

8Bit-16Bit-32Bit-8Bit-16Bit-32Bit

Bit Age Times #2

8Bit-16Bit-32Bit-8Bit-16Bit-32Bit

Table of Contents

- 01 [Introduction](#)
- 02 [Rants and Raves of FAVE](#)
- 03 [Neo Geo Game Review](#)
- 04 [New Jaguar Games](#)
- 05 [Renting Video Games](#)
- 06 [Which Witch is Which?](#)
- 07 [Tengen, more than Tetris](#)
- 08 [Site of the Month](#)
- 09 [Conclusion](#)

Introduction

Welcome to the second issue of Bit Age Times! This will be the final issue that is part of Retrogaming Times. Next issue will come out on November 30th and will have its own section, so when the next issue of RT pops up and you don't see a new issue of BAT, don't fear! This is also a themed issue of sorts. We will deal with the animal mascots other animals of the Bit Age games. You know for every successful Sonic the Hedgehog, there is an Aero the Acrobat. So put on your deep boots and get ready to trudge through another issue of Bit Age Times!



Rants and Raves of F.A.V.E.

You may not have heard of them, but being a video game editor, I sure have. F.A.V.E. is a small, but very vocal group of animals that are protesting their absence from classic video games. They believe they are not represented in this medium and decided to do something about it. For anyone not in the know (which is almost everyone), F.A.V.E stands for Forgotten Animals of Video Entertainment. They sent a group of five delegates to voice their concerns to me. Why did they choose me? Because everyone else ignored them. But, having an open mind, I decided to hear them out. So here is F.A.V.E.

Tom-Glad you could make it. Could you tell the audience who you are and a little about F.A.V.E?

Sloth-We are a conglomerate of overlooked, passed over animals that want our fair share of the spotlight. We are not asking for too much, just a small mention in a video or computer game.

Okapi-And none of that edutainment junk, we wanna be real video game heroes.

Tom-OK, but could you tell us who came here today?

Sloth-Let me introduce our main delegates. To my left is the Okapi and sitting next to him is the Cassowary. On my right are the Lungfish and the Pygmy Hippo.

Tom-When did this group start and why?

Cassowary-It started a few years ago, mate. Mainly because I saw all my mates becoming game characters. Koalas and kangaroos went early. Then the kiwi and last the bloody bandicoot got a game. Here I am, one bad bird with a kick that could kill a man and they take that rotten bandicoot. Why? I shoulda been the Australian version of the Road Runner.

Lungfish-Pipe down, you overgrown chicken. Look at me, I can breathe on land and under the water. I mean the possibilities are endless for me. But no, they give the game to an earthworm. I eat earthworms for lunch.

Tom-Let's calm down here. Did any of you take this up with the game companies?

Pygmy Hippo-We sent representative to the different companies and the same thing always happens, they get a game and leave us behind. I tried to use my influence as my uncle was in Congo Bongo, but no one wants to put a pygmy hippo in a game. I am cute, much cuter than some stupid hedgehog and a whole lot tougher.

Okapi-Just because I am a largely unknown creature is no reason to be overlooked. Look at me, can't you see me in a platform game? I can run fast, I jump like the dickens and I can butt heads with the best of them. I need an agent!

Tom-Sloth, all you do is sit around and sleep all day, what kind of game could you be in?

Sloth-Must all video games have action? Why can't I be a chessmaster or something? Sure, I am no speedy mouse or mighty lion, but I have uses. You gotta be creative.

Tom-Point taken. Did any of you think about creating your own games?

Lungfish-I am a fish, you moron. What do fish know about programming? Talk spawning and I am your man. Wanna discuss the best baits and I am the fish to talk to, but programming, I have fins. Sheesh, and they say humans are the most intelligent creature.

Cassowary-You know how slow typing with a beak is? All that up and down, I feel like that stupid dunking bird that was all the rage. And the headache it gives me.

Sloth-Too much work, we just wanna little recognition, not a job.

Okapi-I am a hoofed mammal, we don't do well with computers.

Pygmy Hippo-Ditto, plus they haven't invented a computer you can use in the water.

Tom-Well, I will let the people out there know about your plight and maybe we can get someone to include you in a game. Good luck and will someone please clean up the mess you made?

Pygmy Hippo-Hey, were animals. We make messes, we don't clean them.

(Editor-If you want to know more about some of the species listed here, click on the links below).

Lungfish- <http://home.sol.no/~asharald/orders/general.htm>

Sloth-



Neo Geo Game Review

One of the games I always wanted to play on the Neo Geo was Crossed Swords. Not because it looked like an awesome game. Not because of stellar reviews, but because I once did a comic book called Crossed Swords. So I had a certain affection to the name. Well, I tried the game and the best I can say about it is that it has a great name! The rest of the game is average at best.

Crossed Swords is a adventure game with a third person perspective. Actually, it is sorta first and third person. The best way to describe it is think of the view you have in Punchout and you get an idea of the perspective. You have to travel from one predetermined location to another, all the while battling different creatures. Think of it as Final Fantasy on rails.

The graphics are very nice and everything is well drawn, as you would expect from a Neo Geo game. The fighting system is pretty simple, with a few choices and that is all. One of the biggest problems with the game is that once you conquer it, you will not have any desire to play it again. A little variety and a good dose of branching story would have increased the playability. But they chose looks over substance and this was the end result.

To its credit, it is a different type of game and considering the Neo Geo is sorely lacking in variety, it gets a nod for that alone. We are talking a system with half of its games being fighting games. That alone is a good reason to own it.

One nice feature it does employ is the ability to have have two players at the same time. This adds to the game as I always like a two player game, especially a two player cooperative game. You and me against the world mentality makes for a fun time. This strongly adds to the game. But once again, you will not want to play it too many times, so it will be a few fun nights and then to the shelf for good.

I must applaud SNK for trying something different and attempting to add some variety to the Neo Geo lineup. With a few additions, they could have had a winner on their hands. The Neo Geo really could have used a good role playing game, but this one isn't it. Guess when you make games with the intent of being arcade games, you have to follow a certain formula. Too bad as this game has potential and a cool name!



New Jaguar Games!

Songbird Productions is excited to announce a pre-order program for the upcoming Jaguar releases, including a special offer for those who pre-order most or all of the new games!

The following games will be published by Songbird Productions in the 1999 and 2000 timeframe:

Title Date Pre-Order Price/Retail Price (Nov 1st)

Skyhammer 12/20/99 \$69.95/\$79.95

Soccer Kid 02/07/00 \$69.95/\$74.95

Hyper Force 03/20/00 \$69.95/\$74.95

Protector 05/08/00 \$69.95/\$74.95

Information on all the above games can be found on the Songbird web site at

[<http://songbird.atari.org>](http://songbird.atari.org)

Renting Video Games?

by [Doug Saxon](#)

Yes, you read that right, video game rental completely took off during the NES era. It was one of the most exciting things for young NES players like myself, because I could afford with my extremely limited budget to try new video games. Never before did I want to go the grocery store with my mom, but once they started renting Nintendo games, I would tag along with her every time.

I discovered that some games such as Defender of the Crown could be finished within the two or three-day span that I owned the game, so it was great to rent these games for a few days, finish them, and then take them back. Other games like Spelunker looked really cool on the box, but sucked so bad that the \$3 expense was more of an investment, because new NES games cost about \$40 then. It is too bad video game rental didn't take off in the "Retro" age, because gamers would have been able to try all the terrible games out there for pocket change before wasting \$40 on them. Finally, there were the games that were so cool like Metroid and Guardian Legend, that they were to be immediately added to the Christmas list. I wanted these games to be keepers.

Today video game rental is still going strong. You walk into your local Blockbuster and there are aisles and aisles just devoted to video games for all of the currently popular systems. It is even possible to rent certain games and burn them onto a new CD!! But let's not forget that this craze all began in the "8-bit age."

Which Witch is Which ?

By [Fred Wagaman](#)

Given the time of the year, I felt it might be good to include some mention of Halloween games. In keeping with the theme of this issue of BAT, I've decided to discuss a couple of the cuter Halloween games.

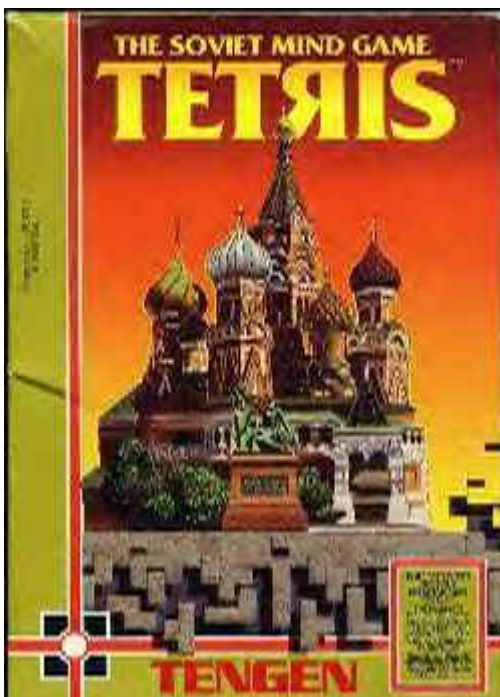
"Cuter Halloween games ?" you ask. What cuter Halloween games ? Well, I'm talking about Magical Chase and Cotton. Both games have a cute, anime-style witches riding on brooms and blasting a variety of enemies. Magical Chase, as far as I know, was only ever released for the Turbogرافx-16/Turbo Duo (PC-Engine in Japan) on the hu-card format. Cotton has had numerous forays on several platforms in Japan. Again, it can only be found as a US release on the Turbogرافx-16/Turbo Duo Platform. It is a Super CD. Magical Chase is a side-scrolling shooter in the vein of Gadius and Lifeforce. You control Ripple and traveling with her is a pair of Star Maidens that offer extra firepower. As you destroy enemies, jewels or crystals will appear. Picking these up gives you money to spend at the upgrade shops that appear occasionally in each level. At the option shop, you can upgrade your weapon, buy replacement hearts, upgrade the power of your Star Maidens or change your speed. The graphics are bright and cheerful. Your enemies include flying pigs and we all know that any game that includes flying pigs can't be bad. The game makes decent use of parallax scrolling that gives the illusion of depth as you scroll.

Cotton is also a side-scrolling shooter. In this case, you control Cotton. Traveling with her is Willow, a small fairy. As you destroy certain enemies, a crystal will appear. This crystal can be red, green or blue. The crystal will add a shot to your supershot arsenal. Holding down your regular shot button will charge up the supershot and fire off one of three attacks. As an example, the red crystal will fire off a Fire Dragon. The second button will drop a bomb-shot, which is great for taking out those ground-based enemies. Graphics are

also bright and cheerful and enemies are varied. Parallax scrolling is also used well in this game. You can't help but compare the two games. Cotton is a little bigger than Ripple and is thus easier to hit. The graphics and backgrounds are better in Cotton. I especially like the full moon on the first level. Even though the music isn't bad in Magical Chase, Cotton's CD-based music just blows it away. Ripple can take quite a few hits before she is shot down. And her hearts can be refilled by objects left over from destroyed enemies or at the option shop. Cotton can basically take a couple of hits and she's toast. Cotton has some cut scenes between levels that tries to advance some sort of storyline, but you'd expect that on a CD.

Both games are fun to play. If you enjoy side-scrolling shooters and are looking for something different than the normal outer space/air force type, you can't go wrong with either of these two forgotten gems. And if you have a Turbo Express, Magical Chase can be taken with you. These games can command a premium price among Turbo-aficionados. You should expect to pay better than \$40 for either of these.

Fred also notes that Cotton appeared on the Sega Megadrive in a game called Panorama Cotton. It is a Space Harrier-esque game that had a small print run of only 10,000 copies. He would love to get a copy of this at a reasonable price. Can you help ? If so, he can be reached at fcw3@postoffice.ptd.net.



Tengen, more than Tetris

During the Nintendo 8-Bit era, one company made alot of noise. So much that it ended up in court. The company is none other than Tengen. They were a subsidiary of Atari that made games for the Nintendo. And what games they made!

When someone mentions Tengen, the Tetris game they did is what almost always comes to mind. This is the far superior version of Tetris for the Nintendo and because of a lawsuit by Nintendo (who owned the console rights to the game), it is the much rarer and more desirable version of Tetris. It is one of the first games to be recalled and a majority of the copies produced were destroyed, making it a hard to find and highly desirable cartridge.

But Tetris is only the tip of the iceberg for this company. They also produced many great arcade classics for the Nintendo. Games like Pacman, Ms Pacman and the highly enjoyable Pacmania are all Tengen titles. Then you have Gauntlet among the great games they produced. These titles alone would warrant Tengen as a great software company, but they are far from the only titles done.

Tengen didn't just do classic arcade games, they also did many games that were popular during that era. Games like Klax, Toobin, Vindicators, Skull & Crossbones and more were all brought home by Tengen. They were alot like Coleco was in the classic era, they took good, but not quite as popular arcade games and brought them home. They also had the popular RBI Baseball series! So you can see that Tengen did provide alot of great games to the Nintendo. So next time you think of Tengen, think of a game other than Tetris.

[Nintendo Games by Tengen](#)

After Burner
Alien Syndrome
Fantasy Zone
Gauntlet
Indiana Jones & Temple of Doom
Klax
Ms Pacman
Pacman
Pacmania
RBI Baseball
RBI Baseball 2
RBI Baseball 3
Road Runner
Rolling Thunder
Shinobi
Skull & Crossbones
Super Sprint
Tetris
Toobin'
Vindicators

[Site of the Month](#)

When you think of great game, you may not think about the music that goes into making these games great! But take the music away and see how much it detracts from the game. With this in mind, I spotlight a site that is dedicated to the great music of video games! The Game Music Homepage is one of the oldest (started in 1994) and best of the music pages. While many others have put in emulators and other programs that you need to listen to the music, this site offers you straight downloads of the songs. Just download and zip and you can be enjoying the music (like the Kung Fu theme you heard on this page). How can you ask for more than that?

The site has alot of music for you to listen to and you are sure to find some favorites. But he also has links to other music sites, some information about the different video game companies and more! So if you are looking for some great music and don't want the hassles of downloading a player, check out this site! Here is the link to it!

http://www.lool.net/Game_Music/

[Conclusion](#)

This is another small issue, but we are growing! As you can see, we have increased the number of contributors! Look for the newsletter to increase next month as we move the release date to the 30th of the month! The extra 10 days will give me more time! Please keep the comments coming and thanks for reading Bit Age Times!

[Tom Zjaba](#)