way it's always been, and the way it will probably always be.

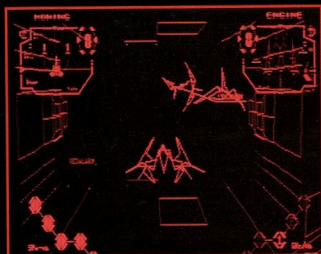


VIRTUAL BOY

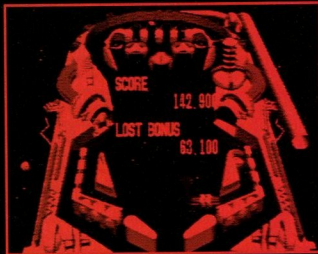


effects are sharp and clear.

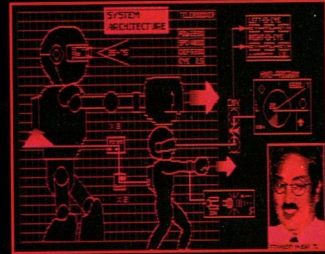
I was lucky enough to spend some quality time with a unit, here at GF and I walked away totally convinced, The



Red Alarm

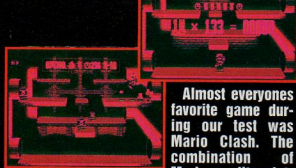
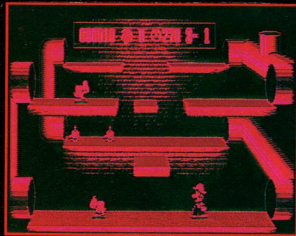


Galactic Pinball



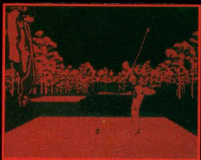
Teleroboxer

Mario Clash



Almost everyone's favorite game during our test was Mario Clash. The combination of Mario quality platforming and 3 dimensional gameplay is a perfect marriage. In Mario Clash you (as Mario) have the ability to travel through pipes up, down, into and out of the environment. The goal is to hop a koopa, grab his shell and hurl it either towards or away from yourself at the bouncing enemies, once to stun 'em and a second time to smash 'em. The gameplay is rather simple but the intensity really picks up as more and more enemies appear, from ghosts and spines to flying goombas. The addictability factor here is at an all-time high, and the 3D effect is stunning! Screen shots will never do this game justice, you've gotta' try it!

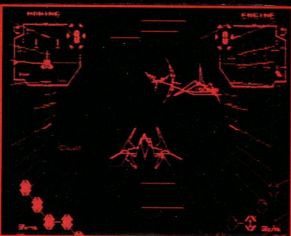
VR Golf



T&E's VR Golf has all the features the big boys have, including the digi-

tized characters and options o'plenty. Before you swing you can adjust your stance, direction, and pick your club. Then the fun really starts. Once you drive that lil' sucker down the green, no matter where your ball lies, you will get a sense of depth. All of the hills, bunkers, and trees are layered as they would be if you were actually standing right there! Three dimensional graphics give golfing sim's a whole new angle. The preview version we tested wasn't quite complete, but this game shows great promise, especially if you're a fan of the T&E tradition of golf sims. We'll have more on VR Golf as the game progresses.

Red Alarm

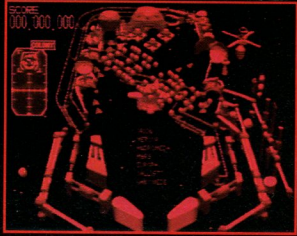


Poking ones face into a game of Red Alarm, the first thing you'll realize is that you have never really played

a 3D shooter before. Looking from behind the ship is one thing, but feeling the amazing depth all around you is another. You use the A and B buttons on the controller to speed up and slow down (you can even stop or fly in reverse) and the button on the backside of the controller to fire. All the while you can steer anywhere in the environment, forward or backward. The graphics are detailed wireframes depicting enemy crafts, huge robots, and walls that come alive with faces stretching out right at you! The music and voice in Red Alarm are high quality, rounding out the game's features. This fantastic shooting game should be available at system launch this August. At that time we'll have an in-depth review. See you then!

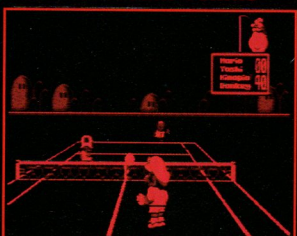


Galactic Pinball



Nintendo's own Galactic Pinball takes pinball to a whole new level. Of course, everything is in deep 3D but the game itself is loaded with many unique gameplay options as well. For instance, some power-ups will allow you to spin and shoot while piloting a small hover craft above the surface. Levels include Alien, UFO, Cosmic and Colony. Get ready for an entirely new pinball experience!

Mario's Dream Tennis

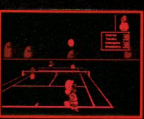


I've always been a sucker for a good tennis game, or, at least what I thought was a good tennis game.

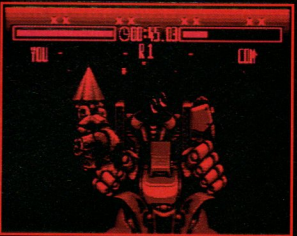
Never have I been more immersed in a sports game then I was in Mario's Dream Tennis on the Virtual Boy.

Let me paint you a picture. Imagine you are a shoulder height camera floating just behind Mario on a real time, real depth, actual tennis court. The effect is nothing short of astounding! Playing this game makes me think of what someone could do with a football game, and this actually scares me. I'm tellin' ya' there's nothing like three dimensional sports... nothing.

The version of MDT I played featured a doubles match: me (Mario) and Yoshi against Donkey Kong Jr. and Toad. I played back and let Yoshi handle the net most of the time, and I gotta' tell ya', this thing is just too cool. You are going to love this game!



Teleroboxer



Among the initial releases for the Virtual Boy is Teleroboxer, obviously one of the first prospects for the new hardware. While Telero doesn't feature the stunning depth

showcased in Mario Clash and Red Alarm, it does have depth in the gameplay dept. TB is much like a 3D version of Super Punch-Out with futuristic characters. The 3D effects come into play with the fighter's lists. As they punch, lists come right at you. There are a wide variety of special punches and enough strategy to keep you hooked for hours. An excellent link-up game!