

16-BIT SYSTEM MEGA REVIEW—WHICH IS BEST!!!

THE 1990

A SENDAI PUBLICATION

"Your day has come, Jaquie!"

VIDEO GAME BUYER'S GUIDE

PREVIEWS OF
UPCOMING HITS:

SUPER CONTRA
CASTLEVANIA 3
NINJA GAI DEN 2
FOR THE NINTENDO

SUPER SHINOBI
GOLDEN AXE
FORGOTTEN WORLDS
FOR THE SEGA GENESIS

GRADIUS
CASTLEVANIA
KWIRK
FOR THE NINTENDO GAMEBOY

TELL-ALL REVIEWS
OF THE HOTTEST
GAMES FOR YOUR

NINTENDO
SEGA

TURBOGRAFX-16
GENESIS
GAMEBOY



PLEASE
DO NOT TOUCH



ROBOWARRIOR

RoboWarrior! Depth... challenge...mystery...electronic terror that pushes players to the limit.

Here's the game Jaleco created as *the answer* to what players have been asking us for... challenge...complexity...mystery...action.

Destined to inspire a cult of its own, RoboWarrior delivers depth of play that takes the Nintendo Entertainment System® Player to his outermost limits.

With **27 stages of play, 12 weapons, 14 enemies, 7 Lords, 6 extra powers, a room full of idols, treasures, golden keys... and more**, RoboWarrior is set on a man-made planet where the human population has been driven underground by an evil, powerful army of marauders.

RoboWarrior places heavy demands on the player's memory and problem-solving ability, as well as his aptitude for dealing with complexity.

If challenge and complexity are what you're looking for, then RoboWarrior is the game for you. Ask for it at your favorite video game store, now!

THE ARSENAL!

12 deadly and powerful weapons defeat fearsome enemies.



LIFE VEST



CANDLE



HYPER MISSILE



SUPER BOMB



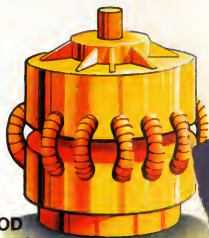
MAGICAL BEE

THE POWERS!

When collected, six powers step up the effect of the weapons. Here are two of these powers.



ENERGY CAPSULE



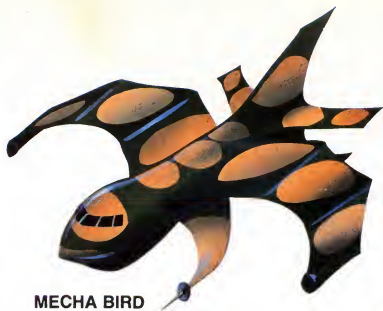
LIFE POD

THE ENEMIES!

RoboWarrior has to eliminate as many enemies as he can throughout the game. Here are some of the 14.



WISP



MECHA BIRD



WANE

THE LORDS!

RoboWarrior's 27 stages include 7 Lords of Evil. Some of these are:



GLOBULA,
LORD OF AMOEBAS



LIAN,
LORD OF AIR



GHOLEM, LORD OF STONE

ROOM OF IDOLS!

RoboWarrior must find the secret way into the Room of Idols. Beneath some idols are hidden valuable objects necessary to continue the game.



THE CHALICE!

In certain stages the Chalice appears, and unlocks the power of the key. Its magical powers help RoboWarrior toward his goal, so he must watch for the Chalice and carry it forward.



THE CHALICE

THE KEY!

At the end of every game stage is the Key, necessary to exit to the next stage.



THE FACES BEHIND THE PHONES LINES

8

Has a video game ever gotten you completely stumped? In this article you'll not only meet the people who provide such valuable information for free, you'll also learn the do's and don'ts of how the services work and how to get your questions answered fast!

THE BEST (AND WORST) OF 1989

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What did YOU think was the best game of the year? What was the worst cart you played in '89? Find out if your winners and losers match ours in this candid look at Electronic Gaming 1989.

THE 16-BIT REVOLUTION

73

1989 was finally the year that Americans got to witness the debut of true 16-Bit technology in their home video games. In this special reprint, we examine the current status of "next generation" gaming, and take the first look at several of the systems of tomorrow.

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Who ya gonna call when you're having problems with your games? The phone counselors, of course!



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What were the best games of 1989? How about the worst? See if your favorites match ours!



28

See what the Review Crew thinks of current and upcoming releases on all the game systems!



73

Get the final word on the 16-Bitters!

GET SET FOR RADICAL ACTION



Stand by, gamers! Capcom introduces two new thrilling games to its Nintendo series. And as always, the graphics are hot and the action intense.

First, experience the ultimate character adventure game! As MegaMan, you must conquer and control the eight empires of the evil Dr. Wily. But beware of his sinister robots that rule each empire. Their special powers present a unique challenge at every level.

Then, prepare for undercover action as the Strider. Your orders are to enter Russia and infiltrate the Red Army, returning enemy secrets to your superiors. But be extremely cautious. You know what the Russians do to spies!

So get set for radical action in these exciting additions to the Nintendo Entertainment System. From Capcom, U.S.A.



MegaMan 2 Screen Shot



Strider Screen Shot

CAPCOM[®]

THE 1990 VIDEO GAME BUYERS GUIDE

A SENDAI PUBLICATION

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insert coin

GAMES, GAMES, GAMES!!!

Welcome to the second edition of the Electronic Gaming Monthly Video Game Buyer's Guide! In this special 1990 issue you'll find dozens of reviews on all of the hottest and most talked-about games of the year! You'll also find sneak peeks and first looks at some of the most radical carts coming next year, including never-before-scene screen shots of Castlevania 3, Super Contra and Ninja Gai Den 2 for the NES, Gradius, Castlevania, and Lock-n-Chase for the GameBoy, and incredible scenes from the most power-packed carts coming for the Genesis and TurboGrafx-16.

In addition to these previews and reviews, we'll also recap many of the exciting events of the year and award top honors to those games which displayed superior quality in our "Best and Worst of 1989" special. Find out if your favorites match ours in this no-holds-barred look at gaming in '89!

And for those of you who are still contemplating the purchase of a new machine, we've compiled and updated many of the stories we've run on 16-Bit and other advanced game machines. You'll also find info on the handheld systems and news you won't see anywhere else!

It's been a great year for electronic gaming, and everything indicates that 1990 will be even better! You can be sure that EGM will be there every step of the way, capturing the breaking stories, latest tips, and tell-it-like-it-is reviews that we know you want!

THE EGM REVIEW CREW

STEVE

The main man around the halls of EGM, our editor-in-chief can cut through an alien horde and type 80 words-a-minute with ease! Steve favors shooters and good action/adventures (he rates Blazing Lazers, Ghouls and Ghosts, and Double Dragon 2 as his favorites) to RPGs, but he's beginning to realize the real fun in a good quest.

ED

The oldest gunslinger in the EGM Wild Bunch, Ed enjoys breaking down RPGs and especially enjoys a good Sega cart. He currently is tackling the Genesis carts and is awaiting the 6-meg masterpiece, Phantasy Star 2.

DAVID

EGM's associate editor enjoys carts that require strategy and puzzle-solving as well as fast-action reflexes. His current favorites are Tetris for GameBoy, Ultima on the NES, and Dungeon Explorer for TurboGrafx-16.

JIM, MARTIN, AND DONN

The resident game pros in the EGM offices have what it takes to blast through any game that comes along. From the most sophisticated RPGs to the most mindless shooters to the most intricate action/adventure games, this trio of video champs have racked up more points and completed more titles than any other group of gaming professionals on the face of the planet!

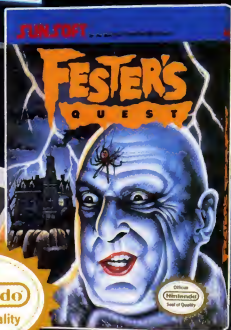
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THE FACES BEHIND THE PHONE LINES

Has Ultima got you stumped? Having problems getting Simon through the Castlevania quest? Don't give up - there is hope! Answers to almost all of your gaming questions are only a phone call away! You can dial many of your favorite game companies and get the latest tips and info from best video hot shots around!

For the four hundredth time you've attempted to fight your way past the seemingly indestructable Boss on level eight, and each time your character gets sent on the express elevator out of Nintendoland. You finally work up enough nerve to call the long distance help number you saw in the back of the manual. Three minutes later, equipped with a few tips and some secret information, you're calmly blasting your way past the once-invincible Boss, on to the final level and new and darker secrets!

Who are those people on the other end of the phone? How did they get so good at video games? What are their jobs really like, and how did they get them?

First of all, these champions are called "Game Counselors" or "Technical Support Representatives" if they are also required to answer questions that pertain to inoperative or defective hardware. Most of them are around twenty-three to twenty-eight years old, although sometimes you'll encounter a game counselor who is well into his forties. Regardless, there is usually one factor that all game counselors have in common: they love video games!

"That's a prerequisite for working at VIC TOKAI," explained their game counselor, Tom Grice. "I always played games when I was a kid. I was a game fanatic! I never thought I'd be making money at it though!"

Tony Van, the main man at Activision, mentioned the importance of being knowledgeable on as many different

systems as possible. "You've got to be familiar with all the systems. If it's just video games, it's not too difficult. For computer-related systems, which is the bulk of my job, I have to know each system, what hardware it can accommodate, what it doesn't have, and how people can buy it. We have to know what will happen in certain operating systems, what those errors mean, and how we can go around it."

While many companies employ their own game counselors, Nintendo is definitely king of the hill in this area. Their operation has more than 90 people working phone lines and answering more than 25,000 calls each week! Not only can the Nintendo counselors answer questions about Nintendo's own games, like Metroid, Punch-Out!, and Zelda, they also have a wealth of valuable info on games produced by the 36 Nintendo licensees!

While we all know that phone counselors can be extremely helpful in beating the games, especially the more involved RPG titles and quest adventures, what exactly are the qualifications needed to become a phone counselor? How do these people end up in the positions they're in?

Jennifer Pascal at Acclaim Entertainment gave a very frank description of how she wound up as one of their game counselors. "When I started working here, I was mainly doing a lot of filing and secretarial work. While I was using the FAX machine, I would have to wait a long time for the transmissions to finish. I would wander over to the video

many other joysticks currently on the market, with a base measuring roughly 8" X 6", with a sleek, sloped design and suction cup feet for optimum stability. The joystick graces the left portion of

NES ADVANTAGE + (Nintendo)

True to its name, this joystick offers playing advantages plus a host of other benefits that together made it unlike anything ever seen before when it was released; both in and out of the arcades!

This attractive unit boasts the same grey/black/red color tones found on the NES master unit. Measuring roughly 9" x 7" x 2", the NES Advantage is one of the first to claim honors for an eight direction "arcade-style" joystick. The joystick extends approximately three inches from the front favoring the left portion of the joystick. The metal stem is topped with a clear plastic ball just like the joystick found on most of your coin-op favorites.

Connecting the NES Advantage to the main system is a 6' cord that terminates at the end to accommodate two joystick ports. This thoughtful design makes it easier for two people to play between plays to enjoy the fun of playing with the NES Advantage without having to purchase a second joystick (unless, of course, you want simultaneous game play in Super Mario Bros. or Ikari Warriors).

The "A" and "B" buttons are located to the right of the joystick. Both are equally vibrant red and are slightly raised from the base and are oversized for easy access. Directly above the joystick is the "Turbo" knob which allows you to lock the joystick with depressed buttons for rapid fire and auto fire.

A 1-2 turbo button is located on the top switch. Self-test buttons are also included for testing the joystick, working well with the NES Advantage joystick. The NES Advantage is best used in conjunction with the 1-2 turbo button for an exchange of

ULTIMATE SUPERSTICK (Beeshu)

Here comes the latest of high-control joystick do Entertainment Master System the greatest meshed with bring the front



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MANIA CHALLENGE, RENEGADE, DOUBLE DRAGON,
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FOR A PREVIEW, VISIT YOUR NEAREST NES DEALER.

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games area and play games until the FAX machine was finished." Her superiors quickly realized where her true talents ran and switched her to game counseling.

Robert Leitgeb wandered into game counseling in a similar fashion. He was initially an assistant sales manager at Tecmo, Inc., and he began to play more and more of the games from his company. "Everybody just started referring game questions to me because I started figuring out the games. It was more or less just handed to me," he continued. "So I guess I made my own fate by playing the games so much!"

Just as Robert continues doing double duty as game counselor and sales assistant, many other people combine counseling and technical support jobs with other company responsibilities.

Patrick Bennett, who works at Konami, acknowledges that many of his counseling duties carry over into other areas. "A lot of my job is phone contact with players, and answering mail on a daily basis. But I'm also involved in our computer software department. Testing our software and Nintendo games at the same time."

Mark Margulies, the man with the answers over at SNK Corporation, not only answers phone lines and the incoming customer mail, but also puts out a free monthly newsletter, with reviews and interviews in each issue. (You can get your free copy by writing to Mark at SNK, 246 Sobrante Way, Sunnyvale, California 94086).

Tom Popelka, meanwhile, assists as technical support rep at HAL America, when he's not operating as Vice President of Marketing or overseeing construction of the company's new offices.

Tony from Activision gives a good description of an average day for a Game Counselor, "My position is technical support representative. We're on the phones from 9AM to 4:30PM every day, and we're taking all the technical calls. But we do all sorts of other

things besides answering phone calls though. We have to figure out the questions when they come through, and if it's something we've never run into before, we have to test for it to make sure it's not a problem with their system. We also do different kinds of testing on the products as they become available, and make suggestions as to what would be helpful or how the games may be improved."

"It's more than just sitting in front of a television screen playing games all day," remarks Byron Cook from Tradewest. "Really I'm a Product Manager (overseeing the development of new games), but I do the game counseling as well."

As Patrick, the game counselor at Konami points out, "As a game counselor your job is to assist the players and help them get through the game - to make the game more enjoyable. So they'll call up and ask if you have tips on the game. You try to give them a piece of a hint here, a part of a clue there. You have to allow them to think a little bit for themselves. You don't want to tell them exactly how to do things, but you give them hints and clues to allow them to do it for themselves."

Martin Alessi, a member of the U.S.

National Video Game Team and phone counselor for FCI agrees that giving clues is better than providing a walk thru of each game, but takes a different approach with their latest release, Ultima. "Ultima is such a complex and challenging game, it is often hard to give callers just one or two clues and expect them to get anywhere. Specific tips are needed to get through each of the game's different challenges." While it may be intricate and have plenty of RPG and adventure elements, there are some questions that are more common than others. 'Where is Sherri located', 'Where is the mystic sword', and 'Where is Ambrosia' are three of the most asked questions that each have answers that explain other parts of the adventure. Everything is tied together and affects another part of the game which players seem to like."

Robert at Tecmo notices that "the age group varies, and it depends a lot on the games. For some games, I get a lot of adult calls. Our game RYgar, for instance, has callers that are a bit younger, while Solomon's Key had a older following due to the strategy overtones."

Martin Alessi agrees, "most of the calls for Zanac, Seicross, and other action games are from younger players, while those for the others, including



A game counselor in his native environment. FCI pros Paul Ojeda and Zack Neal field another call from a perplexed FCI game player!

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KUNG-FU HEROES



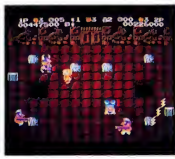
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the bulk of the calls for Ultima have been in their upper twenties, thirties, and forties."

Mike Arkin works with Jennifer Pascal at Acclaim Entertainment. He is becoming aware of a growing trend of women and girls playing the games. "We're getting a lot of calls from female players. They like the fact that we've added some female characters into



Byron Cook from Tradewest

our new games like Knight Rider. The women and girls seem to like it."

Nearly all the game counselors we interviewed had mentioned the overwhelming hunger of callers that seek tips, tricks, codes, and other secret information that's not usually printed in the manuals. At Tradewest, Byron Cook says, "The callers want to know about the hidden things in the game, or if there is anything not listed in the in-

struction book."

Robert at Tecmo estimates that most of the calls are for hints and tips also, and sometimes they'll ask questions about totally unforeseen situations. Sometimes, however, these unusual techniques will backfire. "Kids will do things in a game that you wouldn't ordinarily do, just to see what happens. There's a spot in Rygar where you can leap off the edge of the floating castle and fall into another castle. You never would expect anyone to do that. Instead of dying, you get trapped inside there and because there's no time limit on Rygar you have to unplug the cartridge and lose absolutely everything you've worked for!"

Game counselors also receive a lot of questions concerning availability of games. "When's P.O.W. coming out?", "Will you be making a sequel to Ultima?", or "Can I buy carts straight from you?" are some of the most frequently asked questions. The majority of callers want code words, secret continues, of hidden power-ups and level selects. Free men awards, revealing hidden objects, or improving your fighting abilities are also valuable tricks.

There are major differences of opinion on the practice of giving out secrets and tips such as these. Activision's Tony Van comments, "A lot of people like the secrets and power-ups. The way I feel about it, it's kind of a drag for some people to be able to play forever and some people can't. We like to have all of our info upfront and make the

game fair to play for everyone."

Robert at Tecmo agrees with the difficulty of figuring out some of the codes. "Some of those codes are impossible. Like the one for Rambo (a combination of 32 separate letters and numbers) or Metal Gear (five sets of five letters). Given all the possibilities, coming up with a code on your own would seem pretty much impossible."



Tom Grice of Vic Tokai

But some of the other Game Counselors don't share Robert's positive attitude towards publishing tips and secrets. Tom Popelka of Hal America views the effect of these tips in this way: "When you see tips or a manual coming out on a game that has taken two years to develop, and there's a trick that is released thirty days after the game that gives the kids a shortcut to the ending, then where do you go? It can also limit (Continued on Page 82)

What to know before you call...

Here are some helpful
hints on how you can get
all of your questions
answered without running
up the phone bill...

Phone counselors often answer hundreds of calls a day from enthusiastic game players from around the country who want to have the latest tips, release dates, or secrets. To answer your questions, however, there are several things that should be remembered before you even pick up the phone. Observing these phone counseling rules will allow you to not only get your questions answered promptly, but also enable others to call!

- 1) Read all the way through the manual carefully and play the game as much as you can. Give it a little effort, you may solve your problems by yourself!
- 2) Know what to ask! Where are you in the game and what exactly has you stumped. Know your questions!
- 3) Try to limit your questions to three or less. If you tie up the lines more than a couple of minutes you may be preventing others from calling!

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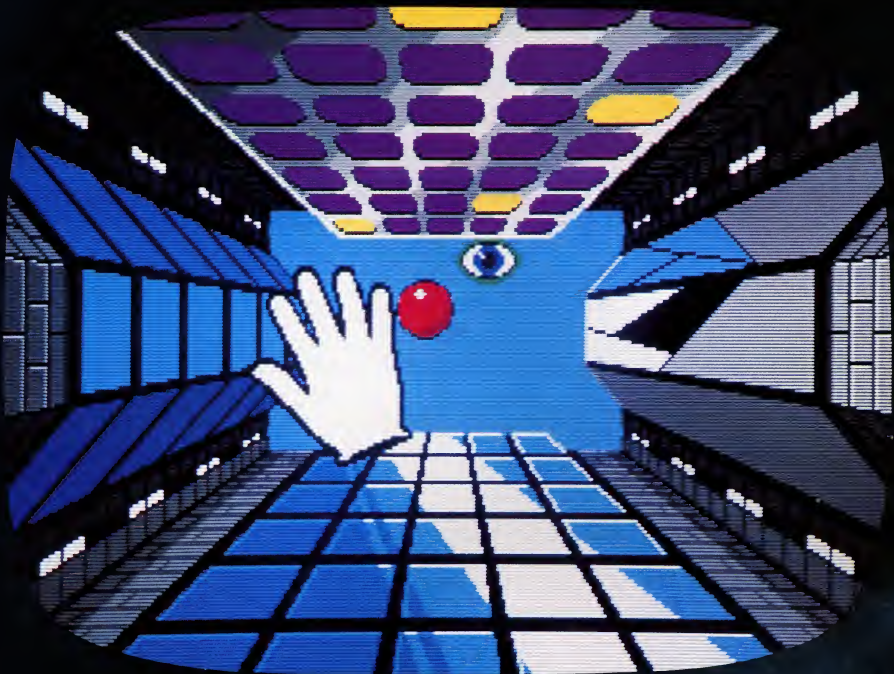
Twist your wrist for an immediate head butt in Double Dragon. Bend a finger for “Thrash Mode” —your character turns and shoots in all possible directions. Bend another for “One-Shot

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Power Glove in the
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BEST AND WORST OF 1989

What was your favorite game of the year?

See if your favorites (and least favorites) match ours when EGM picks the winners of 1989 and highlights the games, machines, and companies that made this the hottest year in the history of video games!!!!



THE BEST GAME OF THE YEAR (TurboGrafx) - The Legendary Axe

The perfect blend of action and adventure make The Legendary Axe a must-have for Turbo owners. Great graphics and sounds compliment the outstanding theme.

THE BEST GAME OF THE YEAR - Ghouls and Ghosts

With graphics and sounds right out of the arcade and game play that kept us challenged after the first play, Ghouls and Ghosts took the top spot hands down. Ghouls blew us away from start to finish and really showed how good a 16-Bitter could be!



BEST GRAPHICS IN A VIDEO GAME - Ghouls and Ghosts

From the screens full of highly detailed game characters, to the multi-directional scrolling, to the enormous fully animated Boss creatures, Ghouls and Ghosts is an excellent example of just how powerful the Genesis' 16-Bit brain is. This game is so close to the super-charged coin-op of the same name you may find yourself looking for a coin slot!

THE BEST GAME OF THE YEAR (Nintendo) - Tecmo's Ninja Gai Den

With its cinemascope effects, interesting storyline, and radical game play, Ninja Gai Den proved to be an instant winner.

THE BEST GAME OF THE YEAR (Sega) - Sega's Wonder Boy 3

Will Wonder Boy's problems never end?!? Hopefully not, since the games just seem to get better and better! This time around you can change into different animals during your battles.

BEST BGM AND SOUND IN A VIDEO GAME - NEC's Fighting Street

Thanks to their revolutionary mega-peripheral, the CD-ROM, NEC's first release captured this category

hands-down. Fighting Street is filled with CD-quality music, and sounds, not to mention true-to-life voices!



BEST NEW VIDEO GAME SYSTEM - Sega Genesis

Although it's catching heat now that the TurboGrafx-16 is sitting alongside, the Genesis edges out its worthy competition with its true 16-Bit processor and superior graphic and sound abilities. With more games, the Turbo could dethrone the Genesis, but with more games available and over 20 expected by Christmas, the Sega name and the Sega games let Genesis reign supreme!



MOST CHALLENGING VIDEO GAME - Sega's Phantasy Star

The Master System finally came into its own when Sega released this little gem. Phantasy Star is a fantastic and futuristic RPG that continues to baffle even the most ardent gamers with its expansive environment and challenging situations. Throw in a wide variety of opponents as well as some nicely drawn visuals and you get a game that exceeds its challenge by only one factor - its addictiveness!

BEST SPORTS-THEMED VIDEO GAME - tie:

World Class Baseball (TurboGrafx-16)
T. Lasorda Baseball (Genesis)
Baseball Simulator (Nintendo)

While this category may be crowded with winners, each title is deserving of the Best Sports Video Game title.

Both World Class Baseball from NEC and Tommy Lasorda Baseball from Sega stand out as the premiere baseball simulators, reproducing all aspects of play (batting, fielding, etc.) with breathtaking realism thanks to the mega-powered processors driving the games. They both look great and play great (in fact, they look almost identical although the Turbo title came first).

Culture Brain's new Baseball Simulator 1.000 gets top honors in this category, surpassing other outstanding efforts such as John Elway's Quarterback, Tecmo Bowl, and the Jalisco library by taking liberty with the sport itself and creating an entertaining and playable cart. Some of the specific pitches (which will give you an idea of the nature of this game) include the "Ninja" pitch and a flaming (literally) fastball that causes batters to EXPLODE if they are beated!

BEST SEQUEL TO AN EXISTING GAME - tie:

Mega Man II
Ghouls and Ghosts



Taking top honors here we find good old Mega Man back on Dr. Wily's case. Mega Man 2 succeeds by staying true to the nature of the first game but adds a whole new cast of crazy Boss villains, as well as a slew of unique power-up not found in the first game! This is not so much a new game as it is an extension of the first! Ghouls and Ghosts grabs another award here due to a tie-in with a game called Ghost and Goblins. There's no comparing the two, however, with Ghouls surpassing the original in more than just name.

MOST EXCITING NEW THEME IN A GAME - Tetris

Although it had a successful life as a computer game prior to appearing on the Nintendo, Tetris has managed to capture the hearts and minds of Americans despite the fact that the Russians are behind it.

An overly addictive puzzle game that's nauseatingly simple to play, Tetris has already spawned a flurry of sequels that use similar types of reflex/strategy combinations. None of the post-Tetris entries look that promising, but Tetris itself will long be known for creating a brand new genre of gaming.



BEST RPG VIDEO GAME - FCI's Ultima

Using an award-winning computer game (the traditional breeding ground for RPGs) as a blueprint for a new NES RPG is tough to beat!



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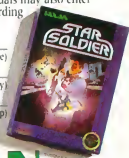
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BEST VIDEO GAME CONTROLLER - Hudson's Sansui SSS

In addition to being a good derivative of the standard Nintendo flat pad with all of the variable turbo boosters intact, the Hudson Joycard Sansui SSS wowed us with its ability to simulate real stereo sound on a machine that plays in mono! A nifty plug even allows you to play in private when you don't want anyone else to hear you!

HOTTEST HERO IN A VIDEO GAME - Capcom's Mega Man

Besides blasting away Dr. Wily and his evil minions, that mega-fantastic video game super-hero, Mega Man, also beat the likes of Simon Belmont (who fights a Dracula with more lives than Jason) and Link (what a wimp)! Mega Man's wide array of implements and superior firepower (not to mention his doo) make him number one in our books



COOLEST BOSS ATTACKERS - tie:

Ghouls and Ghosts
The Legendary Axe

The number-one games for both the next generation machines wiped out the competition. Loki, at the conclusion of Ghouls is a formidable opponent who rests upon a fantastic throne. Jagu, from Legendary Axe, may not be as regal, but he's every bit as mean. You'll find that the other Boss characters from these two games are equally nasty.



MOST RIDICULOUS PREMISE FOR A GAME - Tradewest's Taboo

As non-conventional video games, Jeopardy and Wheel of Fortune were fun to play and Anticipation wasn't overly stomach-churning. But who really needs a video game version of Tarot cards? The mystical responses aren't even interesting. At this rate a "Learn to Program BASIC on your Nintendo" and "Video Calculator" carts can't be far behind. Please guys, don't forget, it's a video GAME system.

MOST EAGERLY ANTICIPATED GAME (That WAS released) Konami's TMNT

While Ninja Gai Den and Strider helped generate a fair amount of interest, no other game was being looked for as much as Konami/Ultra's Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. It didn't really live up to expectations, but for a while Turtle hunting was the hottest hobby at Kay-Bee.

MOST EAGERLY ANTICIPATED GAME (That WASN'T released) Nintendo's S. Mario 3



The third chapter of the Super Mario Bros. series played to rave reviews and a chart-breaking run in Japan last year. In the states, however, it looks as though we'll have to wait until some time in 1990 to experience the further adventures of Mario and Luigi. For those of you who just can't wait, go plop a quarter in a Play-Choice 10 with SMB 3 at your local arcade. You'll find out why we're forecasting it as a strong contender for "Game of the Year" next year.

WORST PROPAGANDA FILM OF 1989 - Nintendo's GameBoy Press Conference

Tooting your horn for the sake of advertising is one thing, but without the flash of the superior 16-Bitters or a color hand-held at the Summer CES, Nintendo made an eager audience sit through a horrible film (starring Mario of course) that tried to convince everyone that 16-Bit machines were unnecessary and boasted no real strengths over the current NES. Give me a break! Nintendo may want us to stay in the Stone Age, but can they honestly think that there's no difference between the games for play on the Turbo and Genesis and their NES? Stuff a pizza in it Mario!

THE WORST FILM OF 1989 - Paramount's Star Trek V

Boldly going where no one ever wanted to go before in a Star Trek movie (to sleep) comes episode five, The Final Frontier. To call this movie boring is an understatement, especially when you consider that the high point in the flick is when Kirk, Spock, and McCoy sit around a camp fire and eat beans. We don't even get a fart joke for a cheap laugh! What could have been a summer blockbuster, with a final resolution of the Federation/Klingon conflict ending the current cast's mission with a galactic bang, fizzles with the only exploding space craft being an old probe.

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BEST MOVIE TO GAME Sunsoft's Batman

While this one may get pushed back into the early part of next year (Warner Bros. rumoredly thought initial versions didn't follow the movie close enough), Sunsoft's Batman video game for the NES is so good that it's hard not to give the game high praise after we've seen and played it. Although it's essentially a Castlevania spin-off, the game play and theme do the Caped Crusader complete jus-



WORST MOVIE TO GAME - LJN's Friday the 13th

No hacking and no slashing makes Jason a dull boy. Unfortunately, LJN has done such a great job of translating the James Bond of slashers that they end up with a game that's as bad as the movies on which it's based.

NO MOVIE TO GAME - Bandai's Star Trek V

Sometimes a movie title can make game development more difficult - especially when it's a space movie with no outer space shoot-ups or laser-blasting gun-fights. Is there much more that could be included in this game beyond getting Kirk, Spock, and McCoy to sing "Row, row, row your boat" in unison? Not likely - that could explain why Bandai backed out of the game.

MOST POWER-UPS IN A VIDEO GAME - American Technos' River City Ransom



Talk about enhancements! River City Ransom offers more power-up options and weapons than any other game in recent memory. By entering any of the different shops along the parkways, you can purchase books to learn new fighting techniques, buy squid and bagels for energy, or even a FREE smile from a pretty counter girl. All of the diversity makes this cartoon version of the classic Double Dragon (also from Technos) even more fun to play!

WIMPIEST HOSTAGE IN A VIDEO GAME - President Bush in Data East's Bad Dudes



A cheeseburger-totin' President held hostage? Whatever happened to good-lookin' damsels? And what's with this cheeseburger conspiracy thing?

MOST UNPRONOUN- CEABLE GAME TITLE - Koei's Nobunaga's Ambition

Why not just call it "Become a Mean Dude and Take Over a Country!" or "Unite Japan" or something like that? How many kids are going to be asking for a game they can't pronounce?

WORST STOMACH PROBLEM IN A GAME - Ghouls and Ghosts

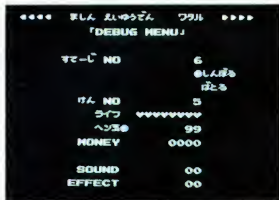
Pass the pepto! Never before has projectile vomiting been brought to life with such detailed animation and color tones!



WORST SPELLING ERROR IN A GAME - tie:

SNK's P.O.W. Thunder Force II

P.O.W. - "Congradurations"
Thunder Force II - "Secret Bonuss"



MOST UNINTELLIGIBLE SPELLING IN A GAME - NEC's Keith Courage

To view some strange writing, plug in Keith Courage on your Turbo, turn the game on, and then reset the game by pressing the Run and Select buttons at the same time. Once the game is reset, push and hold down the number one button, then the number two button, then the Run button, and then the Select button. Wait for the title screen to quit changing and when the word "Start" appears, push up eight times. Now go find a translator!



GET THE POWER TO MOVE

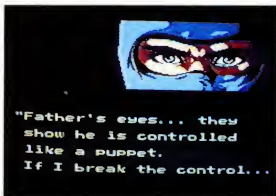
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BEST ENDING IN A VIDEO GAME - Tecmo's Ninja Gai Den

With super graphics detailing an equally outstanding storyline, the climax of Ninja Gai Den is better than some movies we've seen recently. Not only does the game explain many mysterious secrets, it also leaves the door open for part two (which is coming next year).

WORST ENDING IN A VIDEO GAME - FCI's Ultima

After spending mega-hours to finish this RPG, the virtual lack of an ending makes the adventure seem pretty worthless.



THE LONGEST ENDING IN A VIDEO GAME - NEC's Victory Run

At the conclusion of this rally racing game, your alter ego jumps from his car and rushes onto the shoreline and into the nearby ocean. While not tremendously exciting, the next couple of minutes are spent watching the sun go down in what seems like real time, while a boat drifts by.

THE MOST PROMISING GAME COMPANIES - Sega, Konami, Acclaim, Sunsoft, Tecmo

With the Genesis excitement in full swing, Sega has an open door with which to fan the flames with some intense softs. Several of these, The Super Shinobi, Truxton, and Super Monaco GP in particular, show extreme promise.

Konami holds the best all-around line-up with Castlevania - The Adventure and Gradius for GameBoy, as well as Super Contra (or Super C) and Castlevania 3 for NES. A Gradius 3 is rumored to be released soon in coin-op form.

Acclaim has a very strong NES library, with Ironsword, Double Dragon 2: The Revenge, Bigfoot, Total Recall, Narc, and Arch Rival due in the next year.

Sunsoft has Batman and Tecmo has Ninja Gai Den 2. Need we say more?

FADING FAST - Tonka

With 8-Bit Sega sales that never quite picked up speed, and a total abandonment of the Master System in Japan, Tonka appears to be on the mat and nearly counted out. When you also consider that the Genesis can play 8-Bit Sega games as well as 16-Bitters, the need for Tonka's distribution becomes diminished.

BEST VIDEO TAPE - Warner's Batman

Forget the game tapes (they don't tell you anything about the games that you won't figure out yourself or in EGM) and get Batman! You won't learn anything about playing games, but it sure is more entertaining!

WORST VIDEO TAPE - Sweatin' to the Oldies

If I see that obnoxious Richard Simmons' commercial one more time, I'll throw my NES into the TV!

MOST LAWSUITS - Tetris

This title, which barely beat out Double Dragon 2: The Revenge for top honors (they settled out of court), has been the focus of Nintendo's attack on Tengen. It's too bad, since the Tengen NES version of Tetris was a cool copy of the arcade. Now we're starting to hear that the newly designed NES's won't even play Tengen games (players have been saying they don't fit). All's fair I suppose...

THE ONE CES PHOTO YOU WON'T FIND IN ANY OTHER GAME MAGAZINE...



FORECASTING THE 1990 AWARDS...

Here's a peek into our crystal ball for a look at the possible winners of 1990 may be...

- Game of the Year - Super Mario 3
- Super Shinobi
- Best New Game System - Lynx
- Super Famicom
- Best Sequel - Super Mario Bros. 3
- Castlevania 3
- Phantasy Star 2
- Best RPG - Phantasy Star 2
- Advanced Dungeons and Dragons
- Best Game Controller - Gizmo

Special thanks to the EGM Review Crew and the U.S. National Video Game Team for their help in compiling this "Best and Worst of '89" special.

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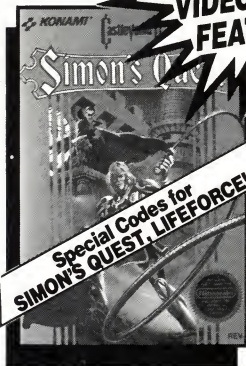
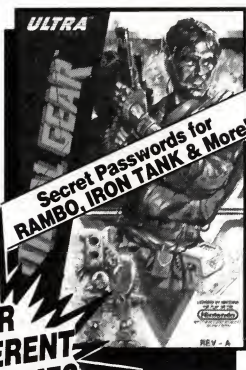
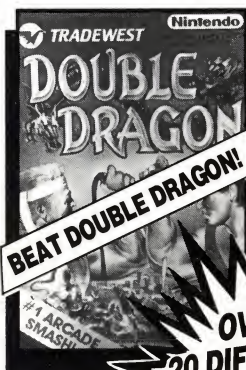
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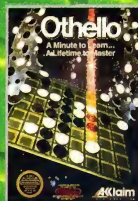
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NINTENDO

P • L • A • Y • E • R

David White

SEQUELS BOOST NES TO NEW HEIGHTS

Just like in the movies, Nintendo game makers are now banking on the success of proven names to catapult them into the new decade. It stands to reason that titles that have created large followings with their graphics and game play would generate similar interest in sequel form.

Some of the carts expected to draw such player interest include those shown on this page. While *Ninja Gai Den* and *Double Dragon* have both been enhanced for the first time, *Castlevania* and *Super Mario Bros.*, two of the biggest names in the Nintendo arsenal, are getting ready for a **THIRD** chapter.

In addition to these powerful titles, other sequels rumored to be under development include *Blaster Master 2*, *Super Bomb Jack*, *Wizards and Warriors 2*, and *Top Gun 2: Dual Fighters*.

NES games WILL stretch beyond sequels in 1990, however, with movie titles likely to capture an equally impressive share of the pie. Some of the more impressive titles include *Total Recall* from Acclaim, *Batman* from Sunsoft, and *Frankenstein* from Bandai. This healthy line-up is sure to get a boost from the normal array of shooters and action/adventures, although RPGs are finally starting to come into their own after the release of *Dragon Warrior*. Add new peripherals like the 4-player satellite and the new stereo surround-sound carts, and it's easy to see that 1990 will be a hot year for Nintendo!



CASTLEVANIA 3

Simon Belmont's adventures are far from over! In this latest version of the classic action/adventure, Simon returns to his roots in a super-charged cart that plays more like the first *Castlevania*. New power-ups and incentives make this a super sequel!

NINJA GAI DEN 2

The battles of Ryu continue in the excellent extension of the original that sends our Ninja hero on a quest to solve another mystery. This time around you'll find all-new power-ups, fighting on trains, and conflicts with deadly Bosses! Great!



DOUBLE DRAGON 2

The best kung-fu punch-em-up ever released on the NES, this two-player version of the original adds more levels, intermissions, and some super graphics!



SUPER CONTRA

The latest installment of the hottest scrolling shooter ever on the NES, *Super Contra* features dual play, new weapons, and a new adventure within an alien entity!

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FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: SNK
Machine: NES
Cart Size: 1 Meg
Number of Levels: 5
Theme: Action
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: Now

BATTLE BEHIND ENEMY LINES!

P.O.W. is SNK's latest arcade-warfare epic. Adapted from the popular arcade title of the same name, Prisoners of War combines many of the play mechanics that were popularized in Double Dragon, and introduces a limited number of power-ups in a jungle-combat theme.

You control a Prisoner of War who has been kidnapped as part of a government plan to rescue other MIAs residing in an enemy prison. After breaking

out of your jail cell, you have only your feet and fists against an army of enemy soldiers equally outfitted with knives and guns.

All of the action in P.O.W. is played out in front of a highly-detailed scrolling background. Several of the areas in this multi-level game even scroll in two directions, providing added depth to play.

In addition to the four separate rounds of battle that include prison barracks, ammunition depots, and secluded lakes, there are a number of hidden sub-rooms within each level. It is in these buildings, trucks, and caves that Armor (which deflects enemy gunfire), Brass

Outstanding graphics help compliment the latest SNK war epic!



TOP SCORE TIPS!

Blast into combat with this special power-up and you'll have the enemy on the run in no time! During the title screen, press 'A', 'B', 'B', Up, Up, Down, Left, and then 'Start'. This will thrust you into battle with a reserve of twenty men! Now, with odds that are a little closer, you'll have all the power you need to defeat the terrorist troops and reach safety.

Knuckles (which increases your fighting abilities) and Life (which recovers lost health) power-ups are found. Before you can recover them, however, you must face all-new dangers and additional attackers. Other weapon upgrades, such as a knife or machine gun, offer limited enhancements and can only be collected from the enemy troops that carry them.

STEVE

P.O.W. is not an overly complex or diverse game, but it does have great graphics and play. The game would get repetitive if it weren't for the constantly changing environments. The lack of a 2-Player option is missed but it doesn't detract from the superior nature of this game.

ED

Another war game from SNK. Nothing spectacular here, just a good solid game. Punch and kick lovers will have their hands full with a formidable enemy and challenging end-of-level Bosses. Other than Double Dragon 2, this is the best kung-fu type game this fall.

DONN

Good translation of the arcade. Has above-average graphics and game play and the difficulty is just about right. It stays challenging through all four levels. It's not hard to pick up but you won't finish it right away.

JIM

P.O.W. has great background graphics and a very addictive play mechanic that is similar to Double Dragon. The game levels do get a bit repetitive, fighting the same enemies over and over again (with an occasional scuba diver thrown in). The end Bosses are also too easy.

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HYDLIDE™



FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Taito
Machine: NES
Cart Size: 1 Meg
Number of Levels: 4
Theme: Action/Adventure
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: December 89

FIGHT EVIL WITH YOUR DEMON SWORD

One of the first third-party releases for the NES was a game called Legend of Kage by Taito. It was a fairly straightforward adaptation of an arcade flop, and didn't manage to attract much attention. Several years have passed since then, however, and Taito has decided to give Kage another

chance in a powered-up sequel called Demon Sword.

Visually, Demon Sword strives to share more in common with this year's runaway hit, Ninja Gai Den. Many of the screens look similar, and some of the new power-up enhancements are identical to those found in Gai Den 2 (which is bound to cause some confusion when it debuts).

In Demon Sword you must gather up items to unlock passages to future stages of play. These are exposed by eliminating certain characters.

The environments in which you must locate these items is fairly large, but it doesn't take long to become familiar with

with the sights and sounds. A lack of definable Bosses handicaps the round structure as well.

In the end, Demon Sword doesn't come close to approaching the type of game it wants to be. The game shoots by too quickly in most places, and the end result is a cart that often goes out of control. Die-hard fans of Gai Den may find merit in this title, but the end result is Kage in a much nicer suit.



After every level of play is completed, another section of your Demon Sword is added. When your sword is fully connected, your offensive abilities are greatly increased.



Many of the play mechanics in Demon Sword are reminiscent of a similar title, Ninja Gai Den and ITS sequel.

STEVE

Demon Sword has better looks than Kage and in many ways it plays much better. The addition of more power-up items & enhanced graphics detail strengthen the potential of this cart. In the end, however, it controls just like Kage, which ruins the effectiveness of many scenes.

ED

A good sequel to Kage that duplicates the same game play from the original. The addition of intermissions is a nice touch but the overall graphic appeal is limited. If you had Kage, you'll probably like this one, if not...

DAVID

I enjoyed the wild jumping, no-holds-barred moves that this game offers. Some of the different power-ups are tough to distinguish, and the special weapons weren't as overpowering as you would expect. The freedom of movement is nice - but locating the end of a level is trying.

MARTIN

The action in Demon Sword is slow and the constant jumping becomes repetitive. The backgrounds look nice but the main characters could have been better. A pretty good ninja game that's no where in the league of Gai Den, but a good sequel to Kage.

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FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Sammy
Machine: NES
Cart Size: 1 Meg
Number of Levels: 15
Theme: Shooter
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: December, 89

INVADE IN YOUR HELICOPTER GUNSHIP

One of the best arcade shooters of all time is Twin Cobra, a machine that perfectly balances power-ups, difficulty, and Bosses in a good-looking package loaded with targets and incentives.

The home version of this all-time favorite, while rough around the edges, includes most of the features that made the game such a mega-hit in the arcades. The most noticeable deletion from the NES Twin Cobra, however, is the two-player feature, instead we get

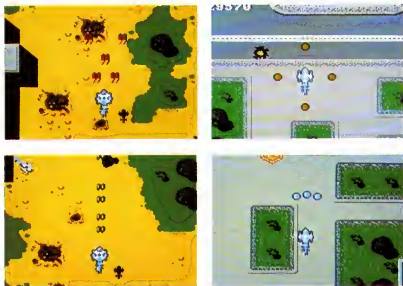
Single Cobra that plays like Twin Cobra without the extra support.

You must fly over various landscapes and enemy installations, blowing away anything (from attacking helicopters to battleships) that moves.

Along the way, enemy transport helicopters will appear and release weapon and bomb enhancements as well as a power-up ball that cycles through different types of weapons. Grab the one that suits you and blow 'em away.

TOP SCORE TIPS!

To rack up unlimited free men without having to shoot your scores into the stratosphere, keep your super-bombs until you've stored up nine. Once your reserves are filled, some of the ground targets can now be bombed to expose 1Ups instead of invincibility and bonus point stars!



POWER-UP!

Each of the four power-up capsules change your firepower in exciting and lethal new ways! Tailor your shooting strengths according to the area of battle you're in and blow the bad guys out of the sky, water, etc.



Battle Boss weapons like this one throughout Twin Cobra's 15 levels of action and adventure.

STEVE

I'm a great fan of shooters and Twin Cobra is tops in the arcades! The NES version has retained most of the options found in the coin-op version, but some of the intensity and a lot of the graphics clarity is lost. Still, it's one of the better NES shoot-em-ups to come along in a while.

ED

Twin Cobra is above average thanks to several options like selecting different weapons and powering them up to incredible heights. The backgrounds are well-detailed and colorful and the whole game is easy to play. Twin Cobra is better than most shooting games in this class.

DAVID

The action in Twin Cobra is pretty good - there's always something to shoot at and something shooting at you. The graphics aren't outstanding, however, and most of the backgrounds look as though they've been done in pastels. Not a fantastic game, but a good shoot-em-up.

JIM

One of the better overhead shooters on the Nintendo. Twin Cobra has plenty of power-ups and lots to shoot at. Highly recommended to fans of games with a lot of shoot, shoot, shoot! Others may find the theme repetitive, but I liked it.



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BLASTER MASTER

A MONSTER OF POWER GRAPHICS... CAN YOU CONQUER THE 8 CLAYING OF DOOM? FALL THROUGH A HISSING HAZARD AND INTO A WORLD OF TERRIFYING CHALLENGES! RUN THROUGH CITY STREETS, PANIC BEFORE OR BLAST YOUR WAY THROUGH THE BRICKS MAZE OF TUNNELS TO THE SECRET LAYERS THAT ARE YOUR ONLY ESCAPE LAY AWAITING AS PRODIGES, CREATURES SO POWERFUL, AND SO GENIAC, THEY LITERALLY FILL YOUR SCREEN!

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THE EVIL WITCH DOCTOR AND HIS BROTHER ATTACK THE PEOPLE OF NINLO AND ROB THEM OF THEIR MAGICAL WEAPONS. GREEN IRELAN IS CAPTURED DEEP INSIDE THE SECRET CASTLE. SAVE THE QUEEN AND GET THE MAGICAL WEAPONS BACK TO THE CASTLE. WAS MANY BROTHERS A SECRET PASSAGEWAY. GREEN IRELAN HAS HEROIC WEAPON TOOLS. SAVE THE PRINCESS IN EACH ROOM AND DESTROY EACH OF 75 GIGANT MONSTERS.

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FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Data East
Machine: NES
Cart Size: 2 Meg
Number of Levels: 7
Theme: Action
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1 or 2
Available: Now

HEY DUDE, ARE YOU BAD ENOUGH!?!

In the arcades, Bad Dudes was a fine derivative that took advantage of the play mechanics made popular in Double Dragon. Since Dragon made its debut, there have been countless numbers of scrolling karate adventures, both in the arcades and at home, but none have captured the punch and kick

formula quite as well as the coin-operated version of Bad Dudes.

The Nintendo home version is a single player version of the arcade bash-em-up. You can control only one of the Dudes (either Blade or Striker) at any one time, unlike the coin-op which offered simultaneous two-player competition. You control your hero's progress through seven different horizontally-scrolling areas filled with attackers on top of trains, in alleys, and on top of helicopters. Along the way you'll face enemy attacks from all types of deadly Ninja opponents. Some of these deadly Ninjas are equipped with throwing stars as well as powerful

kicks! Blue Ninjas are your primary opponents, bringing the battle in close, but you'll also face even deadlier White Ninjas who toss a spread of throwing stars and Red Ninjas that are even more aggressive.

The Red Ninjas also hold the key to another one of Bad Dude's most important features. Whenever a Red Ninja has been eliminated, one of four power-ups will be left behind. These range from a Coke that restores vital health to a Clock that stops the stage time to Nunchuck and Dagger weapons for increased offensive attacks.

Each level culminates in a face-to-face slugfest with one of the enemies' powerful Bosses. Whether it's the magical Green Ninja who splits into several opponents, or the mighty fire-breathing Russian Karnov, the Bad Dudes Bosses are bad through and through! Try the super punch in these areas (build up power and deliver it in a single blow) and blow the bad guys away!



Fight your way through seven different levels of horizontally (and occasionally vertically) scrolling playfields filled with some the baddest enemies and Bosses!

STEVE

Bad Dudes has most of the elements found in the arcade version, but there is something about the movements of the characters that is faulty. The graphics are dated, but animated in a jerky fashion. The play remains decent, but I miss the 2-Player cooperative option.

ED

Another Double Dragon clone. While the game is challenging, it is hampered with a not-so-smooth jerky players movement which gets annoying after a while and detracts from the overall game play. Nothing special, just another average action game.

DONN

The graphics and animation in Bad Dudes is not very spectacular and the game is far too easy for anyone but beginning players. The sound is O.K., but the vocal effects at the end of every level (a trademark of the arcade) is poor. The game play is intact, it's just not that intense.

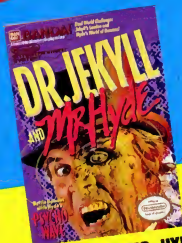
JIM

Bad Dudes wasn't as good as I thought it would be. The graphics aren't overly impressive and the game play isn't that difficult. Fans of Double Dragon-style games might enjoy this one for awhile, but it isn't anything special. This isn't Bad Dudes, but it isn't Bad Duds either.



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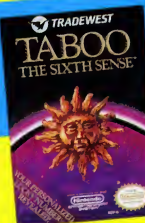
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PUT TOGETHER A SWAT TEAM OF 4. ASSUME THEIR IDENTITIES, STRENGTH, WEAPONS AND MAGIC... CONSIDER THE EVIL GODS WHO HAS WRECKED NAINIA IN BRITAINIA, THROUGH HOSTILE FORESTS, MOUNTAINS & DANGEROUS COUNTRYS. YOUR TEAM MUST DESTROY MONSTERS, ATMAN GODS, AND EXPLORE DUNGEONS TO DISCOVER THE HIDDEN PLACE OF EXODUS. 3 INDIVIDUAL GAMES CAN BE PLAYED SAME/ALTOGETHER WITH EACH SCORED SEPARATELY.
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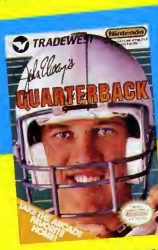
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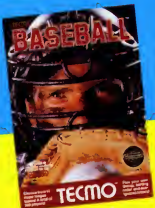


DOUBLE DRAGON
A STORY OF BILLY AND BUNNY LEE. BILLY'S GIRLFRIEND IS KIDNAPPED. THE SEARCH FOR AMBROSIN IS THE CHALLENGE. FIGHTING THE SAVAGE STREET GANGS, USING WHATEVER WEAPONS COME IN HAND, THROUGH THE SLUMS, FACTORIES, AND WOODCO OYSTERS OF THE CITY TO REACH HER. PROTECT FOR HIS FINAL CONFRONTATION WITH THE SHADOW BOSS!
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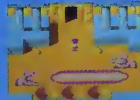
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Ed Semrad

MASTER SYSTEM FUTURE IN DOUBT

The Sega Master System unfortunately appears to be heading into rough waters. Now that Sega's 16-Bit Genesis has made a successful launch, almost all of their programming talents have been drained away from the 8-Bit unit and been placed back into the older system's super-charged cousin.'

That news, combined with the fact that both Activision and Parker Bros. have decided to discontinue their support for the 8-Bit (Galaxy Force and Montazuma's Revenge are the last titles from those two companies), cast an even darker shadow over the face of a superior system that never quite got up to full speed. Even Absolute Entertainment, who had promised to deliver several titles at one time, have already cancelled the Sega version of James Bond and release on their R.C. Champ Racing has been delayed numerous times.

Tonka, the U.S. distributor of the Master System has let many of the people in charge of the Sega go, and with an 8-Bit adapter soon to be offered by Sega for the Genesis, the phasing out of the Master System can't be too far behind.

Several titles are on their way, including Dynamite Dux, Golden Axe, Psycho Fox and the games previewed here. Is the Master System out of the picture? Not yet, but all the new Sega titles appear to be going to the Genesis - not the Master System.



TENNIS ACE

Take to the court in Sega's latest sports game. A unique perspective and plenty of options give Tennis Ace a look and feel all its own. All the moves of real tennis are intact in a cart that has everything a tennis fan could want in a game.

NIGHTMARE BASKETBALL

Here's a twist on one of the most popular video sports. Although most of the rules of the real game remain intact, you're now playing against a gang of otherworldly creatures and bizarre monsters who are out for a close-up slam-dunk jam!



ULTIMA 4

Anticipated to be the RPG extravaganza of the year, Ultima 4 promises to be the most complex and challenging adventure title ever released on the Master System. Adapted by Lord British himself, this 4-meg spectacle is bound to be a top hit.





FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Sega
Machine: Master System
Cart Size: 2 Meg
Number of Levels: 4
Theme: Action
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: Now

SHIVER ME TIMBERS, MATEY!

Captain Silver is the latest in Sega's post-RPG thrust to incorporate play mechanics and themes that are closer to arcade titles. This title was licensed from Data East and it does a fair job of duplicating the game play found in most of your horizontally-scrolling arcade favorites.

You control a young lad named Jack Avery, on a quest to find a fabulous treasure that has been left behind by the infamous Captain Silver. The only trouble is that while the Cap'n may be dead, his evil spirit isn't about to let you walk away with his booty without a fight! You can battle the ghoulies that

appear to stop your progress, as well as the Captain himself, with your trusty sword. Along the way you can also increase your blade's effectiveness by recovering a variety of power-ups. Other power-up items enable you to perform other functions (such as limited invincibility) that also add to the overall play value of the game.



Set out on your adventure with cutlass in hand! Various spooks and swordsmen will challenge your every step.



The scrolling backgrounds in Captain Silver offer a detailed backdrop to the rest of the action.



Take on Captain Silver himself in the climactic final confrontation in this latest Sega 8-Bit action/adventure!

STEVE

Captain Silver is a decent attempt at a Castlevania game for the Master System, but there isn't enough challenge to hold your interest. All the contents of a good action game are there, you just don't have a lot to interact with.

ED

An easy game for younger players. Nicely animated action that is not too difficult. Definitely not for a serious game player, with average graphics, simple sounds, and rudimentary play, Captain Silver is great for beginners but won't present much challenge for any one else.

DAVID

This is a good diversion from the normal selection of RPGs that Sega has been offering up recently. It's a bit slow in parts, but for the most part it represents a good addition to the slim library of Master System action/adventures. It's not difficult, but it does have some good qualities.

JIM

Captain Silver is a good game, but it's just too easy for me. I finished this one after only a couple of plays. If Sega had made Captain Silver harder, and made the entire adventure longer, then it would have been more fun than it currently is.

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FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Sega
Machine: Master System
Cart Size: 2 Meg
Number of Levels: 5
Theme: Shooter
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1 or 2
Available: Now

BECOME A MASTER OF THE CLOUDS

Cloud Master is a very cartoony version of numerous side-scrolling shoot-em-ups. It uses lots of pastel colors to create each of the five environments and an odd assortment of enemy characters (ranging from flying cat heads to soup bowls and more) to challenge you throughout.

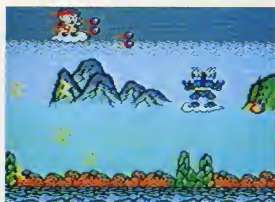
Riding on a cloud, you control Mike Chen, a powerful wizard who has mastered the mystical art of shooting Ki Force.

Each round is broken up into several parts, with the majority of the battles taking place in front of slow-moving, horizontally-scrolling backgrounds that may remind you slightly of something out of Fantasy Zone. They're not quite as weird, but the colors that are used are bright and vivid.

The graphics in many areas appear washed out, with very little detail in the scrolling backgrounds. The game characters themselves are not the most

detailed, either, but there are a lot of opponents filling the screen which translates into plenty of targets to shoot at and avoid.

The basic allotment of weapon power-ups (which increase the intensity of the Ki Force) can be found in open pots and a Boss guardians protect the gates to higher levels of play and even more powerful weapons. If you manage to defeat all five of the world Bosses, you will achieve the rank of Cloud Master!



Fight through the mysterious lands atop a magical cloud, blasting the bad guys with your Ki Force.



Battle mysterious creatures that range from bowls of soup to flying cat heads to killer Roosters.



Five levels of challenge await as you evade the enemy and try to reach the rank of Cloud Master!

STEVE

Cloud Master isn't an overly impressive shooting game. Its cartoon look took it off and the lack of a real storyline adds to the confusion. As a shooter it's just average, and the difficulty doesn't adjust well between levels. Cloud Master could have used some revisions.

ED

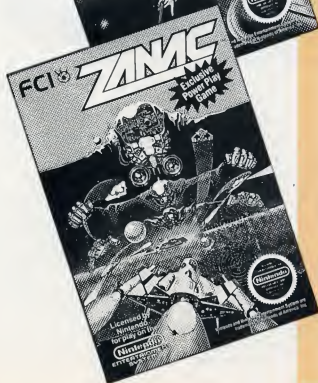
An extremely frustrating and difficult game. Action-filled backgrounds that are highly repetitive make it difficult to stay interested for very long. A dull game that, because of its difficulty, becomes more frustrating than enjoyable.

DAVID

There's not a lot of substance to this bland shooting game that has few power-up alternatives and not a lot of variety. The Bosses are large and fill the screen, but they're not very interesting and have little to do with the rest of the game. No where near R-Type or similar shooters.

JIM

Cloud Master doesn't have much depth or continuity. You sit on a cloud avoiding obstacles, and shoot at all the targets that come on the screen. Cloud Master is too straightforward for me.



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SPELLCASTER

FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Sega
Machine: Master System
Cart Size: 4 Meg
Number of Levels: N/A
Theme: Action/Adventure
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: Now

BATTLE ON AND BECOME A SPELL CASTER

At one time labeled the follow-up to Phantasy Star, Spell Caster is a four-meg adventure title that concentrates more on action scenes and Boss encounters that puzzle-solving and role-playing edicette.

Spell Caster places you in the role of Kane, a martial arts master on a mis-

sion of peace. You must overcome dangers and obstacles within several kinds of side-scrolling screens as well as text screens that accompany animated "photos" of your character and the opponenets you converse with. Some of these people and creatures provide you with useful information

needed to solve the Spell Caster quest, while others will award you specific weapons and magic!

Don't let the title or the hype confuse you into thinking this is an RPG. While it may contain some of the elements found in Phantasy Star, it is definitely not a sequel.



The text screens are highly detailed and often reveal information that is crucial to the quest. Some of these scenes will test you, while others will provide power-ups.



The Boss attackers appear at various stages in the game to test your fighting skills and magical abilities.

STEVE

Spell Caster is Sega's Simon's Quest. It's not a conventional RPG, but it does have some of the best action/adventure features to appear in a Master System game. Full screens of text are also incorporated to move the game along. A good addition to the Sega library!

ED

Spell Caster is a disappointment. The name implies a RPG and it isn't. It definitely is not a Phantasy Star sequel. Except for the pyramid maze, Spell Caster is just a straightforward adventure with great graphics and a long quest. This cart will have to do, however, until Ultima 4.

DONN

Your standard scrolling action adventure that has been woefully lacking of the Sega 8-Bit. Spell Caster is a good game that shares the same adventure overtones and action scenes that are found in Strider and Simon's Quest. Not fantastic, but it's nice to see this on the Sega.

JIM

A four-meg disappointment. Spell Caster doesn't take advantage of its high power, instead you get an action/adventure with a quest that's too short and doesn't offer many options. For seasoned players, there's very little action and the Bosses aren't as difficult as they should be.

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TURBO CHAMP

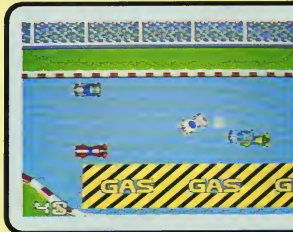
Steve Harris

TURBO TO INCREASE LIBRARY OF TITLES

One of the big questions facing potential buyers of any of the new advanced gaming machines is quite simply, "What kind of games can I expect in the future?". While the NEC TurboGrafx-16 launched with a minimal selection of games, they have big plans to follow up the debut of the system with dozens of fab cards guaranteed to bowl you over!

NEC doesn't quite have as difficult a job in creating hit titles as its main competitor, Sega, is most likely having. You see, the Turbo is really an American version of the run-away next generation machine in Japan, the P.C. Engine. The level of third-party support for this system in Japan is extraordinary, with dozens of games announced every month and over 100 currently on the market!

To insure the same level of success here in the states, NEC has wisely secured the rights to many of the top P.C. Engine hits. Granted, not all of their upcoming titles are winners, but the sheer number of cards that are planned for release in the months to come totally eclipses what will be appearing on any other system. It's up to NEC to continue capturing these hot titles while supplementing their library of imports with good American efforts like T.V. Sports Football from Cinemaware, and other adaptations from prominent companies around the world like Tynesoft who have a very nice circus game under development for the Turbo. Diversity, on the Turbo, is guaranteed!

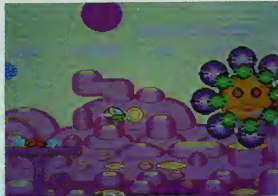


MOTO-ROADER

An overhead perspective is used in this unusual racer. As you blaze across different world tracks, you must maintain a lead or lose fuel when you fall behind. A power-up screen allows you to enhance your vehicle with extra fuel, weapons, and more!

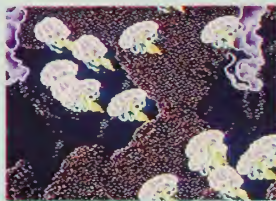
FANTASY ZONE

A favorite of Sega owners, this fast-paced shoot-em-up on acid takes you through seven wicked worlds filled with some of the most bizarre creations imaginable. Huge Boss characters and fantastic power-ups make the Turbo version the best yet.



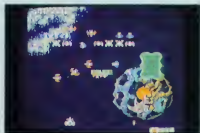
DEEP BLUE

An overly difficult underwater shooter that puts so much on the screen that it's impossible to traverse the slow-scrolling playfields without getting hit. The graphics (especially on the Bosses) are nice, but the game play is too repetitive without variety.



NEW NAMCO ARCADE TRANSLATIONS

Namco is one of the world's leading producers of video games. If you've played Pac Man or Galaga, then you've played a Namco game. Through a special arrangement with NEC, Namco will be bringing several mega-hits to the U.S. for play on the Turbo like Pac-Land, Final Lap, Ordyne, and World Court Tennis.



GALAGA '90

An all-new armada of alien bugs is out to get you! Originally released as Galaga '88 in the arcades, this is a great sequel to the original and nearly perfect on the



DRAGON SPIRIT

A mythical fantasy/shooter that lets you become a multi-headed dragon that breathes fire on the monsters trying to stop you from saving your main squeeze. A great looking and great playing game.

CD SUPER-HITS



With the release of the TurboGrafx-16 CD-ROM and CD-ROM Interface units you can now play games that are even more advanced! The CD-ROM titles not only capture the look and feel of the arcade games on which they're based, they also have extraordinary CD-quality sound and perfect voice reproduction. Among the first titles that will be available are (from l-r) Fighting Street, Monster Lair, and Darius.

SIDE ARMS



In this futuristic translation of the hit Capcom coin-op, you and a friend (using the optional multi-player Turbo Tap) must invade an alien base and destroy the mechanized creatures that inhabit it. With multiple weapons to carry, and other cooperative features, Side Arms plays like Contra and Section Z.

POWER GOLF

Power Golf is an excellent simulation of golf with some great graphics and other supportive features. You can choose from an abundance of options when setting the game up, and then select a number of courses or even create new ones! Different clubs, hazards, winds - it's all there!



R-TYPE



The perennial favorite of game players everywhere! The side-scrolling shoot-em-up has never looked as good as it does on the Turbo, with all levels intact and graphics that will have you looking for a coin slot. A four-meg masterpiece that blows all other home versions away!



FACT-FILE:

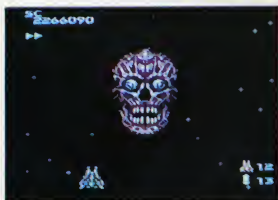
Manufacturer: NEC
Machine: TurboGrafx-16
Cart Size: 3 Meg
Number of Levels: 9
Theme: Shooter
Difficulty: Easy-Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: November 89

BLAZE YOUR WAY THROUGH THE GALAXY

Here's an outer-space shooter with enough teeth to cut through all of the competition combined! Blazing Lasers combines all of the proven elements from the most popular shooters and throws them together. Behind the intense shooting action, however, are some of the most detailed and futuristic animated characters and backgrounds ever created (and destroyed) in a video game blaster!

There's not a lot in the way of originality here, but the plot that is present is solid enough. You're in command of a Gunhed starship that can capture the "gels" left behind by certain cargo ships to enhance your offensive and defensive powers. These range from homing missiles and shields to deceptor waves and ring blasters.

Add a series of enormous and colorfully animated Boss characters and the challenge and deadline of this shooter becomes apparent! Blazing Lasers is packed with power!



This is one of the last Bosses in Blazing Lasers. Power-up your weapons and stockpile your bombs to defeat it.



Collect the gels to increase your power, or capture the numbered gels to change or increase current enhancements.

TOP SCORE TIPS!

There are four difficulty levels built into Blazing Lasers. To access the difficulty select mode, hold the Select button during the title screen and alternately push the number one and number two buttons until the screen blanks out and the words "Normal Dog" appear. Now you can toggle between "Normal Dog" (the regular setting) and "Hard Human". To access still higher levels, repeat the process of holding Select and pushing 1 and 2 to access "Super Mania" and "God of Game"!

To get into the sound test, toggle the pad left and right repeatedly during the title screen. A sound prompt and number will appear which can then be changed with the pad and played with the number two button. Hit Start to exit the screen.

STEVE

Blazing Lasers is the most intense shooter ever conceived. The play mechanics steal from the best the category has to offer, and thanks to the Turbo's advanced processors, the graphics and animation blow away all previous shoot-em-ups. It's a bit easy, but top-notch nonetheless.

ED

Slightly better than average shooter with finely detailed backgrounds, intense opponents, and more action (especially on the higher levels) than most can handle. Very difficult for the average player, BL becomes a repetitive scrolling/sliding/shooter after awhile.

DONN


Outstanding! I'm not normally a shooter fan, but this may make me a believer. Dynamic action, eye-catching graphics and an end Boss that's a real B****. My favorite Turbo game!

MARTIN

Definitely the best space shooter available on any system. A multitude of power-ups can be enhanced to incredible levels while stunning backgrounds and enemies provide plenty of targets. Everything in this game - the Bosses, music, and play are near perfect!



You've always
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a video game
system.



Until now.

*Introducing the TurboGrafx-16
video game system.*

TurboGrafx-16 is the video game system that's built around a 16-bit graphics processor. Compared to the 8-bit systems you're used to, it's four times faster, with better graphics, almost ten times as many colors, head-splitting stereo sound and deeper, more challeng-

ing gameplay.

In short, the bad guys are bigger, the good guys are smarter, the action is faster, and the challenge is greater.

TurboGrafx-16 gives you dozens of great game titles to choose from. As well as optional accessories that let you expand your system.

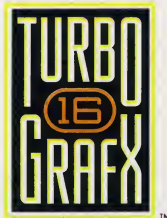
For example, there's a

NEC



CD player that plays video games in addition to audio disks. A TurboBooster™ audio/video enhancer. Even a TurboTap™ connector that lets up to five friends play all at the same time.

TurboGrafx-16. Because the last thing a video game system should be is predictable.

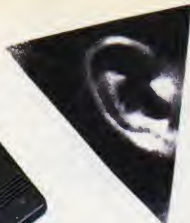


The higher energy video game system.



TurboGrafx-16 CD Game Interface and Compact Disc Player

Brings CD sound and an even higher level of gameplay to the TurboGrafx-16 system—with more characters, more levels, and more challenge. Also plays regular audio and the new CD graphics (CD + G) discs.



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Working with your stereo TV or mono TV and stereo audio equipment, TurboBooster's special pre-amp function gives your game full stereo sound and sharper, clearer graphics through direct video input.

Where
the system
gets its
energy.



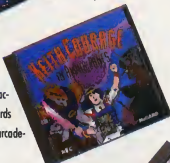
TurboGrafx-16 Multi-Controller Adapter

Now up to five friends can play specially selected games at once. Compete in head-to-head action or work together towards victory.



Tons of Arcade-Quality Games.

Packed with high-energy action, our TurboClip™ game cards bring you some of the best arcade-quality titles around. Adventure games like *The Legendary Axe*.*



Action games like *Vigilante™* and *China Warrior™*

Racing games like hard-driving *Victory Run™*. And, when you're ready, you can even expand your system to play

TurboGrafx-16 CD games, for even more excitement—with more characters and levels, real voices, CD music, animation, and more.



The TurboGrafx-16 system has many high-energy components and accessories that not only let you enjoy an amazing level of excitement now, but also let you expand your system in the future.



TurboGrafx-16 Entertainment SuperSystem

The heart of the incredible TurboGrafx-16 system. With a custom 16-bit graphics processor that delivers an amazing 512 colors, a CPU that's four times faster and six times sound generators.



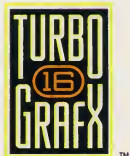
TurboPad™ Controller

Specially designed to help you control the amazing energy of the TurboGrafx-16 system, it's precise and fast, with three levels of "turbo" fire.



TurboStick™ High-Performance Controller

Lets you aim better and move quicker than you thought possible! Variable speed "turbo" fire gives you high-energy action—up to 16 shots per second. Or you can go into slow motion!



The higher energy video game system.

*TurboGrafx-16™ "TurboClip™" "TurboPad™" "TurboBooster™" "TurboStick™" "TurboPlay™"

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CHINA WARRIOR

FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: NEC
Machine: TurboGrafx-16
Cart Size: 2 Meg
Number of Levels: 4
Theme: Action
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: November '89

WASTE THE ENEMY AS THE CHINA WARRIOR

China Warrior is the TurboGrafx-16's contribution to the overflowing genre of chop-suey kung-fu kick-em-ups. This time around, however, the game play has an added twist!

The first thing you'll notice about China Warrior is the very large characters that take center stage. Both your hero, a brave fighting man with a bulging chest full of muscles, and your opponents, mostly a bunch of cloaked evil-doers, trade punches and kicks

while a variety of obstacles are thrown or float onto the screen adding danger to your journey.

While the action unfolds in the foreground, four different background scenes scroll by. These change after every scene is completed which, in addition to challenging you with the aforementioned bad guys, involve hand-to-hand and foot-to-foot combat with several different kinds of Boss attackers who each have their own

strengths and weaknesses. The Bosses serve as intermissions during the main combat scenes and mark the conclusion of each round of play. Rounding out the game play are bonus rounds and multiple acts.

Fight through the multiple levels of attackers, obstacles, and Bosses!



TOP SCORE TIPS!

There is a secret debug mode in China Warrior that allows you to set the game in different ways!

To initiate this trick, turn on the game system and then turn it off. After this, turn the system back on and reset the game by pressing and holding the Run and Select buttons. Let go of the Run button (still holding the Select button down) and press Up on the pad once. Next, let go of the Select button and press Up twice more, then Right six times, then Down twice, and then Left twice. A special screen will appear that will let you select the level of play on which to begin, the number of men you begin with, and whether or not you want your character and the enemies to be invincible or not! Now you can blast through the game with no trouble at all!

STEVE

China Warrior is probably one of the worst TurboGrafx-16 games to come along yet. Its intentions are good, but the execution of the game is poor. The very large characters that move with badly animated jerkiness and barely adequate graphics. Too repetitive and no diversity.

ED

A game that doesn't quite meet average standards. The 1/2 screen-sized characters are a refreshing change from the normal action combat, but this game is far too predictable with hazards approaching from only one direction. More variety would have been better.

DAVID

China Warrior is little more than a large-scale kung-fu game. The graphics of the real karate moves are well done, and the extra detail in the animation (Bruce Lee deserves royalties) make this one look much better than it really is. The game play is limited as well as the power-ups.

JIM

China Warrior is much too simple - there's not enough game to support the graphics. The characters are detailed like the hero who bleeds from the mouth when he gets cut up, but most of the opponents are identical and pretty boring. An average kung-fu game 16-Bit style.



FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: NEC
Machine: TurboGrafx-16
Cart Size: 2 Meg
Number of Levels: 6
Theme: Action/Adventure
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: Now

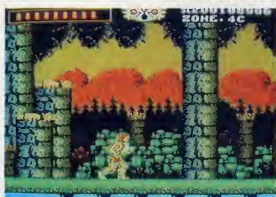
FIGHT DEMONS WITH THE LEGENDARY AXE

In *Legendary Axe* you become a warrior on a mission to save your love, Flare, from the vile clutches of an evil cult that intends to sacrifice her to the devil. With your magical axe in hand, you set out to rid the land of this menace and rescue your babe!

Legendary Axe introduces a number of options and power-ups that require a fair amount of strategy as well as skill to master. You'll discover health power-ups, bonus point crystals, speed-ups, and a special mask that increases the damaging power of your axe! When you're fully powered-up, you can take on just about anything with a thunder-and-lightning blow!

Legendary Axe boasts dual-scrolling backgrounds, enormous Boss creatures that fill the screen, and a huge cast of crazied cult worshippers, each with their own technique for doing you in!

Stand your ground, mighty warrior, poor Flare is depending on you!



*Beautiful scrolling backgrounds serve as the setting for the exciting *Legendary Axe* battles!*



Take on six different Bosses, including Jagu, the leader of the cult that has taken Flare hostage!

TOP SCORE TIPS!

Unless you choose the correct paths through the doorways in the in level five, you'll be returned to the top. To progress through the round, travel to the right until you reach room "E". Jump down the well in "E" that leads to the next level of play and exit the door. Continue to the right until you reach room "P". Do NOT exit the door in that room - instead jump down the well. Keep moving to the right and you will reach the Level 5 Boss at the end of room "R".

To get an unlimited number of men, proceed to the extreme right of the underground in level 3a to uncover the free man idol. Kill yourself and, when you reappear, move to the left and drop down. Move to the right again and uncover the same free man, plus those awarded for your score!

STEVE

The *Legendary Axe* is one of my favorites! It combines an excellent theme with some of the best graphics and sound I've ever seen or heard in any video game. The execution is brilliant, the many power-up options welcome, and the game a joy to behold! Highly recommend!

ED

This is how *Rastan* should have been done. Multiple paths, an attack meter that takes time to build, and numerous hidden pitfalls, *Axe* is not as easy as it appears to be. It's hard, but fun, and with only 3 continues, remains challenging. This should be your first game purchase.

DONN

One of the best action/adventure games I've ever seen. Great detail in the game characters and backgrounds create an excellent setting for numerous encounters that occur with enemy monsters and creatures. Plenty of variety keeps you on your toes throughout the entire contest.

JIM

A great game! *Legendary Axe* is really *Rastan* with better graphics. The game play is good and is supported by highly-detailed creatures and tunnels that constantly change. There's a lot of variety and just the right amount of difficulty. *Axe* is everything you could want in a game.

VICTORY RUN

FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: NEC
Machine: TurboGrafx-16
Cart Size: 2 Meg
Number of Levels: 8
Theme: Driver
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: Now

GENTLEMEN, START YOUR ENGINES!

Ever since the invention of the video game, drivers have always remained a staple of any true video gamers diet. From 280 Zap to Super Monaco GP, game companies are always looking for new ways to incorporate the hottest technology with the sure-fire thrill of simulated driving.

While Super Monaco GP (duc out for the Genesis) and both Hard Drivin' and Stun Runner (also rumored to be going to the Genesis) currently burning out arcades, the TurboGrafx-16 has delivered a video racing game that is very different than anything you may have played before. Instead of adopt-

ing a "hold-the-pedal-to-the-floor" style of gaming, Victory Run requires constant shifting and plenty of strategy when navigating the eight different courses that make up the race.

At the onset of each game, you must also select the proper number of repair points to make it through the race. For example, hard turn-



The car customizing/map screen



Power your way across Europe in the first TurboGrafx driver! Different terrain, car customizing, and a road rally theme make Victory Road pleasantly different.

can burn up your tires or improper shifting can grind your gears. When these vital parts wear down, your overall performance subsides. This is a very original touch that has yet to be seen in other drivers, which let you power-up but never power you down. After every leg of the race you can repair your broken or worn down items from the reserves of repair points remaining. If a broken part remains broken, certain functions (like shifting into higher gears if your gears are damaged) becomes impossible!

STEVE

Victory Run is not overly impressive in terms of graphics realism, but it does introduce some nice features into the standard racing theme. Wearing down your car and fixing it helps to bring strategic elements into play. The car handles slow in some areas, but in the end this is good.

ED

NEC's version of Out Run. While graphically inferior to Out Run, the game play is superior. The car handles like a race car should and the power drifts are better than any racing game to date. A difficult game to beat, but one which is hard to put down. Very addicting!

DONN

Victory Run is a good driver that has decent difficulty and length. The shifting of gears accidentally becomes annoying early on, but after several plays it gets easier to control. Overall this card is pretty good, however, boasting some nice enhanced graphics.

JIM

Probably one of the best driving games to come along for any system. Victory Run has 3-D effects, including hills and curves, and enough variety in the courses to keep you occupied for some time. If you like driving games then this is the one for you.

OUTPOST: GENESIS

Steve Harris

ARCADE-INSPIRED TITLES FUEL GENESIS

The Sega Genesis has taken a commanding lead in the 16-Bit sweepstakes, with close to 500,000 machines and around two dozen game titles expected to be in the hands of game players by Christmas-time.

The fact that Sega has jumped to number one is no surprise, especially when you consider the very loyal following that the company has picked up with their 8-Bit Master System. Sega is promising even more unbelievable video game thrills, and the carts previewed on these pages is an example of the quality that's yet to come.

Besides these games, Sega and third-party licensees are set to release an abundance of softs that range from intense shooters to sports to reflex-testers.

Discovery International has jumped on the Genesis bandwagon by porting their addictive computer title, Zoom, over to the Sega 16-Bit. Activision is also in on the action with several exciting products.

The majority of the remaining games due out for the Genesis will likely be high-quality imports from Japan. Some of these carts, like Super Hydlide, Air Diver, Atomic Robo-Kid and others, look very promising.

Also due out in 1990 are the Tele-Genesis modem, and possibly even the Art Tablet, Computer, and Disk Drive. There are also rumors of a hand-held device that will let you play Genesis games on the go - and in full color!



SUPER SHINOBI

A spiffed-up 16-Bit sequel to the original Ninja hero! This new Shinobi features power-ups like the flame wall and fireball attack, backgrounds that are absolute dynamite, and Boss characters that range from Ninja Warriors to Dinosaurs! Very hot!

SUPER MONACO GP

The ultimate Sega racing game is delivered straight from the arcades and into your living room with hardly any loss along the way. Blaze past highly-detailed obstacles and backgrounds, watch your rearview mirror, and punch the pedal to the floor!



PHANTASY STAR 2

A six-meg follow-up to the number-one Master System cart of all time. Features battery back-up to store adventures in progress, 16-Bit graphics and animation, and a new quest that's loaded with action, mystery, and more than enough challenge!



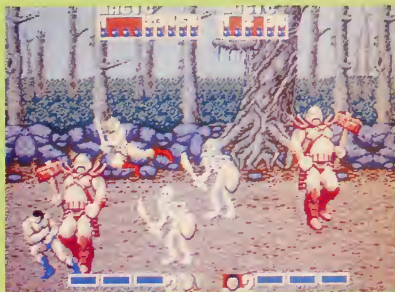
SUPER HANG-ON

Based on the arcade driver of the same name, Super Hang-On captures the feel of the coin-op beautifully, but also throws in additional graphics and options. The goal is the same: race your super-charged motorbike through six different courses in Europe, beating the clock and avoiding other drivers. In the Genesis version, however, you can also enhance your bike's performance at each stop in a special shop screen and view different riders at the onset.



GAIN GROUND

This little-seen Sega coin-op is getting a second chance on the Sega Genesis. You control a band of raiders in an action game that's got great background graphics, thanks to the Genesis' powerful 16-Bit processor, and game play that vaguely resembles Gauntlet. Collect valuable items and if the enemy gets in your way...blow 'em apart!



GOLDEN AXE

Straight from the arcades and into your living room comes all of the action of one of this year's biggest action/adventure hits! Golden Axe looks fantastic on the Genesis, with all of the detailed animation and high-res backgrounds of the original. The game play on the version we played, however, was not quite up to par, with haphazard controls that didn't quite respond the way we wanted them to.



FORGOTTEN WORLDS

Destined to be the Ghouls and Ghosts of Genesis shoot-em-ups! This title is perfectly suited for the Genesis, with full-screen Bosses, scrolling background scenery, and an onslaught of enemy creations that leave your free time to a minimum and keep your guns blazing.

Either one or two players can participate simultaneously, joining forces to eliminate the alien infestation with brute strength! A fabulous shooter!



FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Sega
Machine: Genesis
Cart Size: 5 Meg
Number of Levels: 4
Theme: Action/Adventure
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: Now

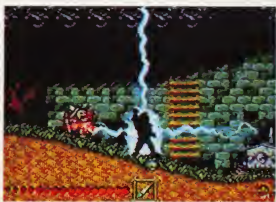
PUT ON ARMOR AND FIGHT THE UNDEAD

In this remarkably faithful translation of the high-powered sequel to *Ghosts and Goblins*, you set out on a mythical quest to fight the ultimate evil and rescue the damsel in distress.

Ghouls and Ghosts is the flagship of the Genesis software library. No other home video game has ever had such detailed graphic characters, such beautifully drawn scrolling backgrounds, and such challenging game play.

You're Arthur, a brave knight who has once again been called upon to take on an undead evil from the underworld.

Prior to play, you're treated to a scrolling map that plots your progress and shows you the dangers to come. Each one of the game's five levels of play are broken up into three different sections that include a first and last half and then the Boss attack. It is during these encounters with the Boss creatures that the game really comes to life, with fabulously animated nasties that fill the entire screen!



Use the magic armor to activate the special "Super" power-ups like the lightning blast!



Each Boss presents a different challenge. Find the weapons that work best for each of the attackers you face.

TOP SCORE TIPS!

Without the magical enhancement that the Princess of Power gives you, you are not allowed to progress through the doors that lead to the final Boss of the game.

The secret implement can be found just prior to entering Loki's cavern. To get the super weapon that's needed to defeat Loki, you must progress through the final round, running past the treasure chest that appears from the ground in the chamber where the two gatekeepers appear and blow fire. Leave that treasure chest intact, and continue to the right until you defeat the trio of mini-minstrel winds. Now go back to the chest, with the magic armor on, and destroy it to unveil the Princess of Power who will give you the secret weapon. Proceed to Loki's chambers and fight the devil himself!

STEVE

9 *Ghouls and Ghosts* is a game you can't pass up. It's one of the few titles that packs enough action and challenge to keep any player busy! The game play is great, the Bosses truly frightening, and the power-ups different and exciting. Just what a 16-Bit game should be!

ED

9 Easily the best cartridge game ever made! Also powerful - with audio that is second to none and animated backgrounds that add a great 3-D effect. Other graphic surprises include rain, wind, fire and more! Combined with extremely challenging play *Ghouls and Ghosts* is a superior effort!

DAVID

9 An excellent mix of action and adventure. *Ghouls and Ghosts* is not only packed with fantastic play, it is also filled with some of the best Boss guardians ever! From the opening level to your battle with the devil himself, *Ghouls and Ghosts* keeps you enthralled and fully satisfied.

MARTIN

9 The best game for the Genesis so far. Awesome graphics and super detailed characters, combined with great game play make this one of the best all-around games I've played on any machine.



FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Sega
Machine: Genesis
Cart Size: 4 Meg
Number of Levels: 4
Theme: Action/Adventure
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: Now

FIGHT YOUR WAY TO THE LAST BATTLE

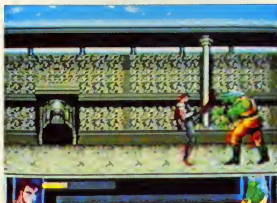
Last Battle moves in a manner that is very similar to that of *Altered Beast*, but instead of taking on mythological creatures, this title pits you against an army of medieval warriors. It's your responsibility to defeat these marauders and reclaim the cities they have invaded.

Within each area you must take on the axe and knife-wielding thugs that have been sent by a trio of Boss guardians. In addition to confrontations with these heavies, you will also encounter friends who provide information, strength, and other power-ups which will help you in your quest.

The adventure overtones help expand the overall theme of the game from a simple scrolling kung-fu cart to an expansive quest with plenty of action. Mazes and text screens help build on the adventure theme, while Bosses and a number of different characters help provide the challenge in the highly-detailed scrolling 16-Bit environments.



The overhead map not only helps you track your position and your adversaries, but also your power and health.



Take on the Last Battle Bosses completely powered-up to inflict maximum damage.

TOP SCORE TIPS!

Unknown to most, there is a secret Continue/Level Select in Last Battle that will allow you to resume your fight on the same chapter your previous game ended.

To initiate this helpful tip, you must first progress to area two or higher. Then, when your game ends and the Sega intro appears, hold down the 'A', 'B', and 'C' buttons simultaneously and press the 'Start' button repeatedly. When the Level Select screen appears, choose your chapter and press 'Start' once again to begin.



STEVE

Last Battle reminds me of a souped-up version of *Altered Beast*. The characters are the same size and the backgrounds move at the same speed (at a crawl). There are Bosses, maps, and more detailed graphics, but the game wasn't that exciting.

ED

Take an average kung-fu game but change the player's size from a three-inch stick figure to half the height of the screen and you have a whole new type of game. Throw in 16-Bit graphics and multi-layered backgrounds and you have a game that goes from average to excellent!

DONN

There's a lot to do in Last Battle, with separate screens for the scrolling action scenes and an underlying story that expands as you progress. The graphics are well done, and the cart has a decent play time, but the game is not impressive. LB is an average kung-fu kicker with a nice suit on.

JIM

Stunning graphics just can't save this karate game. The characters look awesome and the backgrounds are very detailed, but the game play itself is just your normal kung-fu Master spin-off. There are text and map scenes, but they don't add a whole lot to the game itself.



FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Sega
Machine: Genesis
Cart Size: 4 Meg
Number of Levels: 9
Theme: Shooter
Difficulty: Average\Hard
Number of Players: 1
Available: Now

BLAST THROUGH THE ALIEN FORTRESS

Thunder Force II is the first shooting entry to appear in the Genesis library (although additional titles like Atomic Robo-Kid, Curse, and Truxton are on the way) and it takes a unique approach. Instead of relying on strictly on overhead or side-scrolling environments, Thunder Force II uses both! What, at first glance, appears to be the Genesis' answer to R-Type and countless other horizontally-scrolling shoot-em-ups, turns into much more with a

completely separate battle perspective with overhead rounds that play in a similar fashion to the classic Konami shooter, Time Pilot.

Thunder Force II spices up the intense blasting action with a dozen power-ups that affect your firepower in all kinds of radical ways. The overhead conflicts require good maneuvering, while the side-scrolling battles always end with high-powered attacks from Boss machinery that fills the screen!

TOP SCORE TIPS!

As documented in the instruction manual, there is a configuration mode in Thunder Force II that allows you to select your starting level (1-5), difficulty (Training, Normal, Hard), and reserve men (up to five). This is done by holding down the 'A' button and pressing 'Start'.

To reach level 9 (the final round in the game) you must complete ALL of the eight previous levels. Once the final Boss is defeated, however, you can select any round by pressing the 'A' button and then 'Start' during the title screen.

For a quick 500,000 point super bonus, don't shoot ANY enemies during the side-scrolling scenes and then attack the Boss repeatedly! You'll get a cool half-million



The goal in the overhead screens is to eliminate the alien bases that are scattered across the landscape!



The war really heats up when the scene shifts to the side-scrolling scenes. Attack the Boss and battle on!

STEVE

TF2 is one of the better shooters to come along in some time. The benefits of the 16-Bit graphics and sound are obvious, and the round structure gives you two games in one. The overhead sequence is not as strong as the side scenes, but the whole package is definitely top-notch!

ED

You haven't seen great graphics until you've seen TF2. Easily the best visuals in a shoot-em-up, with both horizontal and vertical fighting sequences, the game has more than enough variety. The action is intense and non-stop! Another example of how much better a 16-Bit cart can be!

DONN

A very good game! TF2 has a lot of action with plenty of enemies to interact with and power-ups to retrieve. The graphics are exceptional - with two scenes and plenty of weapons. This is one shooting game that has teeth!

JIM

TF2 has graphics and sounds that blow me away. The game is impressive as well with a ton of power-ups that boost your weaponry to new heights. The side-scrolling scenes are visually impressive, but the overhead screen requires strategy missing from most shooters.



FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Sega
Machine: Genesis
Cart Size: 4 Meg
Number of Levels: 4
Theme: Flying/Shooter
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: Now

TAKE CONTROL OF THE THUNDER BLADE

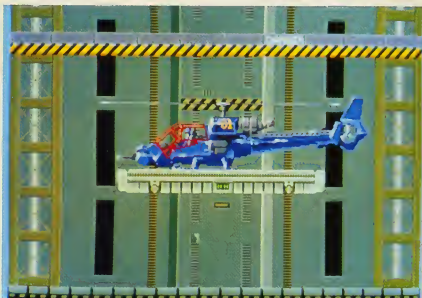
The Thunder Blade attack helicopter is back again in this souped-up version of an arcade and Master System classic!

You take control of a chopper that is armed to the teeth with guns and rockets. Go into battle over enemy territory against some of the most deadly

machines ever displayed in a video game. The battle begins in the skies and then switches to the city, where heavily fortified enemy troops attack from both the air and the ground, using helicopter gunships and armored tanks! Maneuver between city buildings and deliver a crushing blow to the

terrorist armies before moving into their territory!

STB introduces Boss conflicts in first-person detail as well as from an overhead perspective. Equipped with enough firepower to eliminate a small nation, and enough targets to use it up, STB explodes with action.



Take on the enemy attack choppers over scrolling fields and past towering skyscrapers. Use your guns and missiles in unison and blast the invaders out of the sky!



The enemy Bosses fill the screens with mighty machinery! Look out for the missiles and gunfire that erupt whenever a Boss approaches!

STEVE

STB just isn't what a 16-Bit game should be. The graphics, while detailed, don't move in smooth progression from the background to the foreground. The worst thing about STB, however, is how it controls, with poor response that is slow and sluggish and makes the game tedious.

ED

Genesis promises arcade graphics and STB comes close. While better than the 8-Bit, STB is still not perfect. Moving objects increase in size in coarse steps, but detailed sprites add some luster. STB, while good, doesn't show what the Genesis can do.

DONN

Although the dual level game play is adequate, the graphics are too choppy and there is an abundance of screen flicker. I thought the 16-bit processor would have cleared a lot of these problems up, but unfortunately STB is plagued by the same drawbacks.

JIM

Awesome graphics! Harder than the arcade or 8-Bit versions of Thunder Blade, but also a lot better. The controls are sluggish, but the graphics more than make up for a few problems in play. STB makes the 8-Bit Thunder Blade look like a 2600 game!



FACT-FILE:
Manufacturer: Sega
Machine: Genesis
Cart Size: 4 Meg
Number of Levels: N/A
Theme: Sports
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1 or 2
Available: Now

BATTER UP WITH TOMMY LASORDA

Tommy Lasorda Baseball appears to be the first of many sports-oriented games available for the Sega Genesis. It also appears to be the first to use a celebrity endorsement (their upcoming Golf game will be honored with Arnold Palmer's signature). Using a well-known coach as the byline for this title

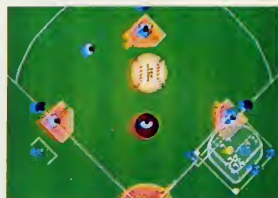
is only slightly misleading, since most of the real play revolves around hitting, fielding, and running, as opposed to real managerial duties.

Regardless, Tommy Lasorda Baseball faithfully duplicates almost every aspect of the real game, from the selection on pinch-hitters and relief

ers, to the after game statistics that track your club.
 Besides the very solid batting confrontation, Tommy Lasorda Baseball has a unique feature that tracks all 26 teams in the league simultaneously! While you're playing, all the others are playing games as well! A helpful pass-code feature tracks your progress during the season!



The pitching/batting dual is one of Tommy Lasorda Baseball's finest features! The graphics are second-to-none and bring both timing and skill into play.



In Tommy Lasorda Baseball, the game simulates true 3-D with special effects like these.



Tommy Lasorda Baseball simulates both batting and fielding from the same perspective.

STEVE

TL Baseball is without a doubt, the best looking video baseball I've ever played. The graphics are excellent, the sound effects first-class, and the whole game very enjoyable to play. The season play and password features are welcome and help add life to a game that is nearly perfect!

ED

With the new capabilities of the 16-Bit machines, baseball has come one step closer to reality. TLB is the best of the market. Players have strengths and weaknesses and the player/batter screen is the best around. The new standard in video baseball!

DONN

The graphics in TL Baseball are 16-Bit quality and really bring this sports game to life. The game itself is good, with most of the features found in real Baseball. The way it tracks the league is cool, but other than that TL Baseball is about the same as the others - but with 16-Bit looks.

JIM

This is your standard baseball, with all the normal windows, batting and fielding modes intact. The game looks incredible thanks to the Genesis' 16-Bit graphics. Probably the best baseball on the market.

DO YOU PLAY VIDEO GAMES??

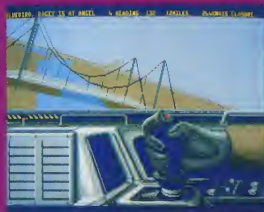
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GAMEBOY™ CLUB

David White

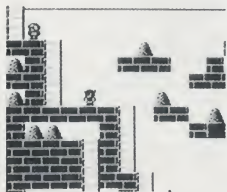
PUZZLERS AND ARCADES ON GAMEBOY

With the Atari Lynx delayed for a few months, die-hard gamers will have to be content with the technologically inferior GameBoy from Nintendo. Just because the unit uses black-and-white graphics, however, doesn't mean that it can't project great games.

The course that most GameBoy publishers appear to be taking in their games is either to tie-in with a well-known name or established arcade titles, or highlight two-player head-to-head competition.

Upcoming titles that will soon be announced on the GameBoy include a slew of arcade titles that range from Double Dragon and Lock-n-Chase to smaller versions of consumer hits such as Castlevania and Gradius. Computer spin-offs like Karateka and Hyper Lode Runner as well as Role-Playing games appear to also be making a thrust into the GameBoy market.

Other plans for the GameBoy include a possible attachment that will allow you to plug your portable unit into a television and play your small screen games in a very big way! We've seen these adapters and played some of the best new GameBoy games on nineteen inch monitors. The games may not be in color or filled with state-of-the-art punch, but many ARE fun, challenging, and addicting - which is the bottom line when it comes to great gaming.



HYPER LODERUNNER

A classic computer game becomes a scaled-down GameBoy title. Although it's a bit weathered due to its age, this version of Lode Runner stays true to the game on which it's based. Not much new here - you either like it or you don't.

BOXBLE

This game is extremely simple to pick up and play - but difficult to put down and highly addictive. You must guide a game character around rooms filled with boxes. You must push the boxes on top of target dots to proceed to the next level.



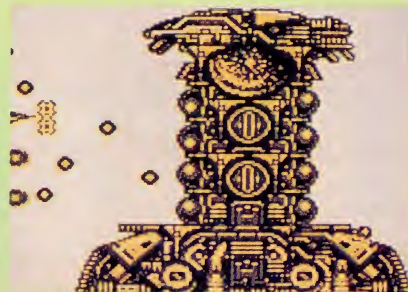
KWIRK

Direct from Japan comes Puzzle Boy, now retitled Kwirk by Acclaim Entertainment. Similar to Boxble in many ways, Kwirk expands upon the basic theme of Boxble by using different kinds of boxes and doorways to progress from puzzle to puzzle.



CASTLEVANIA - The Adventure

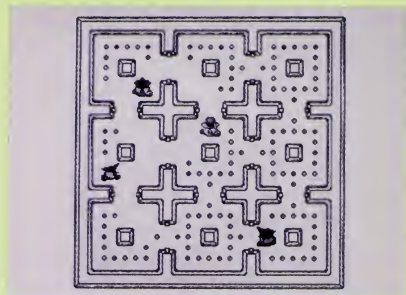
One of Konami's hottest Nintendo Entertainment System games is reprogrammed on the GameBoy and it is hot! Only Super Mario Land comes as close to this game at reproducing arcade-style action on the GameBoy. You must guide Simon Belmont across both verticle and horizontally-scrolling playfields brimming with bad guys, Bosses, and much, much, more! A very good game that shows just how good GameBoy games can be!



GRADIUS

Konami is well on their way to capturing the largest share of the GameBoy market with a dynamic line-up of titles that includes this down-scaled version of one of their most popular games.

The scrolling action and play mechanics are almost identical to the NES version on which it's based. You can capture power-up items for options, shields, lasers and more! Another GameBoy winner from Konami.



LOCK-N-CHASE

This one makes a lot of sense on the GameBoy, despite the lack of popularity that surrounded it when it was released as well as its age. It's executed very well, however, with intermission screens and some variety in mazes. When you get right down to it though, Lock-N-Chase is little more than a Pac Man variant that may be able to attract some attention as a GameBoy title since the game is not too demanding.



MOTOCROSS MANIACS

Another high-action scrolling cart from Konami. This is their first original effort on the system that can't fall on proven game play or a popular name. In spite of this, however, Motocross Maniacs does deliver some thrills in a game that sets out to duplicate Nintendo's Excitebike in many ways. Stunt tracks and a variety of moves can also be performed.

TETRIS

FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Nintendo
Machine: GameBoy
Cart Size: 256K
Number of Levels: N/A
Theme: Puzzle/Strategy
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1 or 2
Available: With GameBoy

FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE...

Tetris is the only game of 1989 that could be called revolutionary. Adapted from an original computer program developed by a Russian engineer, Tetris is deceptively easy to learn and mad-deningly addictive. Despite all of the legal problems that have plagued the game in its NES form, its structure and execution make it perfect for the GameBoy system.

The basic theme of the game is to rotate five different shapes, each made up of four small blocks, in a way that locks the pieces together with no gaps in between. When a complete horizontal line is created, that line is eliminated and all blocks on top of it fall down one level. The goal is simple: keep the blocks from reaching the top of the screen where "Game Over" awaits.

Tetris combines strategy (you must eliminate four lines at once to score a big point Tetris) and has an absorbing two-player mode that lets two players go head-to-head with the Video Link.



Tetris, which comes packed with the GameBoy system, features multiple options including head-to-head play!



Fit the five different blocks together in patterns - when you complete a solid horizontal line it is removed for points!

TOP SCORE TIPS!

There is a secret "city scene" filled with Russian dancers and musicians if you finish the TYPE B game from level 9.

If you begin the TYPE B game on Level Start 9 and Handicap 5, and complete 25 lines, you will not only get a chorus of jumping Russians, but will also be treated to the "end" of the game: a Space Shuttle rising into the air and off of a launch pad with three fiery boosters. This is extremely difficult, however, since the number 5 handicap starts you with blocks filling the entire lower half of the screen!

There are two other rockets, small and large, that appear at the end of TYPE A games. The small rockets appear if 100,000 points are scored, and a bigger rocket is shot off if you score in excess of 200,000 points.

STEVE

Tetris is the perfect game for GameBoy. One which you can't finish, yet you constantly absorbing throughout. Difficulty increases at a progressive rate and never gets too hard entirely masterable. The two-player mode shows off the Video Link like nothing else.

ED

A fascinating game for puzzle lovers. One of the best for GameBoy. The two-player version is outstanding. The second 25-line mode makes it easy to play quick games by yourself. With nine speed settings and five handicaps, Tetris is a perfect match for anyone.

DAVID

Possibly the best game available for the new GameBoy system. Tetris is the perfect 2-Player portable cart, with easy-to-learn, yet challenging play. The Interaction in the Player Video Link mode is much better than the NES version. A perfect game to kill time on long trips.

MARTIN

The perfect portable game. Believe it or not, the GameBoy version has the best play of all the versions. The two-player Video Link is good, but a cooperative option (like in the Tengen version) would have been nice. Be warned, Tetris is VERY addictive!

SUPER MARIO LAND

FACT-FILE:

Manufacturer: Nintendo
Machine: GameBoy
Cart Size: 256K
Number of Levels: 12
Theme: Action
Difficulty: Average
Number of Players: 1
Available: Now

A WHOLE NEW LAND OF ADVENTURE...

Super Mario Bros. is easily the most popular game in all of Nintendoland, so it didn't come as much of a surprise that one of the first games for the GameBoy system would star the tiny Italian with a heart of gold. The way the game plays, however, has proven to be a surprise to everyone.

Instead of adopting a strange new play theme like in Super Mario Bros. 2, Nintendo has wisely opted to bring Mario back to his roots for his first GameBoy adventure. Super Mario Land is not so much of deviation from the original as it is an extension of the original's basic plot and play theme.

tubes which Mario can drop down into. Mario starts out short, becomes "Super" once a mushroom is collected, and becomes armed with fireballs when a flower is found.

Other new enhancements on the Super Mario theme include 1Up Hearts (as opposed to the different colored mushrooms), Flower Power that can actually retrieve coins as well as eliminate the enemy characters, and a bonus round after every stage is completed. It is in these bonus chambers that up to three free men and Flower Power are awarded. Though flower power is a cool feature, it makes the cart a bit too easy once you've played a couple of games.

All of the features from the original Super Mario are intact, with a few modifications. There are mushroom men as well as the turtles, only this time the half-shelled nasties turn into explosive bombs that detonate in a deadly blast!

Super Mario Land, while short on game time (there are only four worlds, with three rounds each), has great scrolling scenes, tough Boss villains, and even new vehicles like a torpedo-firing Submarine and a missile-launching Airplane that rocket Mario to even greater levels of action.

Most of the other familiar Super Mario sights can also be found, like coin-filled bonus rooms and



Evade the bad guys or stomp 'em from above! Super Mario Land is loaded with hidden coin boxes, 1Ups, bonus rooms, free men boards, and more!

STEVE

Even though it's in B&W and on a 2-inch screen, Super Mario Land is a fantastic game that is, above all, very fun to play. There are loads of things to discover and all new worlds to chart. It's a bit short (only 12 screens), but there's enough challenge here to recommend this one.

ED

WOW! Mario's back and now he's portable! Easily the best GameBoy cart, Super Mario Land should be your first purchase. Pipes, hidden coin rooms, and 1Ups - they're all there, just waiting to be discovered. It's Super Mario Bros. all over again and it's fantastic!

DONN

Like Super Mario Bros. for the NES, Super Mario Land is filled with the same kind of running and jumping action. There are loads of secret things to uncover, and new screens that add to the Super Mario theme. This is the best GameBoy game I've seen so far.

JIM

A great GameBoy game! Excellent scrolling graphics make Mario Land look and play just like Super Mario Bros. All the bad guys, mushrooms, and other features from the original are here, along with new characters, 1Ups, hidden coins, and more! A portable Super Mario Bros.!

ATARI ADVENTURE

Steve Harris

NEW 7800 GAMES AND LYNX OFFER HOPE

1989 proved to be an exciting year for Atari. While neither their lawsuits against Nintendo, nor the games they released put much of a dent into Nintendo's armor, the formation of a development facility to run autonomously from their Sunnyvale headquarters, as well as the purchase of a high-tech hand-held have managed to leave hopes very high for 1990.

While the 2600 comes down in price even more, it continues to be the outdated lunchbox system that plays nothing but inferior games. Why the unit is around is a mystery - but why good development dollars are going into softs to support it boggles the mind.

The XE System remains in an identity crisis (Is it a game system? Is it a computer?...), but *Xenophobe* is a good title that should satisfy any owners.

The ST, which some still believe will eventually become the backbone for some type of Atari 16-Bit, has some truly amazing titles coming out. One of them, *Alien Brigade*, is so overpowering it's hard to believe that it came from Atari. *Picture Operation Wolf* meets *Aliens* and you'll get the idea behind this very gross (the title screen is spelled out in dripping blood by an alien's finger!) but absolutely solid game.

1989 may not have put Atari in the lead, but it did return them to the map!



NEW 7800 TITLES ANNOUNCED FOR 1990

While competition with Nintendo still remains difficult for Atari's premiere game system, the 7800, several moves by Atari have brought the unit closer to the competition.

From the newly-opened development facility in Chicago, Atari has set out to capture not only arcade licenses, but also inject some new energy into their system with titles that aren't bogged down in the same tired game play of the past.

Besides turning out excellent versions of *Xenophobe* and *Mat Mania*, Atari is also moving into territories previously inhabited only by Nintendo and Sega. Look for high-action shooters (*Planet Smashers*), first-person blast-em-ups (*Alien Brigade*), side-scrolling shooters (*Sentinel*), and arcade-style sports games (*Ninja Golf* and *Blood Basketball*).

LYNX STUMBLES IN '89

After much excitement surrounded the Atari color hand-held during the CES, several problems have snagged the planned release of the unit until sometime in 1990.

Besides not being able to get enough of the color displays to meet demand, the company that designed the Lynx and sold it to Atari, Epyx, appears to have gone out of business, despite the multi-million dollar advances from

Atari and promises to continue development work on the Lynx. Software deliveries (which included the first six Lynx games) didn't come on time and a breakdown within Epyx threatened to destroy the Lynx entirely! Fortunately, things appear to be back on schedule, with new game work assigned to the Atari development facility in Chicago, as well as licensees in the U.S. and Europe.



First came the Atari 2600, Mattel Intellivision, and Colecovision. Now we have the Nintendo Entertainment System, Sega Master System, and Atari 7800. What we've come to expect from home video gaming, however, is about to change forever when mega-powers, Nintendo and Sega, as well as some new names, load their guns to deliver the ultimate 16-Bit and Portable game systems. Now, EGM brings you the complete story . . .

16 - BIT SYSTEM PREVIEW



Sega's GENESIS

Sega's Mega Drive, the first true 16-Bit game system to be released in Japan, has now become the first high-powered machine to premiere in the U.S. as well. With a library of strong titles that include Thunder Force II, Ghouls and Ghosts, and Phantasy Star 2, Sega is on the way to 16-Bit victory.

Sega has long been seen as a company that had a superior piece of hardware (the 8-Bit Master System) that unfortunately wasn't supported properly by the company or third-party interests. While that has changed somewhat since Tonka took control of the unit, you can't help but wonder if Sega will commit the same mistakes again with their 16-Bit Genesis system. Although a lack of games created early questions, it appears Sega is off on a flying start and plenty of support.

Genesis is a marvel of advanced gaming technology. It has the ability to do an enormous number of tasks simultaneously and can generate up to 512 colors on screen resolution of 320x224.

The Genesis system is sleek in its look and design. On the lower-left portion of the unit there is a special earphone jack, with a volume control for private stereo sound control. Next to the volume control, the main power switch as well as the reset button can be found.

The surface of Genesis is embellished even further with a disc-shaped cartridge port that extends slightly above the surface of the machine. The cartridge slot is located in the middle of the disc and uses carts that are similar in shape to the games that are used with the Master System, although they are not compatible (a separate "Power Base Converter", which is sold separately does that job).

Game Control

The Genesis system comes with an advanced three-button joystick that offers exceptional control. The controller is larger than any previous type of gaming pad (in fact it may be too big for younger hands), and has a crescent design that makes it fit comfortably in both hands (the thumb of the left hand controls the pad, while the thumb on the right hand press the 'A', 'B', and 'C' buttons).

Tele-Genesis

One of the Genesis machine's most interesting features is the Tele-Genesis peripheral. This state-of-the-art add-on will enable you to play specially developed games simultaneously with friends down the street, across town, or even in another state! You'll see the action at the same time they will and vice-versa.

While the idea of modem games is nothing new (computer enthusiasts have been using them for years), it is a definite advancement in video game technology. The real uses are questionable, however, since the type of games that will really benefit from the Tele-Genesis system will probably not be the high-action arcade-oriented titles. The baud rate and information transfer is very slow, and head-to-head sports games and board games are the only applications that currently exist.

Software Support

Although the Genesis is technically the most advanced game machine set to appear any time soon, it faces stiff competition from the TurboGrafx 16, which is also in wide release. Sega does have an advantage in recognizable arcade titles (such as Space Harrier 2, and Altered Beast), as well as stunning original efforts such as the high-intensity shooter, Thunder Force II, the absolutely remarkable Ghouls and Ghosts (a little-seen arcade sequel to Ghouls and Ghosts), and other upcoming titles like Forgotten Worlds, Arnold Palmer Golf, Phantasy Star 2, The Super Shinobi, Basketball, Zoom (from Discovery), Atomic Robo-Kid, and other potential Sega favorites like Super Monaco GP, Gain Ground, After Burner and more!

8 BIT VS. 16-BIT...A DIFFERENCE YOU CAN SEE



Altered Beast will be one of the first games available for the 16-Bit Genesis system. It has all of the features found in the arcade version, including five levels of



play and exceptional graphics and sounds. The 8-Bit version for the SMS is an equally outstanding game, but the differences between the games is obvious.

THE GENESIS GAMES - ONLY GOOD LOOKS?

TOMMY LASORDA BASEBALL - Despite some similarities to the TurboGrafx baseball, TL Baseball introduces all-new concepts like full league playing.



THUNDER FORCE II - Two different types of game play are melded together to present two distinct challenges. Flashy graphics, great music, and plenty of shoot, shoot, shoot!



ALEX KIDD - Good ol' Alex is back for more fun than ever! Find your way through all new lands of surprise in this 16-Bit improvement on Miracle World.



SUPER THUNDERBLADE - A close version of the arcade hit that's loaded with first-person graphics, scrolling overhead attacks, and huge Boss weapons. A bit difficult to control with rough edges showing up in the first-person animation.

TELE-GENESIS

Tele-Genesis brings modem control into the world of video gaming! Connect the adapter to the unit and plug into your phone lines. Other attachments that may appear include a full-fledged computer, CD-ROM (like that employed by TurboGrafx 16), and an art tablet. These could appear as early as next year.

16 - BIT SYSTEM PREVIEW



NEC's TURBOGRAFX 16

The American version of the Japanese P.C. Engine, NEC's TurboGrafx 16, has all of the good looks of the rival 16-Bits and great game play as well! Combined with a library of potential games larger than any other next generation system, TurboGrafx-16 is ready to deliver...

The secrecy is over! The first magazine to report on the advanced P.C. Engine game machine from Japan is now here to let you in on the future of this system in the U.S.! No longer to be known as the P.C. Engine, NEC is now blasting their advanced game machine, the TurboGrafx-16, into the hands of game players everywhere. Boasting all of the fantastic graphics and sound capabilities of its Japanese cousin, the TurboGrafx is poised to deliver arcade-style thrills at home.

The brain behind this amazing system is identical to that of the NES. But the wizards at NEC have enhanced the normal 6502 processor with an inde-

pendant picture processing unit that lets the system produce truly dazzling background and character images.

In addition to producing games in-house, NEC is also aggressively seeking third-party support for their system. Many companies have pledged to develop for the unit which means that, in addition to the titles NEC will be showing with the unit (The Legendary Axe, Keith Courage in Alpha Zones, Vigilante, etc.), many more games will be just over the horizon. NEC can also take advantage of a growing library of games for the P.C. Engine (now totaling more than 100) that are potentially available for the TurboGrafx. Hot ar-

cade properties like R-Type, Dragon-Spirit, Galaga '88, Twin Cobra, The Ninja Warriors, and Side Arms as well as outstanding original efforts like Honey in the Sky, Victory Run, Son Son 2, and Deep Blue. Turbogرافx will also have a multitude of sports games like Power League baseball and Winning Shot golf that also share the same high level of playability and spectacular graphics and sounds.

Besides a great game titled Keith Courage in Alpha Zones (see game preview for more info), the Turbogرافx 16 will also come packed with one Turbopad controller that is very similar to the Nintendo flat pad that comes with the NES. The Turbopads, however, come equipped with rapid-fire capabilities built right in! If you want the feel of a joystick, both NEC and third-party licensees like Beeshu will have replacement controllers that are sure to up your score!

Expandability will also be another of the Turbogرافx strong points, with a CD-ROM player due to be released very closely after the initial appearance of the main system. Besides playing games on Compact Discs (which are equal to over 2,000 of the regular cards), the unit can also play regular CDs and has an on-screen control panel that lets you program your own music! The CD-ROM player, as well as other attachments like an AV Booster for stereo sound and a multi-player interface that offers play for up to five people at the same time, plug into the back of the unit where an expansion port is located.

Since many of Turbogرافx 16's initial games are not highly recognizable arcade names, the system will have to sell itself more on great games than on great titles. With a diverse selection of truly magnificent games already programmed for the P.C. Engine, the Turbogرافx unit appears to be in a better position than the competition to offer a wider variety of games.

NEC's plan of attack is simple: offer a multitude of outstanding games on one of the most advanced gaming systems ever released. While they don't have a ThunderBlade or Space Harrier in their bag, they do have a good selection of games and some of the best playing games of all the next generation systems previewed.

INITIAL TURBOGRAFX 16 GAMES INCLUDE...



DUNGEON EXPLORER - Fight your way through multiple levels of beasts in this arcade-style RPG. Use the clues in the conversation scenes to gather power-ups, fight Bosses, and more!



ALIEN CRUSH - The ultimate video pinball puts you inside an alien organism filled with pulsating drop targets and bumpers that come alive! Bonus scenes help expand the game play even more!



THE LEGENDARY AXE - A definite 10! One of the best video games we've ever played! Great play compliments the incredible graphics!



VICTORY RUN - A new breed of racing game! Victory Run challenges you to a road rally through Europe. First-person graphics enhance this addicting game.



KEITH COURAGE IN ALPHA ZONE (comes with Turbogرافx 16 system) - Guide Keith Courage in a battle against underworld creatures! Multi-levels, power-ups, nasty Bosses, and more!



VIGILANTE - The arcade mega-hit comes to the Turbogرافx 16! This version surpasses any other (including Sega's), and comes with lots of street fighting action. Incredible graphics and game play!

THE TURBO-CHIP CARD

The Turbogرافx 16 uses powerful cards, similar in appearance to those used in the Sega Master System, to store game info. The Turbochip cards hold up to 6 meg of program power! These tough cards are about the same size as a credit card and come in a nifty CD case for easy storage!



16 - BIT SYSTEM PREVIEW



The first 16-Bit game system developed outside of Japan, the Konix Multi-System captures true 16-Bit gaming in a package that is unconventional yet powerful. Get the full story on this exciting machine and its future here in the U.S.

After the July issue of Electronic Gaming Monthly previewed them, and the Summer Consumer Electronics Show introduced them, the video game world has been buzzing about the latest in gaming technology: 16-Bit systems. While the new high-powered game machines unveiled at CES (NEC's TurboGrafx-16 and Sega's Genesis) created quite a stir, new attention is being focused onto a segment of the console market that is still eagerly awaiting the arrival of the Nintendo 16-Bit Super Famicom and Namco 16-Bit "Super" system. Much of that interest is being directed at the first 16-Bitter developed outside of Japan - the Konix Multi-System.

The MultiSystem (previously code named the "Slipstream") is England's contribution to the "next generation" game system wars. While their number one weapon may not carry a name as familiar as Nintendo or Sega, the unit that Konix has created seems to have

a lot of the power that will be necessary to go up against the big guns. Beyond its lightning fast processor, the Konix Multi-System also has a multitude of additional features that include an interchangeable controller system that provides physical feedback during play, a simulator chair, and games that work on disk rather than carts.

The MultiSystem itself is blue and black and has been described in the British gaming press as "a toilet seat with handlebars"! The system embraces the controls as part of the entire package in an effort to provide a more hands-on appeal, giving players more feedback than a typical flat pad.

Controls

One of the MultiSystem's most unique features is an interchangeable controller system that allows you to change the controller as easy as you change the



The MultiSystem simulator chair is definitely the unit's most interesting add-on, but poor reaction (it moves painfully slow) could kill it.

joystick for one game, then switch to a steering wheel, and then reconfigure the joystick into the shape of handlebars for the next. There is also an arcade-style simulator chair that rocks and rolls to the movements of the system's joystick. A high price tag makes the chair questionable however.

Under the Hood - Looking at the Power Behind the MultiSystem...

Unlike the Sega Genesis or NEC TurboGrafx-16, which both use the more common 6502 and 68000 processors to power exceptional graphics and sounds, the MultiSystem uses a chip that is more familiar to PCs. The Intel 8086 inside the MultiSystem does its job well, however, running along at a zippy 12 MHz (as compared to the Genesis' 7.6 MHz and the Turbo's 6MHz). The 8086 does little of the actual game processing; instead it parcels the work out to other specially designed chip sets. At the heart of the machine are two such

chips, one for the graphics and one for the sound. Inside these ASIC (Application Specific Intergrated Circuits) chips, the MultiSystem games come to life!

The graphics chip can produce 9 million pixels per second, enabling the system to theoretically change the screen 87 times per second in high resolution mode. This chip set also makes it possible for the system to draw rectangles, lines, and 3-D vector-like graphics in the hardware, making the programmer's life much more care-free.

The machine has a palette of 4,096 colors and several resolution modes, including 512x200.

As far as the audio portion of play is concerned, the MultiSystem is equally impressive, with a sound chip that Konix compares to the Yamaha DX7 synthesizer (used in some arcade games). It also has the ability to play games in stereo through headphones.

The MultiSystem also out guns the competition in the fight for memory with 256K (over the Genesis which comes in with 64K), which can be expandable to 1.5 Meg.



MUTANT CAMELS '89 - This bizarre shooter from Llamasoft features side-scrolling graphics and killer humps from programmer Jeff Minter.



LAST NINJA 2 - The computer mega-hit looks super on the Multi-System. Last Ninja employs angled graphics and a quest that requires strategy and skill.



BIKER - This comes packed with the Multi-System. It's your typical road racer, with some interesting stunt maneuvers thrown in for good measure.

Games

Although many companies have signed on to be part of the Konix game plan, most openly admit that they will have trouble getting any MultiSystem product out the door by the end of the year. In spite of this, we were given previews of some of these titles which range from a quasi-3-D shooter called Defender of the Ground to Konix Chess.

BIKERS - (comes with the Konix Multi-System) An attempt at an arcade motorcycle game from award-winning software house, Argonaut. Created specifically for the Konix, Bikers features racing as well as stunts.

REVENGE OF STARGLIDER - A flight simulator and arcade game in one that works with the Power Chair. Also from Argonaut.

ROTOX - This is a 3-D space game featuring floating platforms that have been overrun by aliens. A high-tech shooter from Binary Design.

TUNNELS OF DOOM - A futuristic race game that lets you link two Multi-System games for head-to-head competition!

Other titles to be released by independent Konix developers include Multi-System versions of **Star Ray** from Logotron and **Sailing Simulator** from Empire, and **Ocean's Run of the Gauntlet**. Other upcoming disks include **Microids Super Ski Simulator**, the ancient coin-op **Mr. Do's! Wild Ride** from Electrocoin, and a follow-up from Titus called **Crazy Cars 2**. **Hammerfist** from Vivid Image **Vendetta** from System 3, a tank simulator and a graphics/sound package are also reportedly under development.



RUN OF THE GAUNTLET - In this Ocean contest, you must fight your way through bizarre lands.



THE NEXT GENERATION OF HAND-HELD GAMING...

THE ATARI

L Y N X

Ever since Electronic Gaming reported the first information on the top-secret Epyx hand-held game system last year, the video game industry has been buzzing over the possibilities of portable gaming. A cartridge-based game machine that can go anywhere seemed to have definite advantages over the pocket games that used permanently burned LCD displays and could play only one game.

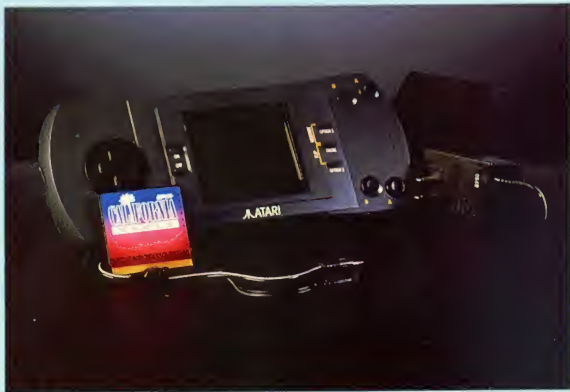
Before Epyx could get their system completed and out the door, however, the gaming super-powers at Nintendo stepped in with a hand-held of their own. The Nintendo GameBoy (EGM Vol.1-No.2) blew us away with solid game play in a compact package that includes smooth scrolling, NES-quality sounds, and decent black and white graphics (with variable levels of shading) on a dot matrix screen. GameBoy also has other features such as the Video Link, which connects two GameBoys for head to head play, and a standard Nintendo flat pad controller built-in to the unit itself!

While all eyes were turned toward Nintendo, however, Epyx quietly finished their portable game machine, code-named Handy, and struck up a super-secret deal with Atari Corpora-

tion to build and distribute the world's first color hand-held as well as assist in game development. The new Atari-Epyx alliance enables Atari to go head-to-head with GameBoy and show off the next generation of portable gaming today!

The Lynx is far superior to GameBoy in many ways. The most noticeable difference between the two systems is the delivery of the screen images and game action. While GameBoy uses a black

2" black and white LCD screen that has several different levels of shading, the Lynx has a 3 1/2" full color TV-quality monitor that can produce dazzling displays in over 4,000 colors! The Lynx also has a higher level of resolution (the 160x102 screen looks like an Amiga since the screen is much smaller) which allows the system to create highly detailed arcade-quality characters and backgrounds. The graphics chip employed by the system gives the Lynx



Designed and developed by RJ Mical, the wizard behind the Amiga computer, the Atari/Epyx portable game machine is more advanced than most full-sized systems!

LYNX GAMES

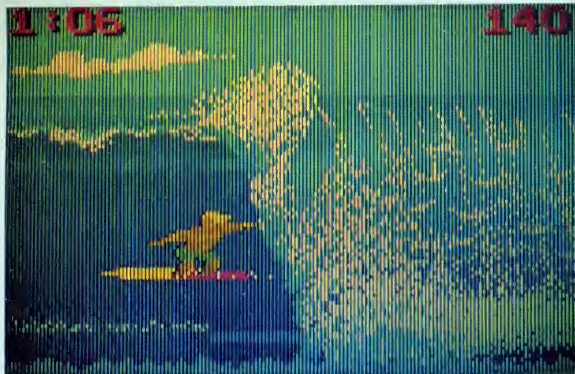
As a game system, the Lynx is extraordinary, but how many games will it have to play and are they any good?

Epyx currently has finished six games for the Lynx that all borrow from familiar themes or recognizable titles. Among the first games, which will retail for \$34.95, are Epyx's California Games (which comes with the system), Bally Midway's Rampage Deluxe, Electrocop, Blue Lightning, Gauntlet 3, and Gates of Zendacon.

All six have fantastic graphics and play and show off the system's abilities to their fullest. In *Electrocop*, for example, you can proceed to different levels by walking through doorways which quickly zoom forward as if you're walking down a long hallway. The effect is very well done.

Other upcoming Lynx games include a strategy/puzzler called *Chip's Challenge*, as well sports games such as *Golf*, *Football*, and *Soccer*.

Despite a retail price that is way above the GameBoy (\$149.95), the color hardware used by the Lynx is uncomparable. The real test of the unit will be the games - which must possess superior play to match the outstanding looks if the Lynx is to overcome the better supported competition.



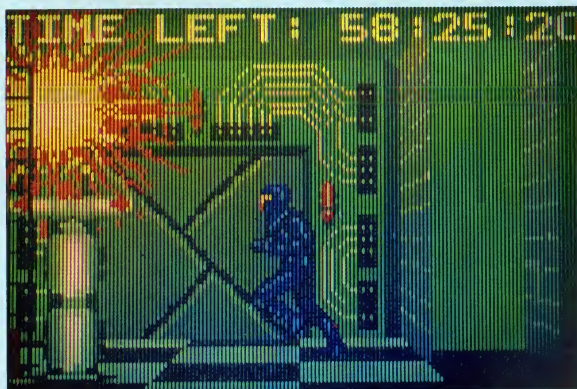
California Games - *The Epyx computer classic holds true to form on the Lynx! Packaged with the system, California Games contains all the surfin' and skatin' adventures from the original game!*

games the same look and feel of the new 16-Bit systems! It's really that good!

The Lynx hardware is also far superior to the GameBoy. In fact, it's far superior to just about any 8-Bit game system in existence, including the Nintendo and Sega. Not only can the system duplicate the scrolling features of the GameBoy, it also has scaling and zoom functions that are usually found only in high-tech arcade games (not even the Genesis and TurboGrafx-16 has these abilities)! This means that the Lynx will be able to produce exciting first-person perspective games like *After Burner* and *Pole Position*, where game characters and backgrounds start out small in the background and increase in size as distance is covered, with relative ease. Several Lynx games already take advantage of these functions with incredible results!

GameBoy boasts of multi-player games that allow players to go head-to-head simultaneously with two systems and two game carts. A special Video Link adapter cord allows the GameBoy to do this. The Atari machine has a similar device called a Com-Link, but instead of just two gamers, the Lynx can connect an unlimited number of players together. It also has the remarkable capability to jointly hook

multiple systems together with only one cartridge! This is done by downloading information into the Lynx's powerful computer brain which stores the game code on special chips. The same game cart can then be downloaded into several other game systems. While Atari is considering these advantages, a higher price tag for the downloading games and a limit in how much info the Lynx can store (possibly only a few game levels at a time), may prevent these carts from appearing any time soon.



Electrocop - *Take on the criminal droids in this Handy action/adventure epic! Spectacular scrolling screens and animated sequences make this game one of the best of the Lynx games!*

(Continued from Page 12)

the enjoyment that a player receives, especially if the game has multiple endings and only one ending is published."

"The player's need to know how to face a little frustration thrown in the game. I think the game counselors can get them back on track. If a player gets really stuck, a game counselor can get them over the hump, but not necessarily give them all the solutions. Give them some ideas, but only enough for the player to try harder."

Patrick at Konami agrees with the aim of aiding a caller, and not in telling everything. "I'll have people call in and say they found such and such hint or clue in a game before hearing about it anywhere else and I think it makes them feel a little bit better about themselves. To be able to come up with that information by themselves."

Byron Cook, however, takes a different approach to giving away game secrets. "I don't really agree with the attitude of limiting questions or answers. I feel it's better just to talk, and to say as much as the people want to hear. I'm sure", he continues, "it cuts out other people who are calling in, but it's better than the old phrase, 'Oh, I'm sorry, I have to go now,' which I've personally heard from some game counselors."

While many may see the job of game counselor as the ultimate in fun, it's not all high scores. "It's a serious job," says Tom Popelka at Hal America. "Most of my friends think it's a great way to make a living, but it's not as easy as they imagine. Most of them think it's like Tom Hanks in the movie 'Big'; just sitting around playing games all day. But it's so much more than that."

So remember, the next time you call, be thankful that there are experts on the other end of the phone with the patience and information to help you out of any type of jam that may come along. They pay for your quickly answered questions with plenty of hard work, an enthusiastic attitude, and high scores that are responsible for some of the meanest rapid fire blisters around.

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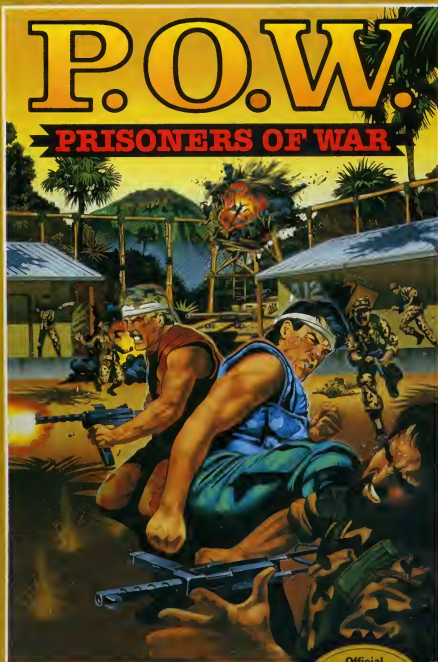
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