

THE N64 ENCYCLOPEDIA

EVERY GAME RELEASED FOR THE NINTENDO 64



INCLUDES
ALL JAPANESE
AND
64DD GAMES



THE
UNOFFICIAL
GUIDE

CHRIS SCULLION

The N64 Encyclopedia

**EVERY GAME RELEASED FOR
THE NINTENDO 64**

CHRIS SCULLION



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To Mum and Dad: the Nintendo 64 was the first console I bought myself, so technically there's no need to thank you this time, but it would have been pretty hard to buy the thing if I hadn't been alive in the first place, so I'll always be grateful to you both for making me actually exist. And on the bright side, hopefully I've finally come up with a dedication that won't make Mum cry, haha!

To my wee brother Kevin: nothing will ever beat the countless times we played each other at ISS 64 for the Bear Cup, or spent hours doing a 40-man, pinfalls-only Royal Rumble in No Mercy. Those were the greatest moments in my gaming life and that's because of you. Cheers again bold yin.

To my incredible wife Louise: this has been one hell of a difficult year and your patience as I juggled two books and a full-time job has been beyond belief. I love you so much for trusting me to know my own limits, and not saying 'Told you so' when I crossed them over and over again.

And finally, to my gorgeous daughter Serena. At this point you're just getting the hang of how to move an analogue stick, which means you've probably still got a few years to go before yer da's making you try the likes of Jikkyou Powerful Pro Yakyuu 2000. And that's fine by me, because you're already growing up quickly enough as it is and I'm constantly astonished at the funny, intelligent girl you're becoming. I love you with all my heart.

FOREWORD

Long before Nintendo's Wii project coined the term, Nintendo 64 was a revolution.

It's difficult to describe to those who weren't there just how mind blowing it was to go from the comparatively limited 2D games of the time, to freely pirouetting around Peach's 3D castle grounds, swooping between a mighty AT-AT's legs behind the controls of a Snowspeeder, and dancing on the majestic waves as dusk set across Sunset Bay.

3D had been done before on PC and the likes of Sega Saturn, of course, but not like this, not with this level of freedom, finesse, and conviction. While other early 3D developers seemingly couldn't imagine beyond on-rails shooters and isometric platformers, Nintendo's peerless EAD utterly revolutionised three-dimensional movement and camera control with Super Mario 64, legitimately resetting expectations for what games could be and setting standards for decades to come.

Mario's stunning analog stick precision, the revelation of four-player GoldenEye 007, Star Fox's visceral controller-shaking explosions, the unforgettable dynamic soundtrack of Banjo-Kazooie and discovering *that* vast Hyrule Field vista in Ocarina of Time are treasured memories that will remain etched in the minds of N64 fans forever.

And that's without touching on the rich legacies created by little known debuts such as Super Smash Bros., Animal Crossing (Japan-only), Mario Party and Paper Mario, alongside the stone-cold classics F-Zero X, Conkey's Bad Fur Day, Pilotwings 64, Majora's Mask and Perfect Dark.

It was a golden era for beloved developer Rare, with the beloved UK developer turning out hit-after-hit with the likes of Jet Force Gemini, Blast Corps, Diddy

Kong Racing, Banjo-Kazooie/Tooie and Donkey Kong 64 supporting Nintendo's own brilliant output – and that's without mentioning GoldenEye 007, Perfect Dark, Conker's Bad Fur Day and more. Has there ever been a more prolific output from any developer during a console generation?

For me, Nintendo 64 offered a glimpse of what video games could be. Beyond its captivating worlds, it pushed the social side of gaming more than any platform before. With an unprecedented four controller ports, N64 was the ultimate party console and some of the best multiplayer games ever were born within its cartridges.

The likes of Mario Kart 64, Super Smash Bros., WWF No Mercy, Mario Party, Diddy Kong Racing, Mario Tennis and of course, GoldenEye 007, brought four friends together in split-screen utopia that, given the boom of online gaming in the generation that followed, has never truly been matched since in terms of local multiplayer. Instant, global networking is convenient, but it can't quite replicate the feeling of snatching victory within breathing distance of your sobbing rival.

Nintendo 64 is probably not Nintendo's greatest console – third-party developers in particular really didn't show up to the party, ending the company's market dominance up until then - but it arguably pushed the medium forward more than any other system, with a legacy that can still be seen in video games today. And for that reason, it remains my - and many other players' – favourite games console ever. Viva la revolución.

Andy Robinson
Editor, Video Games Chronicle (VGC)

INTRODUCTION

The Nintendo 64 launched in the UK a month before my 14th birthday. For most of my life (as documented in my previous Encyclopedias), I was thoroughly immersed in all things video games, but the fact I was a kid and the fact that my parents understandably weren't keen on raising a spoilt wee sod meant that I usually got consoles either at Christmas or when people were selling them second-hand in the local classified sections, while I almost always got games when they were down to around half price. What can I say, it was pre-internet, so the old 'FOMO' wasn't anywhere near as pervasive.

The Nintendo 64, however, was the first ever console I got on launch day, and I did it by making the ultimate sacrifice. A local video game shop accepted my offer: on 1 March 1997 I would arrive at their door with my Sega Mega Drive and around 80 games, and hand it all over in exchange for a Nintendo 64 with just one game, Super Mario 64. In hindsight it was a ridiculous decision for both parties: I was giving up an enormous library of great games, and they were taking on stock that would take a while to shift, but at the time the N64 was such a huge leap forward for Nintendo – and my favourite series, Mario, in particular – that I didn't regret a single thing about it. It's quite fitting on a personal level, then, that my previous book was the *Mega Drive & Genesis Encyclopedia*, because just as that 13-year-old me moved on from Sega's 16-bit console to the N64, so too does my series of books about them 25 years later.

The Nintendo 64 was partly built with multiplayer games in mind: after all, the thing had four controller ports on it, when only two was considered the norm. The fact I wasn't quite old enough to head off to university or have situations where I was heading back home from the pub with a group of pals, meant that at the time I was very rarely witness to the joys of four-player GoldenEye 007 or Mario Kart 64. I had to hope that my brother's pal – the only other person

we knew who owned an N64 – and his brother were willing to come over with two controllers, which only happened on rare occasions. Despite this, some of my best multiplayer experiences in my life were on that console, partly because my brother and I spent countless hours competing against each other on International Superstar Soccer 64, and working together as a tag team in the various THQ and AKI wrestling games (starting with WCW vs nWo World Tour and working all the way through to WWF No Mercy).

ISS 64 is actually a prime example of why this series of books exists. Although it received high praise at the time in the UK as one of the best launch window N64 games, over time the ISS games have generally taken a backseat to other Nintendo 64 gems, and when you look at top 10 lists it rarely appears (especially in North America, where football games are generally ignored for the most part anyway). It's games like this, therefore, that the *N64 Encyclopedia* is designed to cater for. Naturally, the likes of Super Mario 64, GoldenEye 007 and The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time are in here, complete with gushing text trying to get across in mere written words just how important they were in shaping the future landscape of video games.

As with my previous books, though, it's games like ISS 64 that the *N64 Encyclopedia* is mainly trying to address. Millions of people fought their friends in Super Smash Bros., got jiggy with it in Banjo-Kazooie and literally felt the difference of the Rumble Pak in Star Fox 64 (or Lylat Wars, if you prefer), but almost every N64 owner also had fond experiences with other games that may not have been so popular. Maybe you and your friends had regular all-night NBA Hangtime sessions, or maybe as a kid you were obsessed with Toy Story 2: Buzz Lightyear to the Rescue. Perhaps you learned to count playing Elmo's Number Journey, or perhaps you took a punt on Snowboard Kids and realised it had been worth it. Whatever your personal history with

the Nintendo 64 is, you'll find it in here. And, for the first time in this series of books, every Japanese title is included too (including all 10 Nintendo 64DD games), meaning if you were an importer then your past is covered here as well.

As ever, thank you so much for reading this book. The only reason I continue to get to write them is because people like you continue to buy them, and I can't stress enough how fortunate that makes me feel. Please do contact me on Twitter @scully1888 and let

me know what you think of it, and please do review it online if you can: the more word spreads, the more books there'll be. Speaking of which, I hope to see you again next time for the fifth instalment in the series, in which I'll be taking a look at another four-player console that deserved more love than it got: the Sega Dreamcast.

With love,
Chris Scullion

THE HISTORY OF THE NINTENDO 64

Nintendo had been enjoying huge success in the home video game market in the early '90s, but it was also aware that it was going to have to start planning ahead if it was going to remain the top dog. Its NES console may have been the most dominant 8-bit system worldwide by a considerable distance, but its 16-bit successor, the SNES, wasn't having a similarly easy ride thanks to the huge strides being made by Sega. Its 16-bit Mega Drive / Genesis console was so well-received thanks to games like *Sonic the Hedgehog* that it served as legitimate competition to the SNES and even outsold it in some regions. What's more, following a rather public backtrack that saw Nintendo bowing out of a partnership deal announced with Sony, Nintendo was aware that Sony was going ahead with the 'PlayStation' project it had previously planned to create with it, meaning even more competition than just Sega would be on the way soon. The SNES may have still had some life left in it, but a successor would need to enter development.

On 23 August 1993, at its Shoshinkai trade show, Nintendo's president Hiroshi Yamauchi announced Project Reality. This was a massive strategic partnership with Silicon Graphics, the company whose obscenely detailed computer graphics workstations were used in such ground-breaking special effects movies as *Jurassic Park* and *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*. While Nintendo's new console obviously wasn't going to pull off movie-quality CGI visuals, its partnership with such a tech powerhouse was still making its intent clear: the next Nintendo system would have jaw-dropping graphics capabilities. What's more, it was going to be available by the end of 1995 for \$250.

In June 1994, Nintendo announced that its upcoming console was going to be called Ultra 64, and that it already had a 'dream team' of developers working on games for it, including the likes of Rare, Acclaim, DMA Design, Ocean and flight sim experts Paradigm Entertainment. It also signed a licensing deal with Midway to produce arcade games with Ultra 64 branding, to suggest that they were running on Ultra 64 technology. Even though the tech wasn't really similar, the arcade releases of *Killer Instinct* and *Cruis'n USA* continued to build hype for this mythical Ultra 64 console. Then, in November 1995, at another of its Shoshinkai shows, Nintendo revealed the final design for the console, along with a new name: Nintendo 64.

By the time the Nintendo 64 name was announced, Nintendo had already conceded that its new system wasn't going to be ready by the end of 1995 after all, so it was scheduled for an April 1996 launch instead. It was then delayed again to June 1996, and wouldn't be releasing worldwide as Nintendo had originally planned: while these steps were necessary, they also marked the first of the N64's stumbles. Sony's much-hyped PlayStation and Sega's Saturn had already been released in Japan at the end of 1994, and now Nintendo fans were expected to wait until mid-1996 in Japan, and even longer in the west, to get their hands on what Nintendo considered the next generation of gaming. It promised it would be worth the wait, however.

For many, it was. The Nintendo 64 finally launched in Japan on 23 June 1996, then came to North America on 29 September 1996 (infuriatingly for Europeans, their region wouldn't get it until 1 March 1997). The launch titles differed for each region, but one constant was *Super Mario 64*, one of the most ground-breaking,

genre-defining games ever released. With Super Mario 64 alone, Nintendo had made its mark on the next generation of video games. Sony and Sega may have made polygonal games the 'new normal' by the time the N64 had arrived, but Super Mario 64 showed exactly how the jump from 2D to 3D could truly revolutionise the way games were played.

The games themselves were only part of Nintendo's attempts to put its personal stamp on how polygonal gaming should progress, however. The Nintendo 64's real secret weapon – and something Nintendo offered at launch that neither Sega nor Sony initially did – was its unique new controller, which included an analogue stick (or a Control Stick, as Nintendo preferred to call it). Although analogue control methods had existed in home consoles ever since the days of the Atari 2600, the Nintendo 64 was the first major system to include analogue controls as standard at launch, meaning every player was able to navigate the polygonal 3D worlds of its games using a control method accurate enough to cater for the extra level of depth this new dimension provided. Such was the impact of the Control Stick that it's practically impossible to imagine having to direct Mario around Bob-Omb Battlefield or subtly tweak your Pilotwings 64 aircraft's flight direction with a conventional D-Pad. The Nintendo 64's polygon-pushing power may have been its main selling point on paper, but it was the controller that was revolutionising the way we played games.

It wasn't just the controller itself that was a hugely important part of the Nintendo 64: the number of controllers the console supported was also a key decision. The N64 included four controller ports as standard, instead of forcing players to buy separate multi-taps for games involving more than two players. This was transformative for many households and student dorms as marathon four-player sessions of GoldenEye 007, Mario Kart 64, Super Smash Bros. and the like became commonplace worldwide.

The Nintendo 64 was also a console designed with the future in mind. The controllers contained small expansion slots on the back which players could use to plug in peripherals. At launch this was limited to Controller Paks, small memory cards which stored a modest 256KB of save game data for some third-party games. But before long this also included the Rumble Pak – which brought battery-powered force feedback to the masses – and the Transfer Pak, which enabled data from some Game Boy cartridges to be passed over to certain N64 games. The flexibility of the slot meant that particularly inventive developers could make use of it in their own ways, with the likes of microphones and even heart rate sensors. Meanwhile, another port on the top of the console eventually allowed players to plug in an Expansion Pak, which doubled the N64's RAM from 4MB to 8MB, meaning some developers could activate high-res graphics modes or include new features that the stock N64 was incapable of handling. There was even an expansion slot on the bottom of the system for the Nintendo 64DD add-on, but we'll get to that in the Japanese section of the book.

Ultimately, the Nintendo 64 has gone down as one of the most iconic consoles ever created. Although its sales figures never really came close to those of the NES and SNES, and finished a distant second place behind the juggernaut that was the Sony PlayStation, those who did own the console fondly remember it as one that provided them with some of the most thoroughly entertaining gaming experiences of their entire lives. Many long-term players still have their Nintendo 64 at home because they can't bear to part with it, and even though these days its games may not hold up as well visually as those of other systems (even those of its era), there are still a host of legitimate gems that continue to be hugely enjoyable to play to this day.

And speaking of the games, let's get to them.

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buy this.*



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NINTENDO⁶⁴

Nintendo

THE GAMES

When Nintendo first properly revealed its Nintendo 64 console at its Shoshinkai show in 1995, its president Hiroshi Yamauchi made a speech on the first day of the show. Yamauchi explained that Nintendo's focus for the Nintendo 64 was on providing the best quality titles, rather than trying to release a large number of them. The implication was that Nintendo was already aware that the N64 wasn't going to have the biggest library; and this was something that would come to pass, with a little more than 400 games released for the console worldwide.

If you already own the *NES Encyclopedia* or *SNES Encyclopedia* (or the *Mega Drive and Genesis Encyclopedia*, for that matter) you'll see that each book is packed with anything from 800 to 1,000 games, many of which take up a quarter or half of a page. Meanwhile, have a quick flick through this section and you'll see that the vast majority of the games get either a full page or half page. The reason for this is simple: the Nintendo 64 just didn't have a lot of games in the grand scheme of things compared to its predecessors.

There were a number of reasons for this, but the most important one was the storage medium Nintendo chose to adopt. While Sony and Sega had opted for optical CD-based media for its PlayStation and Saturn consoles, Nintendo stubbornly chose to stick with cartridges. Cartridge-based software obviously had its benefits, most obviously when it came to loading times. While PlayStation and Saturn games often had lengthy loading times, loading was practically non-existent in the vast majority of N64 titles. Putting games on cartridges also meant that some (though not all) games could allow players to save their progress directly onto the cart, something not possible on a read-only format like a CD.

These benefits were arguably outweighed, however, by numerous drawbacks. The cartridge format meant that developers could only work with a fraction of the storage space that CDs offered at the time. Whereas a PlayStation disk could hold up to 660MB of data,

the majority of Nintendo 64 cartridges held between 4–32MB, with the absolute largest games like *Resident Evil 2* holding 64MB, a tenth of the PlayStation's capacity. Another major drawback was the cost involved in making these cartridges (especially those with more storage). CDs, even Sony's proprietary ones, were significantly cheaper to manufacture than N64 cartridges were, and the result was that N64 games tended to be more expensive: not only for the customer buying them, but for the publisher making them in the first place, for whom releasing an N64 game was often a bigger financial risk because of the upfront costs involved.

None of this is to say that the Nintendo 64's library is bad, far from it. In total, a little more than 300 games were released on the Nintendo 64 in the west, and you'll find them all in this section of the book. This book may feel a little more spacious than previous books in the series thanks to it having less than half the games than the NES, SNES and Mega Drive books, but it could be argued that the general quality of titles in this book is on average higher than those of previous systems. Of course, the N64 had its fair share of stinkers like any other console, but it also had a wealth of high-quality titles and a decent number of hidden gems in there too.

One final point to note: every screenshot in this book was captured using original Nintendo 64 hardware modified with an UltraHDMI upgrade (which adds an HDMI output to the console). This allowed me to capture N64 games at their highest quality output, instead of resorting to software emulation (which can often provide inaccurate results). Despite this, it's worth being in mind that the Nintendo 64 had a number of display resolutions for its games, with the lowest being 240p. As such, some of the screens in this book may be a little on the blurry side, but they do accurately represent the way these games looked and so you can expect screenshot quality to vary on a game-by-game basis.

NINTENDO 64

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1080° SNOWBOARDING

Year
Publisher
Developer

1998
Nintendo
Nintendo EAD



WHEN IT COMES to initial entries in console encyclopedias, you'd be hard pressed to find a better first foot forward than 1080° Snowboarding. A first-party snowboarding title created by Nintendo's prestigious EAD studio and produced by Shigeru Miyamoto, 1080° revolutionised the genre with its surprisingly realistic handling. Although there had been snowboarding games before it – most notably the Cool Boarders series on PlayStation – 1080° quickly gained a reputation as the most satisfying representation of the sport, thanks in part to the way it handled different types of snow. Racing through areas where the snow is thicker will slow your boarder down, while some sections are covered with a sheet of ice that lets you travel extremely quickly but can make turning a nightmare.

It's the way 1080° controls that makes it so memorable. It's not quite an all-out arcade racer, but it's far from a serious, complex sim either. Acceleration is automatic, but players can hold the Z trigger to crouch and build up speed. Tricks can be pulled off in-air, but landing is far from a given: players have to not only line up their board with the snow to ensure smooth contact with the ground, but also have to hold Z as they're about to land so they can bend their knees and keep their balance. Failure to do either can result in a tumble, meaning every time your boarder leaves the ground you have to stay alert. This can lead to a slightly difficult time for complete beginners, but the eventual result is



a deeply satisfying experience when you start pulling off perfect landings on huge, risky jumps.

There are initially five characters to choose from, each with their own stats. American boarder Rob Haywood is the best choice for starters, being your typical all-rounder, while Japanese pro Kensuke Kimachi is similar but has slightly weaker stats. Kensuke's compatriot Akari Hayami

and Canadian 14-year-old Ricky Winterborn are the rookies of the game: neither are very fast but they have good technique, jump and balance. Finally, the appropriately named Dion Blaster is an English boarder whose top speed is unmatched but is about as steady as a newborn calf. With a bit of skill you can eventually unlock some silly extra characters, including a panda suit and gold and silver metallic boarders. As for where this motley crew are riding, 1080° may only have six courses, but what it lacks in quantity it certainly offers in quality. Whether it's the sneaky tree-infested shortcut in Golden Forest, the slippery concrete roads at the end of Mountain Village or the extremely narrow, torch-lit bridges in Dragon Cave, each course has its own defining features that make it a pleasure to re-run them to try to better your times.


1080° was successful enough to spawn a GameCube sequel, the entertaining 1080° Avalanche. By that point, though, the gaming world was positively snowed under by similar titles, with the SSX series in particular taking over the chilly crown. As such, Avalanche could never quite have hoped to have the same impact as its predecessor, meaning the N64 original is the one people remember most fondly to this day. ■

FACT

In 2021, 1080° programmer Giles Goddard created a spiritual successor called *Carve Snowboarding*, which was released on Virtual Reality devices. So if you ever felt 1080° was sorely missing motion sickness, track it down.



AERO FIGHTERS ASSAULT

Year | 1997 
 Publisher | Video System
 Developer | Paradigm Entertainment

AERO FIGHTERS ASSAULT is the sixth and final game in the Aero Fighters series (known as the Sonic Wings series in Japan). Whereas all the other titles were vertically scrolling shoot 'em ups, however, Assault is a completely different type of game, instead offering third-person dogfighting shenanigans in open environments. The story revolves around Fata Morgana (wrongly named Phutta Morgana in the North American manual), an alien military organisation that was also responsible for a variety of attacks in the previous games. This time it's detonated a heat-generating bomb in the Antarctic (don't they all generate heat?), which has resulted in major seaboard cities like Tokyo and New York becoming

flooded. As the world's ground units are immobilised and naval forces are concentrating on saving the enormous numbers of refugees created by the flooding, it's up to the UN's special Project Blue force to head out and take on Fata Morgana. Although Assault plays entirely differently to the other Aero Fighters

FACT

It's possible to unlock a special X-28 ATD experimental aircraft, whose pilot is a dolphin called Spanky.

games it does still have some arcade-like elements: despite the more realistic flight sim appearance there's still an emphasis here on scoring points. As you take on the various missions in the likes of Tokyo, the Pacific Ocean, a desert and the Antarctic, bonus points are scored for all manner of things like how many of your wingmen survived, how much time was remaining and whether you still have a full stock of certain weapons. Gain enough points and you can take part in special bonus stages: unlock all three of these and the game ends with a special fourth one set in space. ■



AEROGAUGE

Year | 1997 
 Publisher | ASCII Entertainment
 Developer | Locomotive Corporation

AEROGAUGE ARRIVED ON the N64 a number of months before F-Zero X did, meaning for a while it and Extreme G were players' only real options when it came to futuristic racing. It's set in 2063, where the International Formula Association decides to create a new racing series that makes use of Sky Step Class flying cars. As in Nintendo's series, each of the vehicles (known here as Aeromachines) is piloted by a different character, and each can travel at fairly fast speeds. Unlike in F-Zero games, however, AeroGauge also lets players control the vertical height of their ship rather than simply steering it left and right. This makes it feel almost like a racing version of Star Fox instead.

While AeroGauge was an interesting take on futuristic racing it did have its issues. Critics were unhappy with its extreme pop-in, which even by the Nintendo 64's standards was quite severe, with entire buildings and tunnels appearing

almost right in front of the player. The game's high level of difficulty was also met with criticism: even at the easiest difficulty setting it's often a regular occurrence to finish in last place until you master the game's tricky Drift Dash boost mechanic, which involves holding the Z button as you turn, letting go of A then quickly pressing it again. It was never quite going to challenge F-Zero X, but for a while AeroGauge was one of the top dogs in the futuristic racing genre on Nintendo 64, if only on a technicality. ■

FACT

UK publication N64 Magazine hated AeroGauge so much it not only 'awarded' a score of 10 per cent, but also gave out the phone number for ASCII's UK office in case anyone wanted to complain.



AIDYN CHRONICLES: THE FIRST MAGE

Year | 2001
Publisher | THQ
Developer | H2O Entertainment



THIS INTERESTING RPG was developed by H2O Entertainment, the US-based studio best known for Tetrisphere. It tells the story of Alaron, a headstrong young squire who was orphaned as a child and adopted by the King. When he hears that a farmer called Kendall has gone missing, Alaron heads out to find him, but instead encounters a gang of goblins who poison him, causing him to fall unconscious. After a disturbing dream Alaron wakes up to find he's been rescued by a healer called Oriana, who tells him she can't cure whatever poison he's been inflicted with. Upon returning to the Castle, Alaron is ordered by the King to set off with a group of other adventurers to try and find an antidote. Naturally, without spoiling too much, the poison is only the tip of an unusual iceberg that Alaron is about to happily Titanic his way right into.

The combat system in Aidyn Chronicles is similar to that of many turn-based RPGs but players also have to take their characters' positioning into account, as party members and enemies are both able to wander around the battle area. Outside of battle, Aidyn can use the 'camp' option any time he likes while he's exploring. Camping outside comes with its risks, though: if you can successfully camp without distraction your party will regain their lost stamina and endurance points, but occasionally you'll be ambushed by monsters

FACT

One particular recruitable character named Sholeh will only join your party if there's space for her the first time you talk to her. This means literally killing off one of your party members to make room for her, which feels a bit harsh.

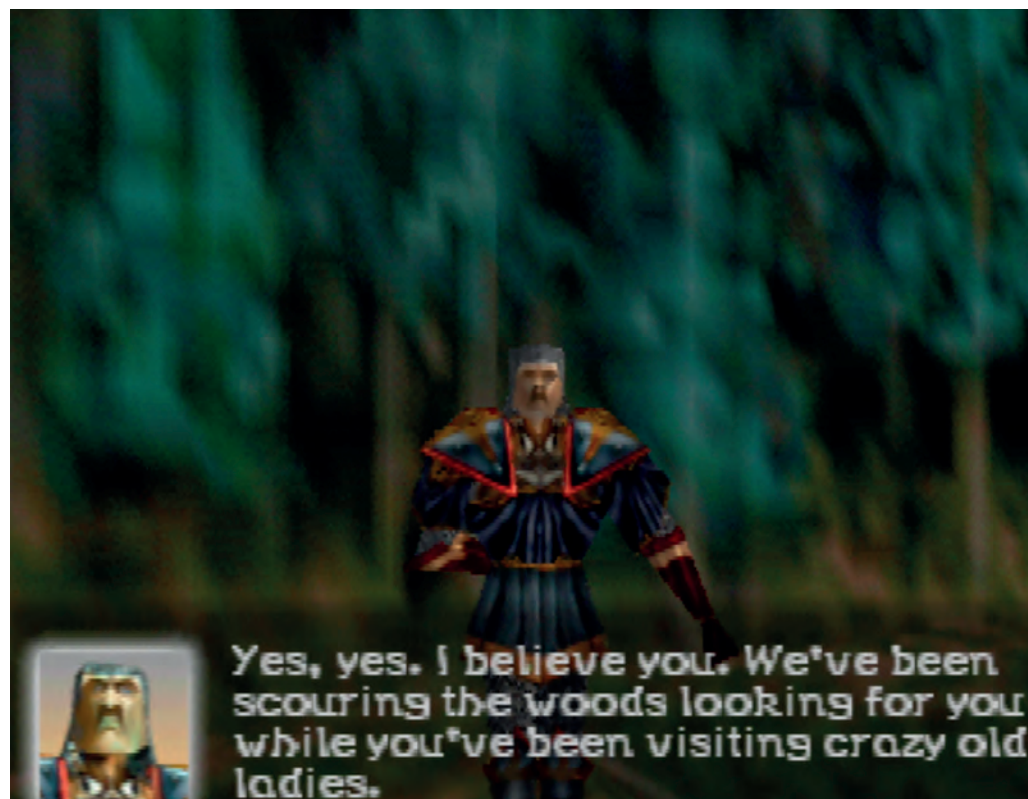


while camping, meaning if your party's stats are low it's a gamble (one that can be avoided by renting a room at an inn instead).

One of the main criticisms levelled at the game is how long everything takes: actions during battles have rather long animations and can take a while to perform.

Given that dodging attacks can be fairly frequent at times, this leads to situations where even the most basic of battles can take a few minutes to beat, while larger fights – when you have a full party and a bunch of reasonably powered enemies to battle – can often take upwards of 20 or 30 minutes. Alaron's slow running speed was the other notable problem critics raised, as with no fast-track option players would regularly find themselves spending an inordinate amount of time travelling between locations due to the protagonist deciding that a brisk jog is the fastest pace he can bring himself to muster.

Despite these criticisms, those who stuck with the game through its slower moments did have some praise for its depth and its sense of humour. The game's lead designer was Chris Klug, who had previously designed the second version of DragonQuest and had written a popular adventure module for Dungeons & Dragons, and together with writer Angela Ferraiolo created an entertaining script with some fun jokes in there. Anyone who can put up with its glacial pace and a battle system that arguably hasn't aged well may therefore find a surprisingly entertaining story hidden inside Aidyn Chronicles: the problem is more that it takes particularly strong willpower to reach that point. ■



AIRBOARDER 64

Year | 1998  ✗  ✓  ✓
Publisher | Human Entertainment /
 Gaga Interactive
Developer | Human Entertainment

CONVENIENTLY SET IN the year 2064, AirBoarder 64 is a futuristic take on the Tony Hawk series that replaces skateboards with AirBoards, a floating board that hovers 50cm above the ground. There are three game modes: Street Work, Time Attack and Coin. Street Work is less seedy than it sounds, and is simply a score attack mode where you're given a set time to perform stunts and rack up the highest score possible. Time Attack places a number of checkpoints in a stage and tasks you with hitting them all in order as quickly as you can. Finally,

Coin is a more laid-back mode where you're given a generous time limit to collect a set number of coins dotted around the level. There are five stages to choose from – Green Park, Lost Forest, Snow Festival 64, Sunset Island and Giant House – all of which are open, non-linear environments like those found in the Tony Hawk games. Finally, there are a total of eight playable characters (four initially,

FACT

ASCII Entertainment planned to release Air Boarder 64 in North America as AirBoardin' USA but it ultimately never happened.

with four unlockable), each with their own stats and their own preference for riding either a regular or goofy stance. Despite its best efforts AirBoarder 64 was met with middling reviews by critics, mainly due to its slow pace and its awkward controls. Special note, however, should go to the Giant House stage, which does what it says on the tin and gives the impression that you're a tiny hoverboarder zooming around an enormous home, ducking underneath beds and using mouseholes as tunnels to other rooms. ■



ALL STAR TENNIS '99

Year | 1999  ✓  ✓  ✗
Publisher | Ubisoft
Developer | Smart Dog

UBISOFT'S NINTENDO 64 take on tennis featured American pro Michael Chang (who had previously reached the world number 2 ranking a couple of years earlier) as its cover star. Chang was one of 12 players available in the game, eight of whom were actual real-life players (Chang, Amanda Coetzer, Jana Novotna, Conchitz Martinez, Gustavo Kuerten, Jonas Bjorkman, Mark Philippoussis and Richard Krajicek). Joining them are four fictional characters, including British player Zoe Taylor – presumably in there because the actual best British women's tennis player at the time was ranked 137th – and an American called Vanessa Child who bears more than a passing resemblance to

Venus Williams. The game itself is a relatively slow-paced tennis game that initially looks like it favours realism over anything too over-the-top. It only takes playing through a couple of sets to realise, however, that Ubisoft couldn't resist throwing in some odd gimmicks to at least make things a little silly should players wish. These include




FACT

The French version of the game is called Yannick Noah All Star Tennis 99, even though Yannick Noah isn't a playable character.

the interesting Bomb Mode, where every time the ball bounces a bomb is created in its place, meaning players have to navigate a bomb-riddled court without being blasted onto their backside. Also present are a couple of over-the-top special moves, one of which creates a wormhole in the middle of the court that blasts the ball out at an extremely fast speed. Oddly, you can only turn these off for human opponents, meaning you can't have a normal game of tennis against the CPU (unless your idea of 'normal' is Donnie Darko). ■



ALL-STAR BASEBALL 99

Year | 1998    X
 Publisher | Acclaim Sports
 Developer | Iguana Entertainment

ALTHOUGH THE NINTENDO 64 had a noticeably smaller library than that of the NES and SNES, it still had its fair share of American sports games, including Acclaim's All-Star Baseball series. Acclaim had released the first All-Star game on the PlayStation and Saturn the previous year, before deciding to bring the series to Nintendo consoles instead. All-Star Baseball 99, therefore, was a Nintendo 64 console exclusive with only a Game Boy Color port accompanying it. The game not only features the full Major League Baseball licence (meaning all the team names and logos are present), but also boasts the MLBPA licence, meaning all player names and likenesses are all correct.

Much like Acclaim's other major N64 sporting series NFL Quarterback Club, All-Star Baseball 99 (and its sequels) made use of the Nintendo 64's hi-res mode, presenting the action in 480i resolution (instead of the more conventional 240p) and making things look generally sharper as a result. This, combined with the default camera's close-up view just behind home plate, made the game noticeably visually superior to previous baseball games on the SNES.

The MLB licence goes beyond simply including the logos and uniforms here. All 30 Major League Baseball stadiums are also included in the game, '3D rendered down to the cut of the grass' according to the back of the box, which is ever so slightly hyperbolic unless baseball fields have completely flat grass. Add to this over 600 player animations and around 100 unique batter stances, along with (fairly repetitive) play-



by-play commentary by New York Yankees broadcasters John Sterling and Michael Kay and it was clear that Acclaim was keen on providing the most authentic baseball game released up to that point.

Although on the field it took its baseball seriously, All-Star Baseball 99 did have its fair share of silly cheats that could be entered to make things a little more entertaining.




By entering ABBTNCSTLO (a reference to comedy duo Abbot and Costello) the game would mess with players weights, making some of them extremely fat and some comically skinny. Meanwhile, adding the code GOTHELIUM ('Got helium?') would activate the obligatory big head mode that was all the rage during the early polygonal era. Perhaps best of all, entering the code PRPPAPLYR would make all the players completely flat and 2D, the code being a reference to PlayStation rhythm game PaRappa the Rapper.

FACT
 While promoting the game, Midway posted a comparison chart showing All-Star Baseball 99's features compared to 'Junior's Game' (MLB Featuring Ken Griffey Jr) and 'That Catcher's Game' (Mike Piazza's Strike Zone).



Clearly approving of such tomfoolery was the game's cover star. The role of cover star is always a big deal in sports titles and is the modern equivalent of appearing on a Wheaties box, and this time the prestigious honour was awarded to Colorado Rockies outfielder Larry Walker, who even got to introduce the game in the manual via words he absolutely, definitely, honestly wrote himself. 'You've got so much gameplay here', he allegedly says, 'I hope you don't forget to get to the ballpark! See you on base!' You certainly will, Larry, you certainly will. ■

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2000

Year | 1999  ✓  ✓  ✗
 Publisher | Acclaim Sports
 Developer | Iguana Entertainment

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 99 was such a success that Acclaim decided to stick with the Nintendo 64 for its successor. The main change in the 2000 edition is improved batting controls in the form of a



new 3D batting cursor. In the previous game players simply moved a cursor to where they wanted to swing then pressed the A button, but this time the cursor can

be rotated to let the player adjust how they hit the ball (assuming they hit it cleanly, that is). This means players can deliberately try to hit a grounder to advance their runners and load the bases, or even have a go at popping one into the air for a sacrifice fly.

A new instant replay mode and Expansion Pak support round off the main additions. ■

FACT

In a publicity stunt Acclaim used All-Star Baseball 99 to predict that the New York Yankees would win the 1998 World Series 4–3, with Scott Brosius as MVP. It was close: the Yankees won 4–0 and the MVP was indeed Brosius.

ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2001

Year | 2000  ✓  ✗  ✗
 Publisher | Acclaim Sports
 Developer | Iguana Entertainment

THE THIRD AND final N64 All-Star Baseball advances the series by the least amount, with only a handful of new features added to what was admittedly already considered an impressive baseball game.






One big addition is a new Hall of Fame team to accompany the present-day squads: going by the name Cooperstown Legends, it includes the likes of Reggie Jackson and Nolan Ryan. Changes have also been made to the Arcade mode to

make pitching and batting feel more streamlined than normal, making things play quicker. Other than that, however, there isn't much new here. As *Nintendo Power* magazine put it at the time: 'Last year's ASB was batting close to a thousand in the graphics department, and this year's version looks just as good (if not exactly the same)'. ■

FACT

One brilliant new addition is a park set in a cornfield, meaning players can play against the Cooperstown Legends there and recreate the iconic Kevin Costner movie *Field of Dreams*.

ARMORINES: PROJECT S.W.A.R.M.

Year | 1999  ✓  ✓  ✗
 Publisher | Acclaim Entertainment
 Developer | Acclaim Studios London

ARMORINES WAS ACCLAIM'S second attempt to take the Turok 2 engine and adapt it to fit a licensed IP (having already done so with *South Park* a year earlier). *Armorines* is a first-person shooter based on a superhero team created by Valiant Comics, and is set in the future (some time in 'the third millennium') during an invasion of giant insectoid aliens simply referred to as the Bugs. After the Bugs pillage and ransack the entire world and overthrow its militaries, the ultimate decision is made: send in the *Armorines*. As the game itself puts it: 'The *Armorines*

were the military option we hoped we'd never have to use. An advanced, virtually indestructible fighting force created to withstand even the devastation of a nuclear attack.' Which is nice and all, but something obviously went wrong during the design phase, because considering the protagonist can be killed after a couple of hits by a creepy-crawly I'm not


FACT

Turok and *Shadow Man* were also *Valiant* characters. If you're wondering why Acclaim had such an interest in *Valiant* Comics, it's because Acclaim bought *Voyager Communications* (which owned *Valiant*) in 1994.

convinced a nuke would leave them unscathed. Players can choose between one of two characters, each with their own combat styles. Tony Lewis has a plasma blaster for his main weapon (which fires slowly but is powerful) as well as a big rocket launcher, but is useless at close-quarters combat and relies instead on a shield to get out of scrapes. Myra Lane, meanwhile, has a less powerful but faster-firing energy rifle as her main weapon, along with a grenade launcher and a nifty cattle prod style weapon she can use for powerful melee attacks. ■



ARMY MEN: AIR COMBAT

Year | 2000  ✓  ✗  ✗
 Publisher | The 3DO Company
 Developer | The 3DO Company

THE ARMY MEN series was something of a divisive one over the years. Originally starting off as a real-time strategy series on the PC, it didn't take long before The 3DO Company brought the series to consoles with Army Men: Sarge's Heroes (see later) as well as a number of spin-offs, including the one you see on this very page. Air Combat (known as Army Men: Air Attack on other systems) is a third-person helicopter game similar in style to EA's Desert Strike series, in which players take on a series of missions aboard a hefty chopper... albeit a plastic one.

That's because the main twist here – as you've no doubt already gathered – is that all the characters in the game are little plastic army men. In this case, there are two warring factions, the Greens and the Tans, and their rivalry shows no signs of easing any time soon. Indeed, things are about to properly kick off, as General Plastro of the Tan Army is planning a huge operation that will result in the Green Army's borders being seized, with war pretty much unavoidable. Playing as the Green Army's elite Alpha Wolf Squadron, you have to head out and gun down the Tans *en masse*, not resting until they're reduced to a big puddle of melted beige plastic.

You gain access to four different helicopters as you play through each of the game's 16 missions. Starting off with the fast-moving Huey (which is basically a Bell 212), you



eventually get the Chinook (slow but can take a beating and carry a heavy load for rescue missions), Super Stallion (fast and powerful without too many compromises) and finally the Apache (the same chopper as the one in Desert Strike and easily the best of the bunch). You can also choose

from a series of co-pilots who have each mastered one of the game's available weapons: Woodstock is a Vietnam veteran (or the plastic toy equivalent) who specialises in machine gunning, Rawhide is a cattle farmer who loves rocket launchers, Hardcore is a 'cocky and headstrong' chap who prefers homing rockets and, because it was made in the late '90s, the sole female option is Bombshell, who only became a co-pilot by 'using her beguiling charms to ride shotgun' with the pilot. Look,

I didn't write the thing.

Gameplay is what you would likely expect from a 3D version of Desert Strike with the player using the stick to move the helicopter forward and back and rotate it, while pressing C-Left and C-Right strafes from side to side. We're not exactly talking Microsoft Flight Simulator here so you don't need to worry about altitude or anything like that, but you do also have access to a winch, which can be used to pick up items and rescue soldiers as the need arises. There's also a multiplayer mode called Officer's Club, where up to four players take part in mini-games involving hunting bugs, capturing flags, recovering food and rescuing scientists. ■

FACT

The decision to use army men in the series was actually an attempt to avoid censorship, because the German ratings board was clamping down hard on realistic violence at the time.



ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES

Year

1999



Publisher

The 3DO Company

Developer

The 3DO Company

THE FIRST OF the Army Men titles to be released on Nintendo 64, Sarge's Heroes is a third-person action game where the player takes control of Sergeant Hawk, aka Sarge, the main protagonist of most of the entries in the series. Sarge is the leader of Bravo Company, and his five favourite soldiers make up the Bravo Company Commandos. As (bad) luck would have it though, General Plastro and his Tan Army launch a pre-emptive strike on the Greens' camp, causing a scene of devastation that leaves many of the Green soldiers 'mortally melted'. Even worse, all five of the Bravo Company Commandos have been captured, along with war correspondent Vikki (who just happens to be the daughter of Sarge's boss Colonel Grimm: well, that's where nepotism gets you). As Sarge, you have to make your way through 16 missions taking on the Tan Army as you try to rescue the Commandos and Vikki while trying to hunt down Plastro in the process.

Sarge's Heroes is played with a third-person viewpoint and, like many games from its era, can be a little harder to get used to these days because of its control system. The lack of a second stick means the N64's Control Stick is used to run and turn, while players have to hold down the C-Right button to toggle a strafing run. Sarge is initially armed with a standard issue M-16 assault rifle but as the game progresses he can also find the likes of

FACT

Vikki starred in her own spin-off platformer called *Portal Runner*, which was released on PS2. The PAL version's cover includes a questionable 97 per cent score by *PSE2* magazine.



a shotgun, M-60 machine gun, sniper rifle and even more exotic weapons like a bazooka, mortar and flamethrower.

The game's big twist, however, comes in the third mission where Sarge discovers that there are actually two worlds: the plastic world and the real world. By stepping through a portal into the latter Sarge suddenly realises that he is actually five inches tall and the world around

him is enormous. This leads to the sort of Honey I Shrank the Kids type you would expect from a game starring small toys, and as Sarge travels back and forth between worlds you find yourself in two very different scenarios: some stages play like a standard war game that simply has odd-looking soldiers, while others place Sarge in a series of real-world settings in which the environment is just as important as the action. One minute you're

trying to find a Blue Spy in an enormous human-sized bathroom, the next you're taking on massive killer ants and ten-foot tall strands of grass in the garden. A child's sandbox becomes a sprawling desert while the final stages take place in a giant kitchen and living room, culminating in the Battle of the Staircase. Hey, you weren't there, man. Despite the clear benefits of its clever premise, Sarge's Heroes was criticised at the time for its awkward control system and annoying camera. As such, it was only met with a middling reception by the games media, with review scores averaging at around 60 per cent. Unbeknownst to many at the time, this would actually make it one of the higher scoring Army Men games. ■



ARMY MEN: SARGE'S HEROES 2

Year

2000



Publisher

The 3DO Company

Developer

The 3DO Company

THE SEQUEL TO *Sarge's Heroes* takes place where the first game left off, with the Tan Army in full retreat and their Field Marshall Tannenberg held hostage by the Greens. This should be cause for celebration but someone is conspicuous by his absence: the Tans' leader, Plastro. Plastro's still in the real world and is suffering from 'plastrification', a condition where spending too long in the real world turns army men into little plastic toys (sshhh, nobody tell them). He's saved, however, by the mysterious Brigitte Bleu of the Blue Resistance, who has developed a serum that reverses plastrification.

Plastro takes over a toy shop in the real world and uses Brigitte's serum to create a new army of toys to destroy the Green Army for good, so off goes Sarge to stop him. Again. The gameplay in *Sarge's Heroes 2* is much the same as that of its predecessor, but this time Sarge

is joined by Vikki, who can be controlled in some of the stages. As before, the game's 17 stages jump between Sarge's world and the real world as players fight their way through such strange environments as the inside of a fridge-freezer, a gumball machine inside the toy store and a pool table, before the final battle takes place inside a pinball machine (because why not). Reception was much the same as that for the original *Sarge's Heroes*, with critics complaining that none of the issues from the first game had been addressed. ■



FACT

In the four years between 1998 and 2002, no fewer than 19 *Army Men* games were released, which is probably overkill however you look at it.

ASTEROIDS HYPER 64

Year

1999



Publisher

Crave Entertainment

Developer

Syrox Developments

ATARI'S CLASSIC 1979 arcade game *Asteroids* never had a plot, other than 'blow things up, please'. Naturally, 20 years later such simplicity wouldn't fly, so for its Nintendo 64 update Syrox and Crave decided to conjure up a new storyline in which the player is a pilot who's been recruited by the Astro-Mining Corporation to clear out debris-filled areas of space so it can conduct various mining operations there and make big money. Naturally, the majority of this debris consists of ruddy big asteroids, but luckily you're armed with a laser gun that can blow them into progressively smaller chunks until they're tiny enough to destroy for good. It turns out two decades doesn't actually make a lot of difference, because at its core

Asteroids Hyper 64 plays very similarly to the Atari original, with players able to rotate their ship, use thrust rockets to move forwards and enter Hyperspace – in other words, teleport to another random part of the screen – to avoid

collisions at the last minute. The game includes 90 stages split over six zones, but players would be forgiven for initially believing there isn't much variation because each zone's 15 stages have the same background and enemies. It isn't until you progress through the game that you eventually encounter new enemy types including alien eggs, extra-terrestrial crystals and cloaked asteroids (which fade in and out and can only be hit when they're fully visible). You can also collect power-ups including homing missiles and mines. ■



FACT

At one point in Stage 15 a special green vector asteroid flies past. If you can shoot it you'll unlock a port of the original 1979 version (albeit with the same modern sound effects from the main game).

AUTOMOBILI LAMBORGHINI

Year
Publisher
Developer

1997
Titus Software
Titus France



DIG OUT YOUR copy of *The SNES Encyclopedia* (what do you mean you don't have one? What a disgrace) and turn to page 105 to see Lamborghini American Challenge, a licensed racing game by French studio Titus Software. I'm sure I don't have to spell it out for you but Automobili Lamborghini is the successor to that game, replacing Titus's trusty sprite-based racing engine for a shiny new polygonal one (and a sturdy one at that, running smoother than most other N64 racing games and with solid car and track models that rarely show any glitching). There are four modes available to you in this game: Single Race and Time Trial are self-explanatory, while Arcade has you taking on a series of three tracks, with the aim being to win all three in a row otherwise it's Game Over. As well as the other five drivers racing alongside you Arcade mode also features a timer at the top of the screen that requires you to top it up regularly by driving through checkpoints: like numerous other racing games of the era that don't really balance this too well, it's actually possible to run out of time and get a Game Over while you're in first place, which makes a bit of a mockery of the system. Arcade Mode is split into two different sets of tracks – the Basic Series and the Pro Series – meaning there are six in total in the game. Naturally, the Basic tracks have

FACT

The Japanese version of the game is called *Super Speed Race 64* and adds a handful of new features like weather effects and a new difficulty level.



straightforward designs and are generally quite ovular, covering countryside, city and beachside environments, while the significantly more complex Pro tracks feature similar landscapes while throwing in some other gimmicks (ancient ruins, fog and racing through caves and canyons respectively). Each track has one or two shortcuts that are

fairly easy to spot even at high speeds, but don't get too

excited: most of them don't really save you much time and since you can lose some speed turning into them some of them actually let your opponents catch up with you a bit. The other main mode is Championship, which is your typical Mario Kart style system where you get points for each race depending on where you finish.

Although you obviously start off with just Lamborghini cars to choose from – the Diablo and

the Countach, specifically – by completing Arcade and Championship mode in various difficulties you can eventually unlock other cars based on the Porsche 959, Ferrari F50, Ferrari Testarossa, Dodge Viper, McLaren F1 and Bugatti EB110. While most races in each mode are simply a case of getting through each lap, in some longer races your fuel can run low or your tires can get worn. This introduces a pitstop element to proceedings, where you have to pull in and perform a mini-game: either using the Control Stick to fill your fuel tank, or spinning it quickly in circles to change your tyres. In all, Automobili Lamborghini is a solid enough racing game, if an unspectacular one. ■



BANJO-KAZOOIE

Year | 1998
Publisher | Nintendo
Developer | Rare



USUALLY A PLATFORM game has to become much-loved before its protagonist is then chucked into a bunch of spin-offs, but Banjo the bear started off the opposite way, making his debut as one of the playable characters in Rare's Diddy Kong Racing. Eight months later, Banjo finally appeared in a starring role in his own game, and this time he wasn't alone. The original idea was that Banjo would have a backpack that could sprout wings and legs to help him traverse the various locations he would explore, but over time the game's designers at Rare decided that rather than make the bag a weird limb-sprouting organism it was probably a bit more sensible to put another character in the backpack and have them pop out whenever needed instead. The result was Kazooie, a cheery red 'breegull' who teams up with Banjo to form one of the most memorable partnerships in gaming, up there with Sonic & Tails, Mario & Luigi and um... Mortal & Kombat.

The game revolves around the kidnap of Banjo's little sister Tooty, who's been nabbed by the evil witch Gruntilda. In a plot device that has definitely never been done before with mirrors or anything, Gruntilda's cauldron tells her that she's no longer the fairest of them all (or words to that effect) and that Tooty is actually more of a looker. Incensed, Gruntilda captures Tooty and hooks her up to a machine that will, after a conveniently lengthy warming up period, transfer Tooty's beauty to

FACT

Banjo-Kazooie started off as a SNES platformer called Project Dream, which starred a young boy called Edison. It was eventually moved to the N64 and Edison was replaced by Banjo.



Gruntilda. Off head Banjo and his birdy buddy Kazooie to confront Gruntilda and defeat her to get Tooty back.

Banjo-Kazooie is similar to Super Mario 64 in that both games have a hub area that branches off to numerous other stages: Gruntilda's Lair in the former, Peach's Castle in the latter. The player then has to explore these open-world stages in an attempt to find the collectibles that will let them unlock new areas in the hub, thereby opening up new worlds. While Super Mario 64 made this fairly simple by doing it with Stars, Banjo does things differently by offering both Jiggies and musical notes. The former are anthropomorphic jigsaw pieces that can be used to solve the various jigsaw puzzles dotted around Gruntilda's Lair: finishing one of these opens up a new world. The musical notes – of which there are 100 in each world – open

other locked doors in the Lair so the player can access these jigsaws in the first place. It's an interesting mechanic that encourages further exploration: rather than just heading for the Jiggies, the player has to take their time and collect the notes too.

Ultimately, Banjo-Kazooie was recognised as one of the few titles of its era to challenge Super Mario 64's platform game crown. Its similar structure and free-roaming style opened it up to understandable comparisons, but its greater insistence on (comical) dialogue and the way the pair learned a wide variety of new moves as the game progressed – almost giving it more of a Metroidvania feel at times – ensured the game stood out in its own way. ■



BANJO-TOOIE

Year | 2000
Publisher | Nintendo
Developer | Rare



IT'S BEEN TWO years since the events of Banjo-Kazooie (literally, in this case, given the release dates), and the nasty witch Gruntilda remains dead and buried. Well, buried at least, but dead? Not so much. During a storm, Gruntilda's sisters Mingella and Blobbelda dig her up and discover that she's been alive all this time, but her body has been reduced to a skeleton. Angry, she blows up Banjo's house (killing their mole friend Bottles in the process) and, together with her sisters, starts plans to use a special device called the Big-O-Blaster to extract all the life force from the world and use it to regrow her body. It's safe to say that there aren't many colourful platformers that open with its heroes setting off to avenge the death of a small animal friend, but that's what you get here so you might as well play the ball where it lies.

One of the main elements of the original Banjo-Kazooie was the way the pair would regularly learn new moves from Bottles (RIP), but there are no silly amnesia or 'it's been a couple of years, they're out of shape' storylines designed to remove their skills so the player can learn them all over again. Instead, the game begins with the plucky pair fully armed with all the moves they had by the end of their first adventure, and as they make their way through this sequel they learn even more new ones from Bottles' drill sergeant brother Jamjars. These include shooting eggs at enemies with a new first-person viewpoint, a



new Bill Drill move (where the pair turn spin downwards at high speeds to break boulders and unscrew screws) and the laughably violent Breegull Blast, where Banjo grabs Kazooie by the legs and slams her downwards onto enemies.

There's one major new gimmick that changes everything, though. Eventually you'll start coming across special floor tiles called Split-Up Pads: step on these and our heroes will do a Lennon and McCartney and go their separate ways, letting you control each of them individually. When this happens, Banjo and Kazooie can each then learn a whole new set of unique moves. For example, now that Kazooie is no longer in Banjo's backpack, he can now take it off and use it as a weapon to attack enemies.

Kazooie, meanwhile, also gets a bunch of extra techniques now that she's free of her cloth cocoon:

she can glide off high ledges, leap high into the air and even sit on eggs to hatch them.

Banjo-Tooie was met with similar critical praise to that of its predecessor, though its bigger scale meant that some reviewers felt it could be a bit overwhelming at times. That said, the fact it was released a year after the collect-a-thon that was Donkey Kong 64 certainly went in the game's favour, because when you place it next to the elaborate epic that was the great ape's polygonal debut (which appears later in the book, naturally), Banjo-Tooie feels like sitting back and chilling out to an easy listening album by comparison. ■

FACT

The game was going to have a mode called Bottles' Revenge where a second player could control an undead Bottles and possess enemies to try and kill the heroes, but it was scrapped for time reasons.

