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W.I.N.T.E.R.C.E.S. SPECIAL REPORT

LAS VEGAS

Here's your ticket to an inside look at the next six months of video gaming. What's hot? What's lame? What's in the future? Plus Power's top show picks.





THE SHOW IN A SHELL

Here's the quick read on this year's Winter Consumer Electronics Show. Nintendo once again claimed the dominant position in the industry, exhibiting new games for the Super NES, Virtual Boy and Game Boy while Sega was mostly walled off from public view. New players abounded at this year's show. Disney, Turner, America On-line and Prodigy were just a few of the new faces. Software tool developers like Alias and Multigen also demonstrated their products for the first time. Much of the discussion concerned the future of video gaming. Everyone was talking about the next generation, but one thing was clear—for now, the Super NES remains the strongest platform for video games. The versatility of the Super NES continues to provide a home for the biggest and best video games like Donkey Kong Country, Mortal Kombat II, NBA Jam Tournament Edition, and Star Fox 2. The huge library of games for the Super NES insures that it will remain the must-play system for the foreseeable future.







THE BEAST IS BACK

The success of Donkey Kong Country, which has set record after record for video game sales, kept Nintendo at the top of the banana heap at C.E.S. Nintendo gave the industry its first look at some of the future hits for the Super NES by unveiling Star Fox 2 (Power's top pick of the show) along with FX Fighter, Comanche, Kirby's Dream Course and Kirby's Avalanche. Donkey Kong Land headed up the best of Game Boy list and was one of the top games in any category. Kirby's Dream Land 2 also looked good, as reported previously in our Shoshinkai coverage. Nintendo also hinted that an RPG with amazing rendered graphics will be coming out this fall.



BEST IN THE WEST

The editors of Nintendo Power tallied up all their ballots and came up with the ten top Super NES hits of the show and the top five Game Boy picks. It's important to remember that some of the games included on the list were early versions. In those cases, we judged each game on what we actually saw at C.E.S., on the past track record of the developers, and on other factors like originality and depth. These are the ones to watch.

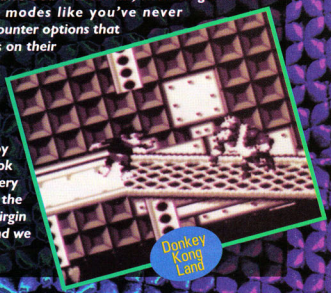


Secret of Evermore



Weapon Lord

Star Fox 2 is bigger and better than the original hit in every category. Tournament Jam rocks. (See the article in this issue.) Metal Warriors has some of the most unusual two-player action of any game. StarGate looks and plays like a Super Star Wars title. Secret of Evermore includes lots of potential, with Square's reputation for excellent adventures. International Superstar Soccer challenges the best and beats them all, including FIFA. Comanche has two-player modes like you've never dreamed. Weapon Lord uses counter options that will keep even the best players on their toes. Mega Man 7 returns to the classic look and moves of the original NES series, but there are some surprises, too. FX Fighter has one of the premier polygon game developers working on it.



Donkey Kong Land

Donkey Kong Land does for Game Boy and Super Game Boy what Donkey Kong Country did for the Super NES: it makes it look better than it ever has before. Kirby's Dream Land 2 combines a very big game in a little package. Playmates' Earthworm Jim provides the same wild game as the Super NES version for players on the go. Virgin wasn't showing its two titles in Vegas, but they are on the way, and we have seen them here at Nintendo. Both games are of top quality.

W.I.N.T.E.R. C.E.S. REPORT

SPECIAL REPORT

LAS VEGAS

HONORABLY MENTIONED



Other games that impressed us with their potential for fun included Phantom 2040 from Viacom. At about 40% completion, Phantom looked quite promising, but we will need to see more of the game before giving it the thumbs up. Mask, a Malibu game, also looked interesting in the early stages. We'll be sure to keep an eye on it. Dirt Trax FX and Future Zone from Electro Brain both have come a long way. A Mode 7 flying sequence was finished in Future Zone that reminded us of the Star Wars games. Playmates showed Deep Space 9 and Mutant Chronicles. The Chronicles looked like a particularly bloody Contra game, but only two areas were complete. Super Turrican 2 from Ocean is a Metroid wanna-be that goes some of the distance toward that goal, but not all the way. Prehistorik Man from Titus is another funky cave man. (If prehistoric life had really been as cool as it is portrayed in this game, mankind would never have evolved beyond furry shorts.) Interplay's Boogerman will be a hit with players who get a kick out of bodily fluids. Bust A Move—Taito's deceptively simple puzzle game—looked like a winner, too. Kyle Petty's No Fear Racing wasn't shown on the floor, but Williams gave Power a developmental copy of the game for evaluation. The potential is there.

*On the Game Boy side of the aisle, we should also mention Konami's Animaniacs, which is based on the Genesis game of the same name rather than on the more active Super NES title. Still, the simpler action is more suited to the Game Boy. T*HQ and its stable of EA titles will be one of the biggest suppliers of Super Game Boy action over the next six months. In the lineup are FIFA Soccer, PGA European Tour, and the Strike series of chopper attack games.*

TOP SUPER NES PICKS

	Title	Company	Completion
1.	Star Fox 2	Nintendo	40%
2.	NBA Jam Tournament Edition	Acclaim	100%
3.	Metal Warriors	Konami	100%
4.	StarGate	Acclaim	70%
5.	Secret of Evermore	Square	30%
6.	International Superstar Soccer	Konami	100%
7.	Comanche	Nintendo	30%
8.	Weapon Lord	Namco	85%
9.	Mega Man 7	Capcom	100%
10.	FX Fighter	Nintendo	40%

TOP GAME BOY PICKS

	Title	Company	Completion
1.	Donkey Kong Land	Nintendo	80%
2.	Kirby's Dream Land 2	Nintendo	40%
3.	Earthworm Jim	Playmates	70%
4.	Lion King	Virgin	100%
5.	Aladdin	Virgin	100%





THEY'RE SEEING RED

Virtual Boy made its American debut in Las Vegas featuring improved versions of Space Pinball and Teleroboxing, two of Nintendo's 3-D games shown in Japan in November. In addition to those two games, visitors viewed several other game demos on modified TV screens. Those new titles included two space flyers and a Mario game with both side-scrolling and overhead views. Other demos included an underwater scene showing a dolphin, a racer and a top view shooter. In addition to the demo games, Kemco announced the development of Virtual League Baseball and T&E Soft and Hudson Soft of Japan revealed that they are working on several Virtual Boy games each. American third-party licensees also began to line up behind the extraordinary 3-D banner of Virtual Boy. Nintendo made the Virtual Boy development systems available following W.C.E.S. so American development is now underway. One of the attractive features of the new system is said to be the simplicity of programming for it, which should mean that a wealth of new games is just ahead. Power is also working with the developers of the Virtual Boy system to bring you the first true images of Virtual Boy's 3-D game environment. We hope to have the first pictures in the next issue of Nintendo Power.



THE DREAM TEAM IS A DREAM COME TRUE

The Nintendo Ultra 64 "dream team" now includes Software Creations, a British company known for innovative games and cutting-edge video game sound and music technology. Over the past year, Software Creations has been working on Sound Tool—now slated to be one of the development tools for the Nintendo Ultra 64. In addition to Sound Tool, Software Creations is developing an NU 64 game for Nintendo. Previously, Nintendo and Software Creations collaborated on Ken Griffey Jr. Presents Major League Baseball. Expect more hits.

In other dream team news, Silicon Graphics has agreed to absorb Alias and Wavefront, two of the leading graphics tool developers for SGI computers. SGI will set up a new subsidiary that combines the resources of both software companies. Alias, based in Canada, is one of the key partners in the NU 64 dream team along with SGI, providing animation and graphics tools for NU 64 developers. Wavefront also develops high-end graphics software for use on SGI computers. Nintendo Ultra 64 game developers should reap the benefits of this awesome corporate combo.

THE TOP FIVE RUMORS AT W.C.E.S.

5. Virtual Boy is actually a device that sucks your brains into a dimensional vortex where alien beings have gathered to dine.

4. Several 3DO units were discovered missing from a store. Although a clerk insists that they were purchased, the search for the missing units continues.

3. Mortal Kombat IV is in secret development in an airplane hangar somewhere in Nevada called Area 51, and agent Muldar is on the case.

2. Silicon Graphics workstations have been discovered in rock formations from the end of the Cretaceous period and may be linked to the sudden extinction of the dinosaurs who discovered that it was easier to render themselves than to reproduce.

1. Sega has this great come-back game idea featuring two burros playing tennis and tentatively titled, Donkey Pong Country Club.

The CD-ROM based systems including Saturn, 3DO and the Sony Playstation are set to squabble among themselves this summer. But gamers who want the ultimate gaming experience will have to wait until the fall; that's when the Nintendo Ultra 64 will be released. Players and developers are already in awe of the first NU 64 arcade games, Killer Instinct and Cruis 'N USA. But as good as those two games are, they are only a drop in

THE NEXT GENERATION

the bucket of what the system can do. On the other hand, the more limited graphics processing capabilities and slow access speeds of the CD-ROM systems will make it more difficult for them to compete directly with the Nintendo Ultra 64. Games that appear on multiple platforms like the Saturn or Playstation will be substantially similar. But neither of those systems will be able to match or even come close to the graphics quality and effects of the NU 64. An emulation of NU 64 graphics was shown at WCES. The animated sequences from Silicon Graphics were beyond anything we've ever seen on home systems or in arcades. This was the cutting edge technology that SGI has promised all along. It is now a reality. In fact, the silicon chips—the CPU and GPU of the NU 64—are finished. Take it from the source. The Nintendo Ultra 64 is on schedule and it is awesome beyond the belief of mortal game players.

We have also learned of several more NU 64 titles that will be released at or around the launch of the new system next fall. One will be Top Gun from Spectrum Holobyte. Although games based on Top Gun will appear for the other next generation platforms, the Nintendo Ultra 64 game will be unique, emphasizing extraordinary graphics in an arcade-like combat flight game. Several Japanese licensees are also working on titles that we can't announce just yet, but the games range from action to RPG. We expect at least a dozen exclusive NU 64 titles to be released soon after the launch.

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