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Arrivederci 32bit?

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Super Mario 64 redefines 3D videogaming



Biggest Issue Ever

140 pages

Shigeru Miyamoto's *Mario* series is the epitome of brilliant game design, encompassing superb control, intelligent structure and almost limitless scope. Edge reports from E³ in Los Angeles where the most significant game of the decade was unveiled. Just how good is *Super Mario 64*?

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shape up is obviously in Rare's hands. After so much former hype regarding *Killer Instinct*'s importance in the N64's assault (the game was used as a spearhead for the clandestine Ultra 64 previews in Chicago two years ago - see E12), it arrived as something of a disappointment with no effort taken to implement 3D routines to rival *Virtua Fighter 2* or *Tekken 2*. Instead, despite some wonderfully colourful graphics, it remained resolutely in *Street Fighter II* and *Mortal Kombat* territory (presumably to appease the US fighting game market still consumed by this style of game).

Perhaps as much as an indication of Nintendo's reticence to share technical information with its licensees as of its own creative supremacy, titles such as *Shadows of the Empire*, *Cruis'n USA* and *Kirby's Air Ride* (which again, looked better at Shoshinkai), simply fell short of the N64's initial mission statement. That's not to say they weren't impressive, they just didn't live up to full expectations. Lucas' *Shadows of the Empire* proved again that the company is most comfortable when developing for the PC, and apart from some impressive screen depth, there was little in this new Star Wars game to showcase the machine's abilities. As for *Cruis'n USA*, this arcade port showed signs of the developers having difficulties improving on the original. Supposedly boasting a higher frame rate (although still relatively clunky), the game fell short of the racing game standard already set on the 32bit machines and the car proved difficult to control with the analogue stick.

Other Nintendo 64 games did appear at the show, although were absent from the Nintendo booth. Acclaim's *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter* was in playable form and looked promising, despite the blatant fog effect used to disguise the screen's lack of distance drawing. Virgin's *Freak Boy* was in demo form, bearing no resemblance to the *Stackers* puzzle game that N64 Internet junkies have been getting excited over. Other N64 games were William's *Doom 64* and Mindscape's *Monster Dunk*, a basketball game featuring monsters. How original.

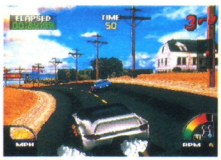
Despite the relative strength of the N64 line-up (and arguably the two best games of the show), Nintendo's confirmation of the machine's $249 price tag was met with a mild reception. One reason for this was Sony. On the first morning of the show, during a conference on videogames which included NOA's **Howard Lincoln** and SOA's **Tom Kalinske**, Sony's executive vice president **Jim Whims** dropped the bomb by announcing a PlayStation pricecut to an astonishing $200 (SCEE also announced a simultaneous UK price drop to £200). The following day, Sega followed suit and matched Sony's price with its Saturn. Dodging the curved ball of how the Nintendo 64 is now in fact the most expensive next generation games system →

It is...

GamesMaster which is wearing surprisingly well considering three similar shows. Bad Influence, Total Reality and Reactive have been taken off the air. Dexter Fletcher did try to kill off the show two seasons ago by being agonisingly unwatchable. He failed



Virtual Boy was still keeping its head above water with new titles such as *Dragon Hopper*

























Nintendo previewed eight games at the show for the N64: as well as *Super Mario 64* and *PilotWings 64*, the following games were playable at the event (from top left): *Cruis'n USA*, *Kirby's Air Ride*, *Shadows of the Empire*, *Killer Instinct*, *Blast Corps* and *Wayne Gretzky's 3D Hockey*. Other titles shown on video (continued, left to right) were *Super Mario Kart R*. *Doom 64*, *Goldeneye*, *Mission Impossible*, *Body Harvest* and *StarFox64*