

Retro Times 2

The Newsletter for the Retro Gamer in All of Us

October 1997

What's Happening in the Gaming World?

Welcome to the second month of Retro Times, a newsletter for the classic gaming enthusiast! I have seen quite a bit happening in the classic game market in the past month. We are seeing many of the classic games being redone on the modern systems. I saw a preview of a new version of Battlezone. Before that, I saw a new Pacman in the Mario 64 mold and a new version of Frogger. This can be the spark that either sends the classic gaming market booming or the market will remain small and friendly. While I would enjoy increased business, I would hate to see the friendliness of the industry go away. We shall have to wait and see if there is any impact. I have noticed that prices for some of the "elite" games have been getting less in auctions. I have seen Crazy Climber fetching around \$100.00, where they were going for about \$50.00 more not too long ago. Some of this may be attributed to a recent exodus from many of the long time collectors and a wave of these titles have resurfaced into the industry. I don't expect it to last and the prices should correct themselves soon enough. Makes me wish I had some extra cash to stock up a few Chase the Chuckwagons to use for trade bait in the future.

You may have noticed that there are numerous changes to the web page, especially in the classic gaming area. I have been hard at work adding tons of stuff for sale, more reviews and this newsletter. I hope to keep adding more stuff and have some big plans for the coming year. Well, enjoy the rest of the newsletter and your comments and input is always appreciated.

What About Those Boxes and Docs?

An area in classic gaming market that will see a major rise in demand in the coming year is for boxes and rule books. While I don't know of any boxes or docs that is worth more than the actual cart, I think the day is coming. The main reason is that there is A LOT less boxes and docs available than actual carts. While many would argue that without the cart, the others have little use, that is no longer true. Many collectors are completist and want the complete package. Plus, others like the artwork on the boxes and docs and like to display them. The day will come when the demand will far outstrip the supply and the boxes will shoot up.

I did some number crunching to get a basic idea of how many loose carts are there to every manual and box. As we all know who have a decent sized collection, it is much easier to find a loose cart than a boxed one. So I decided to figure out the percentages and give you the results. In my inventory and personal collection, I have approximately 4500 classic games. So these numbers shouldn't be too far off a national average. What I did is simply add up all the carts I had for a certain system, boxed or loose, and then divided the number by the number of corresponding manuals and then again for boxes. This gave me a basic idea of the scarcity of the manuals and boxes for a certain system. I did it for four classic systems, because they were the ones with the most carts and gave the best representations for the system. The four I used are the Atari 2600, Colecovision, Intellivision and Odyssey II. To make things easier, I rounded all the results to the nearest number. Here are the results, maybe you can do a survey of your collection and we can compare numbers.

Atari 2600

There are 6 loose Atari 2600 games for every manual.
There are 10 loose Atari 2600 games for every box.

Colecovision

There are 7 loose Coleco games for every manual
There are 12 loose Coleco games for every box.

Intellivision

There are 3 loose Intellivision games for every manual.
There are 5 loose Intellivision games for every box.

Odyssey II

There are 2 loose Odyssey II games for every manual.
There are 3 loose Odyssey II games for every box.

Notes: I found that the Coleco is by far the hardest to find boxed, while the Odyssey seems to be quite plentiful boxed. My personal observations is since the Odyssey and Intellivision had box designs that encouraged keeping them and using them for the storage of the cart, more people kept them. My belief is since you had to literally tear the Coleco box to open it (the tops are sealed), it made the box less desirable. Also, because of the box design which made it tougher to get the cart and manual out, most people discarded them. The main reason the Atari was higher was the sheer number of shrinkwrapped games I had, most which were probably bought at closeouts. While this probably means little, it can give you something to think about when you decide whether to shell out the extra few bucks for a boxed version.

Question of the Month

This is a form of a question I posted on the classic game newsgroup about a year ago. I believe the Atari 7800 was a great system that had alot of great classic games. But many great classics were left off the system and so my question is what classic games would you have made for the Atari 7800 that weren't? Use your imagination. This could be any of the arcade games or any of the early Atari games (like an updated version of Adventure or Yar's Revenge). I did my top ten version for the serious ones and another for humorous ones.

ATARI 7800 GAMES THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN

10. Missile Command-Redo it to add a two player version, like the Centipede. Could have been great fun!
9. Crystal Castles-There may not be a lot of fans of this game out there, but I always liked it and the 2600 version doesn't cut it for me.
8. Tempest-The 2600 may not have had the capabilities, but I'm sure the 7800 could do it. A great game that wasn't available for the home until the Jaguar.
7. Warlords-I would have liked to see an updated version with different options like two players versus or teaming up against the computer.
6. Pengo-One of the few reasons to put up with the 5200's joysticks. I would much rather play it on the 7800 and have my choice of joysticks.
5. Defender/Stargate-These classic games were surprisingly missing from the 7800. Considering how popular they were and how easy they could be ported and hopefully improved, I am surprised.
4. Pizzatime-This sequel to Burgertime (was it actually ever made?) is one of those games I have always wanted to play. I am a major Burgertime fan and would love to make pizzas.
3. Wizard of Wor-Another of my favorite games (I always danced to the beat of a different drum), which is also a great two player game. See a trend here?
2. Satan's Hollow-I haven't played it since my youth, but I have fond memories of this game. Maybe it

was my evil, rebellious side, but I would love to play this again.

1. Crazy Climber-While I enjoyed the 2600 version, I would rather have a full version with the King Kong and the improved graphics.

ATARI 7800 GAMES THAT THANKFULLY WEREN'T MADE

5. Math Grand Prix-Whee! Whoopee! Does anyone credit this game for teaching them anything?

4. Hangman-Hangman is hangman, regardless of system.

3. Sneak n Peak-I know this and the next games weren't made by Atari, but I'm taking liberties for the sake of humor. Imagine the added features they could add like twice as many places to hide and include a blindfold for your opponent.

2. Journey Escape-With the better sound chip, we could really enjoy those Journey songs. Happy, happy, joy, joy.

1. ET-Now all those pits you fall in will look really neat.

VIDEO GAME REVIEWS

Since I have so many classic reviews on the web page already, I decided to review some of the modern versions of classic games. So without further adieu, here are the review!

1. Q*Bert 3-At first I had a problem with the game. The hypnotic backgrounds were annoying and his nose bounced when he hopped. But once I got past this, I found a very enjoyable game that I am glad I picked up. You have all the elements of the past game, plus new enemies, different boards and lots of surprises. I really like the different pyramids, as it keeps it fresh. While I am sure some purists would have a problem with this game, I think it is great and play it often. Available for the Super Nintendo.

2. Mr. Do-Another game for Super Nintendo that I waited until the price fell before buying it (got it new for about \$20.00). While I have seen some people complain about it, with most of their complaints being trivial, I really like the game and forgot how much fun the arcade game was. Considering I have been playing the Colecovision version for the past year and a half, this was a major change. The dinosaurs and letters are smarter, the graphics crisper and those animations knocked me out the first time I saw them. I hadn't played the arcade game in so long, I completely forgot about them. It was a pure trip down memory lane to see them again and that alone was worth the price of admission. Ignore the bad reviews (some people are never happy) and buy it! Now if they would only release the other three Mr. Do games on a compilation cart, I would be in heaven.

3. Champ Kong-This is one of those enhanced classics from Champ games. You get a nearly identical version of Donkey Kong with all the levels and animations, plus an enhanced version with added bonus levels. For the price, this is a good deal and one I recommend. It is only for the IBM computers, but if you are reading this, odds are you have one. Also, there are all kinds of different skill levels you can start with.

FINALE

That will wrap up another issue of Retro Times. Hope you saw some improvements with my second effort and hopefully I can improve even more in issue #3 (check back next month). As always, I love talking about classic games and would love to hear your opinions. We are always looking for submissions. Good luck and good gaming!

-[Tom Zjaba](#)