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IT'S VIRTUALLY HERE...

Stop the presses! It's show time for Nintendo, and our Tokyo journo has hot news on their latest hardware oddity. It may not be what you were expecting...

As promised, Nintendo debuted their new Virtual Boy hardware at the Shoshinkai show in Tokyo, on November 14.

The 32-bit RISC-based 'virtual reality' gaming unit bears a striking resemblance to the artist's impression which we printed last month (repeated to the right) with the main exception being the system's joystick. The finished controller now features D-pads at both ends, which, according to Nintendo, 'accommodates multi-directional spatial movement'.

The machine generated much interest amongst showgoers, all keen to experience the true stereoscopic effects delivered via advanced LED (light emitting diode) technology. Developed in conjunction with US-based LED researchers, Reflection Technology Inc, the monochrome high resolution display runs red images over a black background.

In keeping with the system's 'Boy' moniker, early emphasis has been placed on portability. Power is supplied via six AA batteries and the much-discussed headset display unit is suitably lightweight in construction.

Three examples of the unit's future software were presented at launch: *Mario Brothers VB* – a variant of the first ever Mario and Luigi title which appeared in arcades, on the NES, and as a bonus game in *Super Mario Brothers 3*; *Space Pinball* – a, well, pinball game, presented in a similar fashion to Meldiac's SNES title *Super Pinball: Behind The Mask*; and *Teleroboxing* – a *Super Punch Out*!!-style effort



The Japanese magazine *The Super Famicom* predicted the VB Boy's appearance accurately, especially the pad's shape.

featuring robots slugging it out.

As you'd expect, each game made use of the system's mirror oscillating technology to a different degree of effectiveness and, it must be said, a general feeling of disappointment prevailed concerning Nintendo's initial selection. Certainly, those expecting a 3D *Zelda* or *Metroid* extravaganza were to be bitterly disappointed.

The system will enjoy a full Japanese launch in April 1995, retailing at around \$200, with games at under \$50. Further details on the machine and software will appear in our full show report next month.

James Leach



Ollie's really captured my: Joie de vivre and sparkly nature. But he's far too: Thin. And he's miserable in real life. Still, I hope Christmas is going to be: A time of unconditional love for all my friends. I don't care about anyone else.

Debs Cook



Ollie's really captured my: Feminine side. That dress helps. But he's far too: Hair. And his feet smell too much. Still, I hope Christmas is going to be: White, with a blanket of snow covering much of Avon and Somerset.

Tony Mott



Ollie's really captured my: Gerbil. And I really want it back. But he's far too: Scrooge-like to return it unharmed. Still, I hope Christmas is going to be: A time of cleaning gerbil-poo off his living-room carpet for Ollie.