NINTENDO NEWS

MEET THE BOYS

'CAUSE THE BOYS ARE HERE....

THE BOYS TO ENTERTAIN YOU... BA DA BADAAHH....

An oddly shaped red head, evil looking eyes and spindly little legs – it arrived in the office this week. Danny was here and the Virtual Boy wouldn't be long in following. This month the TOTAL! office saw two new boys arrive, one is brilliant fun, and the other is a staff writer called Danny. Which would the TOTAL! crew take to their hearts first, you guessed it. Cue the news. Check out the Virtual Boy. Oh, and make the tea Danny.

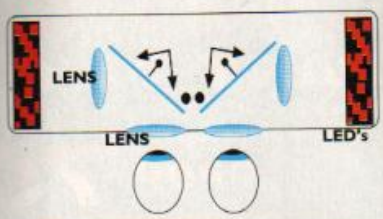
After months of speculation and second-hand glimpses of it, the TOTAL! office finally witnessed the arrival of its own bouncing little Virtual Boy this week. The virtual stork dropped it off at the start of the month and the 4lb 2oz little tinker has had plenty of admirers wanting to tickle its cheeky chin and change its cartridges.

But when the coo-ca-chooing stopped, there were three main questions that needed answering. Is it any good? Is it worth buying? And can I have a go yet? To be brief, the answers would have to be, Yes, we don't think so, and wait your turn you filthy queue-jumper. But of course, I'll elaborate on these.

First up, there is no doubt that the Virtual Boy is great fun to play. Part of this is obviously that it's simply new Nintendo technology and everyone wants to have a go, but it's also a genuinely a good gaming experience. There are drawbacks, though, and to a certain extent the negative press coverage it has received is warranted. The games are viewed in 3D and there certainly is depth to the pictures with a holographic feel to the images. It looks like a 3D Game Boy image though and the lack of full colour is obviously a disappointment. You just see red really, which after a while just makes you see red as well – if you see what I mean. You get the

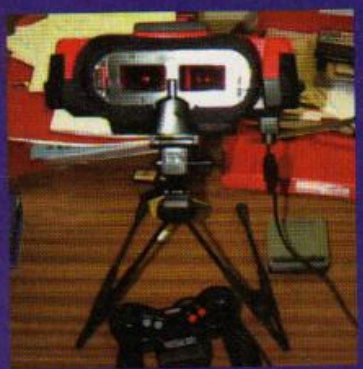
Just a reminder of what makes the Virtual Boy the thing of beauty that it most surely is

Processor: 32-bit RISC CPU
Speed: 15 MHz display
Display: RTI Dual mirror-scan, high resolution LED displays
Resolution: 384 x 224 pixels for each eye
Software: 8-16 Megabit ROM pack
Sound: Digital Stereo (self-contained speakers)
Power: Six AA batteries/SNES adaptor/rechargeable battery adaptor
Two-Player: Playlink cable
Pack in game: *Mario's Tennis*
Price: $179.00 (£116 approx)



VIRTUALLY FUNNY

It had to be done. Aside from the continual torment we've given Danny this month, we had to get in a visual public gag that would make a complete arse of him in the mag. Start as you mean to go on is our motto. So the old shoepolish-round-the-outside-of-the-Virtual-Boy trick was an obvious rouse to get the ball rolling. Danny, as you may have guessed by now, is our new staff writer and has experienced the giddy heights of *Sega Power, Super Play, GamesMaster, Ultimate Future Games* and *The South West Whippet Fancier's Handbook* before joining TOTAL! We're sure you'll love him like a brother by the end of this issue.



The Virtual Boy, the centre of much excitement in the TOTAL! office, well, second only to Debs' summer outfits...



Enter new boy Danny, fresh of face and mad for exclusives, he adopts the Virtual posture to ensure maximum gaming technique!

feeling, however, that the five games so far don't really test its capabilities to the limit and that better things are round the corner of that learning curve. Based on the old adage 'software sells hardware' though, for now the Virtual Boy is worth holding back on. It's great fun, but at $179 (approx £116) it isn't worth shelling out for just yet.

There are other disadvantages as well. You look a complete dick playing one for a start and people can make a whole host of faces and gestures behind your back while you're engrossed in a game. Also, although it is touted as a portable gamesplaying experience, it doesn't exactly fit in your pocket does it? Yes, it can be moved around easily and runs on batteries but moving it around your house easily and being able to take it on a bus journey are two different things. And finally, it's antisocial, even with a one-player Game Boy game you may be in a different world at times but you're never completely cut off from this one.

Full marks to Nintendo for the concept, but at the moment only half marks for content and execution. This is obviously a starting point for greater things, but for now although we'd seriously advise that you try and get to play one, we'd also advise that you hold onto your readies for a bit longer.

FIVE STAR GAMES

We've had five games to make us anti-social, excitable idiots with bad postures this month. The famous five being *Mario's Tennis, Galactic Pinball, Red Alarm, Teleroboxer* and *Panic Bomber*. Reviews of all five can be found on page 36, but it's *Panic Bomber* and *Mario's Tennis* which are getting the most-played thumbs up at the moment. More games to follow next month with *Golf, Baseball* and *Virtual Fishing* and *Virtual Bowling* all on their way soon – we'll keep you posted as the Virtual Boy verdict is reached.

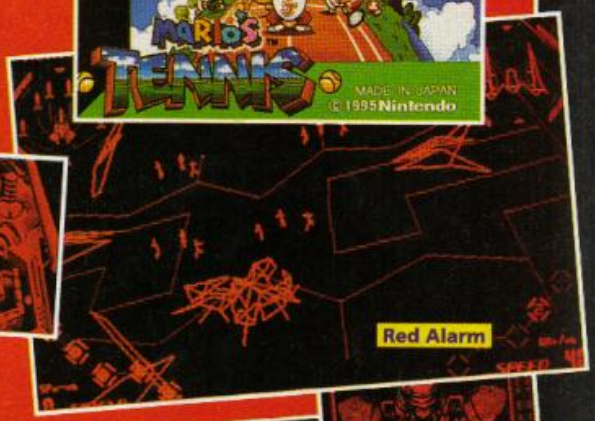














Here are the five to get over excited about. It really has been a red October for us this issue. They may look like ugly red boxes to you but to us they mean so much more. Really.



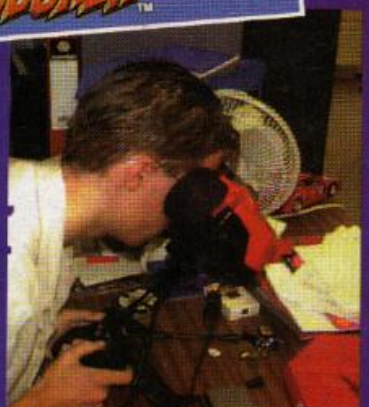




Hurrah! cries Danny, oblivious to the muffled laughter in the office. Has Nintendo failed to detect a major design flaw in the viewer...?



...Not at all! It's Rob with a tin of shoe polish, what a jolly, if not somewhat predictable, prankster! The publisher laughed, the sandwich man laughed, bloody funny it was!



But with a shrug of the shoulders, and an exemplary professional attitude Danny carries on for YOU the reader!

MARIO'S TENNIS

A somewhat chubby, moustacheod plumber isn't the stereotypical image that tennis players have to live up to. But then seeing as it's a chubby, moustacheod tennis-playing plumber that has to take on, among other things, a ruddy great chimp at his chosen sport, it doesn't seem as if stereotypes figured on the programmers 'to do' lists all that much in the end.

So, without going into detailed descriptions of plot-structure and character-motivation, our Mario's suddenly got 'into' tennis. Basically, *Mario Tennis* is a simple but addictive little game, which, although it holds few surprises, at least makes it up to you by being extremely playable, and one of them two-player link-up games to boot. One of the best of the bunch.



Playing tennis keeps you fit. So does cooking, breathing and punching ladies.

DANNY

Overall: 80%

GALACTIC

A sturdy, solid and reliable pinball sim, *Galactic Pinball* manages to capture what's made pinball games so popular on home consoles over the past decade. Yep, it's simple enough, and yes, pinball's about as much as you're going to get out of it (apart from a couple of mildly impressive graphical techniques), but even though it may



VIRTUALLY HER



RED ALARM

Quite an odd one, this. On the one hand, it's a pretty impressive 3D spacey shoot-em-up, with a real grip on the Virtual world and all those fancy techniques, and on the other it's an often visually confusing, headache-inducing attempt at being something it's quite obviously not. Perhaps it's trying too hard too early, or perhaps it's just me, but this is one that I just couldn't get to grips with, no matter how long I had my head buried in the more-than-daft-looking recesses of the Virtual Boy. Still, there's no doubt that the programmers have tried hard on this one, and that it will appeal to the sort of people that... well, the sort of people that have shelled out £180 on a VB. But I can't see it being The Next Big Thing, somehow. Sorry, ish.

DANNY

Overall: 67%

TELEROBOXER

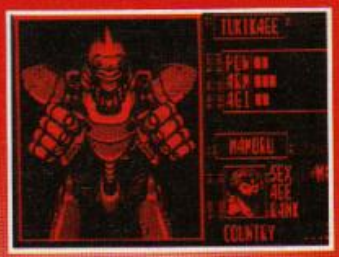
After inventing robots to do hazardous duties, scientists, in order to gain a more widespread appeal, have organised a worldwide, robotic boxing tournament for the telerobotics. A new craze was born, Teleroboxing.

You take the part of a telerobotic, desperate to win the teleroboxing tournament but first you must whip the seven other, tough, robotic warriors to even stand a chance.

If you liked *Super Punch Out!!* on the SNES, you'll like this. The only trouble is, there aren't nearly enough characters to defeat so the 3D experience will be short lived.



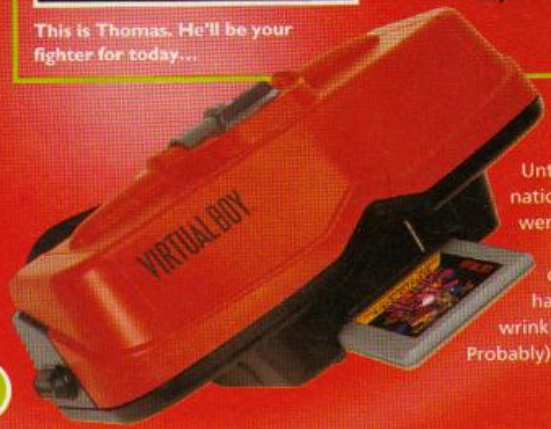
Although creating pain is not a good thing, making someone cry is. Do it now.



This is Thomas. He'll be your fighter for today...

ADAM

Overall: 76%



Headset

Until the Virtual Boy came along, the nation's three leading head-attachments were Madonna's funny microphone thing, bizarre medical jaw-wiring devices, and the faithful old full-face hairdryer (as modelled by blue-rinsed wrinkly-faced old women. And Debs. Probably). Now, though, there's a new fave...

PINBALL



be outranked by its SNES counterparts, *Galactic Pinball* is playable enough to make it the perfect game for a quick blast when you need your gamesplaying fix. Nowt special, mind, just wholesomely good.

DANNY

These shots are actually full-colour...



Overall: 78%



...it's just that your eyes are crap. It's A FACT!

At last! The red-faced creatures with the stick-like legs have made it to the TOTAL! office! And it's time for them to review the very latest in Virtual Boy carts...

PANIC BOMBER



Below: Poppsy the Spleen is just one of our many funny little friends.



What is it with puzzle games recently. You can't get enough of 'em. There are your Avalanches, your Puyo Puyos, your Popoons and now it seems your Virtual Bombermen. *Panic Bomber* is very similar to all of the above, ie, place three matching objects in a line to make them disappear. Okay, it doesn't sound very inventive but it's one of those games you can't stop playing until you've gone blind. It also has all the elements of good puzzle games: it's fast, it's large and most of all it's fun. The only downers are that the 3D images aren't used to their full potential and there is no two-player link up option. Darn.



ADAM

Overall: 84%

Our mate Adam Funnyname reckons that *Panic Bomber* is the best VB game ever. And he should know. Cos he's tall.