

RETROWORLD

with Jason Moore

Let's take a look at yet more games for Nintendo's much loved Virtual Boy.

MARIO CLASH

Nintendo's first 3D outing was a harmless game of tennis court, while the game played came back at us with very little more than the Original Game Boy version. Mario Clash however was Nintendo's attempt at offering things right.

Get the Mario's more traditional platform outings, this game is more of a puzzle. Each of the 40 levels is played in a single screen, 3D arena, with a framework made up of pipes and platforms.

Unfortunately, these arenas are packed full of various obstacles - mainly larger obstacles, from Mario's fun stacked world. As well, the key used is diagonal, and, armed with only a jump button, Mario must eradicate each area of enemies.

While the game offers considerable variation over the levels, you can't help feeling that the old Mario magic is missing. Perhaps things would've been better if the scores were battery backed onto the cartridge, or if you couldn't just choose which level you wanted to attempt. Overall, an interesting puzzle game, which does raise to show how innovative the NES 3D capabilities are, this provides a lasting challenge.

RETROWATING

BASEBALL '95

Common opinion in the games industry is that if a console is going to be accepted in the US, it simply must have a baseball game. Kenic's title definitely fits the bill.

The initial entry into, offering a large screen meeting in say ball, instantly confirm to the 3D cartoonish view of the sport. Sure, there are pages of bewildering Japanese statistics, but once you get to the score card, things couldn't be simpler.

First comes the batting, with a well defined 3D stadium as the backdrop. Believe it or not, I managed to hit the ball with my first ever timing, which considering the complexity of other baseball titles, instantly warmed me to the game. But that's not to say it's easy.

Every instance of movement and timing makes a vast difference to the overall lot. When it comes to fielding, the ball's visible shadow means it's even possible to make a catch every now and then.

It's the mixture of pick-up-and-play and the skill needed to get good at the game, which makes Baseball '95 one of the more worthwhile sports games on the Virtual Boy.

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JACK BROS

When I first played the Japanese version of Jack Bros, the hearts of Japanese had made me think it was packed with side playing elements. On finally locating an American version, I was rather disappointed to find that the text was just instructions and tips on how to play each level. Essentially, Jack Bros is a cross between

Gunwitt and single player Bomberman. Inevitably around 3D means, picking up keys to unlock the key to unlock the key. On your way pick-up extra bonuses, but to add to your trouble, intro weapons and more being damaged by the various enemies and virtual traps. The game's not simple, though.

Some critics have long said they will often play Bomberman-style bombs. The game is made up of six worlds, each in themselves, consisting of a lot of stages. Each world has to be completed in the fifteen rows, and all the various hazards are intent on slowing you down. When you reach each stage's end you jump down to the one underneath, a simple, but elegant use of the 3D hardware.

The final stage of each level houses a big boss and while they're not particularly difficult to defeat, keeping one eye on the rapidly depleting counter can be very stressful as the counter gets to zero before you complete a world. It's back to the beginning!

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SPACE INVADERS

Talio

If there's one game that Virtual Boy fans crave then it's Space Invaders - maybe it's the game's official Talio status, or just the thought of playing it in 3D. One thing for sure: though the criticism of a battery backed score table in this game's greatest flaw.

There are two play modes. The traditional 2D game is completely authentic but the 3D version comes complete with duplicating aliens and stunningly detailed

backdrop. The UFO that previously just used to drift across the screen now brings invader announcements, so shooting it down is much more of a priority.

There are also score attack and time attack modes, which would do much to improve the usability of the title if only the scores could be saved.

Unfortunately though, all the things that make Space Invaders so frustrating have made their way into this version as well. You can still only shoot one missile at a time, for instance, and the annoying noise that accompany every shot is at three too.

Overall, a positively unvarnished interpretation of a video game classic. It's got its flaws but we

RETROWATING



67%



69%



73%



84%

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