RETROGAMING TIMES monthly
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'70s '80s '90s

COVERING 3 DECADES OF CLASSIC GAMING

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Press Fire To Begin

by Bryan Roppolo

This will be the last issue of Retrogaming Times Monthly with me as a full-time head editor. Recently things have become too busy to perform all the editing/website maintenence/graphics design by myself. I plan on staying on with the magazine doing the graphics and such, but will be leaving the editor position. Donald Lee has said he might be interested in stepping up and doing a rotating editor spot, where we have a roundtable of editors who edit for one month and then someone else does the next, etc. until it comes back to the first editor again. This sounds like a great idea, so that the editor's don't get overwhelmed or burned out. We are still looking for more people for this roundtable, so if you are interested send an e-mail to me and I'll make sure you get on board. I very well might join this roundtable myself just to stay on as editor for one month a year. The one thing we do need is someone to put together the issues who knows HTML or has a web design program like Dreamweaver. Hopefully by splitting/rotating the duties like this we'll be able to continiue running RTM since it's easier for more people to do smaller jobs rather than one person doing a large job. It should be fun next month as we turn the corner with this new editor roundtable and I am looking forward to seeing who else steps in to join.

Retrogaming News

Houston Arcade Expo
The Houston Area Arcade Group (HAAG) is holding their annual Houston Arcade Expo on October 8th and 9th at the Houston Northwest Crowne Plaza. Admission is $30 for a weekend pass or $20 for a single day, and discounts are available if you buy your tickets in advance. Admission gains you free-play access to over 200 classic and current coin-op pinball machines, video arcade games, penny arcades, and console video games. There will be tournaments, events, music and workshops to keep the young and young at heart entertained. Speakers include Dan Ferguson (Lone Star Pinball Museum) on the History of Pinball, Ken Graham (former Williams Programmer), Retro Pinball talking shop about their new pinball and many more. Visit http://www.arcadecenter.com for more information!

Video Game Trader Expo
On October 23rd New Jersey will be the host of the all new Video Game Trader Expo (VGTXPO), presented by Video Game Trader magazine. VGTXPO is all about getting great deals on those rarities and matching buyers with sellers. We have rented a 4500+ square foot hall at the local Elk's Lodge in Brick, NJ, which is only minutes from the Garden State Parkway and very easy to get to. Admission is only $5 (kids 12 and under are free) and each admission gets you in a raffle to win a brand new PS3 Console. Visit our website at www.vgtxpo.com to find out more.

Retrocade V
Being held Saturday, October 23 at 7:00 PM in Harrisburg, PA. There will be many arcade classics available for the public to play, including Mr. Do!, Galaxian, Popeye, and Dig-Dug. Also, classic consoles like the Intellivision, Atari 7800, Colecovision, Atari 5200, Playstation 2, and Nintendo 64 will be there as well. In addition to tall the gaming, there will be a Halloween Costume Party and Crafts and Activities for the kids. If you live near Harrisburg, be sure to come as it's Harrisburg's only classic gaming party!

The Game Review H.Q.

IF IT'S GAME REVIEWS YOU WANT, IT'S GAME REVIEWS YOU'LL GET!

Vectrexenstein - Berzerk

by Donald Lee

Vectrexenstein is back! The last time this column made an appearance was back in April which means I wrote the column sometime in March. Given that I ran into some work difficulties around April which carried into June, it makes sense I have not had time to write anything besides my standard Apple II Incider column.

While I still don't have a ton of time these days, I made the extra effort to add this column for this month.

The Vectrex game of the month is Berzerk. I definitely know of the original arcade game but don't recall if I played it. If I did play the game, it would have been only a few times.

Vectrexenstein playing Berzerk

Like Transylvania for the Apple II, playing Berzerk for the first time was interesting. I had no idea of what I was doing and just went with the flow. I shot at enemies and tried to avoid the bouncing smiley face know as Evil Otto.

My initial impression was that Berzerk was a multi room game where I had find some sort of escape location or treasure to move onto the next level. Upon reading the Wikipedia entry, it turned out that my sole goal was to try to destroy as many enemies as you court in each room (preferably all so you get a bonus) and then escape to the next room.

Essentially, every time you went to a different room, it was a new level. While the premise of the game sounds simple, it's not that easy. The enemies are generally scattered throughout the room and you have to run around to shoot all of them. Some of them even shoot back at you so you have to watch out for that.

On top of that, Evil Otto comes bouncing his way into the room after a short period of time. Evil Otto does his best to follow you around and makes it difficult to finish off all the enemies. Sometimes, your best option is to just escape and start fresh.

Overall, I liked Berzerk and now I want to give the arcade version a run. Berzerk seems like the type of game I would have liked when I was young but I never got into it.

As for the Vectrex version, it is faithful to arcade version, except that the graphics are black and white. The sound is solid though I did not hear any voice synthesis. From my reading, Berzerk was one of the first arcade games to feature voice synthesis so it was a bit of a shame that the Vectrex version did not include any.

Overall though, I liked the Vectrex version of Berzerk and it's worth a look by any fans of the original.

Apple II Incider - Transylvania

by Donald Lee

Welcome to the October edition of Apple II Incider. Time has definitely been flying and it's hard to believe a month has passed by already. The past few months, writing game columns have been difficult. Work has been busy and I'm involved in various activities. I went white water rafting, had a bachelor party for a friend and then attended a wedding recently.

For this month, Bryan requested Halloween themed games. I pulled out Uninvited last Halloween as well as introducing a Vextrex based column. This year, I will pull out yet another horror type game as well as revisit the Vectrex!

For the Apple II, the game of choice is Transylvania by Penguin Software. This particular version uses Double High Resolution graphics so there is a little more detail than the regular High Resolution graphics. To be honest, in all my years of playing games on the Apple II, I never played Transylvania. Of course, as it as a very popular game back in the 1980's, I did read plenty of articles about the game.

For those not familiar with the game, Transylvania was a graphical adventure game. Think of the Infocom's text adventure games with some graphics sprinkled in. You typed commands to move, collect objects and perform other actions.

When I dove into the game for the first time last night, I had no idea of the hero's goal in the game. I went around from screen to screen blindly until I was killed by a vampire.

Prior to playing the game again tonight, I read up about the game on Wikipedia. I discovered that the goal of the hero was to rescue Princess Sabrina within some specified time frame.

With the goal in mind and noting my experience the night before, I played the game a second time and found a cross during my initial exploration. I thought that would be helpful if I ran into the vampire again. Alas, I ran into a werewolf instead and I was lunch meat.

From the brief experience of playing the game, I know why I didn't play these type of games often when I was young. I simply lacked the patience to figure out the nuances of the game. That was why I was attracted to arcade hits of the 1980's like Galaga and Pac-Man. While these games did require some strategy, you could get instant gratification. Adventure games like Transylvania require a good amount of patience to learn and play. That is why hint books back in the 1980's proved to be popular. People just couldn't figure out how to get past certain aspects of a game. These days, you just look up stuff on the Internet.

All in all, there was something compelling about Transylvania that makes me want to come back to it a little bit. The graphics for this version are solid and convey the atmosphere appropriately. Unfortunately, there is no sound or music for the game. It isn't required but would have added to the creepy feel of the game.

I'm not sure the kids today would play a game like Transylvania if it existed for today's computers. However, for those who grew up on this kind of game, Transylvania is definitely worth revisiting.

Dual Perspective - Ghosts 'n Goblins

by James Sorge

Hello, and this is James Sorge back with Dual Perspective, the column that reviews games from both the playing and the World Record Perspectives. This month, the victim is “Ghosts n’ Goblins”, the monstrosity of a difficult game created by Capcom for the NES and arcade.

Graphics: 9/10 Arcade; 7/10 NES
It definitely looks awesome on the arcade, and the NES versions look OK compared to the arcade. Both versions look good and you will recognize all the characters.

Sound: 7/10 Arcade & NES
The games on both systems have a few recognizable tunes (the first stage has been used in the other games of the series as a remake). It doesn’t get repetitive and you won’t be turning the sound down anytime soon.

Difficulty: 7/10 Arcade; 10/10 NES
This is definitely easier in the arcade than it is on the NES. The arcade had some extra boss patterns, especially on the Red Devils that made them easier to beat, and got taken out of the NES because of space limitations. For the NES, this is one of the toughest games that has ever been created and can be excruciating in the challenge department.

Replay Factor: 10/10 Arcade; 7/10 NES
The arcade is just difficult enough that you will be coming back for it along with its decent graphics and sound. The NES version doesn’t have as great of a replay value because of the downgrade in graphics and the horrific difficulty, but this is a great challenge game all around.

The World Record Perspective:
Kareshi-TV! Daniel “Kareshi” Brown totally dominates this game and the entire series on home consoles. His records are so far out there that you’d be better off playing the arcade version than trying to catch him. The SDA and Twin Galaxies records for speed are about the same as far as I can recall.

The Scores (NES):
Points: 520,300
Speed: 22 minutes 31 seconds

As for the arcade version, Chris Whiteside has a score of 642,900, with PJ DiCesare hot on his trail. This can definitely be worked on.

The Penguin Says:
"Overall I give the arcade version a 10/10, wtih the NES running at a distant 7/10. I'd rate the **World Record Potential** at **3/5** for the arcade (the pressing points haven’t been maxed and it’s infinitely loopable) and a **0/5** for the NES. If you do try and go for the NES record, good luck beating Kareshi. He’ll probably just take it back anyway if you do somehow manage to top him!

Mutated Output: Lame Anniversaries & Geek Role-Playing

by Mark Sabbatini

As 100th anniversary celebrations go, it was rather lethargic. But such was the state of Color Computer affairs at the time.

T&D Subscription Software, some of whose offerings were reviewed in last month's column, cranked out its 100th monthly issue of 12 programs in October 1990. The marvel of churning out so much content, some of it first-rate quality, has already been mentioned. But as is often the case when a business is nearing the end of its lifespan, some cracks were beginning to appear.

"We were hoping to do something very special for our 100th issue, but we ran out of time," the sheet of instructions stated in the introductory paragraph.

Their 10-year run came to an end 21 issues later and during the last few months they were clearly just going through the motions. But its longevity, much like the CoCo's, was amazing considering computers and operating systems tend to evolve or become obsolete every two or three years.

The CoCo was celebrating its 10th anniversary when T&D's 100th issue came out and things were looking considerably less rosy than when *Byte*, in its October 1980 issue, stated the machine would be the most popular of three models Tandy introduced that year (the other two were the Model III and the Pocket Computer). The same could be said for anything in 1990 that wasn't a PC or Mac, of course, but some of the happenings are an interesting example of hope enduring in the face of reason.

Some of the most buzz among diehard CoCoists was the "next generation" machines being promised by a couple of companies. They used 680XX CPUs (an evolution from the CoCo's eight-bit 6809) and were designed to run OS-9 (not the Mac version). Tandy had been insisting for a few years all companies use the operating system and the results were a spectacular failure, which didn't deter the geeks convinced it would ultimately topple Windows, Mac OS and everything else despite virtually no market share outside the corporate server market. One of the models was called the MM/1 and, after all the rabid fanaticism and false launches, about 500 machines were sold. Others generally didn't make it that far.

Much of the hype obviously came from The Rainbow, the CoCo-only magazine that was on life support as its issues had shrunk to one-third of the size of peak years and obviously needed a new forward-looking computer to focus on. The sparse handful of game reviews from its October issue of 20 years illustrated just how slack the CoCo market was.

Two were for solitaire games that could have been written in the late 1970s, yet got accolades from writers expressing how great it was a computer could simulate cards so players didn't lose or scatter them. I've defended myself many times against accusations that advertising influences the journalism side of newspapers I work for, but in The Rainbow's case I feel perfectly comfortable making the accusation myself. Another review was for a $25 slot machine game with horrific graphics, the kind of thing that got crummy reviews on computers a decade earlier, but again the recipient of high praise here. The featured review of the issue was a rave for a graphics program that crashed frequently during routine operations, was painfully slow, and whose documentation omitted several critical steps required to install and launch the application.

It's not hard to see why rumors of new machines, even if they wouldn't run 90 percent of existing software, generated irrational optimism.

The MM/1 and other machines were previewed at the first-ever Atlanta CoCo Fest, again 20 years ago to this month. It was organized by loyalists after The Rainbow decided to scale back its Rainbowfests to one per year in Chicago, down from a peak of four in locations around the U.S. It was modestly successful, especially since it was announced and organized within a few months, and resulted in at least one product that remains a worthy purchase in today's retrogaming world.

Marty's Nightmare is a vertical-scrolling Pac-Man game that brings together two of the CoCo's biggest legends, Marty Goodman and Steve Bjork. Goodman was (and is) a massively knowledgeable computing whiz whose rants about everything from Tandy's "cretinous chimps" to the evil doings of the U.S. government were endlessly intriguing and provocative. Bjork is arguably the CoCo's best game programmer and almost certainly the most commercially successful. Marty's Nightmate is far from Bjork's best game, instead being something of tongue-in-cheek novelty with insider jokes.

A cartoonish Goodman is the game's protagonist, trying to clear the maze before time runs out to reach his seminar. Users in the maze (which look like computer mice and keyboards) try to stop Goodman and ask questions. If they contact Goodman, he stops eating dots until he touches an answer icon (floppy disks for mice users, circuit chips for keyboards) that pop up around the maze. He can drink coffee to get a short-lived speed boost and find Bjork to "open" the seminar, thus giving Goodman 30 extra seconds to finish the maze. If Goodman fails to complete the maze in time the seminar is "rescheduled," with the game ending when he has delayed his appearance too many times.

The humor and CoCoisms are the redeeming aspects for a game that's vaguely similar, but far inferior, to Jr. Pac-Man for the Atari 2600. Bjork uses digitalized voice snippets of Goodman to amusing effect. Customization options, such as playing one day of four seminars or four days of increasingly challenging ones, show the refinement of a veteran programmer. But there's an overall lack of polish indicative of something not really meant for the mainstream commercial market and, indeed, the original idea was to offer a limited run of 500 only to Atlanta CoCo Fest participants. Some leftover copies were sold through magazine ads and other channels.

But while most CoCo software is easily found online these days, a copy of Marty's Nightmare that doesn't crash due to its copy protection is elusive. Bjork wrote some of the most aggressive protection routines of any CoCo game programmer, but since the code for his other games has been cracked this appears to be a case of the CoCo community honoring his request the game not be distributed because he's still selling it commercially. In response to a chat forum post from someone looking to download the game, he responded with how the funds are used and a tale of how his programming has helped the cause (message is unedited for grammar, etc.).

"Any profit from my CoCo software goes to support Glenside's hosting and other CoCo community projects," he wrote, referring to an organization that still hosts an annual CoCo convention. "Any funds left over goes to the Boys and Girls Cubs of Southern California. "While it is true that CoCo software does not create much in the way of funds for the Boys and Girls Cubs of Southern California these days. (But other projects do help out the kids.)"

"The Boys and Girls Cubs did get $10,000 in 1986 because of my rights."

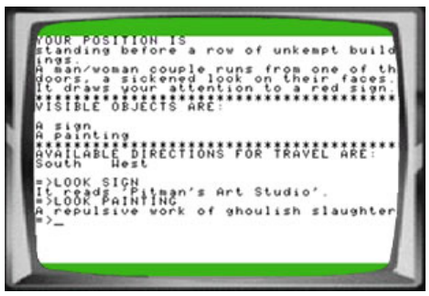
"In the early days of Computer game software, I created a game called Space Balls (TM). Later in 1986, Mel Brooks was working on a movie called Space Balls. While he could used his trade mark for space balls was a movie, he did want to show Space Balls, the Video Game in one scene. To clear any legal issues, he needed to by the rights to use my trade mark. So, I sold him the one time rights to the trade mark (for the movie) for a $10,000 donation to the Boys and Girls Cubs of Southern California. He commented that he wish all the negotiations for rights/issues for his movies could work out so well and help

so many."

Bjork's Web site, which offers details of his CoCo and other work, is at http://coco.etechwds.com.

Moving on to the rest of the game reviews in this month's column, offerings by T&D for the CoCo 3 are continued from the previous installment. They're easily found online, usually in the magazine portion of CoCo software archives, and unlike many commercial programs

The Dreamquest of Randolf Carter - Issue 116 (D)



This is a simple two-word text adventure that looks promising when the instructions tell you it has 15 files, but is too limited to hold one's attention for long. The premise of a hapless character who decides to pursue last night's dream of finding the Golden Sunset City is amusing and well-narrated in the introduction, but after that it's an exercise in the tedium of guessing the right phrase using a small vocabulary of words. Supposedly there's a save command, which didn't work, and the player can spend long stretches retracing the same ground without making any progress. T&D cranked out a lot of adventures of this caliber and, while Dreamquest doesn't have the fill-in-the-blank feel of others, there still is little reason to try it.

Gnome Quest 2 - Issue 115 (B)

This hit-and-miss platformer is written by Mike Snyder, whose remarkable quantity of high-quality work (by T&D standards) was the focus of last month's column. This game is typical of his work in combining first-rate commercial elements with maddening hitches. Your gnome must recover the Fire Spirit stolen by some evil wizard (one of three weapons stolen in what presumably is meant to be a trilogy of games). He roams through outdoor and cavern screens in what could easily pass for a commercial NES platformer, EXCEPT the terrain doesn't scroll. Instead, your gnome travels screen to screen, with a seriously irritating pause in-between. Another annoyance is the random appearance of enemy creatures, since it's entirely possible they'll appear on top of you and thus cause an unmerited death. Given that and the tendency of creatures to hover in key areas in a way that makes them inaccessible, this game would get a much lower grade except for one of those glitches early gamers often exploited. There's a status screen available to examine your player stats, inventory and the like, and checking this resets the creature's location. So you can get close to where you need to be, toggle the status screen and the way should be clear. The game does allow you to continue your progress after you lose all your lives, but only once unless you find objects providing more. For anyone playing any platformer since Super Mario Bros. this is going to feel pretty harsh. As mentioned last month, if he weren't cranking out a game every month or so, the drawbacks could be remedied to produce something fully competitive with stuff on retail store shelves. As it is, this is still worth playing, but I wouldn't mind someone figuring out a hack to seriously increase the number of times you can continue a game in progress. Finally, having noted this is part of an apparent threesome, the game is touted as the sequel to Gnome Quest, sort of a platform/Q*bert puzzler reviewed last month and also worthy of checking out.

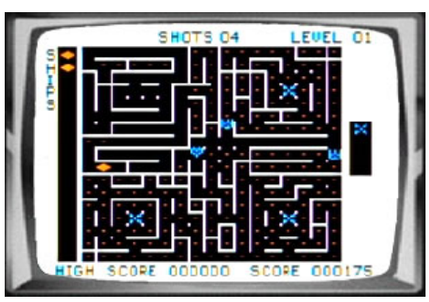
Gopher - Issue 111 (D+)

A cross between Pac-Man and Dig Dug. That description was enough to make me shudder as the concept was tried several years earlier in a type-in program for The Rainbow called Snail's Revenge. I spent a couple of days typing it in and debugging it as a young teen, only to discover it was a miserably ugly and clunky waste of time. Gopher, a collaborative effort by Mike Snyder and Frayne Black, is a considerably better game, but too short on challenge and polish to be of long-term interest. Your gopher clears screens of "red proteins" (dots) and roots while avoiding a snake that will hone in anytime its progress isn't blocked by the terrain. It's pretty easy to trap the snake behind a wall on one side of the screen while clearing the other unchallenged, making this more appropriate for joystick jesters than jockeys. The Dig Dug part is your gopher can clear terrain blocks a limited number of times, but I never got trapped and had the need to do so. Also, something that looks like a falling shield occasionally falls from the sky, but there's no indicator of what it's for (it doesn't kill you, so after a while I didn't pay much attention). Movement is step-like in the spirit of those old handheld LCD games, but that wouldn't bother me too much if the rest of the game was up to snuff. A fairly weak entry, especially as the "featured" game that month, but this was when T&D was descending into its final limp to the finish.

Maze Master - Issue 98 (D)

What we have here is a game that looks good, plays smoothly, has a lot of depth and is absolute drudgery to play. That player, basically a small red and green circle, clears dots from a hefty number of large single-screen mazes that are part of a collective whole. Notice I don't say linked mazes. That's because they're not – exiting a screen and immediately returning brings you to a different maze. So what could be a pretty fun game similar to the underrated Pepper II (a surprising favorite in my Colecovision collection) is instead a stumbling search for screens you have yet to complete. There's a timer that starts with a huge number of units (6,000), although the countdown is halted while you're eating dots. You can also press the joystick button a limited number of times to teleport to other mazes and there are keys that open certain passges. T&D says the instructions are contained within the program, which might reveal some method to the madness, except they aren't. In short, another example of a decent concept marred by deadlines, programmer skill or whatever handicaps T&D labored under.

Mazey - Issue 110 (B-)



This vaguely Pac-Manish effort is a reminder of why the fun of retrogaming can exceed a program's actual quality. It's actually for the original CoCo, not the graphically enhanced CoCo 3, but I was motived to try it due to the issue's instruction/hype sheet calling "one of the most addictive games we have played in quite some time." It doesn't get off to a great start with a bland title screen, instructions and annoying slow screen announcing the level you're entering. But after that you've got a game that easily goes toe-to-toe with a lot of what was being sold commercially. The player needs to clear four moths near the corners of the screen, then reach a fifth moth appearing in a corner to exit the level. Impeding the player's progress are creatures that spawn in the center of the screen at regular intervals, with no apparent limit on how many can appear. This means clearing screens quickly is vital, especially in later waves when the birthrate speeds up. Enemies also shoot two types of bullets (again more and faster as the game progresses), with one type of shot capable of knocking out walls. You have a seriously limited number of shots to return fire, and can earn more by hitting enemies and touching moths. Wall segments also appear and vanish, giving the game a Ladybug feel minus the ability to control the segments yourself. The instructions tell you how to modify the program to adjust the sensitivity of the joystick controls, and this is where a program probably worth a C plus grade to the uninitiated gets a boost. Looking through the listing it's pretty easy to change the number of ships and shots you start with (line 25), and adding line the line "29 LV=(number)" offers an imprecise way to increase the starting level (the number won't match the level, but a value of five offers a slight boost while 20 is extremely fast)). To delete the level tweak, just type "29" and hit the ENTER key. This was one of the joys of programs written partially or entirely in BASIC before hacks were easily available for download for even the most complex of titles. I wouldn't want to do it a lot with retro titles, but this one is entertaining enough to make the effort worthwhile.

The Homebrew Sleuth: Star Strike

by Collin Pierce

SYSTEM: SEGA CD
AUTHOR: STARGATE FILMS / GDG
YEAR OF RELEASE: 2000

The Sega CD tends to get a bad rap that is more the fault of a few publishers than the system itself. There are many good games for the system, but they tend to be overshadowed by the ridiculous number of FMV games for the system. Oh boy, there were a lot of them; and branching videos are only entertaining for so long, especially when the quality is subpar.

Yes, Star Strike is an FMV game, and it was never released during the system's short prime. It was mostly finished by the developer, Stargate Films, when the intended publisher, Sony Imagesoft, backed out, possibly because there were so many similar games on the market that they felt one more wouldn't help.

That's where Good Deal Games comes in. GDG is a website that has a section where you can buy homebrews and reproductions of unreleased games for classic systems, including the Sega CD. GDG has struck deals with publishers who never got to release their games, including Stargate Films.

So, is Star Strike worth thirty bucks? Let's take a look.

Story: C+

The basic idea of the game is that the evil alien race known as the Protoids want to...you got it! Take over the galaxy! Oh, and guess what? You have to help stop them!

OK, not very original, I admit it. However, there is one cool little detail that I've never seen before; the Protoids eat your brain to gain all of your knowledge! I have no idea how that works, but for story purposes, it helps create a sort of B-Movie feel.

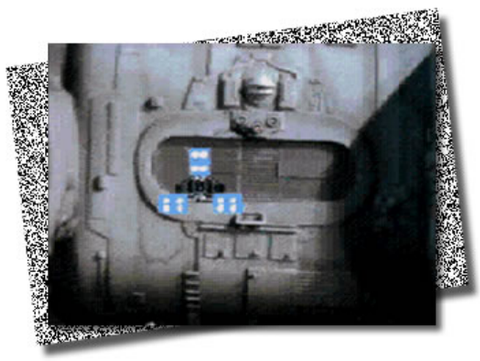
But my main problem with the story is that it is very episodic. Nothing really leads to anything else in the way most narratives should. The characters also have little personality to them. The closest this game comes to having any interesting character development is the fact that the mechanic has an Australian accent.

Graphics: A

Seeing as this is a Sci-Fi FMV game, you'd hope that the visuals would be done well, and this is actually where the game shines. The special effects are done quite competently, with lots of ships flying around, dynamic action, and even decent sets and costumes. One of my favorite original ideas is how the ships go to light speed. They actually have to fly through a special device that magnetically shoots them out at light speed. It just feels more realistic than pushing a button and it magically happening.

But the best part is that the video is full-screen in decent quality. Most FMV games of the time had the video in a little window and they still looked like crap.

Gameplay: C+



As with most FMV games, this is the problematic area. Basically, you point the crosshair and press a button to shoot your target. This game is kind of a relative of Tomcat Alley, but that game at least had many different things to do! You had different types of missiles, you had to answer your radio, deal with different kinds of targets, avoid enemy missiles, etc. This game just feels monotonous in comparison.

Controls: B-

Move the crosshair over your target and press a button to shoot at it. *Yawn* At least it controls decently.

Sound: C+

Let me just get it out of the way now; the acting ranges from mediocre to awful. Of course, you probably already have guessed that. The characters, as pointed out earlier, have little to no personality to call their own, and therefore, no one really stands out except when their acting is way over the top and completely ridiculous. It doesn't help that when you kill an alien, there are only about three different things said by your character, and they can get annoying quick.

The music sounds very stock sci-fi. It sounds like every other space opera you've seen and does nothing to stand out. It's not annoying, but it doesn't do anything to excite you either.

Overall, the sound is mediocre. It does nothing to stand out, and the acting can get annoying.

Fun Factor/Replay Value: C

The game is okay to play once in a while, but because there is little to no variation, you won't be playing it again and again. It doesn't help that it's too hard. You only get one life, and it is lost way too easily. Sometimes, you only get one chance to get through a scene, and you only get a couple seconds to do it right. And that just makes the game extremely frustrating, especially when you die near the end and have to start all over from the beginning! Yes, no continues or save feature. Tomcat Alley was hard, but at least it had a save feature and allowed you to try certain things a second time if you messed up.

Overall: C

This is a game I can only recommend if you like FMV games. If you hate them, this game will not change your mind in the slightest. If you like them, you might get a little enjoyment out of it.

Star Strike is available for purchase at Good Deal Games. (http://www.gooddealgames.com/).

A Pixelated 21st Century!

by Paul "Zimmzamm" Zimmerman

Hello Pixelated fans. “Pixelated Paul” is here to let you know about some of the retroware highlights for the month of September.
It was a slow month for retroware on Wiiware. But DSiWare got a bunch. Also, we got lucky last month with 2 VC games. Hopefully that trend will continue.

Castle Conqueror (Click here to see a video for the game)

Cosmos X2 (Video to the right)

Go Series 10 Second Run (Click here to see a video for the game)

Zenonia (this video is for the iPhone App version, but should be very similar to the DSiWare version) (Click here to see a video for the game)

Astro Bugz Revenge (Video to the right)

Tales of Elastic Boy – Mission 1 (Click here to see a video for the game)

Very Hungry Caterpillar's ABCs (Click here to see a video for the game)

Note: most of the videos for the games below are of the originals (meaning they not being played on the Wii). This is because the Virtual Console is emulating the original system and therefore they are identical.

Samurai Shodown III (NeoGeo) (Click here to see a video for the game)
SNK's classic fighting series continues. This one adds "Bust" and "Slash" versions of characters. This game is gorgeous.

Aero the Acrobat 2 (Super NES) (Video to the right)
Another great looking game. This one is a platformer from Sunsoft. This sequel is more of the same, with some new gameplay additions. So, if you enjoy the original, buy this. My only complaint is gone the catchy, carnival-style music to a new soundtrack with different styles and not nearly as good. The gameplay is great though and most importantly it is fun to play.

As always, send me an email and let me know if you purchased any of these games and what are your thoughts about the games.

I will see you next month for hopefully some more retroware goodies!

■ Retro Games Collector ■ Game Gavel ■ Retro Gaming RoundUp

Game Over

It looks like that is it folks! I'm signing out for the last time (well, I might be back from time to time as a rotating editor) and hopefully the successors that follow me will continue improving upon this magazine which has been around now for over 13 years!

- Bryan Roppolo, Retrogaming Times Monthly Editor

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