

NINTEENDO NEWS NETWORK



NINTENDO ULTRA 64 EARLY RELEASE?

Word has it Nintendo are planning to launch NU 64 sooner than expected, possibly to coincide with PlayStation and Saturn. At the very least we are assured NU 64 hardware is being readied for display at the imminent E3 show in Los Angeles, along with demonstrations of its vast capabilities perhaps even early demos of games! Paradigm have confirmed that at least one of these demonstrations is their handy work; remember they are one of the teams benefiting from Shigeru Miyamoto's contributions.

It is the sheer size of Nintendo's display area at E3 - their biggest yet - that has started the rumours flying. But the expected NU 64 announcement is only part of what is planned for the second half of 1995. A list of developers is confirmed for Virtual Boy (see story) and, from what we can gather, the Super NES is poised to hit hard with something more spectacular than Donkey Kong Country. And we ain't kidding!



VIRGIN ON THE AMAZING!

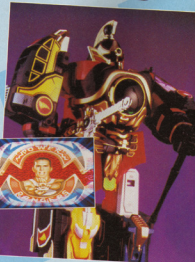
Yet another link is drawn between musician Peter Gabriel and Nintendo Ultra 64 this month, as Virgin Interactive Entertainment are signed up to develop for the dream machine. While Angel studios are busy on their project, Rebecca Allen, who's also worked with Mr Gabriel on video projects, is producing a 3D action game of the kind never seen before. Scheduled for 1996, it's a vague proposition for sure though unbiased contacts confirm the project really is 'that cool.' The tension mounts.

POWER SURGE!

The Power Rangers Movie released next month is going to save the world though we're unlikely to be safe from it. To coincide with the theatrical release, Toy manufacturers Bandai are planning to unleash a second Super NES game to feature the heroes dressed in Tutti-Frutti bike gear. A movie report is to follow next month, meanwhile here's an exclusive first look at the game.



What did you expect croquet? Of course it's a beat 'em up! This time the rangers can jump in and out of the foreground as a tactical advantage over Ivan Ooze's hench men. He's the new baddie, didn't you know. Note the new characters too: Red Ranger is now Rocky, Aisha steps in as Yellow Ranger and Black Ranger is now Adam; though both Trini and Zack feature briefly in the film. Queue the music...



SPECIAL FEATURE

We're used to it now of course, but the term 'Super' associated with anything 'Nintendo' in 1990 was enough to have every video-game fanatic lose sleep for weeks! So when Nintendo announced their 'Super' Famicom, players the world over inevitably went delirious!

With the Famicom (NES) at its peak, games players weren't really looking anywhere else for their fun at this time - not even toward Sega's new 16-bit machine. When Sega released their Megadrive in 1989 the position stood much as it is now with Saturn and Nintendo Ultra 64. The Megadrive's 16-bit technology was far in advance of the 8-bit Famicom and it seemed Nintendo had been taken unawares. As if to confirm this, their most recent hardware release was the massively popular yet miniature and monochrome Game Boy.

Virtual Boy is set for release in Japan this July and NU 64 is to follow in the Autumn. In the light of both Sega and Sony's 32-bit systems already making their debut in the East, doesn't this all seem a bit familiar?

THE HISTOR



GAME BOY

1989

Game Boy proves that a policy of presenting humorous, involving and intelligent game-play impresses more than expensive good looks. Hiroshi Yamauchi, president of Nintendo Company Limited, made the right decision in placing mono-chrome, portability and affordability over colour, clumsiness and expense.

To date Game Boy is the only console to have crossed the divide between all age-groups and gender, with just under half of the 30 million owners world-wide being adults. This is partly due to an advertising campaign aimed directly at older players which, in America, was backed by the slogan 'You don't stop playing because you get old - but you could get old if you stop playing'. Enough to urge any youth-respecting individual to reach for their wallet! Yet another incentive focused on Father's Day: get him a Game Boy and hey presto: 'the Dad who has everything.'

TETRIS

Game Boy's other key advantage was, and still is, the only portable version of Tetris available. That Nintendo focused on this Russian puzzler instead of Mario Land at the release of Game Boy pretty much says it all. Both Nintendo Presidents knew they had to have Tetris, seeing it as the perfect marketing tool for a portable machine which, they hoped, would appeal to both male and female players alike, regardless of age.

SUPER MARIO LAND

No Nintendo machine is complete without its custom-built Super Mario adventure. In Super Mario Land the sprites may be small but the game play is GREAT!

SUPER FAMICOM (JAPAN)

1990

Waiting for Nintendo to make a move is always frustrating. Though you suspect they have everything under control, there's always the worry that delays are due to lack of preparation. Everybody here at NMS remembers the unbearable tension of the year preceding the release of Nintendo's Super Famicom, having seen Sega not only debut their Megadrive in Japan by late 1990, but establish their 16-bit console, re-named 'Genesis', Stateside too.

What were Nintendo thinking of!

The thing to remember is NCL don't work to pressure; they only ever release a product when it is considered worthy of the company's reputation. President Yamauchi had been overseeing the development of a new super console to replace the Famicom since the late 1980s, and he obviously saw no reason to rush-release his superior games machine just because Sega claimed to have reached the 'next level' first. On the 21st of November 1990, any doubts regarding Mr Yamauchi's reputation were dissolved. The Super Famicom had arrived, and it left the shops just as soon as staff could empty those crates containing the system with its initial batch of software.

Boasting a palette of 32 768 colours; a sound chip designed by Sony and a specialist 'Mode 7' graphics processor, seeing and hearing the Super Famicom in action was an experience no games player could exist without. Once everybody got the chance to play the new Super games, they found that the benefits the new hardware provided were just unbelievable!



WORLD
THE
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Y OF NINTENDO

PART THREE YOU ARE HERE



SUPER MARIO WORLD

21ST NOVEMBER 1990
Absolutely the most sought-after video game in history! 96 colour-filled levels, laced with Shigeru Miyamoto's ingenious game play ideals. The style and quality of animation teamed with irresistible music and crazy sound effects, injecting Super Mario fans with renewed enthusiasm for their hero. Nothing has ever come close to this.



PILOT WINGS

21ST DECEMBER 1990
Players join a unique flying school where prototype aircraft are mastered alongside the traditional variety. Being hoisted into the air for your first sky dive is an unforgettable experience, in fact the edge-of-your-seat environment offered by Pilot Wings in every area has remained unique to this day. Fantastic!

(LEFT) An artist's impression of what the Super Famicom was expected to look like. Lucky he didn't work for Nintendo, eh!



F-ZERO

21ST NOVEMBER 1990
The only other game available on Super Famicom's debut is this breathtaking futuristic racer. It showcases Mode 7 in a way that, some argue, has rarely been bettered. Though it only supports one player, many people still prefer taking control over the three cars in F-Zero above competing in Super Mario Kart.



SUPER FAMICOM (JAPAN)



(ABOVE) One early SFC design featured a headphone socket on the right-hand-side. Weird.

SUPER NES (USA)

1991
'And suddenly the world's a more exciting place to be', or so goes the advertising slogan used to launch the Super NES in America. In 1991 one in three American households, who already owned an NES needed assuring it was time to take the next step. Super Mario World presented as strong an argument as any, but the most significant reason was the 'next generation of Nintendo games' that only Super NES provided. With so many people already fired up over their favourite games, all Nintendo's customers need do was imagine the wonders this next generation might conceive. It's all Nintendo doing to guarantee the millions of sales that followed.



(ABOVE) Early shots of 'Dragon Flight' - eventually to become 'Pilot Wings.'

SPECIAL FEATURE

NES BASIC

1993
One of Nintendo's least expected moves has been the release of the NES 'Basic'. Essentially nothing more than a re-styled NES at the \$50 price tag is hoped to entice potential players to join Nintendo's happy family even though they may be working to a tight budget. Looking more like the Japanese Super Famicom than the American Super NES, NES Basic has handled itself pretty well so far. In Japan NCL relaunched the original Zelda adventure, alongside Mario's Woods to mark the event. Any excuse to continue their eternal Nintendo celebration!



(ABOVE) Murray!
It's the Famicom/
NES all over
again. Zelda too!

SUPER MARIO BROS: THE MOVIE

1993

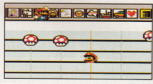
Anybody expecting a tour around the Mushroom Kingdom as seen in the Super Mario video games were in for a nasty shock. Hollywood took the brightly coloured, headiness of the classic games and buried them, producing Super Mario Bros: The Movie as Blade Runner starring The Flintstones! Millions of dollars were spent on confusing Princess Mushroom with Mario's girlfriend Daisy, transforming small mushroom-like Goombas into giant lizard men and presenting our fun-loving dino-with-an-attitude Yoshi as a puny Jurassic Park extra. Bob Hoskins jumps around aided by rocket boots instead of Mushroom Power, he may have the likeness of Mario but the infamous Brooklyn plumber he ain't. Cut!!!



MOUSE (MARIO PAINT)

1992

Next off the Nintendo of America drawing board became the Nintendo Mouse, packaged with the odd-ball Mario Paint. While software developed specifically for the mouse is generally directed at older players - ie King Arthur's World, Might and Magic III and Spell Craft - Mario Paint is obviously geared toward the mind of a child. Admittedly this has nothing to do with actual age as everybody here at NMS still thinks it's great!



SUPER SCOPE

1992

Recognising Sega as a competitor in 1992 did nothing to steer Nintendo from their innovative approach to possibilities with home video-game possibilities. American players were getting less excited over the standard Nintendo set up, and a market survey indicated as much. So Nintendo of America's President, Minaru Arakawa, had his engineers invent something less predictable. The first product they designed being the Super Scope. This remarkably accurate light-gun, precise to the tiniest pixel, is still available today though a lack of excitement surrounding the software has prevented it from becoming anything great. Not surprisingly the only titles worth getting for use with the Super Scope are Nintendo's own, of which there are only four. Although Super Scope 6, packaged free, comprises of six games worth buying the accessory for alone.

SPECIAL FEATURE

PLAY STATION

199X!

Video-games have become Nintendo's business. In fact it's fair to say that the video-game business as it stands today belongs to Nintendo, with everybody else constantly running to catch up.

In 1988 Nintendo agreed to co-develop a CD-Rom machine with Japanese consumer-electronics giant Sony. The two companies were obviously on good terms at this time because Sony eventually designed the distinctive PCM sound chip for the Super Famicom. Given both companies' reputations the CD-Rom collaboration seemed destined to become a match made in some abstract kind of heaven, but it wasn't to be. A revision of the agreement in 1991 revealed that Sony had the exclusive right to license all CD games released for their 'PlayStation' machine, with Nintendo only being able to control the cartridge side. This was so out of touch with the Nintendo way of thinking that the following series of events were inevitable.

At the 1991 CES Nintendo announced that they were to work with Phillips, not Sony, on a joint CD-Rom venture. The difference being that Phillips were providing what Nintendo viewed as superior technology while they remained in complete control over the games produced for it. You can imagine the scene! While the agreement with Sony still applied on the cartridge side, Nintendo appeared as though they no longer wanted anything to do with the PlayStation CD-Rom. As a result Nintendo and Sony engaged in heavy behind-the-scenes negotiations, as neither side wanted to lose out completely. Nintendo had their sound chip to worry about after all.

Unbelievably there came another about turn in 1992, as negotiations with Sony reached a point where Nintendo had finally got what they wanted: control over the licensing of CD-Rom games. Phillips kept their part of the deal but the main event looked set to take place with a joint Sony/ Nintendo venture after all. Rumours ran wild! Because everything looked so much in Nintendo's favour at this point the new machine just had to happen, and artists' impressions of what the CD-Rom might look like began appearing in magazines devoted to video games across the world. (Above Left)

(BELOW) An Official StarWing Competition game was created exclusively for use at the launch party and in-store challenges. We have five copies of this strictly limited-edition cart as prizes for the first five people who can tell us the programmers names. Entries to 'StarWing Ltd Edition', at the usual address. Hurry!

SUPER FX 1993

When Nintendo led the Super NES into the realms of convincing 3-Dimensional worlds in 1993, they enlisted the help of the world's leading experts in 3-D design, Argonaut Software. This East/ West partnership embarked on an awesome project which eventually emerged as Sci-Fi shoot 'em up StarFox, or StarWing as it is better known in the UK.

In order to generate the kind of graphics required, a specialist chip was created by Argonaut's engineers - the Super FX. StarWing bettered anything experienced on Sega's CD-Rom at that time, so convincingly that US advertising slogans confidently asked: "Why go to the next level when you can go light years beyond?" Last year Sony published 'Vortex', another programming feat from Argonaut.



THE POWER GLOVE

1988

JPL's ingenious Power Glove, developed for Mattel. This is the best example of this NES device we could find to show those who don't know, how it worked.



NINTENDO FUN CENTRE PROGRAMME

1992

Since October 1992, Nintendo have been busy installing 'Fun Centres' in hospitals across America; comprising of a VCR, TV monitor and a Nintendo system with a library of games. It's all an extension of US non-profit organisation 'The Starlight Foundation' who are dedicated to enhancing the lives of seriously ill children, to whom Nintendo have pledged a total of \$2.125 million to date. Currently there are over 400 Fun Centres in the US with plans to expand the programme into the UK, Australia, Israel and Japan. Nintendo UK are also responsible for helping charities through organised events.

SPECIAL FEATURE

PROJECT REALITY

1993

Officially 'Nintendo Ultra 64', this joint Nintendo/Silicon Graphics enterprise was first announced under the code name 'Project Reality' in San Francisco, August 23, 1993. It is almost two years since that time and we fully expected to find ourselves saying 'a lot has changed'. But it hasn't. The two companies' incredible mission to bring the first 'Reality Immersion Technology' system to the home has been meticulously carried out, with little said along the way beside the occasional confirmation that all is going according to plan. Comments such as this one, made by Edward R McCracken who's president and CEO of Silicon Graphics, impressed us in 1993:

"By pooling the best and brightest talent from both our companies, 'Project Reality' will propel Silicon Graphics' leading digital media technologies into homes everywhere. Nintendo's financial and technical investment combined with Silicon Graphics' engineering resources will enable our two companies to continue leading the visual computing and home entertainment industries in the '90s."

You don't need us to tell you how much potential is loaded behind this world-beating partnership. Nintendo are the undisputed experts in the video game field and Silicon Graphics' machines are absolutely the most powerful engines a games designer could wish for.



The Gateway Gateway System™

This system allows Nintendo's Super Nintendo Entertainment System (SNES) to be used in a variety of ways, including as a home entertainment system, a travel system, and a system for playing video games. It is a complete system, including a television, a video camera, and a video recorder.

Nintendo Gateway System™

GATEWAY

1993

It's always been Nintendo's policy to make their video games accessible to every day folk; not just those in the know. With their Gateway system a total of 40 million people have the opportunity to get hands-on video game experience through a customised Super NES, adapted to provide a choice of 10 Super NES games, audio CDs, films and telephone for people travelling by aeroplane or boat.

Peter Main, Nintendo of America's spokesman explained how "Millions of adults and children who may not have had the time or interest to investigate video games now have the opportunity to discover Super Mario while crossing the Atlantic or circling above O'Hare."

With their broad thinking strategy, Nintendo have used their experience to develop the world's first truly interactive multimedia system for the travel industry. Their partnerships with key companies such as Hughes-Avicom and BE Aerospace, among others, gives passenger on Virgin Atlantic, Cathay Pacific and Singapore Airlines access to Gateway. People staying in North American hotels have the best overall deal, with Gateway available from 70,000 rooms in Holiday Inns, Clarion Plazas, Embassy Suites and Ritz Carlton hotels.

Obviously Nintendo have greater things planned for the future of home entertainment than they'd care to let on at this point in time!



WARIO

1994

Wario's arch-enemy branches off into his own series of video games! He's a nuisance in 'Mario vs Wario' (1993), but it is Warioland that ultimately gives him free reign to exploit his nasty tendencies. What's more, this Game Boy title proved itself the best in the 'Mario Land' series.



KIRBY!

1993/4

Shigeru Miyamoto's bubblicious super character brings his sense of cool to the NES. Kirby's Special Tee-Shot is released in Japan toward the end of the year, marking Kirby's debut on the Super NES. Hurrah!

SUPER FX2

1994

More Argonaut/Nintendo team work went into the creation of Super FX2, for use in the spectacular Stunt Race FX. Once again the Super NES is taken ahead of its time with true 'real-time' 3-D environments created by polygons generated through the FX2's in-built RISC technology. Real-time allows players to park their car then drive back around the track the other way if they wish, while the RISC technology enables incredible speeds without sparing the detail. Also objects seem more realistic with FX2 as more of them are 'texture-mapped', meaning polygons are cloaked in authentic-looking disguises. Nobody, but nobody, failed to be impressed when Stunt Race FX was released. It is very clever stuff indeed!



A first for Nintendo players in the UK, in that we were the first people in the world to see Donkey Kong Country!

For the first time Advanced Computer Modelling (ACM) is put to use in a 16-bit game, a technique previously reserved for high-end PCs and 'next generation' dedicated hardware. The story goes that programmers 'Rare' happened across the necessary programming technique by accident while working on more advanced projects.

Nintendo of America stunned everybody at the 1994 Consumer Electronics Show (CES) held in Chicago when DKC was announced, because no-one could believe it was running off a 16-bit machine. In fact NOA especially arranged the press conference in order to have people assume that they were watching an early demo of Nintendo's Ultra 64! Not surprisingly the game has gone on to sell in excess of four million copies world wide.

What the success of Donkey Kong Country means is that the Super NES's horizons have been significantly broadened.



iconGraphics



(ABOVE) Space Invaders uses Super Game Boy to access the Super NES's hardware.

(BELOW) Cruis'n USA seen in the arcade. Nintendo's trademark logo sits on the side-panel.



SPECIAL FEATURE

LIFE FITNESS

1994

What do you get if you connect a 'state-of-the-art Lifecycle8!' to the Super NES? Why, the 'Life Fitness Entertainment System™' of course! Developed over a period of two years, this team effort between Nintendo and Life Fitness – who invented the first Lifecycle 20 years ago – is intended to transform specially written games into a form of aerobic exercise. Though we haven't seen any working examples of this just yet, we know Software Creations have Pac Man '95 on the way which uses a similar graphical technique to Donkey Kong Country. Sounds interesting. It's all in the name of true family entertainment – something which, Peter Main claims, "is what Nintendo is all about."



SUPER GAME BOY

1994

Not exactly the colour Game Boy everyone hoped for, but a useful piece of hardware all the same. A fun piece of kit for the Nintendo fan who wants to make the most of everything.



ARCADE

1994

Almost a decade since their last arcade venture, Nintendo invite people to test drive two potential Ultra 64 games as coin-ops.

With Cruis'n USA Midway aimed to 'rethink, reformulate, redesign and re-engineer the road race concept from the pavement up.' While it's not immediately so accessible as Namco's Ridge Racer or Sega's Daytona USA, Cruis'n is definitely way better in terms of realism and opportunities for the unexpected. Instead of accelerating round a circuit, Cruis'n takes place in ten real-life locations that together span a distance of 2650 miles! It took three years in all to transform video footage shot on-location in the USA into a 3D video game experience. It's a weird one, but largely viewed as a pretty great one at that and it has Nintendo's name on the side.

Rare's Killer Instinct needs no introduction. The level of interest sustained over this one-on-one beat 'em up since its debut in the arcades has surpassed even Mortal Kombat II, and that's saying something! From what we know about the future of this spectacular game, it's guaranteed that NU 64 is to perform wonders with it upon its release this year...

NEXT MONTH

... What are Nintendo's plans and how do they intend to make them happen? NMS has inside news on the many possibilities contained in Nintendo's future...