

# THE RETRO GAMES NEWS

*Issue 6*

**SPACE HARRIER**

**CONTACT SAM CRUISE**

**ZERO WING**

**FIST 2**

**..AND MUCH MORE!**

**PLUS: EMULATOR REVIEW  
& WEWANA:PLAY APP**

**RETRO REVIEWS FOR  
COMPUTERS, CONSOLES,  
HANDHELDS & MORE!**



# CONTENTS

|                              |                           |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| SPACE HARRIER <b>4</b>       | ZERO WING <b>30</b>       |
| WEWANA:PLAY APP <b>11</b>    | MEET THE TEAM <b>33</b>   |
| CONTACT SAM CRUISE <b>17</b> | CHASE HQ <b>34</b>        |
| JASON MACKENZIE <b>20</b>    | MARBLE MADNESS <b>37</b>  |
| TRGN AWARD <b>25</b>         | MILLENNIUM 2.2 <b>39</b>  |
| EMULATOR REVIEW <b>26</b>    | FRIDAY THE 13TH <b>42</b> |
| MAIL BAG <b>29</b>           | FIST 2 <b>48</b>          |

To Advertise In



Contact PhilWheatley at:

[media@theretrogamesnews.com](mailto:media@theretrogamesnews.com)

Editorial:



Welcome to another month of retro gaming goodness. Along with the usual classic game reviews such as Space Harrier, Contact Sam Cruise and Friday 13<sup>th</sup>, we also have a couple of unique interviews. The first of which is from a guy called Deepak Pathak who is one of the partners behind the WeWana:Play App which allows you to schedule gaming sessions with your friends. A second is with Jason 'Kenz' Mackenzie who is well known in the retro gaming community.

We also have some new sections such as the Mail Bag and the TRGN Award. Please feel free to email your letters to the email above. Thanks as ever to everybody who contributed such as the writers, our proof reader and Logo artist.

Happy Retro Gaming – Phil Wheatley

The Retro Games News

© Shinobisoft Publishing

Founder Phil Wheatley

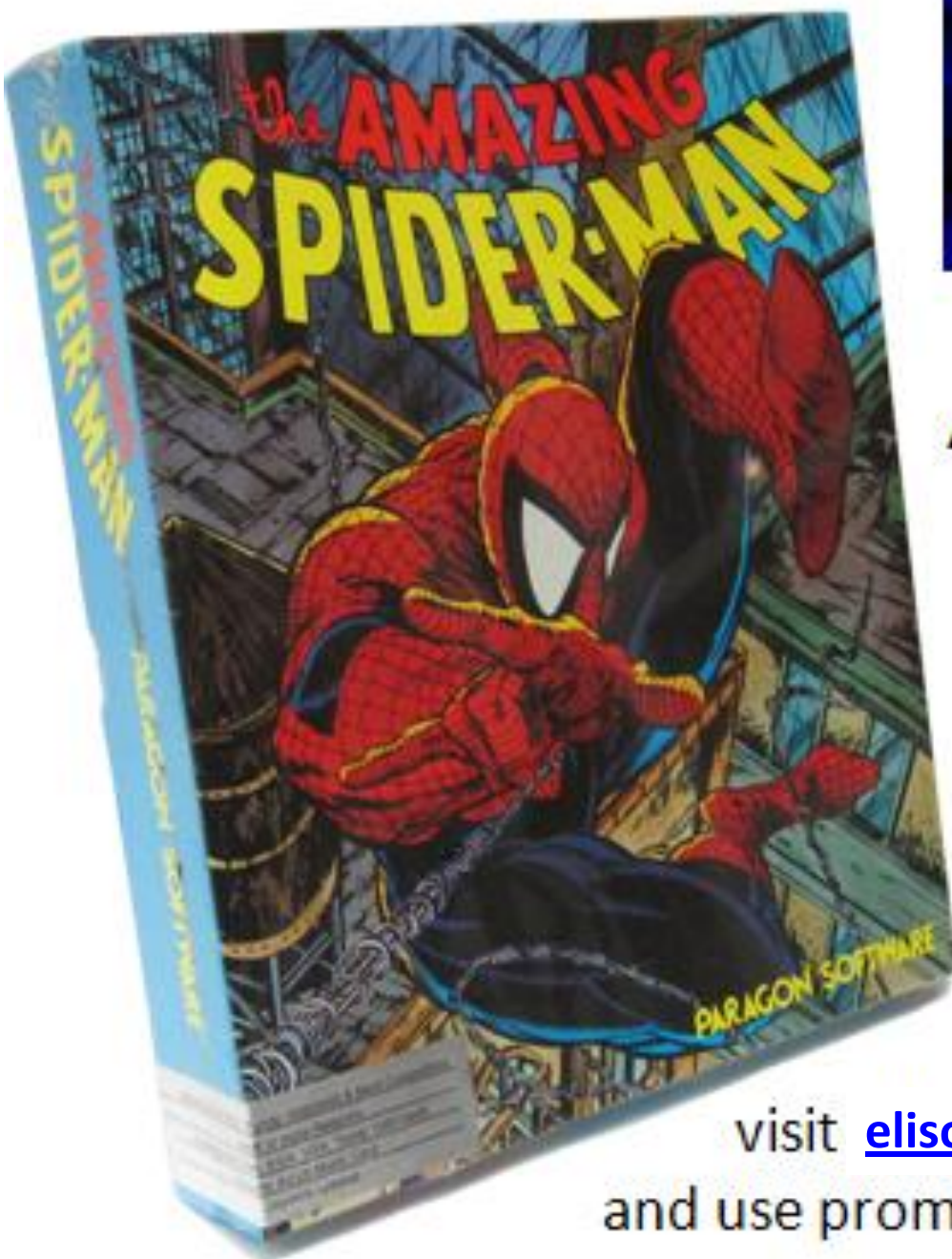
The Retro Games News Logos

by: Shaun Holley



# TRGN

Exclusive Offer!



Amazing Spider-Man  
PC-DOS 3 1/2" Disk  
Retail Box  
USA Release

Only  
**\$4.99** US  
plus shipping

visit [elisoftware.com](http://elisoftware.com)  
and use promo code TRGNASM

offer good until 9/15/2013



Excellent

New / Sealed

**TOP** 1000000

**SCORE** 449580



# SPACE HARRIER

**STAGE 1**

**W**elcome to the  
fantasy zone.  
Get Ready!

The first ever samples  
I heard on my Atari  
ST.

WOW! My friend and I  
were in awe.  
Computers can now  
talk at you as the low  
quality distorted  
sounds came at us.  
Barely distinguishable  
but cool none the less.  
We knew what the  
computer was telling  
us.

"Fun time"

## Essentials

**Space Harrier**

**Sega**

**Arcade & Home Systems Reviewed**

**Reviewed by Drew Kenaz**

**Proof Read by Phil**

Yet another fantastic  
hit from Sega, Space  
Harrier came to the  
arcades back in 1985.  
This game, along with  
Sega's other popular  
titles back then, Super  
Hang-on, Afterburner  
and Outrun really did  
revolutionise the  
design of games and  
used a technology  
known as "Super  
Scaler" to produce

what was the forefront  
of 3D games.

Other systems too  
were at the time  
beginning to develop  
3D games Sega were  
not the first to  
consider 3D as the  
way to go, such as  
Star Wars etc.  
however, while they  
were using full 3D  
objects to emulate  
cars, spaceships etc.





the line graphics and later filled in blocks were a long way off. Sega's idea was to utilise the detail and colours possible in 2D graphics and simply scale them down. If an object was smaller, the human brain would discern it is further away than an object that is larger. The technique is not much more complicated than that.

With 32,000 colours available on screen, and the super smooth Scalar technology at hand, the game took off. The mixture of Chinese dragons flying around and the wonderfully fast chequerboard floors hurtling towards you at break neck speed dragged you into the fantasy world that Space Harrier created.

Add to this the simple yet effective game

play of move and shoot, it both generated the sweaty palm excitement while giving any audience around a chance to marvel at the wonderful detailed and colourful graphics.

Yu Suzuki in typical form also managed to get the controls spot on. By using an analogue joystick and an easy to aim system when firing, the gameplay felt natural. The biggest enemy being your own reactions rather than a clunky system that befell many games in the early 80's.

To give an idea of how advanced the technology used in that arcade machine was, it wasn't until 1994 (9 Years later) when Sega launched the 32X (32bit add on to the Megadrive) that finally a home

computer was powerful enough to reproduce Space Harrier at "Arcade Quality". Even then, the sound was still not quite up to par. It is, therefore, the Sega Saturn version (1996) that is classed as being the first "Arcade Perfect" port of Space Harrier finally appeared.

So, how does it play?

To start off, the first level is nice and easy, just as it should be. Control is nice and fluid, all the enemies are animated and moved about the screen smoothly and the Yu Suzuki signature pastel shades give a bright relaxing start.

This soon changes come stage 2. As you suddenly find out half way through that your laser cannon can't shoot the stone towers. (Shock among shock) You now have no option but to dodge these as hitting them at break neck speed will only lead to being knocked flat on your back, probably with a big headache or at least mild concussion. Perhaps this explains the fire breathing floating heads.

Now Stage three. Hmmmmmm! I do



wonder if there was any help given while coming up with this world...

Things speed up further and you have to avoid or shoot (if you are fast enough) floating and bouncing brightly coloured mushrooms!

Erm, yes!

As surreal as it is, it looks fantastic and the ramp-up in speed starts to twitch your reactions. When you finally are greeted by a 2 headed dragon again, of course breathing fire.

Next, Stage 4, things start to change. We have had our fun but now we get a glimpse that the game has begun to take a serious turn. Gone are the pastel colours, fire breathing heads and bouncy mushrooms.

Instead are hexagon ball type thingys and metal towers. The sky is replaced by a further roof, giving a trapped in feeling and we are moving faster still.

Now for the bonus stage. After a clever introduction to prove that Space Harrier is in fact a serious shooter, you get a break. A nice ride on a fluffy dragon (Never Ending Story anyone?) Guide him to eat everything in his path and then we are back into the game.

Back to more serious missiles being fired at you rather than flashy lasers and we are dealing with jets and sky scrapers to dodge.

However, although things now start to get harder, with a little practice the difficulty curve although steep

is just enough to keep you interested rather than put you off playing again.

Some of the ideas for end of level bosses are interesting, some levels, you only have a limited amount of time before they fly off into the distance while still allowing you to continue to the next stage. For the majority of the bosses, however, the best plan is to either rotate and fly circles around the screen while firing, for others, a figure of 8 pattern is required.

Throughout the game, many of the original foes keep popping up just to remind you of their presence

The ending too feels very satisfying. After fighting the final boss, you finish off battering with each of the end of level bosses in reverse order until finally you fly off into the sunset on top of the friendly dragon seen in the bonus stages.

Fantastic.

So..... Arcade sorted. Space Harrier was converted to an awesome array of computers and consoles.

These included

## 8 Bit

### Game Gear

Released in 1991. the first thing that hits you is the 8 bit music. The title screen doesn't really do it justice. You need to get into the game to see where this has been taken. When looking at this game, you do need to bear in mind how limited the hardware is in comparison to its Arcade big brother.



Hit start and you are greeted with the music you know and love (in 8 bit though) the floor scrolling is lovely and smooth and with an option for a password to skip to levels, at least you have the option to continue where you left off.

Hit start again and you see Space Harrier running just as in the arcades, albeit larger as the Game Gear has a much lower resolution, Sega wanted to keep some detail in the character.

However, this is where similarities start to disappear. Although the floor moves smoothly, nothing else does. The game runs quite slowly in comparison and all the graphics have been changed. This was done to make the characters easier to see on the LCD screen but I am not sure this change was needed.

Again, due to the limited capabilities of the Game Gear graphics engine, there are many graphical glitches in sprite masks which means that you get blocks of solid colour at times around the enemies. While this doesn't affect the game play, it does get in the way of seeing anything behind the graphics crash.

Strangely, Stage 2 fools you into thinking it is the same as in the arcade, with the same floor colour

scheme but up come the bouncing mushrooms from stage 3, did someone get a little confused?

Things change further, Stage 3 (4 in the Arcade) Instead of Hexagon balls to dodge, there are these strange face things and come stage 6 these strange bear creatures show up.

It does feel that the Game Gear struggles and the difficulty playing the game I feel is not due to the game being hard but the sluggish controls and graphics crashes impede what is still a cool game to have if even just from a pure geeky retro sense.

## 16 Bit

### Atari ST

This is where it all started for me. Seeing for the first time, along with Outrun the simulated 3D graphics using sprites.







Knowing now what I do about the capabilities of the Atari ST, I can say that while the sound effects do the job quite nicely, the music although very recognisable is very beepy. It was an issue that almost all Atari ST games suffered from. For some reason, programmers were very lazy when it came to sound on the Atari ST. This is largely because it had on board the same FM chip used by all the 8bit computers ZX Spectrum, older Ataris etc. so the audio was simply ported from a single source.

The graphics however, were not too shabby. You can tell the low resolution instantly 320 X 200 pixels but this was used as best as possible. Although the graphics update is slow causing a jerky feel, the speed was maintained so the game flowed as it should. Bearing in

mind the Atari ST version was released back in 1985 (Just 1 year after the arcade) considering that many gamers were still playing on the 8 bit ZX Spectrum, this version looked fantastic.

Interestingly though, 2 parts are missing. Stage 4 doesn't have the top ceiling and some of the end of level bosses are missing a few sprites. However, this can be forgiven as it was a calculated decision to keep the speed of the game.

### Commodore Amiga

This version was released in 1989 as Amiga owners were upset that such a great game had missed out their system.

So, how did it compare? Well, to start off with, it is obvious that the sound and graphics

are better than the Atari ST. Interestingly, they opted to go for a smaller character on screen, however the view point is also lower which makes the playable area limited to 3/4 of the screen only.

The floor scrolling is smoother but what about the playability?

Well, after a short while of playing, you realise that the Amiga version has the exact opposite problem than the Game Gear does. This time, Space Harrier moves too fast. The motion is accelerated, in other words, the longer you hold the direction, the faster he moves but the acceleration is too



fast. This along with the poor collision detection makes this difficult to enjoy in comparison. After a short while, I wanted to play the Atari ST version again. Amiga owners must have been very disappointed.

With that said, it is not game over for home versions yet. As new generations of



home and hand held consoles came out, Space Harrier was reborn again.

### Sega Megadrive

The Megadrive was launched with Space Harrier 2. This was an obvious ploy to hide the fact their new hardware was still not as powerful as their old arcade machines. Instead they released a new game. This meant that they could use new graphics and not worry about the age old comments of "It's good but....."



Upon playing the game, you could see that some thought had been put into the design. A level select to begin with so you can simply choose which level you want to begin with. However, Space Harrier 2 just lacks substance. It feels and looks somewhat flimsy in comparison with the original arcade. Instead of lasers, dirty great rings are fired at you. There is no continue option which means you do use the level select when you get to a level that you just can't complete.

32 bit

### Gameboy Advance

At last! From the moment that you select Space Harrier from the "Sega Arcade Gallery" you feel the full power of the arcade in your hand.

Music – Great

Graphics – Great

First tip, go to options and select "Control type B", for some reason Sega decided that we all want to have reversed controls. Yeah, I want to press down when I mean up!

The best thing though is it plays really well.

The playing area takes up the whole screen, all graphics are wonderfully smooth and looks almost arcade perfect with only tiny discrepancies

that are really not even worth worrying about

However, the sprites are again a bit smaller on screen. Interestingly, they have learned about controlling Space Harrier via a digital controller (the original don't forget was analogue). No accelerating movement, Space Harrier moves at a fast but constant rate. This makes him much more controllable.

We have our roof back in stage 4 and being given 5 credits means that even when you are trying to get used to the digital controls, you still get to have a decent attempt at ploughing through the levels.

### PS2

In 2004, Space Harrier returned in 3D on the PS2. This can





be found in the "Sega Classics Collection". Now, not all games work well in this updated collection but Space Harrier is by far the best.

Although for the PS2, the graphics look dated, the game plays very well. All the levels from the arcade seem to be there and reproduced using 3D models so they are instantly recognisable. Ranging from the trees and ships of stage 1 to the bouncing mushrooms of stage 3. Even the bonus stage is still here.

Space Harrier himself has undergone a makeover and now supports amongst other tweaks a spiky

pony tail. The dragons too have received an overhaul. Rather than the typical Chinese dragon appearance, they now look like more modernised dragons with flapping wings etc. The music too, while still recognisable has been upgraded with techno beats and some great synth sounds.

Gameplay has had a slight upgrade. There are 2 new weapons, a "Big bad da boom" bomb that takes out everything for quite some distance and lock on lasers that remind me of the homing missiles in Afterburner. A great game addition to for any Space Harrier fan but still doesn't beat the original.

All in all, I would give the Space Harrier series a:

**TRGN Rating 96%**

Flipping Awesome! Great gameplay, plenty of replay value. Some of the home versions could have done with a bit more time spent on them.

Drew Kenaz



## Interview with Deepak Pathak WeWana:Play App Creator

This month we have an exclusive with Deepak Pathak who is the brains behind the social gaming app [Wewana:Play](#). This free app allows you to easily schedule online gaming sessions with your existing friends, or connect with new gamers on the network. We caught up with Deepak to get the latest on this great tool.

**We understand this isn't your first venture in the gaming industry as you used to run your own gaming store, can you tell us more about that?**

Back in 2003 after a stint running my late father's business, I decided to pack it in and do something I would enjoy. Gaming was getting bigger back then and after some conversations

with Sony and Microsoft's official distributors, I ended up owning a video game store by the name of 'Get Gaming'. We had a really cool vibe in the store, with regular gaming tournaments and a really loyal community.

The vibe was so great that Sony and Nintendo supported us directly, using our customers for research and lock-in preview sessions, quite an achievement for an indie store.

This lasted until 2007 where it became cheaper for me to buy games from Asda than direct from publishers.





didn't take too long for a turn to end (cartridges loaded instantly as opposed to cassettes). I found out later that we actually started by playing a Pong type game a lot on a system called 'Binatone' which was billed as the first video game system available for homes.

regularly myself.

After I get home from a long hard day at work, I just want to kick back, switch off and play a few games online.

I'd turn on my console and find none of my friends were actually online so I'd spend up-to 15 minutes calling and texting them to get online... but because they were as busy as me, they could rarely drop what they were doing to join me.

This left me to play online with people who were either way better than me, people who went AWOL, or worse, with people who found it more fun to make up intimate stories of their imaginary relationships with my mom than actually play the game.

It was so frustrating that I'd throw away my headset, turn off my console and simply

The model had become corrupted and it was the beginning of the end for Gaming retail.

**What were your first experiences of playing video games, and which titles bring you fond memories of those times?**

My father liked to do a lot of things with us as a family and one of the things he liked was video games. Once a week we would all sit down as a family and take turns on a certain game. I distinctly remember playing the Commodore 64 and a game called 'Oils Well' as my father liked 'quick to play' cartridge games that

I also have fond memories of games like Outrun, Sonic, Contra spirit and Zelda, which me and my brother took turns to play.

**In a nutshell, what is the main purpose of the app and how does it work?**

This app solves a key problem for gamers and one which I faced

# WEWANA PLAY



stop playing.

I would rather play online with my friends, as it's both fun and social, but it's such a hassle to organise that, so I simply give up.

That was until now!

The app works across all gaming networks and is currently on Android and IOS with Blackberry and Windows apps coming soon.

You simply find your friends on the app (or invite them!) and schedule games with them within a few clicks! We also have a really cool feature where if you use your Facebook ID, Xbox ID or Steam username, we automatically connect you with friends that are already on the app!

We want to make it super easy to connect with your friends and help you to discover friends who play the same games as you.

### **What was the inspiration behind wanting to create an app of this type?**

I was doing some work with Gamestation before their ill-fated end, where I was organising tournaments in their flagship Birmingham store.

Many people would meet for the first time, become friends and then leave. Later they would ask me to connect them to others at the event, but that was impossible, as I didn't keep a list with all their gaming details.

It then struck me that these guys were different from more intimate Facebook friends and that people wanted to keep them separate. Just like you have friends on online gaming networks who are not connected to you via Facebook.

So I got thinking about an app that would solve the problem of connecting with other gamers (without giving them intimate access to your life) and allow them to schedule game times with each other.

Of course, there are other inspirations for this app too, but they will become obvious with some awesome features we will release later this year!

# WEWANA:PLAY

## Pick your players, it's GAME TIME!

**Carrying out certain activities within the app will earn you points and medals, what benefits can the users gain from these achievements?**

The achievements system is something we will be really developing in the next few months. It adds a little fun to the app but it also serves a key purpose. After an event you can rate players based on their 'fun' factor, their ability and reliability. This will be key in some upcoming features.

The achievements themselves will also help give users kudos as we begin to release location-based leaderboards.

We want to reward our best users and give them kudos, maybe in the form of customised backgrounds, special status or even really cool rewards. Achievements are a way for us to keep track of our most loyal users, so make sure

you are earning those medals!

**Will the app run alongside the new generation consoles?**

Absolutely. The app has been built so it can run with anything that we choose, however we will be announcing some very cool features in the coming weeks that will really benefit new gen console users.

**Gaming used to be considered an antisocial activity, how has the online aspect changed the way we play games?**

I think Nintendo played the biggest role in changing the way we perceive gaming as being social. The Pink DS single handedly brought a generation of girls into gaming (something 'inspired' by the Pink Motorola Razr by the way). Those same girls were then influenced further by the launch of the Wii, which brought gaming out of

the bedroom and into our living rooms.

For me, online gaming has given me a great chance to catch up with friends from different countries who I would otherwise rarely meet. It helps keep certain social circles active whilst giving my hand-eye coordination a serious workout.

I recently encountered an elderly guy playing online. He was not so great at the game, but he talked a good strategy, so I asked him how old he was and why he was playing. Turns out he was 81 years old.

It conspired that his granddaughter spends a few days with him every time she has a break from university. Due to the age gap they had little to talk about so instead of watching her play Call of Duty, he got involved. This led to them having a weekly game where they would catch up and talk whilst they enjoyed themselves from different ends of the country.





The girl's father then wanted to get involved so now every week, you have the girl, her father and her grandfather playing online together and talking to each other. All helping bring the family closer together and all naturally organised using our app Wewana:Play !

Mobile gaming is helping make everyone a gamer and I believe that will only help drive greater numbers and greater diversity within online gaming.

**It would be easy to assume that only teenagers would use an app of this nature, but apparently that has**

**been far from the case?**

We have users of all ages of course, but the age group that tops our graph is actually 22 year olds. 29 and 32 year olds are also well represented by our user base with another surprising peak for 44 year olds.

It's perhaps too early to make firm conclusions as to why this may be, but it does suggest the existence of 'gaming generations' or stages in life where gaming is prominent.

**Most apps of this quality require some kind of payment but you decided to make this available for free. What was the main reason for that?**

We want every gamer in the world to be on this app, from the girl down the road who plays once a month to the people who never leave their bedroom. A paid app would gain traction with hard-core gamers but leave out the mass of casual players who have been largely ignored. We want to capture that missed demographic.

There will be an upgrade option in future for people who want the most unique features such as custom backgrounds, but the core of this app will always remain free.

**The app is ever evolving, what new features might we expect to see in the future?**

In the short term you will be seeing a very cool 'gaming groups' feature added during July. This will allow you to create 'clans' or 'groups of friends' and invite them all to an event in one single click. This feature is already exciting many major publishers.

In time this will be opened out so that you can schedule game times between different 'clans' or 'groups of friends'.

You will also see our Blackberry and Windows apps being rolled out over summer alongside the publication of our API to allow intelligent people out there to create amazing apps, using our service as a backbone. Interestingly the API is actually our most requested feature.



In the longer term, I am sworn to secrecy on some many things but what I can tell you is that we have many direct connections to major gaming publishers who will be partnering with us to bring users unique game related features. It's really exciting stuff!

We are also very interested to hear from our users, as we want to build features that are useful to them. So please feel free to give us all your suggestions via the 'Feedback' button within the app. I personally read every piece of feedback we receive.

**You like to frequent gaming events and have recently created a service which keeps people informed of planned**

**events. Can you tell us more about that?**

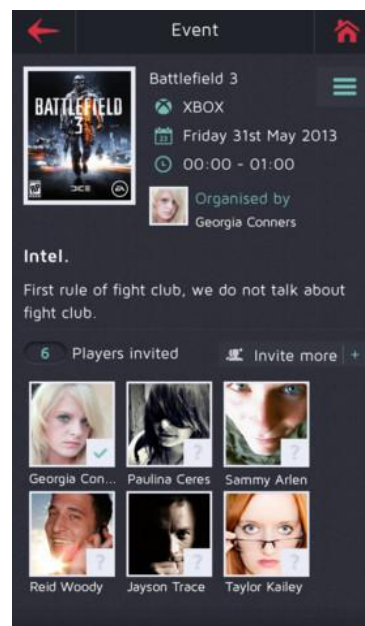
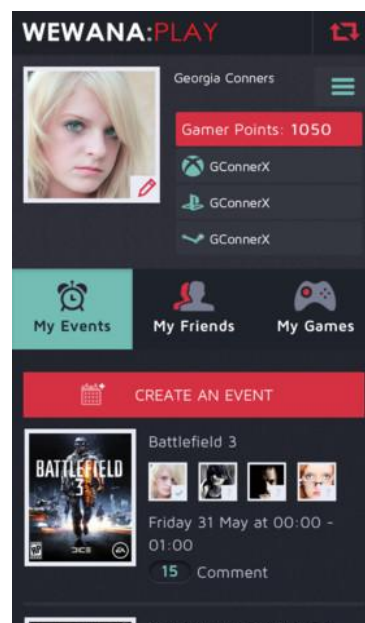
Ah, this is one of my personal projects that was born out of another frustration within gaming. As a newcomer to the Video Gaming Events world I found it very difficult to know what was going on. There is no one centralised site that has all the information in a clear, easy to use manner.

Since I needed to be at many such events, I found it very time consuming and frustrating so I just decided to solve the problem once and for all.

I created the site:

<http://videogameevents.info>

It's a work in progress but is already useful. It's being supported by a number of big players within the gaming world, so will be filling out with events over the next few weeks and I hope the community will help keep it up to date too.



**You can grab the app from the links below. Go for it, it's free and fun to use.**

[www.wewanaplay.com/app](http://www.wewanaplay.com/app)

**App Store:** <http://bit.ly/wewanaiOS>

**Google Play:** <http://bit.ly/wewanaAndroid>

# CONTACT SAM CRUISE



CONTACT  
SAM CRUISE

+++++

Hi score

Score

Bucks

11  
39



Back in the mid-eighties *Microsphere*, consisting of husband and wife team David and Helen Reidy and graphic artist Keith Warrington made some celebrated and iconic games for the ZX Spectrum. Games such as *Wheelie*, *Skool Daze* and *Back to Skool* have become cult classics within the retro community. Strangely however, the final game they ever released was one of the most well received titles of the

## Essentials

**Contact Sam Cruise**

**Microsphere**

**ZX Spectrum Version Reviewed**

**Reviewed by David Hayward**

**Proof Read by Graham Roberts**

year, yet also, the least commercially successful: *Contact Sam Cruise*.

Set in a film noir, Samuel Dashiell Hammett derived world of gangsters, dames, molls and fedora wearing detectives, this 1930's detective side-scrolling adventure

grabbed gamers by the tails of their metaphorical trench coats and offered a perspective that had never been realised before on this humble machine.

The game starts with an all too familiar hard-boiled detective intro: "It was just another day at the





Sam Cruise Detective Agency. I was teaching the roaches to...", then follows the opening scene, and the first look at the quasi 3D world that Sam inhabits. As the game progresses, the player will find themselves leaping away from snipers hidden in dustbins; pulling fuses out of fuse boxes to cut the lights; partaking in classic rooftop chase scenes and being arrested by the police. There's intrigue; shoot-outs; the mob; the Fat Manat number 15 and disguises.

The game is drawn in a beautifully comic book style using Keith Warrington's much improved *Skool Daze* engine, and features some very ingenious methods of bringing three dimensions to a

two dimensional side-scroller. The buildings, for example, can be entered, and you'll see Sam in the background, as he climbs the stairs through the windows as opposed to a cut-out section of the front of the building; likewise, if you exit on the roof, you can then climb back down the fire escape in the foreground. In addition, each of the rooms of the accessible buildings can be entered and objects within the rooms, corridors and so on can be manipulated. Light switches can be turned on or off, plunging the room, or the floor into complete darkness, phones can be answered or picked up to call a number and the other inhabitants of the cityscape can be

interacted with, although most of the time they just receive a punch in the chops.

Intriguingly, the finer points to playing *Contact Sam Cruise* are often missed when you recall playing it nearly twenty seven years later. However, the gift of hindsight enables the contemporary player to appreciate just how well the limited hardware was manipulated to produce so polished a game. Thus a well deserved 'nod' goes towards the coding genius of Mr Reidy. Further points of note are the red crosses along the bottom of the screen which represent first aid kits. These are subtracted after Sam is hit by a bullet from the mob. When they're gone its curtains for old Sam. Additionally, in-game cash, or "bucks" are rewarded to players who complete consecutive elements in the story arc and oddly enough, accumulated by somersaulting onto a windswept dollar bill as it passes you by on the street. However, the amount of money the player holds on their in-game person decreases over time, or when Sam is mugged during bouts

of unconsciousness. When it hits zero, its game over.

Another point of note are the in-game mechanics, and the fact that the antagonists can be temporarily fooled by a ludicrously comically disguised Sam. Telephones, as I've previously mentioned, can be picked up and dialled with amusing consequences; you can drop off a building and on to the head of a passing gangster, or you could simply punch the living daylights out of a passing pedestrian, all years before GTA existed! All this functionality is crammed within the limited memory capacities and functions of a Spectrum. It can only be described as pure genius when you think long and hard about it.



The game oozes charm, style, humour and atmosphere. It's absorbing and a pleasure to look at, but, it's also brutally difficult to complete and can leave you with your head buried deep in your hands after several hours of play. Then again, that's half the fun of it. You could be doing great one moment, wearing a disguise and slipping past the

cops, only to suddenly find yourself being physically picked up by a mobster, taken to the top of a tall building, and unceremoniously chucked off. It's a sheer delight in a non-sadistic fashion.

*Contact Sam Cruise* is a wonderful game from a wonderful era of gaming. Original, fun, demanding, clever, witty and frustrating - what more could you possibly ask for?

**Rating: 95%**





# INTERVIEW WITH JASON 'KENZ' MACKENZIE



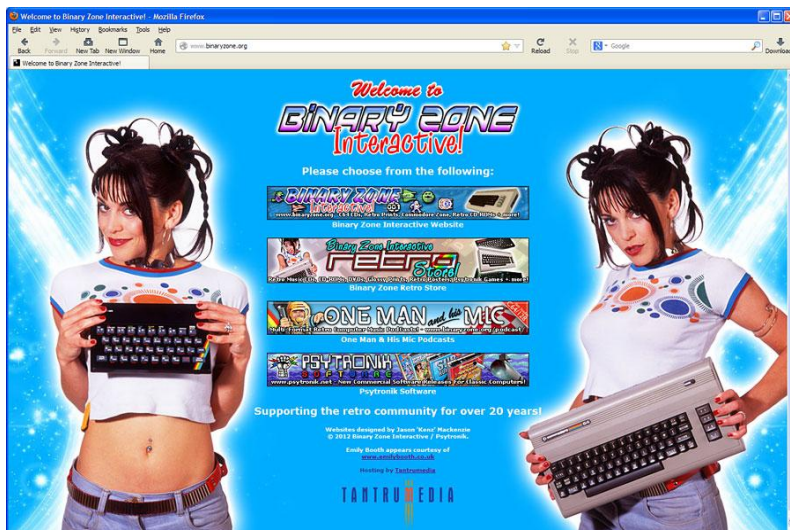
Jason MacKenzie , or Kenz as he often signs himself as, has been contributing to the retro gaming community for many years. Chances are you already been to one of his sites, bought one of his products or at least, bumped into him via the social sites. We caught up with him to find out more about his gaming passion.

**It is clear you put a lot of time and effort into the retro gaming scene, what keeps it fun and interesting for you?**

I'm just constantly being amazed at what people are coming up with for retro systems – even now. I'm a keen follower of the C64 demo scene and it's incredible that

people are still pushing the machine above and beyond its limits with new effects and new graphic modes. Also, as a software publisher it's great to see new games being written for old systems – some of which that are easily as good as (if not better!) than a lot of releases from 'back in the day'. I'm also interested in new hardware innovations for retro computers – I.E. devices that let you load you software from an SD card or that enhance a retro system in some other way – things like that are always fun to play with.





## Why do you think there has been a big interest in retro games over the past few years?

I guess a lot of people like playing the old games for nostalgic reasons, and it's nice to see so many new games appearing on Android / iOS that are inspired by - or are direct remakes - of classic titles. New hardware has made it a lot easier to play retro games (I.E through the Wii virtual console) which is a great way for people to get a retro fix without having to own the original hardware. As well as the nostalgia side of things, retro games are just so much damn fun! As they didn't have state-of-the-art visuals back then a lot more emphasis was placed on gameplay, something that seems

to have been forgotten in a lot of modern titles.

## What first got you into playing games, and what system did you first get into?

I've always been fascinated by computers and arcade games but it was seeing my cousin build a Sinclair ZX81 from kit form and then run a hangman type game on it that got me into computers in the first place. The ZX81 was my first ever machine, followed by a ZX Spectrum, Amstrad CPC, Commodore 64, Commodore Amiga and then various consoles and PC's etc.

## Which old games do you keep going back to time and time again?

I kind of go through phases with different machines. The

Commodore 64 is my main 8-bit computer love and I enjoy firing it up for a game of Uridium, Wizball or IK+ etc. But then I'll get the urge to play a load of Amstrad CPC games, or Spectrum games, or Amiga games! It all depends on what mood I'm in - but more often than not it's the C64 I return to, mainly due to the SID sound chip which I adore.

## What do you think about modern games looking more like films than video games?

I don't really have a problem with modern games looking like films, as long as they are PLAYABLE. The recent Tomb Raider game looked absolutely beautiful and played excellently - they got the combat spot-on and the film-like story was really immersive, I was very impressed with that one. Aliens: Colonial Marines on the other hand is a good example of how NOT to do film-like games. Even though it's based on one of my favourite films and had a lot of neat stuff in it, it was an overall disappointing experience with terrible Alien AI, annoying characters



and a very poor finale. I'm not one of these people who ONLY likes retro games, I'm happy to embrace new technology and am very much looking forward to the PS4 when it's released (but not the XBone – Microsoft have seriously dropped the ball on that one!)

**Which famous people have you met from the scene, and anybody you would like to meet?**

Due to my involvement in a lot of retro events over the years I've been lucky enough to meet a lot

of famous people from the scene. I'm a huge fan of C64 music and am very pleased to have met people like Rob Hubbard, Martin Galway, Ben Daglish, David Whittaker, Fred Gray and Jeroen Tel along with famous programmers like Jeff Minter, Archer Maclean, Sandy White and even the elusive Matthew Smith and dearly departed Jonathan 'Joffa' Smith. I actually have a C64 that I have taken to a lot of these events and it's now plastered with signatures from my heroes. Who would I like to meet? Jeri Ellsworth. ☺

**Do you like to collect old games and systems or just use emulators instead?**

Where possible I like to play old games on the original hardware. Emulation, although very good these days, just isn't the same. You can't beat a good blast on Uridium with it's gorgeous 50fps silky smooth scrolling played on a real C64 hooked up to an old CRT portable TV, just like the good old days. I do tend to use emulators more for software development and graphics for new



Psytronik releases – it's a lot easy to manipulate pixels in Photoshop and then port the completed image back onto the C64 or Speccy.

### **Please tell us about your One Man and His Mic project**

It's a series of 20 audio podcasts devoted to either music from a certain videogaming system, series of games or by a certain videogame musician. There are shows devoted to music by Martin Galway and Tim Follin, shows devoted to music from the SNES, 48K Speccy, Megadrive, Amiga and PSone etc – along with a couple of tribute shows to respected people from the scene who sadly

passed away. All the shows are available for download from [www.binaryzone.org/podcast/](http://www.binaryzone.org/podcast/)

### **How did you get the idea to do your own podcast?**

It started with me co-hosting a live radio show on [www.slayradio.org](http://www.slayradio.org) called 'The Z-Show' with my good friend Alistair 'Boz' Bowness. This lasted for over a year but then Boz moved to Sweden. I enjoyed doing the shows but had neither the time nor equipment to do any more live shows myself so I decided to release my own downloadable shows which I could record and edit as and when I had the chance. After listening to

various other retro podcasts I came up with my own formula for doing podcasts. Some of the other shows I'd heard had far too much talking between tunes so I set myself a 30 second (ish) limit of talking between tracks. I also tried to make them funny and informative where possible – without mucking around too much as that can become annoying. I also came up with the idea of giving each show a theme (either devoted to a certain musician or series of games) so you get something different with each show. It takes ages to write, record and edit each show (I'm a bit of a perfectionist when it comes to audio editing) but the nice feedback I have







received about the shows makes it all worthwhile.

**Please tell us what things people can expect to see at your site?**

[www.binaryzone.org](http://www.binaryzone.org) is basically a gateway to my main four sites. The Binary Zone site contains software from my old C64 Public Domain software library that I have been running since 1989 along with various other bits & bobs, then there's the lovely Binary Zone Interactive Retro Store – from here you can purchase lots of retro goodies includes music CDs, retro scene DVDs and all the Psytronik Software releases. [www.psytronik.net](http://www.psytronik.net) is the software label that I use to release new

titles for retro computer systems. These are brand new titles that have professionally packaged so that they look exactly like classic game releases from when 8-bit computers ruled the Earth. You can also find the One Man & His Mic podcasts on the site – 20 complete shows are available to download.

**What things can we expect to see from you in the near future?**

There's plenty of exciting things in development here in the Zone at the moment. This year I will be celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the launch of Psytronik Software so I'm working on a special '20 Years'

audio CD that will contain music from as many of the Psytronik releases as I can squeeze onto a shiny compact disc. I've also got FOUR new Psytronik titles almost ready for release – these are Flubble & Squij (C64), Sheepoid DX + Woolly Jumper (C64), Ultimate Cops (C64) and Theater of War (VIC-20). Away from Psytronik, I've been developing a new show to replace my 'One Man & His Mic' Podcast. This will be a series of YouTube shows called 'One Man & His Cam' (see what I did there?) featuring retro reviews, hardware features and general retro shenanigans. I have no idea when this will be happening as Psytronik Software is taking up all my spare time at the moment!



This month we are introducing a new feature where we salute somebody for making a notable contribution to the retro gaming community. This award is a token of our thanks to those who have spent

many hours making other people happy and providing value and entertainment.

This month we would like to award Steve Benway from YouTube. He is a prolific poster and always has something interesting to say. His views can sometimes divide people's opinions, but there is nothing wrong with that as it can often lead to an interesting debate.

Not only has he given many people pleasure with his 'off the cuff' gameplay videos, he has collected and preserved many classic computers and consoles, most of which he has shown to his audience.

So, without further ado, Steve we present you with this month's TRGN Award for your contribution to the retro gaming community.

You can see his videos at: <http://www.youtube.com/user/SteveBenway>



## YouTube Special Mentions

**Here are some channels I have subscribed to which I think are worth a mention. Check them out and subscribe if anything catches your eye.**

1 - <http://www.youtube.com/user/Polaventris> Great channel which features many 8 bit games, along with homebrew titles as well.

2 - <http://www.youtube.com/user/DINKYDANA> A wicked channel which concentrates on pickups, often from flea markets as well as gameplay reviews.

3 - <http://www.youtube.com/user/DerSchmu> An awesome one stop shop for long play C64 videos. Also check out his great website at: <http://archive.org/details/C64Gamevideoarchive>

4 - <http://www.youtube.com/user/marlinlee> A really nice channel for early Atari games, many for the 2600. Also includes some fan made games from the homebrew scene.

Phil – Ed.

# EMULATOR REVIEWS

## C64 FOREVER & AMIGA FOREVER



While on one hand you can't beat playing a classic game on the system it was originally written for, there are times when it is more practical and convenient to use an emulator. Not only will the games be ten times quicker to load, but your room will be a lot tidier too!

The problem however with emulators in the past, is some of them required a certain level of technical knowledge to get the games running. Also the sound and graphics could look somewhat different to the original and not all of them could cope with the varying

speeds of computer clock speeds.

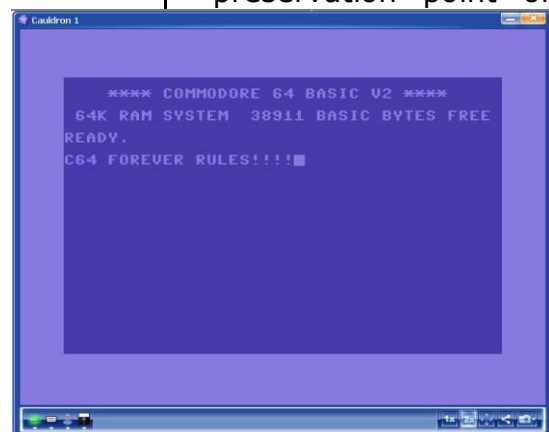
Thankfully things have moved on and people can now play classic games on their PCs that run virtually the same as if on the original hardware. Two such examples are C64 Forever and Amiga Forever; the titles of which I'm sure portray exactly what they do.

Both applications essentially behave the same way as far as functionality is concerned, so for the

purpose of this review, I will concentrate on the C64 version. Obviously you would use the Amiga version to run Amiga games.

The first thing that strikes you about the software when it first loads, is how simple but modern the interface looks. You feel yourself breathe a sigh of relief when you see it is all menu and icon driven, no technical knowledge required here. Also the emulator comes pre-loaded with a selection of games so you can jump straight in and start playing.

What makes the interface even more user friendly is the fact that when you click onto a title (yes, it is compatible with a mouse), you get a screenshot of the game you wish to load, along with information about the game itself. This is wonderful from a preservation point of







view and the application will allow you to put in your own screenshots and information about games you download to the emulator.

Once the game loads, you could be excused for worrying about joystick and key controls, as most emulators in the past have struggled with this. They have either been keys only, which is a problem as some C64 games were joystick only, or they simply wouldn't work at all. However, at the bottom of the screen, there is a panel where you can select whether you want to use keys, joystick along with which port you want to use, or which keys combinations.

Personally, I bought a 'joystick' which looks

and feels like a Playstation controller, but any type of PC joystick would work fine. Amazingly the keys will work even if the original title was joystick only! You are presented with a choice of keys to use, such as arrow keys for example.

Regarding the performance, I was amazed how smoothly it ran the games, and my home desktop is at least 6 years old running XP. The graphics were spot on and the sound was exactly as it should be, it really felt like it was running on the original Commodore. The major difference being my PC won't crash if somebody turns the light or kettle on!

Another nice feature is you can run the

session in a window, or you can set it to full screen. When in full screen mode, it's almost as if you have jumped 20 or 30 years in the past, as it looks just like it did back then. In fact it's probably better as most of us were using flea bitten CRT TV, all of 14 inches if you were lucky!

By the way, don't be concerned that some of the games have a 'cracked game' intro sequence, in many cases this was something that needed to be done in order to load the game onto the system. There is nothing illegal about this and the authors of the emulator have checked this out beforehand.



Not only does the emulator allow you to run games, but you can run other Commodore systems too, such as the Commodore Pet, Vic 20 and Commodore 16. There is also a collections of demos, which is great for

anybody into the demo scene, there is a video section containing documentaries and a gallery section too. Excellent value for money.

consider the years of work the guys have put into this, I think the price is very reasonable. I'm sure many of you would like the opportunity to support them.

to give you hours of entertainment.

The Amiga version presents you with 3 different price points depending on how many games you want included, along with supporting videos and historical information.

These are both truly awesome pieces of software, so for anybody wanting a quick and effective way of playing classic Commodore games, then C64 Forever and Amiga Forever are the best on the market. It also makes life much easier for those wanting to record gameplay videos, possibly for the use of uploading to YouTube. I personally have used it to for doing video reviews and they worked out great.

TRGN Rating: 97%

The Emulators can be purchased at:

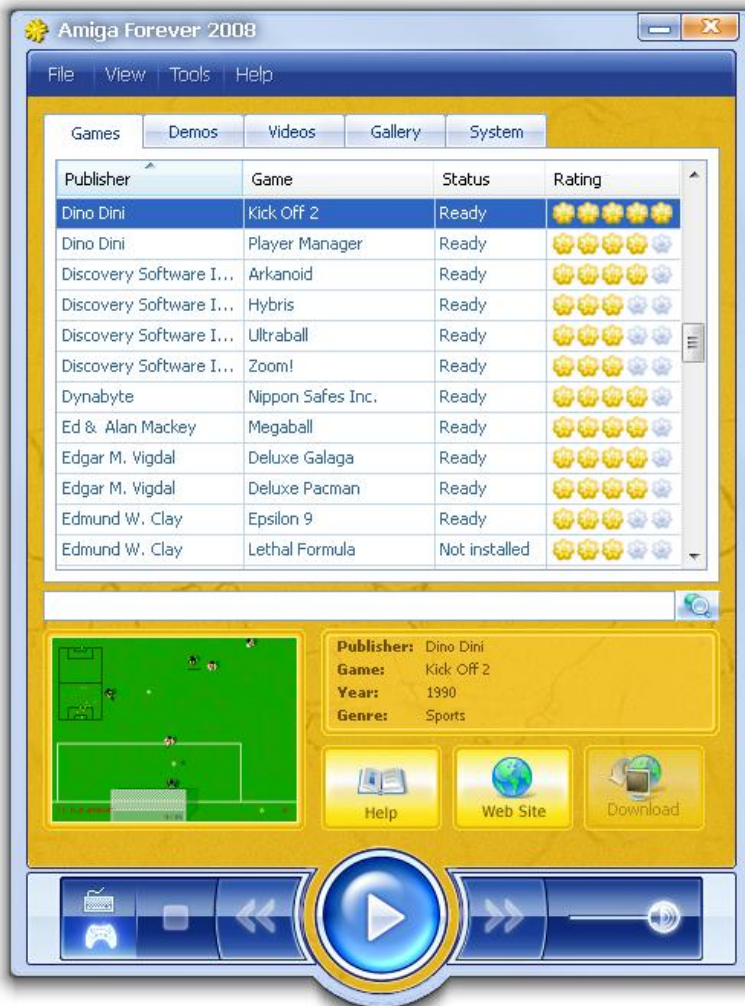
[www.c64forever.com](http://www.c64forever.com)

[www.amigaforever.com](http://www.amigaforever.com)

Feature by: Phil Wheatley

Talking of price, it is an absolute steal! In fact, there is a free version you can download which does have limited features, but it can be upgraded at any time. You can get the full downloadable version for \$14.95, or you can get a boxed version for \$19.95. When you

The Amiga version is also excellent, and I used it to have a few goes on Pac-Mania and Kick Off 2. Amiga games are harder to emulate and so the developers have been very upfront in saying that not 100% of the games will run, but the majority of them will, certainly enough



# MAIL BAG



I have been a dedicated and faithful reader of this awesome retro gaming newsletter from the start.

Amazing reviews from gamers from all over, and very informative and constantly learning new things about retro games all the time, and the newsletters are sitting right on my coffee table alongside with Guinness Book Of World Records: The Gamers Edition, my two favorite readers I constantly pick up and read over and over again. I specially want to thank Michael Smith for introducing this fantastic newsletter to me, a strong influence in the gaming community on you tube and myself.

Each game review is very insightful and full of detailed information as well

as a personal perspective point of view, which I feel most reviews lack these days.

Retro Games Magazine continues to keep me interested and always looking forward to the next issue.

A great read and highly recommend it to all the gamers on you tube and through out every gaming community online, whether retro or modern, its great gaming history, and it reaches all ages of video gamers young and old.

Chuck of Hwc1218  
Of Charlotte, NC  
<http://www.youtube.com/user/hwc1218>

Promoter of Gamers Alley Game Store.  
<https://www.facebook.com/GamersAlleyNC?fref=ts>

**Carlos Orraca (by email)**

Thanks very much Carlos for your kind words. We hope you enjoy The Retro

Games News for some time to come.

**PW - Editor**

How do you feel about including reviews of fan-translated games and hacks like Castlevania II: Redacted?

Also, I would love to see an article on retro carts if you or someone you know has had any experience with them if there are no legal issues with that. I wouldn't mind writing it but I have not had any experience myself with them, although I am very interested in them.

**Duston Justice (by email)**

*This is a great idea and something I would like to include in the near future. In the mean time, check out this video which has some repro carts:*  
<http://youtu.be/ETY79zO1wmY>

**PW - Editor**

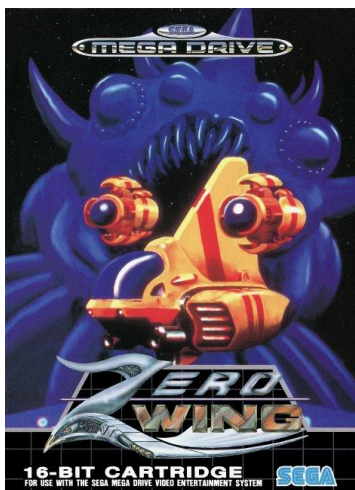


# ZERO WING

CATS : ALL YOUR BASE ARE BELONG  
TO US.

**A**ll Your Base Are  
Belong To Us!

Ever seen this internet Meme? Well this is where it originates from. *Zero Wing* was developed by *Toaplan* and published by *Taito*. Originally an Arcade



| Essentials                             |
|--|
| <b>Zero Wing</b>                       |
| <b>Taito</b>                           |
| <b>Sega Megadrive Version Reviewed</b> |
| <b>Reviewed by Duston Justice</b>      |
| <b>Proof Read by Graham Roberts</b>    |

shooter, it appeared on the Mega Drive in 1991. During the conversion some of the original in-game Japanese text got slightly 'lost in translation' in the game's intro. This led to several funny lines, including the now infamous example above; but let's not overlook the fact that *Zero Wing* is actually one of the best Megadrive shooters around. Read on and you'll find out why!

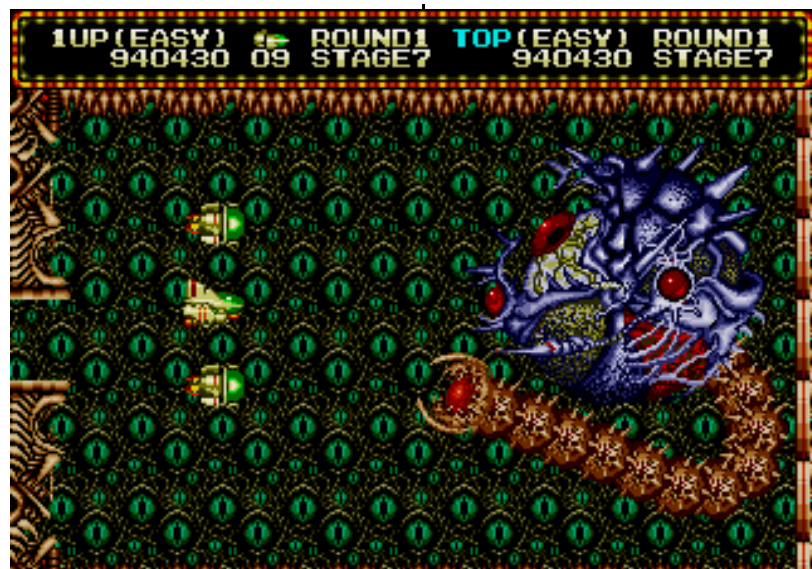
So gameplay... At first glance, the action is not super intense but as the player progresses the difficulty ramps up nicely. There are deceptively 'boring' sections, but in moments the player is bombarded with enemies or has to negotiate tricky obstacles. *Zero Wing* varies the action, keeping any budding pilot on their toes. A refreshing approach when standard shooters just

throw everything at the same rate from start to finish. Plus, it's nice to have a chance of beating a game without needing a 'Game Genie' with lives set to 99!

In-game power-ups are a speed increase, three different types of weapon and a shield grenade. However, that's not all. The player also gets a tractor beam which grabs enemies for use as either a shield or a projectile. The shield grenade is grabbed in the same way, but takes more hits and can be used as a smart bomb. But wait... there's more!

When I first owned this game the instructions infuriated me by saying I could get a 'secret weapon' yet omitted to tell me how.. I managed it by fluke just once and I was overjoyed! Unfortunately I lost my life in about three seconds and the power up was gone. Once again my Joypad found itself flying across the room and into a wall as a consequence of a sudden attack of teenage rage!

Thankfully, hard-core retro gamers have shared their research on forums and YouTube, so you too can gain the coveted secret weapon should you so wish. This (purple) power up is randomly spawned and not



guaranteed. But fear not, checkout the 'tips and tricks' below for a surefire method of procuring this!

Graphically there are better looking Megadrive shooters out there but *Zero Wing* is still very polished and pleasing to look at; backgrounds are well laid out and non-repetitive. Movement is smooth and screen resolution clear. Enemies and bosses are fun and original, indicating the fact that a real collaborative effort had been made to produce a game of this

caliber.

There are however, a few cons: Backgrounds are sadly not parallax-scrolling, and there's a little slowdown when the screen gets too busy (but this doesn't happen very often). If you can get hold of the MAME/arcade version, you'll see better visuals with more detail, but strangely with very inferior sound.

Speaking of sound, its arguably very rare to find great audio in retrogames.



That said, *Zero Wing*'s tunes (by Tatsuya Uemura, who composed music for "Hellfire") are well written and memorable. You'll be humming along in no time! Sadly it does fall slightly short on some FX (the weapons fire sound effect does get a tad annoying after a while), but generally it's very inventive and unique to the game.

Overall I can't give *Zero Wing* full marks, but I can guarantee that its minor flaws won't stop you loving it. The sense of progress, distance (in time) between life loss, responsive controls and good feedback from the uniquely styled visuals

and audio are all very satisfying. A hidden gem, underrated and overlooked, yet very well put together, instantly playable and frankly just plain fun!

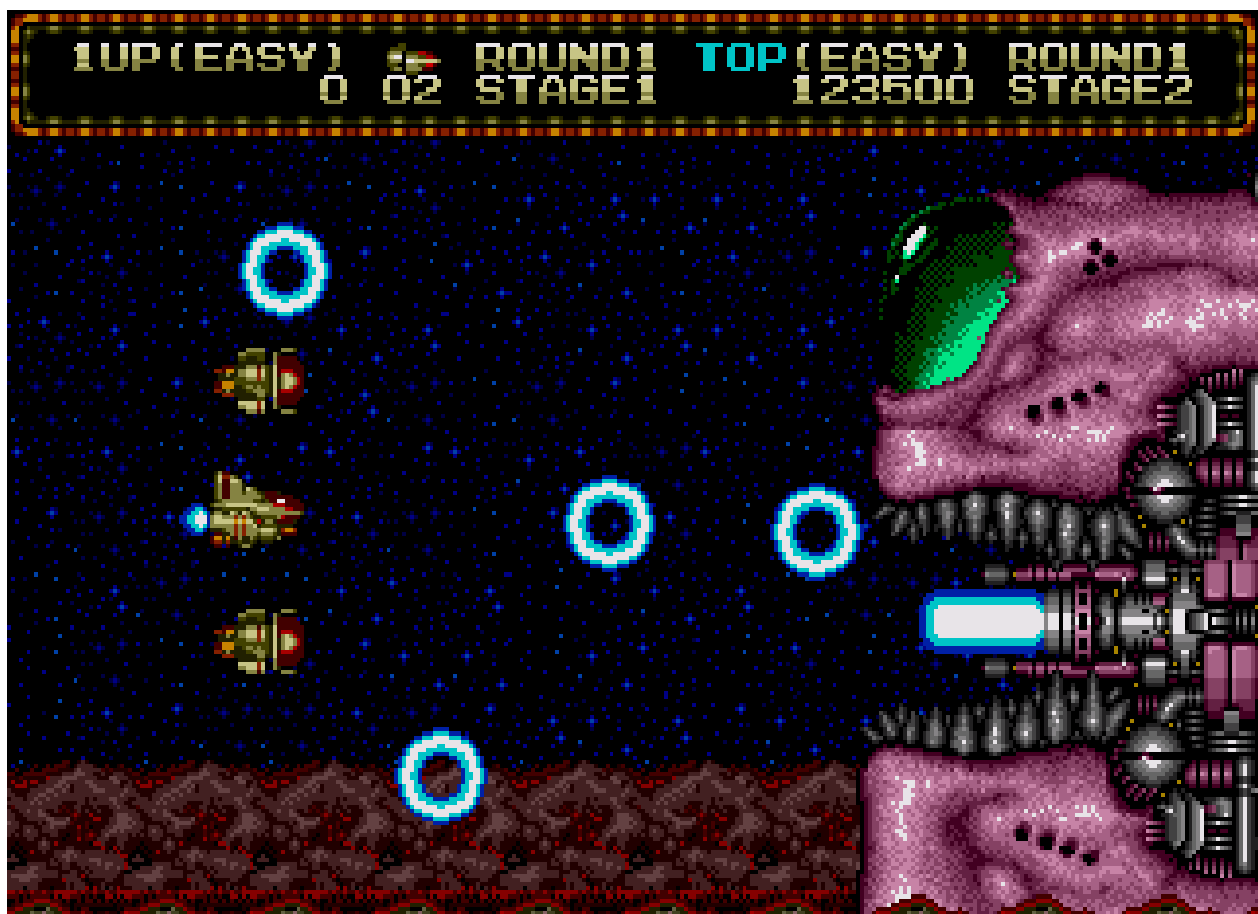
*Zero Wing* may have got its place in internet culture from a mistake in translating Japanese. However, it deserves recognition as a game in its own right and a damn good one at that. *Zero Wing* doesn't need the Meme. If you haven't played it, shame on you, repent your sins and play it now!

**Rating 80%**

Tips and Tricks:

For a 'cheat' menu: Pause, then press C, Up, B, Down, A, Left, Right, B, C, C, Right, Left, Right, A, Down, Start. There are various options, including level select. If you set 'Active' to number 1 and 'Power' to number 3 then you will start with level 3 weapons, and your next power up will be the level 4 'secret' power-up! Woool!

If you have a 'turbo fire' option on your joypad, you can trick this game into pretty much doubling your fire-rate (most noticeable when you move close to your target) great for inflicting damage!







**Phil Wheatley**  
**Editor**

IT Trainer by day, and editor through the long hours of the night, has long had the dream of putting a computer magazine together. Currently playing Lords of Midnight, Uridium and Skooldaze.



**David Hayward**  
**Writer**

David Hayward is a freelance technology writer for web and print. A regular contributor to Micro Mart, Linux Format, CNET, TechRadar and formally, PC Utilities. He's also never completed Fairlight, although he

keeps trying.



**Duston Justice**  
**Writer**

He's been playing video games since the age of 4 when he first played Donkey Kong on the Coleco Vision. He got his NES the following year, and the rest is not quite history yet, but managing to rack up many hours of gaming..



**Drew Kenaz**  
**Writer**

Uni Lecturer in a range of subjects including Games Hardware programming. Creator of the Thor Games console used for teaching. CEO of Hexfreq HexSweet Design currently working on a few retro IOS

games. Fave classics: Arcade, Chase HQ and Space Harrier. At home Chucky Egg and Streets of Rage 2



**Graham Roberts**  
**Sub Editor & Proofing**

Graham is an English teacher by trade. His passions include retro gaming; gaming in general; tinkering with consumer electronics and making PCs. He doesn't really have a favourite game of all time as it often changes. However, at the moment he is particularly enjoying revisiting the Lucasfilm series of games on the Snes (Super Star Wars etc) which he is playing through an emulator.



**Robert Joy**  
**Writer**

Current employment: Global distribution company, Staffordshire. U.K.  
Hometown:- Tamworth, Staffordshire. U.K.  
Favourite classic: oooh, surely all.. However has to be Phoenix

by Taito. Reason being it has all the essence of a classic. Quote: "Follow your passion and it will find you."



**Alex Reeves**  
**Writer / Blogger**

His name is Alex but his friends call him Roly and has his own blog [retrogamesnow.co.uk](http://retrogamesnow.co.uk). Along with his reviews of classic arcade, home computer and console games, he is building a database of retro game stores in

the UK.

HIGH SCORE  
SCORE 2592020

TIME  
60

DISTANCE 7  
SPEED 24 km/h



#### Essentials

Chase HQ

Taito

Arcade Version Reviewed

Reviewed by Alex Reeves: [www.retrogamesnow.co.uk](http://www.retrogamesnow.co.uk)

Proof Read by Alex Reeves

Chase HQ was an arcade racer that was very much of its era, so 80's in its style that it could have been directed by Jerry Bruckheimer, starred Eddie Murphy, and had a soundtrack by Harold Faltermeyer. Playing like cross between Sega's classic OutRun

and the film Beverly Hills Cop, your role is to chase the bad guys through busy streets and bring them to justice by ramming them off the road. So for a brief moment, you felt like you were the star in a buddy cop movie – that was the magic of Taito's 1989 classic Chase HQ.

The cabinet itself was an elaborate affair, the stand-up version having both foot pedals and a wheel, as well as the hi/lo gear selector with turbo boost button. Sirens would blare from the machine in attract mode and during the game, accompanied by flashing lights above the screen.

Insert a coin and you would be given your instructions by police dispatcher Nancy, including the description of the felon you are to apprehend and the vehicle he is driving.

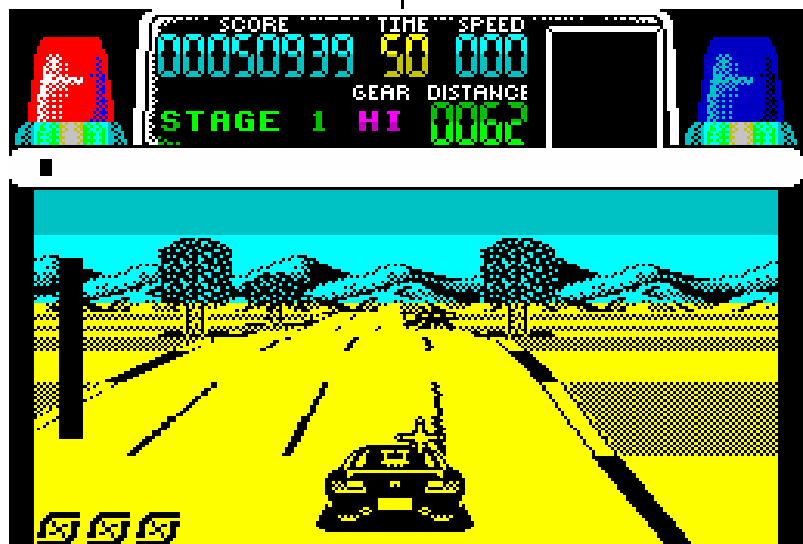
Jump in your Black Porsche 928, floor the pedal in low gear, and you are off down the road in pursuit of your target, accompanied by blaring 80's synth music. A graphic shows your proximity to the car in front as you dodge traffic to the accompaniment of shouts from your partner.

Passing traffic on tarmac covered sections, via branching paths that take you through part finished roads littered with barricades and cones, you soon catch up with the criminal. Now you need to ram his vehicle to damage it, the level of damage indicated on a progress bar at the top of the screen. Keep your eye on other traffic and obstacles as the guy in front can get away from you if you are not careful, and each collision causes a slight skid, using up precious seconds on the countdown timer. This is where the turbo boost comes in, allowing you to quickly recover the distance between you and the target vehicle before he gets away. Deliver the requisite amount of damage before the timer runs out, and the criminal is forced



to the side of the road and taken away in handcuffs, his expensive sports car

in flames. Nancy in dispatch will then present you with a new criminal to





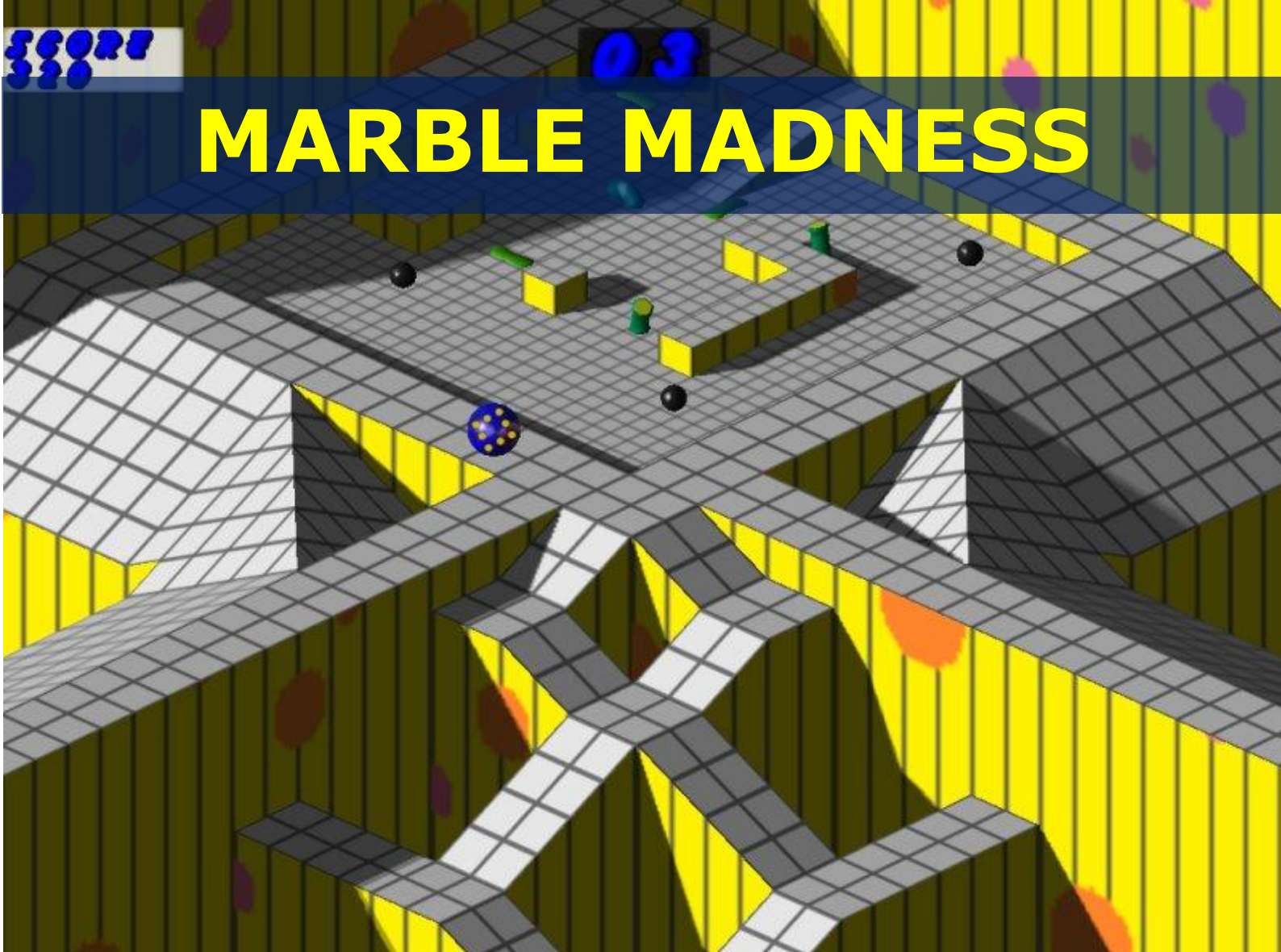


apprehend in a faster, more robust vehicle. Through the game, if you have either the skill or the cash to keep playing, you will encounter sports cars ranging from a Lamborghini Countach to a Lotus Esprit Turbo – clearly the criminal element have great taste in getaway vehicles, and a few quid to spare. Each enemy was more difficult than the last to take down, the Chase HQ cabinet was designed to keep you pumping the machine full of coins in order to progress. That said, a skilled player could complete the entire game in around 10 minutes, with each of the 5 cars having to be defeated in under 60 seconds. The Chase HQ arcade game was a blast, and the inevitable home conversions were

always going to be challenged, given the powerful graphics and audio, not to mention the bespoke driving controls of the original machine. The rubber keys, limited graphics and tinny sound of the [Spectrum](#) would not therefore on paper make a good home for a Chase HQ conversion. The reality was however a different story, and whilst not a perfect conversion, the Spectrum version of Chase HQ by conversion experts Ocean was actually pretty good. There were also conversions for pretty much every home computer and console available, including releases by Ocean for the Amstrad CPC and Amiga, and by Taito for the NES, Game Gear and Sega Master System.

There were also some arcade sequels in Special Criminal Investigation, and Super Chase: Criminal Termination, but neither had the impact of the original Chase H.Q.

The dangerous driving mechanic has been seen throughout video game history, with games such as Road Rash on the [Sega Megadrive](#), and more recently the Burnout series of games on the XBOX. Chase HQ however remains the most perfect and polished arcade racer, something that has to be played on an original cabinet to really be appreciated, and it's one of my all-time favourite arcade games.



"Wow! What's that noise?!"

It's the mid 80's and the arcade is alive. After a period of vector graphics, shoot em ups, marauding aliens and hungry yellow fellas chasing ghosts came a new era in arcade game experiences.

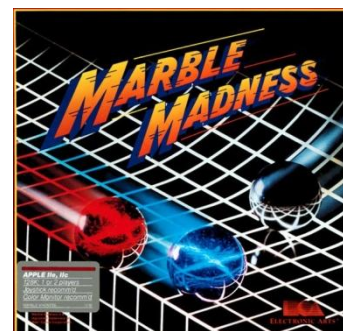
"Marble Madness"... and it really delivered. The first thing you're aware of is the sound. The cabinet came with a huge bass speaker, booming out decibels

| Essentials                                       |
|--|
| <b>Marble Madness</b>                            |
| <b>Atari (Electronic Arts on Home Computers)</b> |
| <b>Arcade Version Reviewed</b>                   |
| <b>Reviewed by Robert Joy</b>                    |
| <b>Proof Read by Phil Wheatley</b>               |

of what was then next generation of sound, from explosions of bass to what seemed like a symphony of keyboards, all perfectly complementing each level.

One of the earlier games in the 80s to use a trackball, puts you in control of a

glass marble which you would have to navigate through a series of unforgiving





3D mazes. Each level consisted of ramps, slopes, narrow causeways and bridges.

Initially this would appear to be simple. However, things are made even more difficult by the presence of strange creatures glooping around trying to devour you or rogue marbles following your every move while trying to knock you from great heights to the oblivion below. These were just a few of the perils that lurked around every turn.

Mazes consisted of traps, rods that would push you off course, drawbridges that if crossed at the wrong time could result in another fatal fall or catapulting you across to another section of

the maze. Shortcuts could be found in the form of pipes to hurl your marble down to a lower section of the level, gaining ground to the ever illusive 'Goal' which is your ultimate aim. However, things are yet again made difficult with a time limit to complete the level, which ticks down giving you that extra sense of dread!

Once you'd managed to race to the finish while frantically spinning the trackball, a bonus was given by taking whatever time you have left and adding it to your score, carrying over vital seconds to the next level, which

you'll need!

The stages became ever more difficult but at the same time were rewarding to complete, with neat little quirks and mechanisms to use to your advantage. This is the driving force that keeps you coming back for more, a very addictive experience. Its Isometric 3D layout, which even now holds its own in the modern world of gaming has not aged one bit making it very playable.

So, if you're not afraid of a little broken glass or heights, insert your credits, hit start and enjoy... This classic game really has stood the test of time.

**TRGN Rating 85%**







*Millennium 2.2* was a game that was developed way back in 1989 by Ian Bird and published by *Electric Dreams/Activision*.

Released for the Atari ST; Amiga and DOS (where it was renamed as *Millennium: Return to Earth*), this wonderful resource based space opera made its mark long before the likes of *MOO* came onto the gaming scene.

The game is a beautiful mix of micro management; resource allocation; colonisation and 3D space battles wrought

#### Essentials

**Millennium 2.2**

**Electric Dreams / Activision**

**Atari ST Version Reviewed**

**Reviewed by David Hayward**

**Proof Read by Graham Roberts**

around an epic story line in which the Earth has been rendered uninhabitable thanks to a several-trillion ton asteroid impact. With the earth now nothing more than a volcanic lump of rock, the duty of saving the human race from ultimate falls upon the shoulders of the player who adopts the guise of the commander of the

Moon colony. Starting out with just one hundred souls, and limited power, you are tasked with heroically leading what's left of humanity against apparently insurmountable odds.

By modern standards, *Millennium 2.2* is particularly taxing. All micro management is handled manually, with the player having



to initiate research; building; mining; colonisation and other sundry tasks in between. While this may sound brutal to the modern 4<sup>th</sup> gen gamer, *Millennium 2.2* comes across as a more personal interaction between the player and the game event triggers. The player (on some level) actually feels for the wellbeing of the colonists and players find themselves striving and working harder to obtain the necessary uranium in order to build orbital defence lasers, and count the days down until that remote colony finally receives the medical help it so desperately needs. It's a lost art, bringing this level of personal interaction and emotional content into a game.

The game is driven by a series of event

handles, which in turn guide the player along a set story arc that will occasionally place a spanner in the works, or conversely provide rewards that will trigger a sudden (in-game) evolutionary leap in technological terms. Upon starting out, the player receives communication from the Mars colony, who have shunned contact with earth and are now claiming dominance throughout

the system, stating that any craft leaving the Moon will be seen as an act of war. Consequently, the first probe the player launches will trigger attacks on their base, which start with just one fighter and increase to a maximum of ten. Thereafter such diverse events as an outbreak of Martian Flu; finding a battle cruiser; finding plans for a terraforming device; colonies seeking independence and a final all-out attack from the Martians pepper the game and require some kind of intervention from the player. These events are well spaced apart, but there's still that element of panic instilled, despite the resources that may be at the player's disposal.



The aforementioned attacks on colonies offer a rather different approach from the static resource-heavy screens that the player commands the game from. Providing there are enough fighters available at the attacked colony these can be launched individually and the player can be catapulted into an *Elite*-esque 3D fighter simulator. The controls and actual space battle mini game are basic at best, but challenging enough to warrant a degree of skill when trying to line up the enemy in the crosshairs. Suddenly being thrust into the cockpit of the fighter does seem a little out of place from the rest of the game, but upon reflection, it's actually a nice touch, and as such forms a nicely balanced and

atmospherically compelling game.

*Millennium 2.2* is a game that certainly grows on you. Perhaps it's the odd mixture of strategy-cum-resource management-cum-sporadic yet sudden arcade action that make it so enjoyable. Or maybe it's the level of detail the player perceives as they manage umpteen colonies and control the resources being shuttled between each. Personally, I find the atmosphere of the game the most compelling aspect. From the outset, with the graphically represented earth growing dull from the fallout of the collision, and the moon coming into focus and prominence; through the challenges of managing multiple colonies and growing



increasingly edgy when it's been some time since the last Martian attack; to the final scene, and in my opinion one of gaming's greatest moments, where the Earth has been repaired by the terraforming device and humanity once again returns to the cradle of civilisation. You are awarded a view of fields of wheat, panning out to encompass green hills, trees, wildlife and finally, a peaceful dome, housing the remainder of humanity. All the while, the background music is the thought provoking Gustav Mahler's Adagietto, from his 5th Symphony in C sharp minor. It almost brings a tear to the eye, after all that hard work. Wonderful stuff.

David Hayward.

**Rating 95%**





# FRIDAY THE 13TH



I believe there is a time in every gamer's life when they are not able to truly choose what games they would end up owning. They might ask for 'Excitebike,' and end up with 'Hogan's Alley' and 'Donkey Kong Classics.' Or, they might ask for 'Ninja Gaiden' and end up with 'Friday the 13th.' It seems that when you don't get the game you wanted, a licensed game is what you end up with.

## Essentials

**Friday The 13th**

**LJN**

**NES Version Reviewed**

**Reviewed by Duston Justice**

**Proof Read by Graham Roberts**

Licensed games are a mixed bag. Sometimes you get a 'Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III: The Manhattan Project,' but all too often you get a 'Back to the Future' or a 'Hudson Hawk.' Here we have something akin to a scientific law that is true almost without

exception: licensed games that are based on movies are terrible. This is especially true when you take a look at the label and see the Technicolor Nightmare Coat that is the LJN logo. However, I submit that just because a game is flawed, no-matter how severely,



it does not necessarily mean that it cannot still be fun.

*Friday the 13th* on the NES is not a true representation of any of the films in the franchise. Instead the game represents a generalization or approximation of the whole series. The game includes the most recognizable aspects of the films. You have a summer camp called Crystal Lake. You have several counselors/victims that are seemingly ordinary teenagers, some built for survival, some not so much, and of course, you have a hulking brute bent on slaughtering everyone in his path and naturally, he just will not stay dead.

The first thing you see in *Friday the 13th* is the iconic hockey mask momentarily before a knife flies from off-screen into one of its eyes as the screen flashes. Any *Jason* fan knows that such an affliction is only going to make him angry, when suddenly the title jump-scars onto the screen (for the uninitiated, a jump-scare is the technique deployed in horror films and in this instance video games of having something happen unexpectedly and suddenly - usually something popping up out of nowhere. It's frequently accompanied by an equally sudden loud noise and often happens after a period of tension-building to

ramp up the nerves of both the protagonists and audience/players and make the scare that much more effective for both).

On pressing start the player is greeted with the basic objective of the game and an eerie bit of music that sounds like an 8-bit rendition of something John Carpenter might have composed. It truly does make one's flesh crawl.

The first objective is to obtain a lighter and travel to each of the large cabins and light the fireplaces. After this is done, you will find a flashlight which illuminates the passages of the cave and the second most powerful weapon in the game - the torch becomes obtainable. The player may notice the first of the game's flaws at this point: The game's poor language translation has made the hints almost useless. This problem is compounded for today's retro gamer who more than likely does not have the instruction booklet that explains some of this.

All the while the player controlled hero of the game (a counselor) is roaming



about lighting fireplaces, Jason is running all around the camp attempting to murder children, the other counselors, and you. If either all of the counselors or all of the children are killed, then it's GAME OVER.

The game is scary in the same way the average *Friday the 13th* film is scary. It relies on the jump-scare, and it does a good job of using it effectively. Any time Jason appears you will hear the 8-bit sudden,

loud tone that one would expect from a typical jump-scare. You hear the same tone whenever any of the counselors die.

As anyone who is familiar with the franchise would expect, Jason is very hard to put down for good. This game does an excellent job including this famous character attribute of Jason. Not only will the player fight him protecting children and counselors only to be greeted with "You

win...for now," each time, but they must deplete his life bar three times to complete the game. Luckily, each time you do deplete his life bar, any living counselors' life bars are refilled as well.

The game does have several other flaws or annoyances. The first is that the overland theme (the music you hear in most environments) is repetitive and quickly grows stale. The theme that plays in the cabins is the same as the creepy theme that plays when you first start the game. As stated before, this theme really sets the mood for horror. It is fitting that it plays where you are most likely to encounter Jason and where the jump-scare is most effective. If only as much effort was put into crafting the overland theme. I don't know how they could have done it, but I would have loved to hear their best "ki ki ki, ma ma ma."

Another flaw is the map. When looking at the map it will look like you should travel to the right to reach your destination. When the player goes back to the overland



screen, travels right and checks the map again, they will find that they have actually been going in the opposite direction. However, this flaw can be overcome quite easily simply by paying attention: It is rare that two cabins of the same size will be next to one another and you can use this design feature as a navigation aid. If going left on the map will have the player walking passed a large cabin and instead en-route they see a small one, they will know before the map will show their movement that they are traveling in the wrong direction.

One aspect of the game is not a flaw so much as it is a part of the game that is poorly developed. There are cabins in the forest that you never really need to visit. They do not have fireplaces to be lit or counselors to be protected. They can sometimes have weapons that are a little more difficult to find, but the player can find more powerful weapons without ever entering these forest cabins. It is a pretty good thing that you do not need to enter these cabins as it is nearly impossible to a. Find



them and b. Exit the woods. The cave is somewhat difficult to navigate as well, but once the cabin is found, it is quite easy both to exit the cave and find the cabin again.

A nearly fatal flaw would have to be the random item drops. Items that are an absolute necessity, such as the lighter, keys, and medicine, are dropped purely at random. There are some locations where some items are more likely to appear, but there is no guarantee of the player finding what they need and when they need it. For example, the lighter is needed to start lighting fireplaces. However, sometimes the player just can't get it to appear right

away. Even items that are supposed to appear in a designated location, such as the torch, simply will not be where they should be and require the player to exit and re-enter a cabin a few times to get it to appear. Other times it shows up early.

The worst flaw is a flaw that is found in many NES games. Often, the best strategy, nay, the ONLY strategy the player has at their disposal is to stand and attack while taking damage. This only happens towards the end of the game when Jason becomes much too fast to dodge and damage at the same time, but it still a significant enough issue worthy of mention.

Alright, enough with the flaws. Anyone reading this has got to be wondering at this point why they should even attempt to play this game. The reason is simple: *Friday the 13th* on NES is fun.

Despite its flaws *Friday the 13th* does a few things very well. The most important thing is it creates a feeling of hopelessness that is arguably necessary in sustaining horror. Jason is a powerful foe. He is fast, strong, tough, and seems to be everywhere. Jason isn't just a final boss. He is encountered throughout the game. He can be encountered seconds after the game is started. It is as though he is actually after the player, as opposed to the player being after him. Thus, the hunter becomes the hunted to a certain extent. Every second of play is spent wondering if Jason is around the corner waiting to put an end to the player's game and life.

The hopelessness is emphasized by the fact that the playable characters are ordinary teenagers. the player doesn't play as an experienced slayer of the undead.

They don't even begin play equipped with anything that can truly be called a weapon. They don't have a gun or even a knife. All they have at their disposal are rocks and whatever athletic ability their character of choice might possess. Most of the characters are not even close to being in the physical condition one would expect from someone who would do battle with the undead (a bit like Pete then in *Shaun of the Dead*).

The player doesn't just have Jason to contend with. While it may have nothing to do with the films, they fight zombies and wolves in the woods and the cave (bats are also encountered in the cave) and giant birds near the lake and at night. There is no shortage of action between lighting fires and Jason encounters.

*Friday the 13th* can really be played two ways. The first way is by playing with strategy. The player arranges their counselors in cabins and tries to cover the camp for maximum response time and fighting effectiveness. This means trying to get each counselor at least moderately equipped and placed in cabins near the children and close to each other. Once this is done the player must choose one of the very few counselors that can run fast enough and jump high enough to get all the fireplaces lit and then be equipped with the axe or the torch so that they can defeat Jason.

The other way the game can be played is as a pure side-scrolling action game. Some may find this way the most fun. It is also the easiest way





to complete the game. Here, the player chooses a counselor to use exclusively. If any counselor is in danger, let them fight their own battle by switching to them when Jason enters their cabin. Stones do very little damage, but can drive Jason off just as effectively as any other weapon. If the children must be protected, switch to an expendable counselor and go drive Jason off, hopefully picking up a knife before they get there. If the player manages to keep this

up until all of the fireplaces are lit and better weapons are found, the athletic counselor can be used to defeat Jason...three times.

This game was released during a time when the horror genre in video games was pretty much non-existent. The idea of having any significant blood, gore, or violence in a video game was unheard of. Given both the limitations of the console and of what would have been

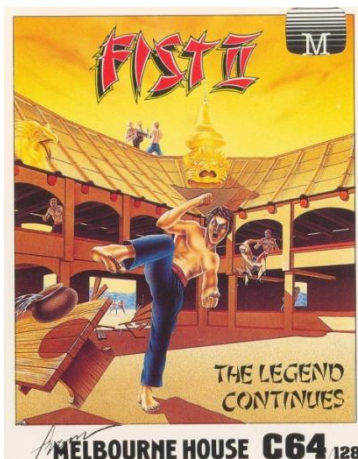
acceptable at the time, *Friday the 13th* on NES is a flawed but interesting and fun game. Though it is popular to hate this game, it truly is worth a look. If you have to, pretend it was a gift and you are just plain sick of all your other games. You have got to play something, ANYTHING that feels new. So turn off the lights, turn up the volume, and play *Friday the 13th* on NES. "Destroy Jason...if you can!"

**TRGN Rating 75%**





Most people who owned a Commodore 64 or a ZX Spectrum would have played Way of the Exploding Fist by Melbourne House, a game which really raised the bar for home computer 'beat em ups'. Whilst this was a great game, there was an



### Essentials

**Fist 2**

**Melbourne House**

**C64 Version Reviewed**

**Reviewed by Phil Wheatley**

**Proof Read by Phil Wheatley**

element of repetition as each level was a series of bouts fought in front of a different backdrop. As each level was completed, you would move a step closer to the much coveted black belt.

Amazingly, despite being an avid reader of most UK based computer magazines during that period, the first time I was aware

of the sequel was when I laid eyes upon it in a shop (John Menzes). The game was simply titled FIST 2, making it feasible for somebody to miss the connection to the first game.

Upon reading the description on the back of the inlay, it seemed hugely ambitious and was hard to see how it could all be fit into



64K without a multi-load. The game would contain all the combat moves from the first title, but would be a side scrolling affair with caverns, rivers, mountains and temples. I would rarely buy games at the time without reading a review first, but on this occasion it seemed a pretty safe

bet, so the purchase was made.

As soon as you launched into the game, you were greeted with great scenery and an atmospheric soundtrack which changed according to what part of the landscape you were in.

The characters were also unique and slightly mysterious, like the war painted warriors and the river dwelling ninjas. Fighting these characters whilst being waist deep in water was certainly a new experience. In fact, if you performed a foot sweep, you were almost entirely submerged.



The object of the game was to find a series of scrolls which have gone missing since an evil warlord had destroyed the original Exploding Fist temples, something that would take some serious exploration and would lead to

climbing to the highest points of the landscape.

To make things difficult, when you start the game your energy bar (or chi level) is very low, but throughout the landscape, you would discover temples in which you can meditate. Upon further enlightenment, you would then reach the next level Kung Fu skill, and thus increase your chi/energy level. This would give you a fighting chance against the trickier foes you would meet on your journey.

An element of the

game which kept you constantly on edge was the fact that if you lost your life, that would be the end of the game and you would have to start from the beginning. I can remember sweating with every battle knowing that if I blew it, I would have to return to the beginning.

An added bonus to the game was the flip side of the cassette contained a game I dubbed Fist 1.5, as it was a hybrid of Way of the Exploding Fist and Fist 2. Basically, the combat was similar to the first game, but the characters were from

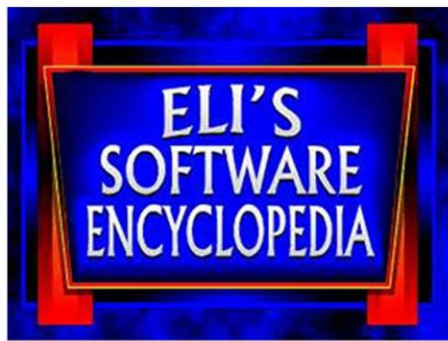
Fist 2. With that said, the backdrops were unique to both games which was great. This addition to Fist 2 allowed you to hone your combat skills, especially if you have never played the first game before.

Fist 2 had great graphics, atmospheric music and a combat system which tied it all together. This game was well ahead of its time and still provides an enjoyable challenge today.

**TRGN Rating 94%**







facebook.com/eli.software.store

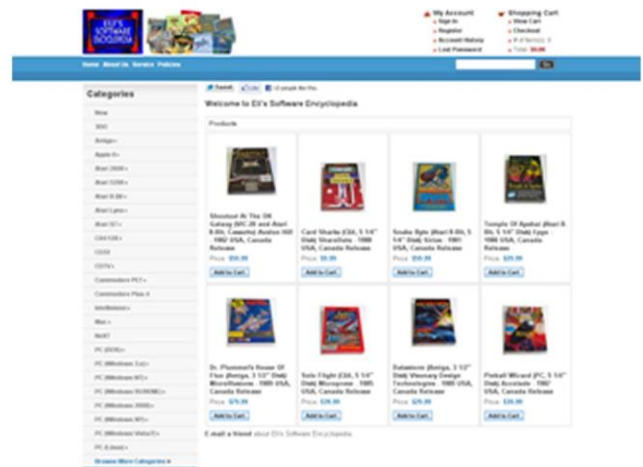


elisoftware.org

elisoftware.com

the  
encyclopedia

the  
store



Nearly 10,000 programs,  
publishers and people  
cataloged.  
And growing.

Over 1,000 vintage  
software titles available  
on over 30 platforms.  
And growing.



# CAN YOU HELP US?

**Please send this  
magazine pdf to 3  
or more of your  
friends, it's free  
and they will love  
you for it 😊**



## GET YOUR FREE ISSUES

**To Get Each Issue Sent to You  
For Free Each Month**

**Please Go To:**

**<http://www.theretrogamesnews.com/magazine>**