

RETROWORLD

with Jason Moore



ou don't have to look back too far to find Nintendo retro classics. The almost forgotten

Virtual Boy is one of the most extraordinary machines ever released and, though we've looked at it before, it's time once again to squint your face up and get ready to let your eyes bleed.

One of the major stumbling blocks of the VB is that it's so uncomfortable to play. I actually remove the stand from mine, lay flat on the floor and balance it on my face. Not only is this still pretty awkward, but there is a dirty, me-shaped space on the carpet where I've been vacuumed around. Then there's the Nintendo tattoo, the dark red ring that's left around your face if you've been playing for more than ten minutes. When Nintendo originally released the machine, they explained that the reason they didn't set it into a more familiar styled head-set, was that their research had proved this more damaging to the eye. Frankly, I can't see the difference.

However, Nintendo did promise the release of a shoulder harness unit. Now, while the promotional photos made the harness look about as comfortable as a surgical truss, it would no doubt have been a better alternative than strapping your VB to your head with your belt and a handful of elastic bands. Unfortunately, the harness was never released and VB fans across the world can be instantly recognised by their alien-like Nintendo tattoo.

Interest in the machine goes from strength to strength, recent rumours of the discovery of a missing game have sent the prices of lesser titles rocketing. VB Lab is a strange roleplaying game which takes place in a chemistry lab.

For those of us who are more frugal, there has recently been news of a multi-cart for the system. Apparently, the Hong Kong sourced cartridge contains all 21 official games and some additional demos and prototypes. Don't get too excited though, the cartridge has yet to be seen for sale outside the territory.



WATERWORLD - OCEAN

Waterworld is the only game to be released in the US, but not to make it to the Japanese market in any form. The game itself sees you in command of a missile-armed boat and the weak, mission based plot, is really just an excuse for a 3D shoot-em-up. Variety is almost non-existent, fresh a couple of levels and it soon becomes apparent how dull this title is. That said, the graphics are clear and well defined and the 3D effect is both fast and realistic: it seems that Waterworld bares more than a passing resemblance to its parent movie. All effects, no content.

RETROWRATING

41%

SPACE SQUASH - COCONUT

This Japanese title goes to the very roots of video entertainment, as it harks back to that TV game classic, Pong. To push Pong into 3D may not sound like the most revolutionary concept but the result is a very playable game. You play from a first person perspective behind your bat and must beat your computer opponent by varying your shots, hoping he will eventually miss the ball. While the whole success of the original Pong can be put down to its two player game, the opponents in Space Squash are tricky enough to offer a considerable challenge.

RETROWRATING

69%

VB BASEBALL - KEMCO

Why are Americans so obsessed with sports games? Read my interview with Howard Lincoln and he'll rant on about the great new sports games coming out for Nintendo machines. It seems you can't set a console in the States if you can't play baseball or basketball on it. Strange then, that the baseball



title for the VB was written in Japan. To be honest, I think one player sports games are pretty pointless and VB Baseball's no exception. Nice big chunky

graphics, smooth animation and simple yet compelling gameplay but, in the end, you're just trying to beat a bunch of statistics. Americans... hummmmmph!

RETROWRATING

53%

VIRTUAL FISHING - NINTENDO

One of the rarer VB titles and it's not hard to see why. There can't be many hardened games players whose second hobby is fishing. This title may be highly sought after by collectors but that's only because it never sold very well. Spend more than ten minutes bawling round the game's Japanese text and you'll soon figure out why. When you finally select the right combination of options you may be rewarded with an animated fish but, for a system so reliant on its 3D hardware, it's bizarre that Nintendo chose to release such an inactive game.

RETROWRATING

44%



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