



Printing Help



Retrogaming Times Monthly #82 - March 2011



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Press Fire To Begin

by Donald Lee



Welcome to the March issue of Retrogaming Times Monthly. As usual, the issue is full of the usual goodies including my look at the Virtual Apple II website.

It's been a tough month for me so I don't have a lot of things to say. However, for those of you who like Retro Computing, you might want to check out the Open Apple podcast located at <http://www.open-apple.net/>.

The podcast is a monthly show dedicated to discussing the Apple II computer line and features regular segments such as "II News", "Retreviews", and "Apple Pickings".

That's it for this month. Enjoy this month's issue and as always, if you are interested in writing for us drop me or [Bryan](#) a message and we'll see that you get on board. Also, feel free to leave feedback for each column, as it's always appreciated.



Retrogaming News

[Louisville Arcade Expo 2011](#)

Friday, March 4 from 1:00 PM to Midnight; Saturday, March 5 from 10:00 AM to Midnight; Sunday, March 6 from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Do you remember playing the classics? Pac Man? Galaga? Missile Command? Yeah you can play these online or at home on your xbox...but that takes away most of the fun! The Louisville Arcade Expo wants to bring back the golden days of arcades by providing a place where people can bring their arcade video games and pinball machines to play, trade or sell, and play classic consoles, to have a special weekend in the 'Ville. All games at the expo will be on free play for all to enjoy!

We will be having a special pre-registration price of \$10 per day. For each day that you have an arcade or pinball machine that you brought on free play, you will get free admission for that day.

The show will be held at the Holiday Inn Hurstbourne, 1325 S Hurstbourne Pkwy, Louisville, KY 40222.

[Southern California Classic Collectors](#)

Saturday, March 5 2011 12:00 PM to 12:00 AM

New Venue, New Location, New Attractions, Old Games (just the way we like 'em!).

SC3 is teaming up with Nucleus, an art gallery and store in the northern L.A. area, to bring you a blowout arcade and console event. The party will take place on Saturday, March 5, 2011, from 12 noon to 12 midnight, at the Nucleus gallery in Alhambra, CA. Admission to the event is \$10 if you pre-register online or \$15 at the door. Visit the Nucleus event registration page to order your tickets.

Nucleus is already making a name for itself among videogamers by featuring cutting-edge exhibits of game-inspired artworks and live nerdcore/chiptune concerts. Now it will be introduced to classic gamers in a big way as SC3 brings over 40 classic arcade machines and dozens of vintage home consoles to the exhibit floor for 12 hours of pure, nonstop gaming. Live music, featuring 8-bit and chiptune artists, will begin late in the evening. An all-videogame version of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" will challenge your knowledge of gaming trivia. Traditional SC3 attractions, including SC3-TV, '80s music, a video game trading room, and Rock Band will also return. Free refreshments will not be provided at this event – food and drink are not allowed within the gallery – but food trucks will be offering fare outside, and there are any number of local restaurants within easy reach of the venue.

You must register at Nucleus to attend this event. Go to our website (by clicking the link at the top of this entry) for more information.

[The Midwest Gaming Classic](#)

Saturday, March 26 from 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM and Sunday, March 27 from 10:00 AM to 5:00PM

The Midwest Gaming Classic is the largest all-encompassing electronic gaming trade show in the Midwest, celebrating it's 10th anniversary in 2011! Take a look at a brief [introduction](#) from one of the event founders to see what to expect.

Our 10th anniversary event will be held on Saturday, March 26, 2011, from 10:00am to 8:00pm and Sunday, March 27,

2011, from 10:00am to 5:00pm. Also, don't miss our [Arcade: Factory to Floor tour](#) Friday, March 25th.

The Midwest Gaming Classic is also a great opportunity for people who usually only play games online to get acquainted with electronic gaming and play some great classic arcade games.

2nd Annual Cowlitz Gamers for Kids Video Game Show!

Saturday, April 9, 2011 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

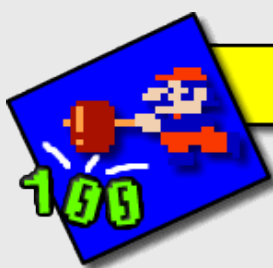
Annual Cowlitz Gamers for Kids Classic Video Game Show on April 9th in Kelso, WA. Last year we helped John raise over \$1,300 for the [Childrens Justice and Advocacy Center](#) (CJAC) and we're convinced we can do better this year with your help!

The show will be on Saturday, April 9, 2011 at the Kelso Red Lion Hotel in Kelso, Washington. Kelso is about 1 hour north of Portland or 2 hours south of Seattle on I-5. Doors open at 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM. Admission is a suggested donation of \$5 to CJAC, although we invite you to contribute more if you can!

Confirmed vendors include Kelso's own Classics collectibles store, Y-Bot Classic Games, [RecycledGamer](#), [AtariCollector.com](#)'s Rick Weis and [Specialty Gamer](#). Expect a lot of good deals on classic video game merchandise. In addition to outside video game vendors, there will be T-shirts and other merchandise specifically made for the event that will also be sold specifically to suport CJAC.

In honor of Super Mario recently turning 25 years old this last year, there will be a speed run challenge on Super Mario Brothers 1-1 this year at the event.

If you would like to have your event featured in Retrogaming Times Monthly, just send an e-mail to Bryan Roppolo at bryan@retrogamingtimes.com and he'll make sure to annouce it in a future issue.



Record Breakers

by Phil Day



New World Records Set By Hank Chien & Andrew Laidlaw

Last month saw a new Donkey Kong World Record set by Hank Chien, and a new Galaga world record set by Andrew Laidlaw. This interests me. So I interviewed them both. However, having done an article on Donkey Kong and Galaga last year I didn't feel I needed to ask too much about why they played and how they played and so on, especially so considering both players have previously held these world records before, and I'm sure they've already commented so much on those questions. So we talked about the future of their World Records and the games in which they scored them on – both Donkey Kong and Galaga being as good as three decades old now. You're probably thinking these games are doing well to still have an interested playing public. If so, you'd be right. Both titles are available on iPhone. Donkey Kong has had many incarnations into other games. And Galaga was revamped as Galaga Legions for the Xbox in 2008, and KLOV.com asked its readers to give their opinion on their favorite arcade games. Pac-man came in at number one, followed by Galaga, then Donkey Kong. KLOV's poll interested me, even more so having spoken to Chien and Laidlaw. Let me try and explain why.

Pac-Man, as a competitive game for international high scores, is dead. Billy Mitchell killed it in 1999 with a perfect score of 3,333,360 points. Since then another five people have equaled his score. But it can't be beaten. Some have reached Mitchell's score in less time, but I don't think Mitchell ever tried to do it as fast as he could. And what does it really matter if someone does it quicker? They don't get extra points. But those who have equaled his score are clearly as at Pac-man. Nevertheless, we will never see the score grow.

On the 19th of March 2011 we may witness the death of Donkey Kong at Richie Knuclez arcade in New Jersey. Billy Mitchell, Steve Wiebe, Dean Saglio, and Hank Chien are, reportedly, all going to be there. Chien recently told me that he'd be there for sure, but he doesn't think he'll be trying to top his score. His score of 1,068,000 is 3,500 points higher than Wiebe's, and 5,200 points higher than Mitchell's. Saglio doesn't have a score on the board for Donkey Kong 'Hammer Allowed' (What are these other bogus tracks like 'No Hammer Allowed'?), but Saglio does have a score of 1,136,400 points on Donkey Kong MAME (MAME is the acronym for 'Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator'; software that allows home computers to run arcade games). Saglio's MAME score is 68,400 points above Hank Chien's. More interestingly both Chien and Wiebe believe the MAME version of Donkey Kong is identical to the arcade game. If this is true, how does Saglio manage to get so many more points than the top contenders? Who better to ask than Chien.

Chien talked to me about 'point pressing' in Donkey Kong. Spots in the game where a player can rack up points somewhat comfortably. He also explained that the most amount of point pressing is available on the most dangerous stages. Chien said:

"It's all about the Barrel Board"

Barrel Boards? There are 22 stages in Donkey Kong – number 22 being the infamous 'kill screen' where the game simply shuts down. Within these 22 stages there are four different maps, or 'boards' as they are known. These boards have no official names, but they have become known as: The Barrel Board, Elevators, The Pie Factory, and Rivets.



The names indicate a bit about their game play and each board plays quite differently. So much so that the Donkey Kong World Record, according to Chien, seems to be coming down to who can squeeze the most points out of the barrel board – the most famous board - where we see Donkey Kong hurling barrels down at Jumpman (now known as Mario). Having spoken to Steve Sander and Steve Wiebe on this too, I'm sure they'd agree. I have seen a little of Mitchell's game on the Barrel Board. I've watched his Jumpman jump three barrels then run down a ladder to jump them again, because every time Kong releases a barrel the clock is counting down. There are a finite number of barrels being released and if you don't jump the barrels, or smash them with the hammer, then you're throwing points away. Unfortunately the barrels are random, very random. They don't fall uniformly, or even with the predictability of the descending aliens in Space Invaders. Instead they behave like a pineapple being bowled down the stairs. So, for world champions like Chien, depending how the barrels behave will determine what chance he has of maximizing his best skills into a top score – luck plays a big part at World Record high scores for those few extra hundred points. The Twin Galaxies score board reflects this. Wiebe and Mitchell both have 99+% of Chien's world record score. But Chien's score is 93.9% of Saglio's score. Still good, but in the Donkey Kong World Champion elite club it is arguably (easily arguably) a long way away. Another way of looking at it is by comparing Chris Enright's score to Chien's. There are only 205,200 points between Enright (ranked at number 10) and Chien's World Record score, with Saglio's score 68,400 points above Chien's. But Saglio's is all on MAME, and Mitchell hasn't been playing a full game for his Donkey Kong World Records. He gets his scores with Jumpmen to spare, and walks away – legend. Maybe he won't in March. Either way, every time a new World Record is set, it's another nail in the coffin for Donkey Kong. But Galaga is different – kind of.

Galaga doesn't have the problem of a kill screen, or point pressing. And the stages are as good as identical, with the exception of challenging stages, but you can't lose a life on a challenging stage, so they are no threat; the strategy to Galaga is quite simple, Laidlaw puts it best:

“Stay alive”

I suppose you could say this about all video games. But Galaga has no real tricks to beating it. There are things that are good to know, but they're pretty obvious and you'd learn them within minutes of play. Galaga is more like Ten Pin Bowling that way. After a couple of throws you know what to do. Don't put it into the gutter on the left or the gutter on the right. Stay in the middle and hit the pins. Of course from there it can be fine tuned, which is what Laidlaw has done, but unlike Ten Pin Bowling (or Pac-Man) there is no perfect score.

The problem with Galaga is Laidlaw's new score: 4,525,150 points. To equal his score you have to average about 900,000 points over four men. But this is not quite true, you really need to average about 1.1 million due to the advantage of 'doubling up' your ship (Galaga allows players to have two ships joined. This doubles their fire-power, but it also doubles their size as a target for the enemy aliens). Laidlaw has laid down the law: A million points per double-up or don't bother. I'm quite sure that someone can pass Laidlaw's score. Laidlaw believes this too. The problem for that person will be dedication. Reaching 100,000 points on Galaga isn't so easy for a new player. It doesn't even seem to be so easy for older players of these games who know them so well. I don't think the game is harder than other games, for example, I don't think it is harder than Donkey Kong.

Laidlaw is a good friend of Wiebe's and has suggested they teach each other their expertise. Laidlaw thinks he could teach Wiebe how to play and win at Galaga, but doesn't think Wiebe could teach him how to play and win at Donkey Kong – and Wiebe's a teacher. Laidlaw believes they're simply too different from each other, that the type of animal that is attracted to Donkey Kong is nothing like the type of animal that is attracted to Galaga. I have to admit, Donkey Kong torments me to no end. And then there is all that fiddly point pressing – I just couldn't be bothered (and I'm hopeless at it). Laidlaw thinks that someone who has the skill-set to manage point pressing on 'the barrel board' should be comfortable with managing a Galaga stage. I agree, but something is keeping people at bay from putting up their scores on this popular game. For example, Donald Hayes and John McAllister. In my opinion, Hayes and McAllister are the top two classic arcade video game players in the world and between them they rank on the top ten games listed on KLOV.com as follows:

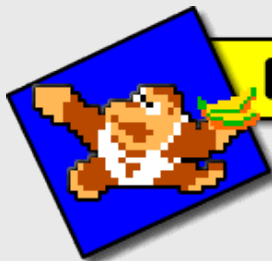
- 1st: Pac-Man (Hayes)
- 29th: Donkey Kong (Hayes)
- 5th: Star Wars (Hayes)
- 10th: Ms. Pac-Man (Hayes)

- 2nd: Dig Dug (Hayes)
- 1st: Asteroids (McAllister)
- 3rd: Defender (McAllister)
- 2nd: Tron (Hayes)
- 1st: Centipede (Hayes)

Neither have a score on Tempest (it is ranked at the bottom with Centipede), nor do they have a score on Galaga Tournament. I don't understand. Hayes has the world record on Centipede and can complete a perfect game of Pac-Man. McAllister has the world record on both Asteroids tournament setting and marathon, he also has the world record for Robotron: 2084. These guys could nail Galaga to the wall – I'm sure of it. What's weirder is the popularity of Galaga – number two on KLOV's list, and it is still being manufactured with Ms.Pac-Man by Namco. Yet it only has 12 submitted scores on Galaga Tournament. Yet all but one of the top ten Donkey Kong scores (from a total of 81) on the Twin Galaxies scoreboard was submitted within the past four years. Is Galaga dying? I hope not.

Pac-man is dead and buried, and I believe Donkey Kong is being bled to death by its top players, which is fair enough. People are out to destroy that game. But I'd hate to see such a popular and simple game like Galaga slowly die without the dignity it deserves.

Regardless, congratulations to Second Time Donkey Kong World Champion Hank Chien and to Second Time Galaga World Champion Andrew Laidlaw.



It's On Like Donkey Kong, Jr.

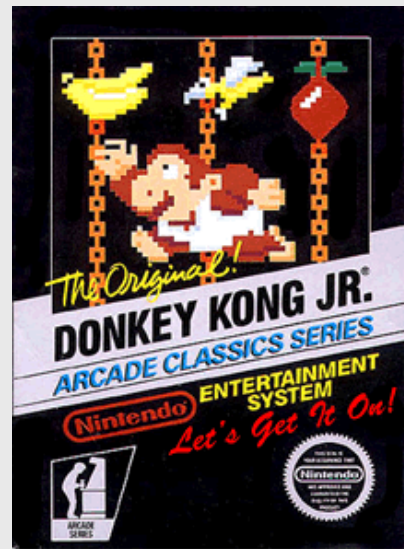
by Paul Zimmerman



If you can't make the [Kong-Off](#) at Richie Knucklez Arcade Games in New Jersey, March 19-20, where the top 10 Donkey Kong arcade players will be competing against each other, then the next best thing is to be at the [Midwest Gaming Classic](#) in Milwaukee, WI, March 26-27, where I will be having a Donkey Kong, Jr. (the Wii/Virtual Console/NES version, not the arcade game) tournament. All of the prizes for this event have been donated from the "Kings of Kongs" – [Hank Chien](#), [Steve Wiebe](#), Billy Mitchell, [Walter Day](#), as well as [Star Worlds Arcade](#). I will be recording all of the games (not the finals) to be listed on Twin Galaxies electronic scoreboard. I will also be selling some limited edition merchandise from Hank Chien and I will be showing his movie, Doctor Kong, during my tournament. Keep watching Midwest Gaming Classic's website for more info.

This is going to be a very big and exciting show since it is the 10th Anniversary of the Midwest Gaming Classic. Besides my tournament, there will be many other things to do at the show, such as special events, various tournaments, guest speakers, and displays. There will be arcade machines, pinball machines, console systems, and computers. From the popular "Events within an Event" to the playable "Classic Gaming and Computing Museum," everyone will find something interesting and maybe something they have never seen before! And then there are the events before the event – the Friday "Arcade: Factory to Floor Tour," the "Clock Chaos Pinball Tournament," and "MGKaraoke."

I hope to see everyone at the Midwest Gaming Classic!





Apple II Incider

by Donald Lee



The Virtual Apple II

I don't know how many readers out there have written a monthly column on a consistent basis. Just like anything else in life, as a writer you go through ups and downs. I've gone through months where columns come easily and I can write them up in no time. Yet, this month is not one of those times. I have been pretty tired from work and other things where writing a column (let alone multiple columns) have been a bit of a challenge. That is why I haven't written more than one column in recent months as well.

For this month, I couldn't think of any particular game I wanted to talk about. Instead, I am going to talk about the [Virtual Apple II](#) website. It is an online disk archive for many Apple II and Apple IIGS games. In addition, for the most part, the site is where I have played the games I have written about here in Retrogaming Times Monthly.

I had my Apple IIe for quite some time before I stopped using it for many years. That meant I also stopped playing my Apple games for many years. However, as time went on, various emulators began popping up for PC's/Windows machines.

I wasn't initially that interested in revisiting the past but decided to give the AppleWin emulator a try. It was quite fun to revisit a few of the games and I continued to play with AppleWin off and on. In fact, I believe that when I started writing for RTM, I initially used AppleWin to play the games I talked about.

By then, the Virtual Apple II website had already been created but it was in its early stages. I decided to start using the website so I didn't have to manually download each and every game I wanted to play. I just let the browser download and run the game instead!

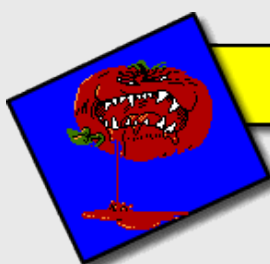
What can I say about the site beyond that it is wonderful? There's plenty of games for the older 8-bit Apple II's as well as a collection for the newer Apple IIGS. You have different options to use a mouse, keyboard, or joystick to play. It appears that a new feature has been added where you can select the type of monitor (Green, Color, or Color CRT). You can also choose the speed of the machine (regular Apple II speed or the faster Apple IIGS speed). Obviously this is to ensure the games run at their proper speeds.

But the overall charm of the site is the ability to jump right into games without making much effort. Yes, you have to download some add-ons to your browser and the game disks still have to be downloaded, but they will be mounted automatically so there isn't much user intervention.

All in all, the site is incredible in that it simulates a complete Apple II machine with the click of a mouse in your browser. I haven't done a count of the games on the site, but there's plenty to choose from. There are some occasions where I have tried to find a game and it wasn't there. So the site is not a complete archive that contains every game ever programmed for the Apple II.

However, even if you didn't use an Apple II, it is worth checking out just for the nostalgia.





Standalone Spew

by Mark Sabbatini



Mattel's Blazing Path On The All-Electronic Frontier

They gave us all-American classics like Hot Wheels, Barbie, and the Magic 8 Ball. Then they closed their last U.S. factory, outsourced to China and got eviscerated in a lead contamination scandal.

They gave us Intellivision...and the Aquarius. They revolutionized the software market with...actually, they mostly just took a bath of historic proportions by stupidly acquiring, managing and then essentially giving away a company responsible for some of the best learning games ever – all within several months.

Mattel, co-founded in 1945 by a literary agent and a guy who designed light fixtures, now lays claim to being the world's largest toy company, depending on how one chooses to interpret statistics. To say they were notable for concepts of incredibly original brilliancy that were followed up with depressingly imbecilic corporate-think is probably an unfair generalization, but one I'll make anyhow since it certainly applies for the purposes of this month's look at handheld games.

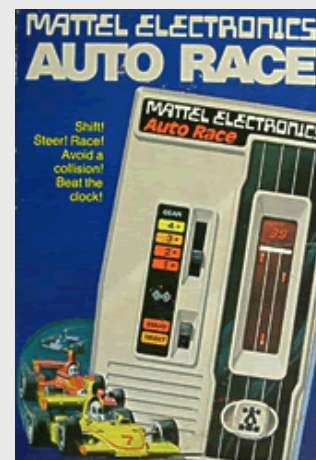
The company notched a huge place in video game history by releasing the first all-electronic handheld game in 1976. A brief pause to allow guesses for what it was, since a lot of people seem to get the question wrong.

Did you guess Football? Wrong. It was released in 1977, but don't feel bad as it's a common mistake (nurtured by the company no less, as explained below).

Auto Race, designed by George Klose and programmed in 511 bytes of code by Mark Lesser, takes the honor, although others were in the works, according to the Handheld Museum (www.handheldmuseum.com), an incredibly comprehensive resource for standalones and contributor of several other nuggets noted below. One of the other titles was Missile Attack, which many people familiar with the company's history thought was the first for a time.

Auto Race cost about \$18 in the 1977 Sears Christmas catalog. Its graphics were those of computer text adventures: entirely in your imagination. All of the screen elements were LED blips displayed with a modified calculator chip ("basically the little segments of the number 8," according to the Handheld Museum). The two main controls were a small knob with a car decal for steering and a four-position gearbox to control speed.

The first units included an AC jack in addition to the 9-volt battery port, but only the latter on subsequent units. What is puzzling since Howard Cohen, one of the originators of Mattel's electronics division, noted in an interview with the Handheld Museum that battery life was a primary design concern.



"The original testing of the game revealed that the battery life was 15 hours of continuous play," he explained. "This was a very short time, in an era when battery cost was a major deterrent to purchases, and had us all very concerned about the toy's reception. We added a label that stated 'change the battery if game malfunctions' which had never been done before (out of consumer backlash fears). We spent thousands of hours and dollars trying to improve this number and discovered that the battery life varied greatly depending upon the mode of playing. Nevertheless, besides breaking price points of the era, this was just another major change in the way toy companies could design and sell toys. Entering the 'electronics' era of toys was nerve-wracking, to say the least."

If Mattel recognized its historic all-electronic achievement, it isn't reflected on the box or in the catalog ads I saw. Instead the box copy boasts it's "fully assembled" and "needs no TV set!" Indeed, when Mattel reissued its original Football handheld in 2000 the box copy exclaimed, "The electronic game that started it all for Mattel!"

But, in the words of Obi-Wan Kenobi, it's a truth from a certain point of view. Auto Race didn't exactly take the consumer market by storm, but its gridiron follow-up was an entirely different story.

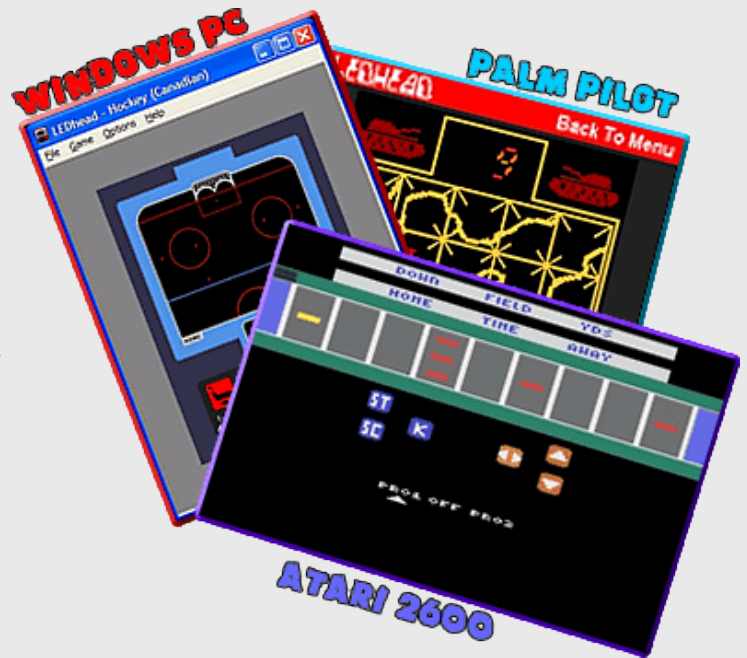
Cohen, in his Handheld Museum interview, said production of Football was halted at 100,000 units out of an originally scheduled 500,000 "buy authorization" because Sears thought the game wasn't popular, based on early sales (it cost \$27 in their Christmas catalog). "Then, in mid-January, Sears let us know that they made a mistake and that they wanted 200,000 a week. On top of that, other sales began to take off and the quota went to 500,000 a week by mid-February (usually a time when the previous years production is over and new toys are just going through prototyping production)."

Mattel made (I believe) 14 similar-looking LED handheld titles (plus some additional larger and tabletop LED games) before switching with the rest of the world to the LCD displays still used today. A lot of the original handhelds are very similar (i.e. Basketball, Hockey, and Soccer), so arguably there's about five distinct categories.

Prices for the Mattel handhelds (and their remakes where applicable) are all over the map, from \$20 to more than \$100. As will be seen in the reviews, purists looking for the real thing should avoid the remakes since there's notable differences – sometimes cringe worthy – in both hardware design and gameplay. That shortsightedness, presumably to trim costs, may explain why they didn't stay in production long.

Those looking for a cheaper and reliable functioning alternative can play emulated versions on numerous computer and portable devices. The following three seem to be the best and easiest to obtain multi-title options:

LEDhead: This freebie by Peter Hirschberg may be the best handheld emulator in existence. It features 12 Mattel handheld titles that, controls aside, are close to indistinguishable from the real thing. Included are Armor Battle, Auto Race, Baseball, Basketball, Football, Football II, Hockey, Hockey (Canadian), Ski Slalom, Soccer, Space Alert, and Sub Chase. Versions exist for Windows, Pocket PC and Palm Pilot. An iPhone version is supposedly "coming soon," according to Hirschberg's website, but it seems like I've been wishfully reading that message for some time (along with his promise that two of Mattel's better and most obscure titles – Basketball II and Soccer II – are coming). There's also a version for the Atari 2600 that contains just the Football remake but, as will be seen, it's not quite deserving of the "exact" status the other ports earn. Fixating on a single title for the moment, the inclusion of the Canadian Hockey version is seriously cool, even if it was more limited than the U.S. version. The differences, as best I can tell, are you can't go behind the net or take penalties (a huge shame since they're what most distinguish Hockey from the similar Basketball and Soccer handhelds) and the defense doesn't steal the puck. The emulator and some very cool other software by Hirschberg (check out the VertiSim toy helicopter simulator) are available at <http://peterhirschberg.com/mysoftware.html>.



LED Football: This is one of four Mattel handheld emulators for the iPhone (along with LED Football 2, LED Soccer and LED Basketball) sold for a buck or two apiece by touchGrove, LLC. Information about the LED series and download links are available at www.ledfootball.com. The "units" can be virtually flipped over, where the instructions are printed on the back, along with a retro "if game malfunctions, try a fresh battery" sticker. There's also "simulated plastic button wear-down" and the ability to make them shiny new again. Graphics and sounds are close enough even for purists,

but gameplay accuracy is lacking due to various "enhancements." Non-perfectionists and those unfamiliar with the originals will probably find they make the game more enjoyable, while old curmudgeons like me will disagree. One drawback, as with all iPhone games, is the virtual touch-screen buttons lack the tactical feedback of real ones.



Classics Sports Plug and Play: There's remarkably little information about this gizmo by Mattel, especially since it's readily available new for a mere \$24.90 at Amazon.com (where it currently ranks 192,011th in toy sales with no user reviews) and about half that used on eBay. It looks like a cross between the original Football and Basketball handhelds, with a jack on top where the cable to connect it to a TV attaches. Only three titles – the original Football, Basketball and Baseball – are included, which seems rather chintzy and might account for its lack of popularity. I don't have one of these and therefore won't try to guess how weird it must be to see those LED playfields on a 40-inch plasma screen (also something I don't have). The controller has four directional arrow keys in a diamond pattern in the center, with four action buttons at the corners of the button area. There's also two sliders to select options. Again, just guessing, but that likely means better tactile feel than the software emulators (based on Mattel's other modern-day remakes), but some initial confusion learning the differences in layout from the originals. Overall, it's probably not a bad choice for those lacking any other platform, especially given what the original and remade handheld units are selling for.



Mattel was honored at the 59th Annual Technology and Engineering Emmy Awards in 2008 for pioneering the development of handheld video games for its initial releases like Football and Auto Race, according to Wikipedia. Accordingly, this month's reviews will examine both in more detail than the usual capsule glance (along with opinions on how well they're emulated), with the other handhelds in the series scrutinized next month. In a departure from the norm, some of the grades are bumped slightly up or down for originality and/or historical value. The original Mattel Football gets a boost despite being below average in the genre, for instance, while Auto Race gets a higher grade than subsequent clones such as Ski Slalom.

Auto Race (C-)

It's the first and therefore deserves some extra credit, but ultimately it's also simplistic with little staying power. Here your blip is a car and the blips you're avoiding are other cars. You control your vehicle with a three-position lever (left, center, right) that puts you in the respective traffic lane just above. There's also a four-position gear switch that controls your speed (the Handheld Museum says you can further tweak the speed by opening up and modifying the unit, but let's not go there). The car gradually moves up the screen as other cars appear randomly in lanes at the top. The closer you get to the top, of course, the more difficult it is to avoid other vehicles, especially at high speeds (and the last couple of steps are essentially luck). Colliding with a car will push you back toward the bottom. Getting to the top represents a completed lap and the objective is to complete four laps in less than 99 seconds (the game ends at that point if you're unsuccessful). Interestingly, a "successful" race isn't necessarily that, according to the six time ratings the manual offers, with 75 or more seconds being "leave car in garage" and 55-65 seconds earning "still an amateur." The first positive rating is less than 45 seconds ("professional driver") and less than 30 seconds is "world champion driver." The lowest time in the Handheld Museum reader forums is 26 seconds, which apparently is achieved by staying in fourth gear and relying



on sheer luck to avoid collisions for all four laps. All this detail is offered as a gameplay incentive, since there aren't many otherwise. Something that is impressive, especially for a first effort, is the sound. The car's engine has a low-pitched (for a handheld) rumble, and the beeps for collisions and other stuff are simple rather than ear-gnashing. All in all, I'd push this aside for more complex offerings quickly, but it's still better than the majority of simplistic one-trick games that have come out since.

Emulation/remakes: LEDhead is the only obvious virtual clone and it plays admirably. Beyond that there's so many imitators of the basic concept for everything with an electronic display (my car radio being the possible lone exception) it's folly to go there, at least until we're evaluating driving games instead of replicas of their forefather.

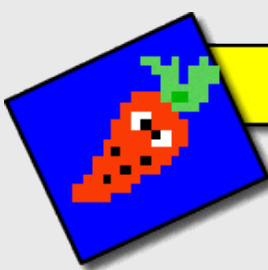
Football (B-)

The second handheld released by Mattel, it's now part of the mediocre middle that also dominates the NFL where the suits are obsessed with parody (spell-check mistake, honest). But that's an astounding feat since virtually every football game in the 35 years since is essentially a less- or more-successful variation of its basic formula. For me, it was THE definition of a handheld game for a time and, judging by the legions of internet devotees, I'm not alone. Still, even then the accolades weren't unanimous, with Consumer Reports calling it overly simplistic and dull (then again, they're not exactly the fun experts). It feels even more moronic than usual to describe the gameplay that surely no child of the '70s missed, which from a programming standpoint is Auto Race on steroids. Again you've got your three lanes (top, middle and bottom in this instance) and again you need to avoid the other blips. The five players on defense move somewhat haphazardly, but generally in your direction, and your playbook calls for dodging past them on the nine-yard field (not ten because the modified calculator chip could only handle nine "numbers"). Reaching the far edge of the field put your runner back at the start and, oh, the fond memories of ripping off long gainers by crossing the entire field several times before getting tackled. Tim Tebow disciples will exalt the offense since your QB can run (better than some handheld competitors, not as good as others), but can't pass at all. He also doesn't seem to have mastered the art of seeing the whole field, since he can't move backward. Your kicker, on the other hand, is da bomb, making every field goal he attempts. Some credit for that is owed to the computerized coach, who somehow knows exactly the distance a kick will travel (one to 65 yards) and calls a punt or field goal accordingly. Home and visiting teams alternate possessions, making it the first handheld with real two-player value. But since you can't play defense, I seem to recall a lot of solitary games so I wasn't benched for half the game. There's four quarters that display 15 minutes each, but last two-and-a-half minutes in real time, with the home team getting possession at the beginning of the game and the visitors starting the second half with the ball. There's two difficulty levels, with the defense moving 50 percent faster on the harder setting, and it quickly becomes the setting of choice for all but beginners. One minor clock irritant is you can only kick on fourth down, so if you're in last-second field goal range with just a tick or two left you may be out of luck. On the other hand, since the defense lines up three yards off the ball, converting short yardage situations are a virtual certainty since you can pick up two yards just by moving forward at the snap. The beep sounds are classic, but how many of us desperately wished for a headphone jack so we could play it without annoying parents, teachers, priests, etc.? Also, like Auto Race, the first production units included a port for an AC adaptor, which was eliminated in later versions. Pinching – literally – a penny? Conspiracy with battery makers after the initial struggles for long life? One of life's great unsolved mysteries.



Emulation/remakes: LEDhead is as close to perfect as it gets, with the obvious exception of the Atari 2600 version. That translation by David Galloway is equally fun, but the graphics are chunkier and the field looks squished. Sounds like the clock are also different, but the beeps for tackles and turnovers are impressively authentic. The controls are a bit weird, however, with the button moving you forward while the left-right joystick switches are the score/statistics functions. LED Football gets a lot right, but there's a notable deviation with the addition of a one- or two-player option. The one-player game keeps you running the home team offense, with the visiting team automatically piling up points on drives where you fail to score. It makes the game more interesting, but those wanting exact emulations (like me) will not be happy. Mattel released what appeared to be a duplicate of the original handheld in 2000, but players learn very quickly there are some disappointing modifications done largely to cut costs. The display is not LED, but LCD with a red filter, making for a blurringly miserable experience

for those trying to play it under the covers after bedtime. It also uses two AA batteries, which don't last as long as the original's 9-volt. But there is one HUGE plus: the ability to turn the sound off. I haven't tried the miniature keychain remake, but it appears to be similar except for the sound control option (and I'm guessing the watch-style batteries last a lot longer). Mattel's Classics Sports Plug and Play, as mentioned, contains the original game, a rather questionable decision since the controller has all the directional controls and buttons necessary for the far superior Football II..



Mutated Output

by Mark Sabbatini



The Many Faces Of...The BBC Micro

Ever walk through a parking lot choosing which cars you'd trade for yours? I've gone through my "most of them" and "none of them" stages, which I suspect is the case for most people with many things in life.

Circumstances and taste obviously are huge factors, since GM keeps making the Chevrolet Aveo because an disturbingly large number of people apparently find it appealing. I'm living in a place where snowmobiles are the primary form of transportation (seriously – they far outnumber cars), so my ride wouldn't be too slick in L.A. and vice versa.

It's why I've defended my love of the TRS-80 Color Computer and a number of other "loser" machines so many times over the years. People can compare specs, software support, reliability and everything else until the end of time, but ultimately it's all about what works for the end user.

That said, this month's column is going to plow ahead with some machine vs. machine comparisons anyhow.

The "Many Faces Of" series is probably my favorite long-running RTM feature, largely because it's intriguing to see how well programmers worked with the platform they had. The not-too-infrequent upsets – such as the Atari 2600 winning a gold or the Commodore 64 choking as a Has Been – are constant reminders talent is often more important than hardware. Not to mention the fun of seeing just how bad Coleco sabotaged its games for competing systems while Atari sometimes seemed to do a bang-up job on every platform but their own.

Generally the lesser-known machines such as the CoCo and Sinclair Spectrum got "disqualified" tags since the reviewer didn't have a machine to test the games on. I did a couple of columns a while back guessing where CoCo titles might rank (and probably should do one for Speccy titles as well). This month – and maybe for a couple more – I'm going to fill in some blanks for my current retrocomputing fixation, the BBC Micro.

I've raved in a couple of columns about the Beeb's technical superiority to any eight-bit competitor, while despairing about the horrible job programmers did taking advantage of that power. The trend continues in many of the officially licensed titles I reviewed, but there's also something more disturbing: A large number of titles with the "official" name that obviously are unlicensed. Apparently the copyright-obsessed lawyers for the big U.S. software houses didn't have their aim too keenly fixed on the Beeb since it was selling to an almost exclusively British machine. As a result, there's little doubt a lot of people forked over money for abysmal counterfeit titles written by hucksters for a quick buck.

Also, it seems some titles by "official" programmers had different names, sort of like Hungry Jack restaurants in Australia, which are actually Burger Kings (the really weird thing is they also have Burger Kings, so they're competing with themselves. Then again, Starbucks was opening "unbranded" coffee shops in Seattle for people who eschewed the Caffeine Borg. But I digress).

In terms of where the Beeb as a whole (specs, support, etc) fits in the pecking order of the competition in terms of potential, I'd roughly rank the machines as follows (evaluate/eviscerate my credibility as warranted):

- Commodore 64
- Atari 400/800
- Atari 7800
- BBC Micro
- Colecovision
- Atari 5200

Apple II
TI 99/4A
Sinclair Spectrum
TRS-80 Color Computer
Vic-20
Atari 2600
Mattel Intellivision
Odyssey 2

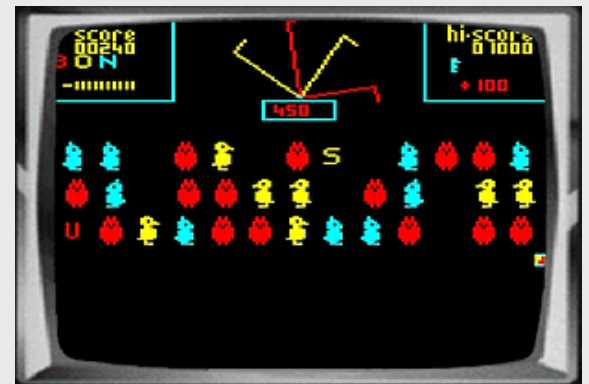
As will be seen the Beeb, which should have been a perennial medal contender, is more likely to trip on the starting line than take home the hardware. Some of that may reflect a different taste in gaming and/or familiarity with U.S. arcade hits, since I'd give a decisive edge to British originals compared to their ports on U.S. machines.

The comparisons this month are for games I've played on most or all the machines compared (albeit emulations in some cases). Others I'm still trying to get fully up to speed on will be examined next month.

One thing that always bothered me with the old RTM comparisons is scores were too close for games of vastly different quality. The Atari 2600 version of Joust, for instance, gets a score of 40 while the gold medal version for the Atari 7800 gets a 47. The former is impressive given the 2600's limits, but there's no way the game with its blocky graphics, fewer simultaneous enemies and eggs that never land is 85 percent as good as the nearly arcade-perfect 7800 version.

Carnival (D+), Have Not (26)

Once upon a time I presided over an awards banquet where a newspaper won an honorable mention for something, which might have been an honor if it weren't the only paper eligible for the category and no first, second, or third-place was awarded. That's roughly the situation here, where the Atari 2600 and Intellivision split a silver medal (35) and the Colecovision (41) won the gold for their ports of Sega's minor target-shooting classic. The fact there aren't more ports makes a Beeb version surprising, but fans of the machine would likely be a laughingstock if they tried using it to impress upon friends of competing machines what they were missing. It's humiliating the pixelated graphics (6) barely give the 2600's a run for the money and sound (4) is a beep-and-blip headache. Controls (8) do what they need to, although precise positioning for things like taking out the pipes is a bit difficult. Gameplay (5) includes all the elements, but they feel about as cleanly implemented as a concert recorded from someone's cell phone in the balcony. The pipes, to name one example, vanish completely from view for about half their rotation and it's near impossible to time their reemergence in order to shoot them. Add the parts together and there is simply no addictiveness (3). I admit Carnival isn't my favorite game, but I never got annoyed playing it until this version came along.



Crystal Castles (C-), Have Not (33)

This is an official port by Atarisoft, so it's a more competitive entry in the field. That said, it still falls disappointingly short of its RTM microcomputer competition. The graphics (7) are acceptable, if underwhelming, but sound (4) is little but an Atari 2600-quality crash noise when you die and a few beeps at the end of levels. The real problem is gameplay (7), where the enemies magnetically and rapidly honing in on Bentley Bear make it seem like another (and less fun) game. The only reason it earns a seven is because the six awarded to the lowest-scoring Atari 2600 version (36 overall), but I'm not sure it's on equal footing with the Apple II version that also got a seven. Animation is jerky rather than smooth, a hindrance to positioning,



although the controls (8) are still well implemented on a relative basis to the competition. The excessive difficulty caused by the enemies' speed also impairs the addictiveness (7), again only to match the Atari 2600's score), but at least all the elements are there for hardcore fans. The Commodore 64 won this five-machine comparison with a score of 43. Left out at the time was the Sinclair Spectrum's port and it's to the Beeb's embarrassment to state the Speccy's green monochrome version might beat out its British counterpart due to more graphics detail and features, even though it suffers from the same overly fast enemy honing.

Gorf (D), Have Not (36)

To play this is to ponder this question: what in the world was the programmer using as a reference for this game? Obviously he'd never been in the same room as the arcade game, let alone played it. I'd say he played it a couple of times on a friend's Atari 2600, but there's too much strangeness for it to resemble any of the home versions. As an aside, it's remarkable how awful all of the ports are – one of the worst collective conversions of an arcade game ever. As for the Beeb version, just the first impression of the title screen is a disaster, as the title is spelled out in huge white letters so blocky they'd embarrass a ZX-81. The subsequent options screen continues to resemble something done with ASCII characters and the in-game instructions scroll so slowly you're more likely to achieve the rank of Space



Avenger on the coin-op game before you finish reading. I've got some disagreements with the original MFO scores (there is no way the Vic 20's version (32) is worse than the Atari 2600's (35), for instance, and in some ways I even prefer the Vic above the Colecovision port (40) that shared a silver medal) so again I'm having to tweak BBC scores to fit. The sound (6) is straight from the first days of the Atari 2600, eerily so. The pixelated graphics (7) might also be something a talented programmer could do on a 2600, but since the actual 2600 version gets a six I have no choice but to assign the above score. Controls (9) are fine, certainly better than the awkward Atari 5200 analogue scheme that earned a seven. Gameplay (7) is worse than all but the 2600 version, which doesn't deserve the six it received (four for the 2600 and five for the Beeb would be more accurate, but ...). There's something amiss with every stage, reinforcing the belief the Beeb programmer had a best a passing acquaintance with the game (as with the other versions, the Galaxians stage is missing, which I'd love to get an explanation for some day). On the mothership stage, for example, there's no shield protecting the mothership you have to shoot through and the mothership doesn't drop fireballs on you. Instead, two mini-Gorfs, which are supposed to appear on top of the mothership from the second round on, appear under the mothership and are constantly diving at you. Also, the collision detection in general is less than precise. It's hardly deserving a decent score for addictiveness (7), but again the inflated competition leaves little choice. Truth be told, no matter what computer/console you own, G_orf is not something you should try at home unless armed with a trusty MAME emulator and the appropriate pirated ROM chip.

Joust (B-), Have Not (42)

There's a reason I singled out Joust as an example of how the scores in the original RTM reviews are too close together. This version is clearly far superior to the Atari 2600 port that just missed a medal with 40 points, but also clearly a step below the bronze winning Atari 5200 (44). So again the BBC version scores higher than I feel merited to match the grade-inflated marks of the competition (one of the reasons I'd be a bad public school teacher, along with urging kids to be free thinkers and to put fun above homework). The graphics (9) are better than most, but well below the near-perfection of the Atari 7800. Nonetheless, with the Atari 2600 getting an insane seven (lines for land platforms?!), I'm basing the grade on that. Same thing for sound (9), which again screams "home version." Gameplay (8) is problematic



in a comparison like this since it can handle all of the coin-op's elements at once, unlike some competitors that bog down if they can keep up at all. But the Beeb's problem is it's too fast and hard. Those with sharp skills will love the elevated challenge, but I'm guessing there weren't many of those in the U.K., leaving newbies to abandon it quickly

and again question U.S. tastes for this so-called runaway hit. Controls (8) are vague, but (all together now) the curve strikes again. That means a default score for addictiveness (8), although it's fair to say there's definite love-hate potential. One interesting note from the net-o-sphere: This may be an early version of an unlicensed version by the same programmer called Skirmish that was published by a different company a year later.

Pac-Man (B), Have Not (42)

Knowing far more about the inner workings of Pac-Man than is healthy, I tend to be a harsh critic of home translations (like I haven't been a crank on everything else). I'm also guilty of some odd judgments. One of my favorite versions, for instance, is a free homebrew for the Radio Shack MC-10 (huh?) that maybe ten people in the world have played (full disclosure: I was asked to play test the game, although it was an out-of-the-blue request after the programmer read something I wrote and i'm not sure I offered any useful feedback). It's not the prettiest version in the world (or the ugliest), but the guy who wrote it used to actual arcade code to control the ghost behavior, etc. That's something I can immediately tell is lacking in most home versions, which is strange since the logic,



speeds, etc. aren't all that complex. The Google Pac-Man Doodle that came out last year uses the arcade source as well, and I wrote an article back in [RTM #73](#) for those interested in learning about and modifying the settings. Uh ... what was I talking about? Oh, right – the Beeb version against its MFO competitors. First off, this version is by Acornsoft, making me wonder if it's licensed since Atarisoft was programming Beeb software. On the other hand, Atari did crack down hard on some other imitators, so it may have just been a licensing oddity. Second, I'll get my bitching about scoring out the way quickly by stating this is a superior game to Joust, yet gets a lower score to fit into its appropriate place. Overall, the Beeb version is one of the better home ports I've played but, while I have some issues with the Atari 400/800/5200 versions that shared a gold with the Colecovision (all with a score of 44), they're still a clear notch above. The Commodore 64 (43) also stays in front due to its selectable starting levels, although I may be giving that undue weight since the Beeb improves on some of the C64's shortcomings. There's no choice but to give the graphics (10) a perfect score, for instance, since the C64 gets a nine even though three of the ghosts are basically the same color. The Beeb's ghosts are arcade-accurate down to the whites of their eyes, which even the winning Atari versions can't claim. Gameplay (7) is mostly there, but there's no bonus man at 10,000 points and the action is a little speedy. Sound (6) is something of a weakness, with no background music and generally sparse gameplay audio. But it isn't annoying, which is more than I can say for some versions. Controls are perfect (10) even if you can't redefine them. Addictiveness (9) is almost as good as any, but the previously mentioned lack of starting levels burns because skipping those early levels is the main reason I'll play a home version instead of a MAME emulation.



Dual Perspective

by James Sorge



X-Men vs. Street Fighter

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 "X-Men vs. Street Fighter," the first tag team fighting game ever made for the arcade.

Graphics: 7/10

More of Capcom reusing sprites, that's why this game gets low marks here. It reuses sprites from X-Men: Children of the Atom and Street Fighter Alpha. It works, but it is kind of lazy.

Sound: 10/10

Where the game fails in graphics, the sound is more than impressive. Ryu's and Chun-Li's tunes are catchy and classic, while the X-Men tunes are good as well. A very good batch here.

Difficulty: 5/10

A very middle-of-the-road game in terms of difficulty. This game doesn't have a lot of the difficulty that Street Fighter Alpha and Street Fighter 2 have. But the AI is still competent and fun to play despite its flaws that can be taken advantage of. It's not the hardest game in the world.

Replay Factor: 10/10

You will replay this game, whether it's 1-player or VS. mode. There's a lot you can do, everybody has something unique to them. It's well-balanced and there's no real god tier to the game (*cough* Marvel vs. Capcom 2 *cough*). Even Juggernaut can hold his own when characters get close.



The World Record Perspective:

This is not the type of game that people think of for a world record, but there is a small arcade track for points if anyone's interested. It's hard to beat, but knowing this game, anything's possible:

- **Arcade Record:** 2,098,100 by Clarence E. Leung



The Penguin Says:

"This is an all-time classic. It gave arcades a last good run, was the father for tag team arcade games (Marvel VS. Series and even Tekken Tag borrowed from it), and like Super Mario Bros. is also infinitely fun to play because of the large possibilities of combos. While it might not be as old as most classics (it came out in 1996), its impact on arcades and the fighting game scenes were monumental and the it deserves to be mentioned, especially now in honor of Marvel vs. Capcom 3 being released. Overall, this game gets an **8.5/10** from me."





The Pixelated Mage

by Jeff Wittenhagen



3D Dot Game Heroes

Platform: PlayStation 3
Developer: Silicon Studio
Release Date: May 11, 2010
Genre: Action, Adventure
Game Modes: Single Player
Tag Line: "Perfectly emulates the feel of The Legend of Zelda, and that's not necessarily a bad thing."

The logo for 3D Dot Game Heroes, featuring the title in a stylized, pixelated font with a character illustration above it.

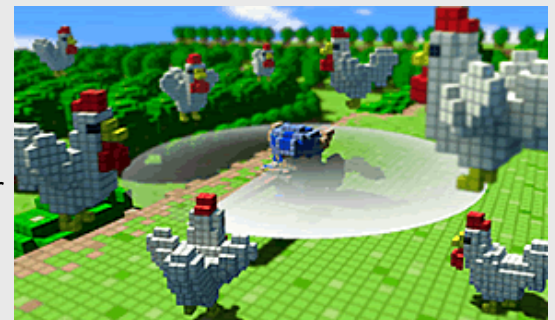
Synopsis

3D Dot Game Heroes takes the classic Legend of Zelda format and recreates the experience utilizing the power of the PlayStation 3 to glorious 3D perfection. On the outside 3D Dot Game Heroes looks like a simple tribute to the Action-RPG genre. You go along the same path as your typical role-playing archetype, being ordered by a king to save the world from some maniacal villain. You go through peaceful towns with helpful villagers and dredge through dungeons each with their own unique theme. In the style of Legend of Zelda, you obtain keys, upgrade your weapons and earn weaponry to progress through the story. 3D Dot Game Heroes perfectly emulates the feel of The Legend of Zelda, and that's not necessarily a bad thing.

The story begins with the King of Dotnia not being happy with the 2D realm that he rules and issue a decree with the snap of his fingers to recreate everything in glorious 3D. Instantaneously, Dotnia is transformed into 3D in epic fashion and you get to watch it all unfold. The silent hero is the central focus of the game and you get to decide how your character looks and the overall type. The robust character editor that is included allows you to create any 3D pixelated character you can dream up. Or you can also be lazy like me and just download one of the thousands already made online and transfer it to your game. The world of Dotonia is perfect for custom characters and it shows the time and effort that the developers put into making this a rich experience for everyone.

Gameplay

As you would expect from a Legend of Zelda clone, 3D Dot Game Heroes gives your hero a sword and shield to fend of nefarious enemies. Luckily 3D Dot Game Heroes modifies this formula to keep things interesting. First off the sword you wield is enormous when you have full health and can be upgraded to even more epic proportions. Once you get hit a single time, your sword becomes normal sized until you reach full health again. This is a change from the old sword beam from Zelda, although you can upgrade certain swords to include that as well. Upgrades are restricted and limited per sword so that you can't over power any single sword. Allowing for sword upgrades gives the game a different pace depending on which sword you are welding and your overall play style. Other items such as the boomerang and bombs work as they do in any Zelda game and are frequently used to figure out puzzles.



The entire kingdom of Dotonia is expertly designed and includes all the areas that are common to Action-RPGs. By using so many varied landscapes it allows for better exploration and makes the secrets less obvious. It also makes you want to traverse every inch of Dotonia to find every hidden item and upgrade. Because of this variety 3D Dot Game Heroes feels like a real world. Randomly spawning enemies will keep you on your toes and warps help mitigate unnecessarily retreading your steps too much.

As expected, dungeons have a bit of a dreary feel to them but overall they feel less explorative than running around in the beautiful over-world. The dungeons all feel essentially the same and no matter how hard they get as you progress, they all feel like you've been there already. Some of the dungeons feel more like work than fun, but the boss fights more than make up for the drabness. It just makes you want to get through the dungeon as quickly as possible so you can experience what's up next.

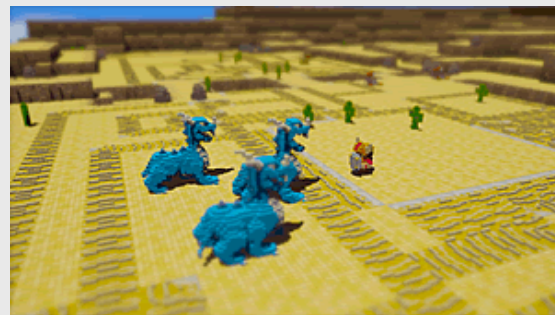
Graphics and Sound

What puts 3D Dot Game Heroes above and beyond a majority of Action-RPGs is the fantastic visuals. The pixelated 3D blocky style makes everything look like it belongs in a retro game and continually reminds us of the games of old. While this technique may have been done on a smaller scale in the past, this is the first time that an entire game has went this route visually. The view of the world is also limited to give you a smaller field of view through fixed cameras which gives 3D Dot Game Heroes a more realistic feel as if you were seeing the world through a window. The angle of the camera is lower than other games and gives everything a cinematic quality, especially when you have dialogue with other characters throughout the land.

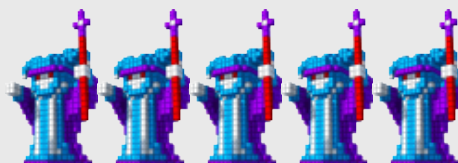
The sound department in 3D Dot Game Heroes is no slouch either. While it does have the similarity to Zelda as the rest of the game, the songs feel like more of a tribute and evolution than just a simple copy. The soundtrack compliments the scenery perfectly and each area in the over-world has different music to match the change. By using MIDI style tones combined with real instruments, it gives 3D Dot Game Heroes a fresh feel.

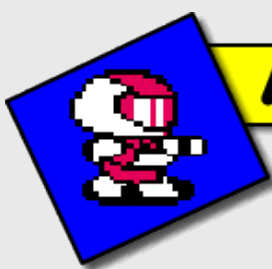
Why You Should Play It

At first glance, you really can't help but feel like 3D Dot Game Heroes is nothing more than a rip-off of the Zelda series. But once you dig deeper into the game, there is an enormous amount of enjoyment to be experienced. Even hardcore Legend of Zelda fans can't help but feel all giddy inside when they see this game because it allows you the ability to recreate Link and use him as your hero! 3D Dot Game Heroes was initially priced well below normal retail for games and you can currently pick it up for around \$30 if you hunt around. Even if it was hundreds, this game is too good to not partake in this unique experience.



Rating = 5 Pixelated Mages out of 5





A Pixelated 21st Century

by Paul Zimmerman



I hope everyone is having a great Pixelated new year so far. February was a great month to be a Pixelated fan. Here are some of the retroware highlights for the latest releases:



Bit.Trip Flux ([click here to see a video of the game](#))

The Bit.Trip series comes full-circle, literally. This is the final game in the series. This is just like Bit.Trip Beat except now your “paddle” is located on the other side. Of course everything else is new. Buy this now!

Jewel Keepers Easter Island ([click here to see a video of the game](#))

Bejeweled, for when you are stuck on Easter Island.

Pucca's Kisses Game ([click here to see a video of the game](#))

Help Pucca kiss Garu.



Arctic Escape ([Click here to see a video of the game](#))

Guide penguins back home through more than 100 levels.

Boom Boom Squaries ([Click here to see a video of the game](#))

A Furry Legends spin-off puzzle game. 26 levels, 40 challenges, endless mode and time trial.



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.

S.C.A.T. (NES) ([Click here to see a video of the game](#))

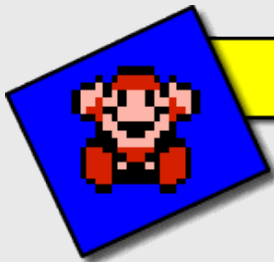
A shooter from Natsume. Similar to Forgotten Worlds. This one is hard. One hit kills. But, it is a fun game.

Faxanadu (NES) ([Click here to see a video of the game](#))

Similar to Zelda 2. Great music! Great game!

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

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



Game Over

by Bryan Roppolo



With that comes the end of another issue of Retrogaming Times Monthly. Will we make it to issue number 100? Who knows, but it will be fun to see, as that's only 17 issues away (about one and a half years)! For those of you that wish to print out each issue of RTM, I'm going to also put out a single page version of this and future issues. However, those will always come out after the main issue goes out, within a week afterwards most likely.

It's nice to see that more articles are being written for the magazine, which is a trend that I hope continues into the future as more writers continue to come on board. All of these new columnists seem to know their stuff and write very well, so I am happy to have them on board. Thanks again for a great issue and for those of you that want to print out each issue or see it all on one-page, that will be coming sometime within the next week. Just trying my best to please everyone! Happy retrogaming!