DECEMBER VOLUME 67 U.S. $3.50 / CANADA $4.50

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EARTHWORM JIM

Part 2: The Ultimate Worm Code

HUGE REVIEWS
DEMON'S CREST
UNIRACERS

LOOK INSIDE FOR THE HOTTEST TIP OF ALL!

SEE THE INSIDE COVER FOR DETAILS.

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NINTENDO POWER
DECEMBER 1994 VOLUME 67









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Code Name:

VR 32

unique

immersion

technology

prototype

The latest advance in high tech



You've heard the rumors and you've read the press releases--Nintendo announces 32-bit video game system for April 1995! Now Power brings you the first report based on actual game play of the new, as-of-yet unnamed VR 32 system. But before we talk about what the VR 32 can do, here's a few facts about what it is. The VR 32 is the first stand alone, high tech, 32-bit, 3-D gaming system for the mass market in the world. At an expected retail price of $200, it will be affordable to everyone. The only remotely comparable products are VR goggles for PCs that cost between $500 to $1000 and still require an expensive computer to run the software. The VR 32 software will exist on Game Paks. You'll insert them just like plugging in Super NES games. And yes, it can also be portable, but it's not a big Game Boy. It's totally unique. Here's how.

Looking into the VR 32's viewers is like entering a world out of science fiction. The sense of real 3-D space is the most striking phenomenon.

A NEW WORLD OF 3-D GAMING BEGINS NOW

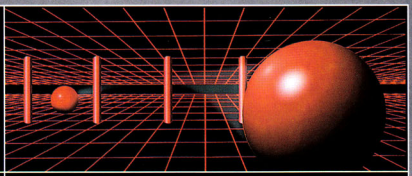
video games is approaching from out of the depths of the human imagination.

Don't expect the shallow depth of holograms or printed 3-D effects, but a true stereo image in high-resolution red and black. The depth seems totally real, like stepping into a miniature world. Objects and characters have fullness. They turn and move in three dimensions. The red and black images give the virtual world even more of a sci-fi look. And the smoothness of the animation is beyond anything you've seen--well, other than reality itself.

WORLDS IN 3-D

"THE DEPTH OF THE 3-D IMAGE OPENS UP WORLDS OF POSSIBILITY."

Looking into the VR 32 world is kind of like looking through binoculars. In binoculars, each eye looks through a different lens, but you only appear to see one image. The two screens of the VR 32 also appear as one image although each eye is focused separately. This is how the depth of the image is created.



The images on these pages were computer generated to give you an idea of the types of views that are possible on the VR 32. But as good as these images are, they can't convey the sense of actual space that you get when you play the VR 32 system. For that, you'll have to try it yourself this spring when it is released.

Games for the VR 32 system will certainly seem more realistic, but even more exciting is the new gaming experience that such realism opens up for players. Controlling a character in a 3-D environment is a much more involving activity than playing in a 2-D, side-scrolling world. In a 3-D environment, you have three axes around which the view rotates. As a consequence of the added complexities, the designers of the VR 32 at Nintendo's R&D 1 development group had to create a unique controller that allows players complete 3-D spatial movement. Depending on the game, you may have to move in three directions at once. Imagine attackers closing in on your character from any direction. Perhaps the only escape is to jump backward, up and farther into the distance while returning fire forward, down and out of the screen toward the enemy. Are you ready for this level of intensity?

REALITY TAKES A BACK SEAT

"IT'S A JOY RIDE IN SPACE."

The promise for flight and driving sims with the VR 32 is awesome. With animation this smooth, you don't get any of the rough edges and angles often associated with polygon figures in games like Out of This World. Both first person (in the cockpit) and removed perspectives are ideally suited to the powerful 3-D system.



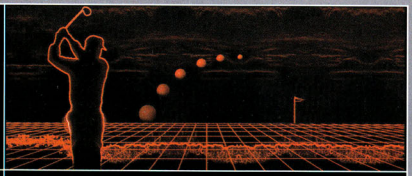
Although this computer generated depiction of space flight shows the craft warping into the screen toward a distant vanishing point, the same craft in the actual VR 32 would be able to swing around and fly back toward you. It would roll, pitch and loop-the-loop with the smoothness of an interstellar manta ray.

For the new generation of VR 32 games, this 3-D view will mean almost infinite possibilities. The prototype software we played involved traditional categories of gaming, but each was expanded and became a new experience by virtue of the VR 32's extraordinary 3-D, its special effects and its flawless animation. One of the most promising demonstrations was of a spaceship soaring in a virtual universe. The futuristic craft flew through the starry void in graceful arcs without any directional limits as in corridor flyers like Star Fox. With the power of the 32-bit processor and exceptional image resolution, the polygon craft had none of the flatness of traditional polygon images. It was smooth and full. To tell you the truth, it was almost like watching an actual ship cruising in its own miniature universe.

YOU'RE IN THE GAME

"IT PUTS THE PLAYER INTO VIDEO SPORTS."

The 3-D golf course seen here is a computer graphic depicting a possible viewpoint for VR 32 sports games. The bottom photo on the opposite page also gives you an idea of how immersive this technology can be. With certain viewpoints, you practically step into the picture.





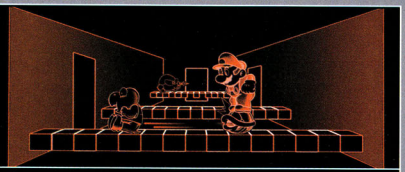
Since three dimensional worlds exist mathematically in the VR 32, the system can track balls and players with absolute precision and it can create a perspective that makes the game imitate reality in ways that conventional video game systems cannot.

The potential for 3-D sports games on the VR 32 is virtually unlimited. No matter what angle you use in a traditional 2-D sports game, you can't fully recreate the feeling of passing, hitting, running and throwing that comes from actually playing a sport on a court or field. Depth perception combined with eye-hand coordination is one of the most critical skills in most sports. In football and basketball, judging the angle, speed and distance of a pass is a process that requires complex 3-D visualization. Judging distances and angles is critical to other sports like golf, baseball, tennis, hockey, and driving games also require many of these same skills. But the realism of the VR 32's 3-D goes beyond control, because it can put you into the game and immerse you in the experience of racing down court and passing off to a teammate or looking over an offensive line of 300 pound linemen for an open receiver down the field. This is the experience that video sports fans have wanted for years, and soon they will have it.

CLASSIC VIEWS

"THE DEPTH IS ALSO IN THE GAME PLAY."

Adventure and action games may never be the same once the depth of the VR 32 demonstrates to players how much more involving a 3-D world is than many traditional video game views. This computer illustration is not taken from the VR 32 demo, but it gives the idea of depth in a classic platform game.





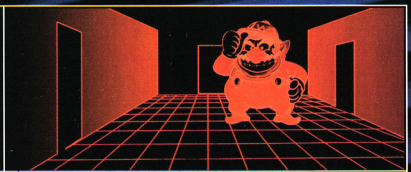
The upcoming Ultra 64 will dazzle players with the most brilliantly rendered graphics available, but the VR 32 plays another role, by ushering in the era of 3-D, immersive gaming. Some of the earliest games will probably look similar to this picture, bringing familiar characters and styles of play to a 3-D world.

Even traditional genres of video games like the side-scrolling platform game take on new life when they are given depth in the VR 32. One of the most impressive demo programs we checked out includes a Super Mario World type environment with paths leading back into the distance. You can move your character along any of the pathways, jumping, stomping, etc., just as in a regular platform game. The depth makes the environment more realistic, but the biggest addition is to the game play, because there is so much more to explore. In the demo, not only had the designers added layers of exploring depth to the game, they mixed types of game perspectives. Popping into one door led our Mario character into a top-down view similar to that in Zelda games, only the dungeon room suddenly had true depth.

SPATIAL EFFECTS

"IN YOUR FACE GRAPHICS."

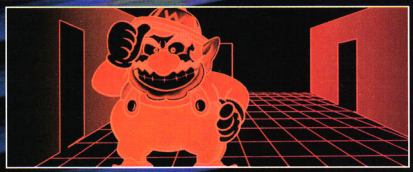
How would you like to meet Wario in person, face-to-face, eye-to-eye? This kind of personal contact will be possible with the VR 32. The 32-bit processor scales the detailed images like the one in this computer art with such smoothness and speed that you'll think it's really moving toward you.



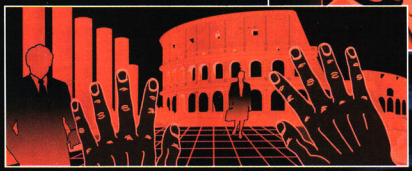


Our artist's conception below, a first-person perspective on the VR 32, may seem surreal with its faceless people, but the reality will certainly exceed all our fantasies. The first games we saw included one boxing demo from this perspective. The dodging and punching were similar to Super Punch-Out!, but the depth was at arm's length

One of the coolest parts of having a system provide such incredible 3-D is that you can create so many new perspectives. Moving around the world in a smoothly scrolling first-person perspective may be the most immersive technique. Current games like Doom that create worlds in this perspective have proven to be incredibly popular. But with the VR 32, the perspective and speed of scrolling will raise this kind of game to a new level of excitement. Beyond first person perspectives, though, the VR 32 excels at other effects, like characters scaling quickly to huge proportions as they rush at you out of the 3-D distance. If you like a little punch in your games, the VR 32 can provide the glove, the fist, and the right hook.







UNVEILING THE VR 32: NINTENDO POWER BRINGS YOU THE LATEST BREAKING NEWS ON THE HOTTEST FUTURE SYSTEMS.

Next Month, Nintendo Power will report on the technical aspects of the system including its unique screens, its highly specialized controller, sound system, portability and peripherals. In the months following that, we'll exclusively debut the initial games for the VR 32. Just prior to press time, it was announced that the new VR 32 system will be named Virtual Boy™ when it is released world-wide in April 1995.