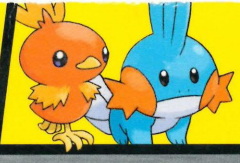
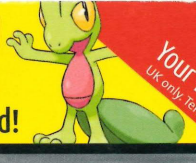
TOM CLANCY'S
SPLINTER CELL
SHHHH! We've sneaked in the first UK review!



POKÉMON
Catch 'em all... *again! Ruby & Sapphire* reviewed!



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A LINK TO THE PAST

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→ **LINK'S LATEST GBA ADVENTURE REVIEWED!**

→ **MAPPED!**
SUPER METROID FUSION
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KIRBY
NIGHTMARE IN DREAM LAND
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→ CRASH BANDICOOT → ISS ADVANCE → VIRTUA TENNIS
→ SUPER MONKEY BALL JR → RAYMAN 3 → AND MORE!

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248
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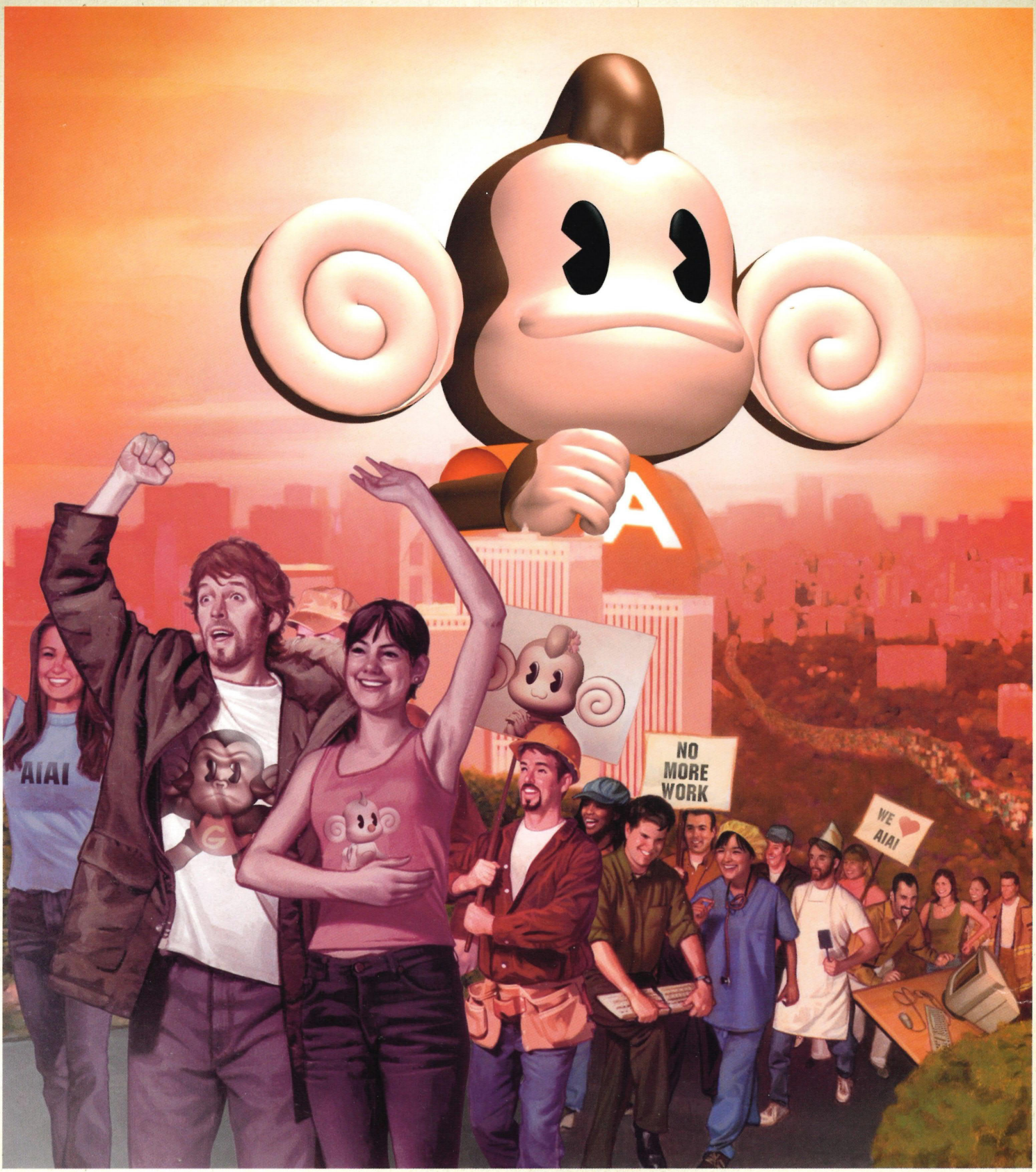

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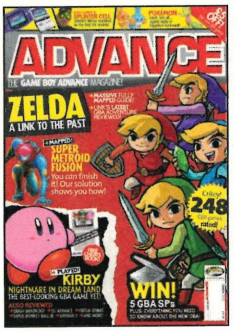

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DO COME IN, SIT DOWN AND MAKE YOURSELVES COMFY.

As you have no doubt surmised from my attire (and the dirty great picture on the cover) we're rather excited about the GBA's first taste of *Zelda*. Okay, so *A Link to the Past* is an almost-identical port of the 1993 SNES game (though there *are* differences). But if you never played the original, you'll find this is more than a match for the majority of GBA fodder out there. After all, a fantastically designed game is a fantastically designed game. And even if you've been there before, I'll wager that you've forgotten pretty much everything. You have my word that you'll enjoy the journey just as much the second time around!

And what about the shiny new GBA SP, eh? Our feature tells you everything you could ever need to know about this latest Game Boy. There's no doubt that it's a thing of great beauty, but is it a bit steep at £90? And what about those of us who've just got a GBA for Christmas, only to find its been superseded? Let us know your thoughts...

And there's plenty more where that came from. We've played the new *Pokémon Ruby & Sapphire*, and can confirm that Britain is due another wave of Poké hysteria when it hits our shores in July. And *Kirby Nightmare in Dream Land* has to be the best-looking GBA game yet!

But back to *Zelda*. You're bound to get stuck sooner or later — it's far from a walkover — but worry not, help is at hand. We've worked round the clock to bring you the most comprehensive fully mapped solution known to mankind. Talking about getting stuck in *Zelda*, I don't think I can get this tunic off, and it's beginning to itch.

Adam Waring,
Editor

STUCK IN ZELDA?
FULLY MAPPED
SOLUTION!
go to page 71

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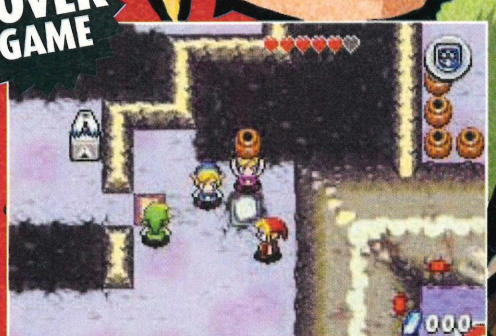
COVER GAME



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THE LEGEND OF ZELDA
A LINK TO THE PAST

Take the next six months off – Link's first GBA adventure arrives at last! Check the review p20 and playguide p71!

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Let the Poké-hunting commence!

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It's the snazziest eye-dazzler yet!

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The stealthy shooter slips onto GBA.

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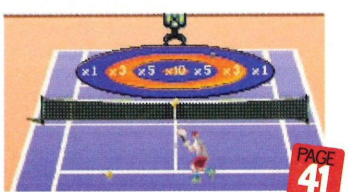
SUPER MONKEY BALL JR
You'll go ape for this chimpy challenge!



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It's smashing!

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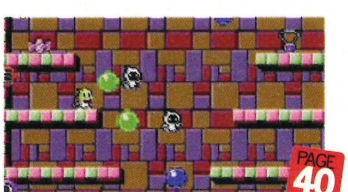
More marsupial madness.



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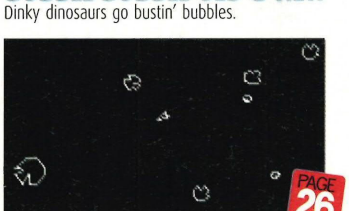
BUBBLE BOBBLE OLD & NEW
Dinky dinosaurs go bustin' bubbles.



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Half-a-dozen pixel-perfect arcade conversions.

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And they're all packed onto a single cart!

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TOO MUCH SUN?
Light-powered vamp-hunting from Hideo Kojima.

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More hardcore RPG-ery in a soft coating.

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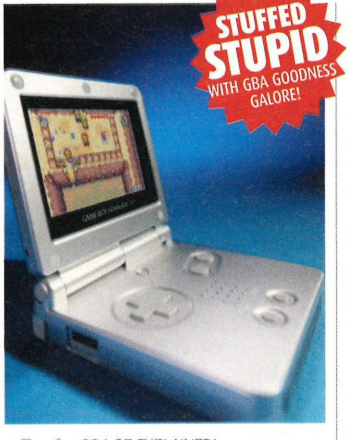

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The most comprehensive GBA review round-up in print.

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The last page is written. The slaves are unchained.

BUSTED!
Not one, but TWO fully mapped guides to a brace of the finest games ever to grace the GBA!

FULL PLAYING GUIDE
METROID FUSION MAPPED TO DEATH!
Our map-making monkeys have been busy this issue...

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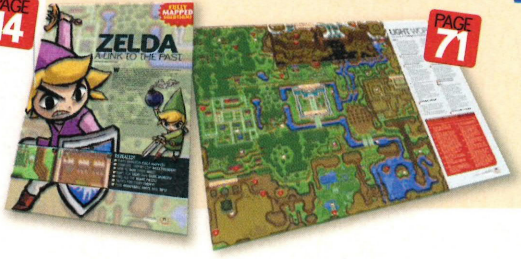

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FULL PLAYING GUIDE
ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST COMPLETED!
Full solution and maps for EVERYTHING!

ADVANCE A TO Z
EVERY GAME REVIEWED

START HERE...

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ADVANCE WARNING

In the Advance crystal ball...

"Unlike the games this is parodying, this is no hastily-slapped-together money-spinner."

FROM: NINTENDO **OUT:** TBC **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★★★

WARIO WARE, INC: MICRO MEGAGAMES

Wazza to develop his own games shock!

You'd have thought there were enough dodgy GBA games out there without Mario's arch-rival, Wario, getting in on the act. But the greedy yellow fellow has set up a software development company as his latest get-rich-quick scheme.

And he really is churning them out at a shocking rate. There are 200 mini-games in this cart, and it's your job to playtest the lot. Each game lasts a maximum of five seconds, and none have instructions. Half the fun is finding out what you're supposed to do next.

Wario is assisted by a bunch of developer buddies, each specialising in a particular genre, which may give you some clue as to what the hell you're supposed to be doing, exactly.

They may be simplistic, but the games are truly bonkers. It might consist of picking someone's nose, or cracking an egg in a frying pan or brushing your teeth. There are even miniature five-second versions of old Nintendo favourites such as *Super Mario Bros* and *Legend of Zelda*!

Another day at the offices of Wario Ware, Inc. Games don't make themselves, y'know.

MINIGAME MADNESS

Of course, real game developers would never put such little effort into developing their games. Perish the thought!

Wario with a refreshing cuppa. What do you think you have to do here?

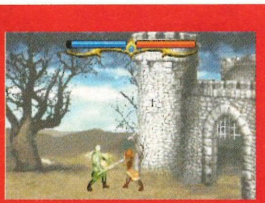
Super Mario, Wario-style! Stomp the lone Gomba to complete the game!

Putt the ball into the hole within the time limit. Simple as that.

No idea what to do? You have five seconds to figure it out!

INCOMING

The new stuff making an appearance on Advance's gaming radar.



DEFENDER OF THE CROWN
- Metro 3D Europe
- Autumn 2003

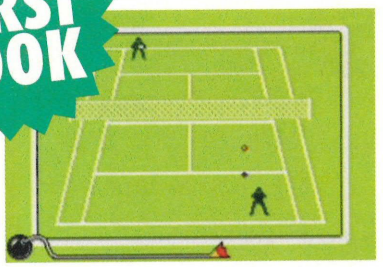
The age of chivalry – a time when men were men, women were women, and 1986 Amiga games were ported to the GBA. Medieval action/strategy from yesteryear.
ANTICIPATION: ★★

AERO THE ACROBAT
- Zoo Digital
- Autumn 2003

The acrobatic antics of circus-star Aero as he battles to save the big top from the evil Edgar. More 16-bit era platforming shrink-wrapped to fit onto our beloved GBA.
ANTICIPATION: ★★★

FIRST LOOK

Relaxing at home with the big W. Let's just hope he's not going to eat it.



It's tennis, that much is clear. Could it be as simple as lobbing the ball over the net?

The pace is frantic, with games popping up one after in rapid succession and no time to think about what you're doing next. Sometimes, it's pretty obvious what you should be doing, but other times you'll be completely stumped. Trial-and-error eventually reveals the answer, but you just don't have much time to figure things out. A time bomb ticks down in the corner, and often you'll find yourself meeting the deadline with just milliseconds to spare.

The more games you beat, the trickier they get. Plus they appear in a random order, so simply memorising what you did last time won't help you very much.

Complete all a developer's output and it's time for a boss battle, where you take on the said developer in a more challenging (though untimed) game. Eventually – a couple of hundred games later – you get to meet Wario himself.

Beating developers also unlocks multiplayer games which, due to their simplicity, can be played with just one cart via link-up.

Unlike the kind of games this is parodying, this is no hastily-slapped-together money-spinner, but a deep and imaginative slice of Nintendo brilliance. From what we've seen so far, 200 crap games equals one fantastic title!

GBA-O-VISION!

PLAY GBA GAMES ON YOUR

See *Game & Watch 4* on the big screen!

Now you can play Advance games on your telly, thanks to Nintendo's latest Gamecube add-on. The Game Boy Player is an inch-thick device that fits snugly to the bottom of the 'Cube.

Game Paks pop into the cart slot into the front, and it's also compatible with Game Boy Color and original Game Boy games, as well as Game Boy Advance titles.

You can then control the action with a regular Gamecube joypad. And if you wanted to be really wacky, you could even use a GC-GBA link cable to use your GBA as the controller!

How does it work? Well essentially it contains the entire GBA hardware, sans-screen. It has a Link-Up port, too, so you can connect it to your GBA for head-to-head gaming, one player using the TV screen, the other the Game Boy. We can't help feel that GBA games are better played on GBA screens, though...

The Game Boy Player is already on sale in Japan, and goes on sale in the US during May. UK release date and price are yet to be released.

Play your 240x160-pixel GBA games on your 32-inch widescreen TV! Just don't sit too close or you'll go blind.

DISNEY PRINCESSES
- THQ
- May 2003

Play as all of your favourite Disney Princesses as you search for the tiara of friendship to make sure that everyone lives happily ever after. Pass us that bucket, we think we're gonna... Blluuggh!

ANTICIPATION: ★☆☆☆☆

PALLADIUM
- Progressive Media
- TBC 2003

Danish-made pinnie sim that's currently in the final stages of production. Pinball sims are an acquired taste, but we have to confess that this looks rather promising.

ANTICIPATION: ★★☆☆☆

Strange new enemies brandish new kinds of weaponary, but the basic gameplay elements seem to be the same.

With dozens more missions to play, we can see plenty of through-the-night sessions in the offing...

FROM: NINTENDO **OUT:** AUTUMN 2003 **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★★★

ADVANCE WARS 2: BLACK HOLE RISING

We'll fight them on the buses...

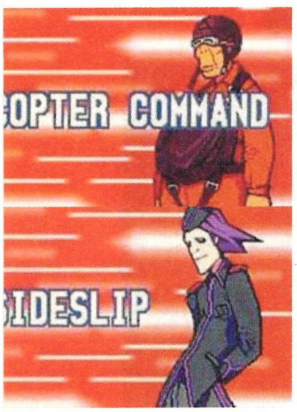
***Advance Wars* is the best turn-based war game on *any* console, and the word is that a sequel is on the way for later in the year.**

Information is a little thin on the ground, but once more it features the dastardly Sturm, leader of the Black Hole Army. This time he's set his sights on Cosmo land, and you're just the budding young commander to stop him in his tracks.

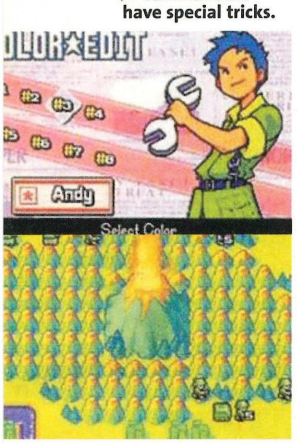
Once again, you'll be up against an array of commanders whose tactical abilities influence the way their armies fight – some may have superior air power, while others excel at long-range attacks.

But as the game progresses you'll unlock further commanders of your own, allowing you to apply tactics to match the situation.

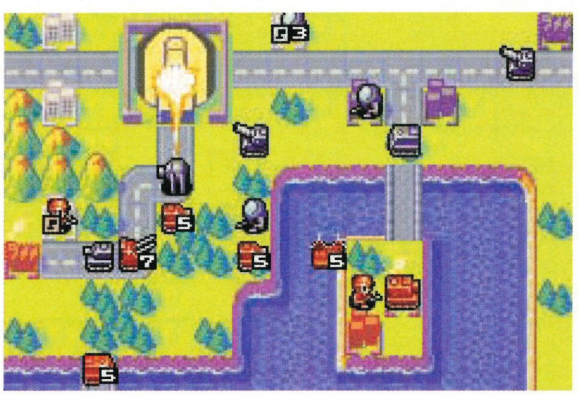
We're still playing the original *Advance Wars*, and if this is anything like its predecessor, this is going to be an essential purchase for even part-time generals.



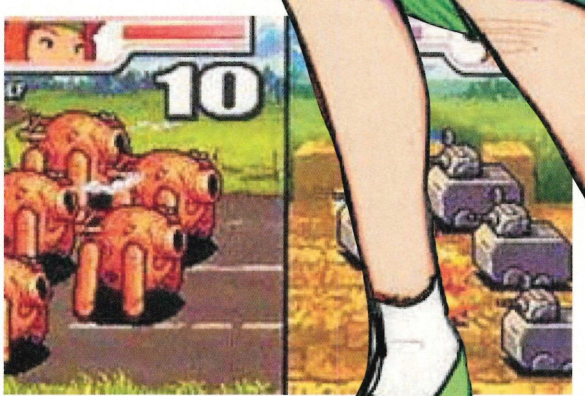
Commanders have special tricks.



Vary your tactics to suit the situation on the battlefield.



It's far better to call the shots back at HQ than be some poor grunt looking down the wrong end of a heavy tank turret.



War in real life is a bad thing. War on your GBA is a very good thing.

HUGO - BUKKAZOOM
- ITE Media
- TBC 2003

This miniature karter sees you shrunk down to the size of a greenfly, and offers a cartoony mix of free-roaming levels and combat as you race to be the first past the finish line.

ANTICIPATION: ★★★☆☆

GALIDUR DEFENDERS
- Lego
- May 2003

This would be just *another* plaformer if it weren't for the promised interaction between Lego's Galidorm Kek Powderiser toy, which somehow responds to the in-game action to give clues.

ANTICIPATION: ★★☆☆☆

FROM: KONAMI **OUT:** 2004 **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★★★

BOKTAI

Nice one, my sun...

The latest GBA game in the works from Hideo '*Metal Gear Solid*' Kojima promised to be something special. *Boktai* – short for Bokura no Taiyo – translates as My Sun. Appropriately, the cart has an in-built light-measuring sensor that detects that the amount of sunlight and this affects the gameplay.

We're not quite sure how all this is going to work, but the lead character, Dyango, is a vampire hunter, so presumably this has something to do with the pointy-toothed ones aversion to the sun. The sensor is reported to be able to distinguish between daylight and artificial light, and the screenshots show the game played at different times of the day; dawn, noon and night. The stronger the light you play in, the more powerful your character.

It's billed as an anime-style action RPG. Apparently, it's all part of an effort to get gamers out of the house and into the fresh air!

Genius or insanity? It's hard to know at this stage, but it's an interesting concept, that's for sure. Perhaps Hideo himself has been out in the sun a little too long...

Boktai is slated for a 2004 release in Japan. Only time will tell whether it ever sees light of day over here...

★ A game that reacts to light has us intrigued, we can't wait to see how it actually works, though.

★ The prototype cart with light sensor. Of course, the real thing will be neatly hidden away.

POKÉMENTAL!

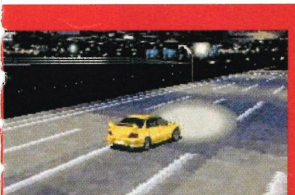
LIMITED-EDITION POKÉMON GBA SP

A must-have for the true obsessive!

Following the runaway success of *Pokémon Ruby* and *Sapphire* in Japan, Nintendo have released a limited-edition GBA SP, complete with *Pokémon* branding to satisfy the wave of Pokémania sweeping Japanese gamers up and down the land.

The Game Boy Advance SP Spice Orange Edition sells for 12,500 yen (about £70) and features the silhouette of new Pokémon Torchic on the front of the machine. It wouldn't surprise us to see further models with the other starting Pokémon, either.

REVIEWED! POKÉMON RUBY & SAPPHIRE go to page 38

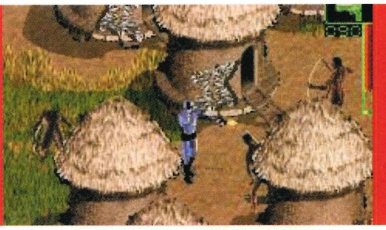


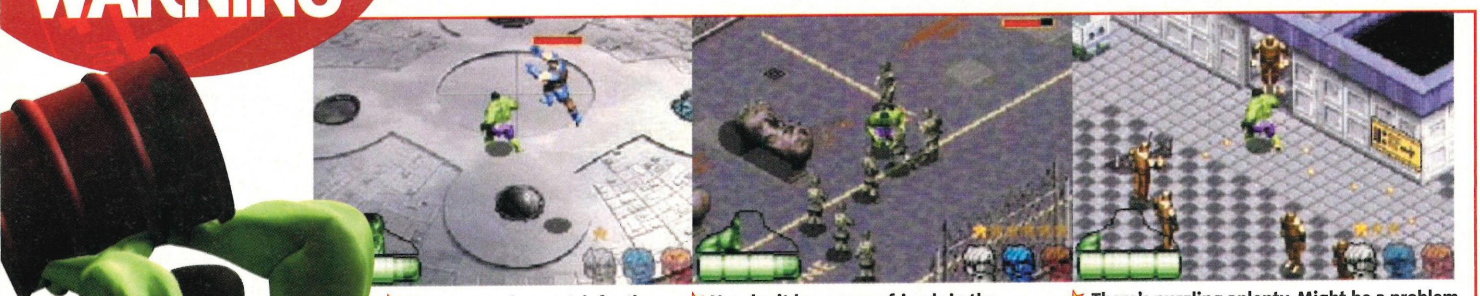
GT ADVANCE 3: PRO CONCEPT
- THQ
- May 2003

Featuring nearly 100 authentic cars from 10 manufacturers, 44 tracks and a win-races-to-unlock-beefier-cars structure, this holds much of the promise of its PS2 big brother.
ANTICIPATION: ★★★★

THE PHANTOM
- Microids
- TBC 2003

Based on the '30s jungle-based superhero comic strip, *The Phantom* is an arcade adventure with a dash of puzzling thrown in for good measure.
ANTICIPATION: ★★★





★ No one man is a match for the Hulk. But other freaks might be.

★ You don't have many friends in the army. In fact, you don't have friends, at all.

★ There's puzzling aplenty. Might be a problem if all you can manage is the odd grunt.

FROM: VIVENDI **OUT:** TBC **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★☆☆

THE INCREDIBLE HULK

Just don't make him angry...

He's big, he's green, he's a killing machine. No, we're not talking about the sweetcorn-selling Jolly Green Giant, but the Incredible Hulk of Marvel Comics fame.

As you might expect, the game follows the storyline of the comic; Dr Bruce Banner is caught up in a nuclear explosion, but rather than being incinerated on the spot, or developing all manner of hideous malformed cancerous growths, the gamma radiation turns him into a green-skinned goliath at times of undue stress.

And boy, does he get stressed. Hounded not only by the army, but hordes of powerful adversaries, including the Executioner, Tyrannus and the Abomination – another result of being careless with those pesky gamma rays.

The game spans 33 levels and promises up to 30 hours of gameplay. The action is viewed from an isometric perspective, and switches from furious battles against hordes of enemies to tricky puzzles guaranteed to tax the lumbering lunk. Plus, up to four players can take part in Hulk-to-Hulk deathmatches via a link cable.

FROM: SEGA **OUT:** MAY 2003 **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★☆☆

SEGA ARCADE CLASSICS

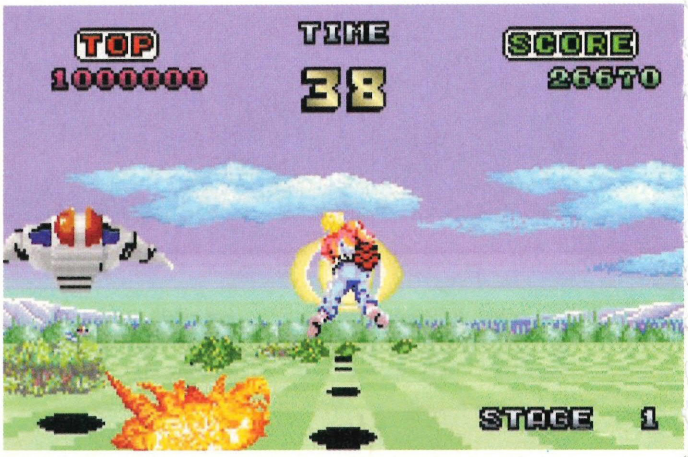
Arcade action from yesteryear

Long before the rise and fall of Sega as a console maker, it was king of the arcades, and we fondly remember pumping many a ten pence piece into the cabinets in our local grimy, smoke-filled amusement arcade, when we probably should have been at school. Then again, we are quite old.

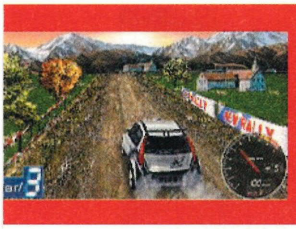
So we're looking forward to reliving those times, and *Sega Arcade Classics* cart comprises four, er, Sega arcade classics from videogaming's vault: *Afterburner* sees you as the pilot of an F-14 Tomcat shooting down enemy MiGs; *Outrun* has you racing a Ferrari around city streets; *Space Harrier* is an odd shooter where you hover along, shooting aliens and saving dragons; while *Super Hang-On* has you astride a motorbike, racing through various countries that all look the same.

They were the cutting-edge 3D games of their day, but their day was back in the late '80s and they look primitive now. Whether they'll be have us reminiscing about the golden age of gaming or act as sad reminders of what used to pass for entertainment remains to be seen.

WANT MORE... AGED ARCADES? ATARI ADVANCE go to page 26



★ We used to find this sort of thing entertaining. Still, it's nice to take a wander down memory lane. Isn't it?

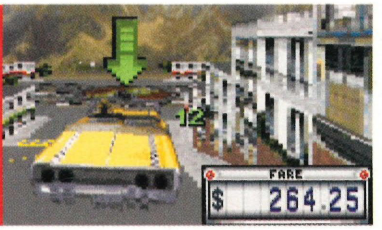


GB RALLY 2
- Raylight
- TBC 2003

This is looking very tasty. There are 42 tracks with proper climbs and ascents, cars that suffer visual damage, and surfaces that give noticeably different driving conditions. A real *Colin*-worrier.
ANTICIPATION: ★★★★☆

CRAZY TAXI
- Sega/Infogrames
- June 2003

The taxi-driving arcade hit has been on all the big consoles, and now it's GBA's turn. Pick up passengers and get 'em to their destinations in record time to make big tips.
ANTICIPATION: ★★★★☆



★ Top of the charts and with good reason. Zelda is essential.

↘ WHAT'S SELLING WHAT?

CHARTS

Top ten GBA movers and shakers

ChartTrack

CHART POSITION	GAME NAME	ADVANCE RATING
→ 1	**ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST** Zelda! On the GBA! At last! Buy it! Now!	92%
→ 2	**SONIC ADVANCE 2** Where's our review cart? Get it together, Infogrames!	N/A
→ 3	**CRASH BANDICOOT 2: N-TRANCED** Marsupial-based platforming fun.	81%
↑ 4	**WWE ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA X8** The best grappler available for the GBA.	78%
↓ 5	**RAYMAN 3** He's 'armless, really!	79%
★ 6	**SUPER MONKEY BALL JR** Sublime simian silliness.	87%
↓ 7	**LORD OF THE RINGS TWO TOWERS** The movie lives up to the hype. The game doesn't.	60%
↑ 8	**STAR WARS II NEW DROID ARMY** If only it played as good as it looked.	73%
↑ 9	**SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2** The essential Mario game. Infinitely better than *SMA1*.	94%
↑ 10	**MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT** The most fun racer ever. An absolute must.	95%

KEY: ↑ Moving up ↓ Slipping down → Non-mover ★ New entry

→ 2 ↑ 4 ↑ 8 ↑ 9 ↑ 10

★ It's a top-looking game. And you can win it!

COMPETITION

WIN A TELLY!

So you can watch Tom & Jerry!

To celebrate the launch of *Tom and Jerry in Infurnal Escape*, Ubisoft is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a TV/video on which to watch the classic cat-and-mouse cartoon capers!

They'll also get a copy of the GBA game and four runners-up will get their paws/claws on a copy of the game too.

The game sees Tom in the underworld after being flattened by a falling piano as a result of Jerry's last trick. His mission is to make it back to the land of the living, which means negotiating nine trap-filled levels, collecting goodies and avoiding enemies as he goes. As you'd expect the cartoon animation is top-notch and all the *T&J* regulars make an appearance, including our favourites, the Mousketeers.

Winning is just a matter of answering the following question – and being plucked out of the hat first, of course:

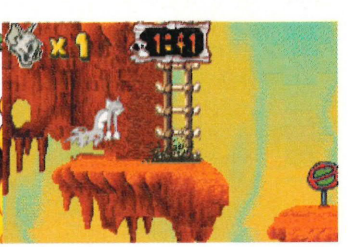
What's the dog in Tom & Jerry called?

A Fi-fi
B Towser
C Spike
D Butch
E Captain Cuddles

Send your answer on a postcard or the back of a stuck-down envelope to:

"I could have sworn it was Rover"
Advance
Future Publishing
30 Monmouth Street
Bath BA1 2BW

Rules.
1. Only entry per reader.
2. Employees and agencies connected with Ubisoft and Future Publishing are not eligible to enter the compo.
3. Closing date is 18 July 2003.
4. The first correct answer wins the TV and copy of *Tom and Jerry: Infurnal Escape* for Game Boy Advance. The next four correct answers win a copy on the game only.
5. The editor's decision is final.
6. Failure to abide by these rules will result in a large anvil marked '1 Ton' being dropped on your head, causing you to shatter into thousands of tiny pieces.



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ADVANCE WARNING

Yes, yes. It may be all arty farty. But it's still all about kicking each other's heads in.

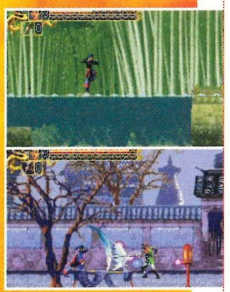
FROM: UBISOFT **OUT:** SEPTEMBER **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★☆☆

CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON

Oriental brawler pops up into view...

This arty martial arts movie was a big hit with non-marital arts fans when it hit the screens a couple of years ago, and was just as likely to seen in arthouse cinemas as the Odeon multiplex. And now it's coming to the small screen in the guise of a beat-'em-up .

But its larger-than-life, gravity-defying moves promise to translate well into a fighting game. Taking the role of one of the four major characters, each with their own signature moves, you fight your way through 19th century China against the backdrop of locations from the film.



NO! Not the slippy, slidey ice world – it'll have you hurling your GBA through the nearest window. You mark our words.

FROM: SWING **OUT:** OCTOBER **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★☆☆

JAMES POND: CODENAME ROBOCOD

There's something fishy going on...

Ah, the early '90s. These were the days when you had to have some kind of mascot to sell a game, and in addition to Mario and Sonic battling it out for console supremacy, there were countless other unlikely videogame hero wannabes. A bobcat called Bubsy... Mr Nutz the squirrel... and a secret agent fish called James Pond.

Yes, it may be cheesier than your dad's feet, but millions of James Pond games were sold on the 16-bit consoles, and now it's GBA's turn. *James Pond: Codename Robocod* looks like being a straight conversion of the Megadrive game.

That is, it's a pretty average platformer, albeit one with lots of secret agent/fish-themed puns. We do remember that its ice world was a particularly tricky beggar, though.

Although the *Pond* series was popular enough in its day, it was certainly a bit B-list compared with heavy hitters like Sonic, so the developers really need to come up with a few extras to make this something special.

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★ Don't thank us, thank Zoo Digital. They're the ones putting up the prizes, generous old souls that they are!

★ What will *you* win? *Aero the Acrobat? Gekido Advance? Gadget Racers? F1 2002? Medal of Honor Underground?* Five great games – and SPs too!

COMPETITION TIME!

WIN A GBA SP!

Yes! We have five GBA SPs plus games from Zoo Digital up for grabs!

The Game Boy Advance SP is the coolest thing to hit humankind since the last ice age, and you can own one thanks to our friends at Zoo Digital!

Astonishing but true, we have no less than five brand-spanking new GBA SPs to give away, plus five frankly fabulous games from Zoo to play on them! Look at these truly terrific titles up for grabs:

Aero the Acrobat
A colourful platformer whose hero first saw light of day on the SNES. Aero is the star of the circus, and has to thwart the evil clowns' plans to take it over!

Gekido Advance: Kintaro's Revenge
This is the best-looking side-scrolling beat-'em-up yet to grace GBA! With a sublime combat system, great anime-style characters and adventure-like puzzle-solving elements, you'll need brain as well as brawn!

Gadget Racers
This cult racer offers incredible depth, sprawling across a massive 60 courses. Plus you can customise your vehicles to your heart's content, and with 50 vehicles and 130 interchangeable parts on offer, there are around 38 billion combinations!

F1 2002
This *F1* series has been a top-seller on the bigger consoles and it's now available on GBA with *F1 2002*. Based on actual 2002 season data, it features all 11 official teams with the 22 official drivers and accurate representations of 17 tracks, from Melbourne to Monte Carlo.

Medal of Honor: Underground
This first-person WWII shooter sees you battle the evil Nazi menace through 17 huge levels. With 12 authentic weapons you'll have plenty of firepower on your side, but you'll need stealth, too, in the face of overwhelming enemy opposition.

Each winner gets a GBA SP plus one of the above titles, selected at random.

To enter, just answer the following question:

Where do wild animals live? (When they're in captivity, that is...)

A A house
B A zoo
C A prison

Send your answer on a postcard (hey, why not pick a nice colourful one up from your summer hols) or the back of a stuck down envelope (we're too lazy to open them, you see). And send it to:

"*Please* let me win a GBA SP"
Advance
Future Publishing
30 Monmouth Street
Bath BA1 2BW

Rules
1. Only one entry per reader, please! Multiple entries are automatically incinerated.
2. Employees and agencies connected with Zoo Digital and Future Publishing are not eligible to enter. (Drat! – Ed.)
3. The closing date is 18 July 2003. Get down the post office quick!
4. The five winning entries will be plucked at random from a large, brown cardboard box with 'GBA SP compo' scrawled on the side in marker pen. Games will be allocated randomly to winners, too.
5. The editor's decision is final. So button it!

WANT MORE... GBA SP? ALL YOU NEED! go to page 16

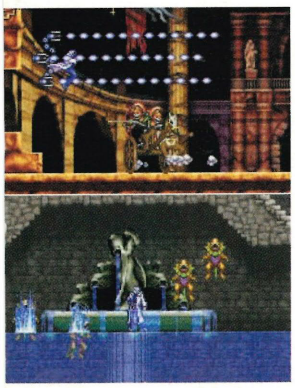
ADVANCE WARNING

Previous *Castlevanias* were notoriously dark and difficult to play. This looks anything but.

It's chilly in that castle. Just look at his breath.

FROM: KONAMI **OUT:** TBA **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★★☆

CASTLEVANIA: ARIA OF SORROW



More capers at the castle.

***Aria of Sorrow* is the latest in Konami's *Castlevania* adventure series, and makes several departures from the previous games.**

For starters, it's set in the future, in the year 2035. The game's hero is due to witness the first solar eclipse of the 21st century when he passes out, and awakens in a mysterious castle. It's your job to escape before you're consumed by evil and that means battling all manner of nasties as you attempt to navigate the castle's complex maze of labyrinths.

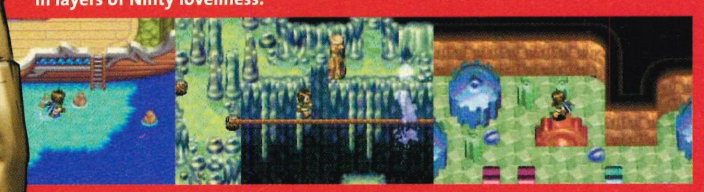
There are loads of weapons to find and use, but you can also absorb the souls of your enemies to learn more than 100 powerful new attacks and abilities. And you can trade souls with friends over a link-cable to further beef up your character in the struggle against the castle's evil forces.

BEARD ALERT! ADVENTURE/RPG OVERLOAD!

It's more hardcore an RPG than *Zelda*, but still wrapped in layers of Ninty loveliness.

FROM: NINTENDO **OUT:** AUTUMN **ANTICIPATION:** ★★★★★

GOLDEN SUN: THE LOST AGE



Fun in the Sun!

This Nintendo role-player is far more traditional than the likes of the heavily arcadey *Zelda* games, but it's just as compelling to play.

Lost Age picks up the story from where the original *Golden Sun* left off, with the characters regrouping to prevent the destruction of their world from evil forces. Again.

Like the original, there are countless twists and turns in the hugely engrossing plot. In fact, the story is even more expansive, with greater emphasis on Psyengergy-based action puzzles. You'll find there's far more action outside the battle sequences than there is in standard, menu-based RPGs, too.

If this is even half as good as *Golden Sun* it will be an instant winner. But it'll probably be twice as good.

WANT MORE... RPG-FRY? ZELDA REVIEWED go to page 20

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THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

It removes the gloom from *Doom*, makes *Mario* glow, and *Castlevania* less of a pain-in-the-arse-for-ya! Introducing the new, frontlit, Game Boy Advance SP!

Words: Adam Waring

We love our GBAs, we really do. But if there's one thing that makes us curse Nintendo's handheld design, it's that dark, dingy display.

To save power (and thus prolong battery life) the screen is of the reflective variety; it doesn't produce light of its own, but reflects light back at you. All well and good, but playing in anything but the brightest lighting conditions means squinting at dull, murky graphics. And the majority of third-party add-on lighting kits do little to improve the situation, with the reflected glare often doing more harm than good. Still, the Game Boy's secret of success has always been its remarkable battery life, so we've put up with it...

But there's light at the end of the tunnel, thanks to the new SP edition Game Boy Advance. Our pocket pal has been given a complete makeover that addresses many of the other criticisms levelled at the GBA – the light-up screen is only the beginning of the story. It has its own, built-in rechargeable battery, which could save you a fortune in Duracells. The spankily stylish flip-top redesign is, in many ways, more in keeping with the traditional Game Boy look, with the screen at the top and buttons below, and allows the shoulder buttons to be positioned much more comfortably.

The Game Boy Advance SP is initially available in three equally desirable metallic colours: silver, blue and black, and sells for £90. We reckon it's a big improvement, but at the same time it's not intended to replace the existing GBA, so the two machines can live happily side-by-side. Hooray!

Good things come in small packages, and they don't come much smaller – or gooder – than the GBA SP!

GAME BOY HISTORY

It seems that Darwin chap was right. The theory of evolution according to Game Boy...

1980s

Game & Watch series

Nintendo's first portable gaming machines were the Game & Watch series, simple LCD games which, like the SP, had a flip-top screen. The games look positively prehistoric compared to today's titles, but you can still get a retro gaming fix with *Game & Watch Gallery Advance.*

1989

Game Boy

It looks ungainly and brick-like now, but this was the ultimate in portable cool. Its low power consumption meant the batteries lasted ages, and ultimately helped it see off the competition.

2001

Game Boy Advance

The GBA vastly improved the power of handheld gaming, replacing the 8-bit processor with a faster, snazzier, 32-bit custom chip.

1999

Game Boy Color

It took ten years for a Game Boy with a colour display to appear, with Nintendo wisely waiting for a screen with low enough power consumption to become available. The tech-specs were beefed up a little too, though it still relied on an ageing 8-bit processor.

1996

Game Boy Pocket

A slimmed-down Game Boy cut the batteries from four to two, and replaced the fuzzy greeny-black screen with a genuinely sharp, black-and-white LCD. Many variations were produced, including the Pocket Light, the first backlit Game Boy.

SILVER, SLEEK & SEXY

With its metallic good looks and flip-top design, this is the most desirable Game Boy ever...

Front-lit screen
Even the darkest, dingiest games are playable in the most appaling lighting conditions, thanks to the built-in frontlight. (Not a backlight; the light is reflected off the front of the screen via a lens filled with tiny prisms.) If conditions are good enough, though, you can switch off the light to conserve battery power. It'll go for ten hours with the light, 18 hours without. Resolution and size is identical to the GBA.

Cart slot
Carts slot into the base of the unit, unlike previous models which hide the slot behind the screen. Just like the GBA, it's backwards-compatible with your old Game Boy carts.

Flip top
The screen is hinged to make the SP the smallest, most transportable Game Boy ever, at a little under 8.5cm square. When folded away like this, the screen is protected from scratches, too. Opened up, the SP is far more in keeping with the traditional Game Boy design, with the buttons below and the screen at the top. The display clicks satisfyingly at a slight angle, for the optimum playing position.

Here's one we made earlier... it's possible to fit your existing GBA with a front-lit screen, but you're going to have to be brave enough to to open it up.

LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE

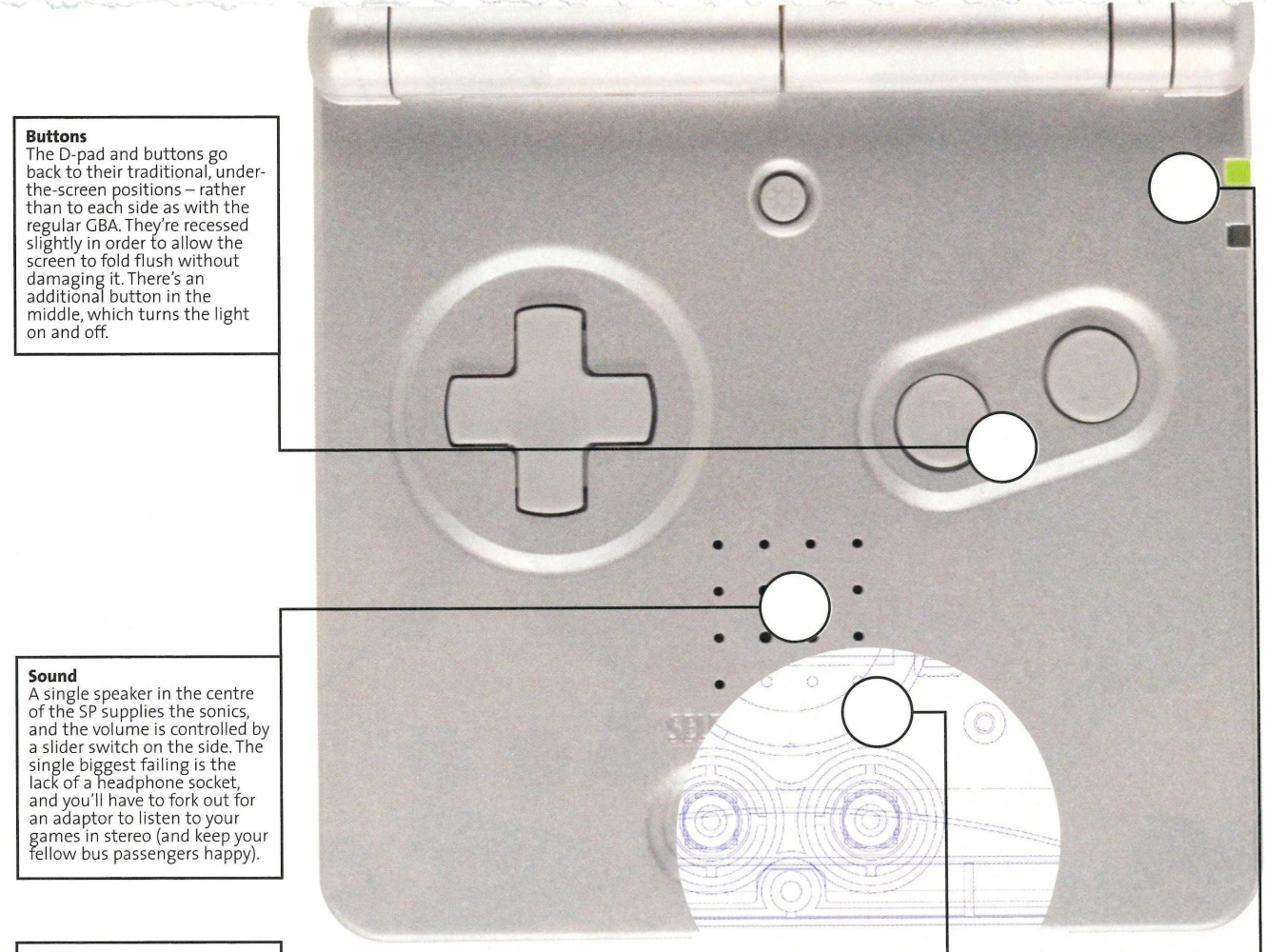
Dig out that soldering iron – it's DIY time!

The design is stylish, the rechargeable battery is handy, but what really sets the SP apart from the Advance is the light-up screen. But don't go chucking your GBA in the bin just yet – there's a way to light up old faithful, too! Afterburner is a self-install frontlight that makes a world of difference to the 'regular' GBA!

We reported on the development of the Frontlight kit way back in issue one of Advance, and after a couple of years in development, and a name change, this kit is available at last. Fitting it isn't difficult, but it does require taking your GBA to pieces (with the included, three-sided screwdriver), and the ability to wield a soldering iron with confidence. The results are well worthwhile, bathing your GBA in crisp, white, light.

The principle is precisely the same as the SP. The light is at the side, and directed to the screen via an angled lens in front of the screen. Fitting the kit takes a couple of hours and, as well as the kit itself, you'll need a soldering iron, cutting tool, and a can of compressed air to keep the dust at bay. A small amount of plastic needs cutting away around the screen to accommodate the frontlight, plus there's an optional dimmer switch so you can turn down the light to conserve power. A couple of wires need to soldered to the GBA's circuit board. So be warned – fitting this kit definitely voids that warranty!

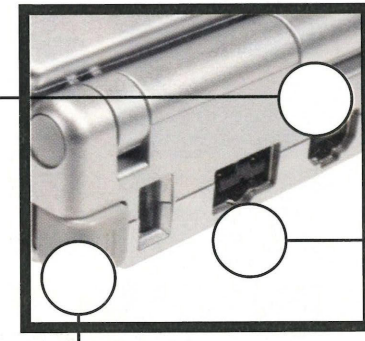
The kit is available in the UK from Xyramax and costs £25 but, if you're not too confident doing it yourself, they'll fit it for you for an extra charge. To find out more, get in touch with Xyramax on 0870 011 3630, or point your browser at www.xyramax.co.uk.



Buttons
The D-pad and buttons go back to their traditional, under-the-screen positions – rather than to each side as with the regular GBA. They're recessed slightly in order to allow the screen to fold flush without damaging it. There's an additional button in the middle, which turns the light on and off.

Sound
A single speaker in the centre of the SP supplies the sonics, and the volume is controlled by a slider switch on the side. The single biggest failing is the lack of a headphone socket, and you'll have to fork out for an adaptor to listen to your games in stereo (and keep your fellow bus passengers happy).

Link-up
You can link the SP with up to three other GBAs via the link cable, for multiplayer mayhem. And you can still link it up to your Gamecube for the growing number of games that support this feature.



Shoulder buttons
The shoulder buttons seem a little insubstantial at first, but are actually more comfortable than before, as you don't have to wrap your fingers around the GBA's housing. Finger-cramp is a thing of the past.

The 'guts'
Despite all the aesthetic improvements, nothing much has changed internally. The tech-specs are identical to the GBA, and it plays exactly the same games. More evolution than revolution.

Power
The GBA SP has a built-in Lithium Ion battery, similar to those found in mobile phones. Battery life depends on the use of the light, and it can power the machine for up to 18 hours for extra-long train journeys. Naturally, a charger is supplied, which supplies a full charge in three hours.

Reviews

All the latest games for you.

Our advice: Read our verdicts and then decide what to buy...

"*Four Swords* reminds us of ancient coin op *Gauntlet*, in a good way."

ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST

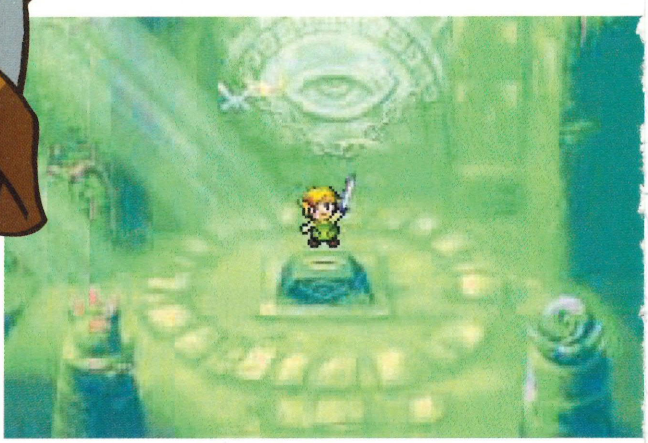
GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Nintendo
- **PHONE** 01932 895 390
- **WEB** www.nintendo.co.uk
- **PRICE** £35
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

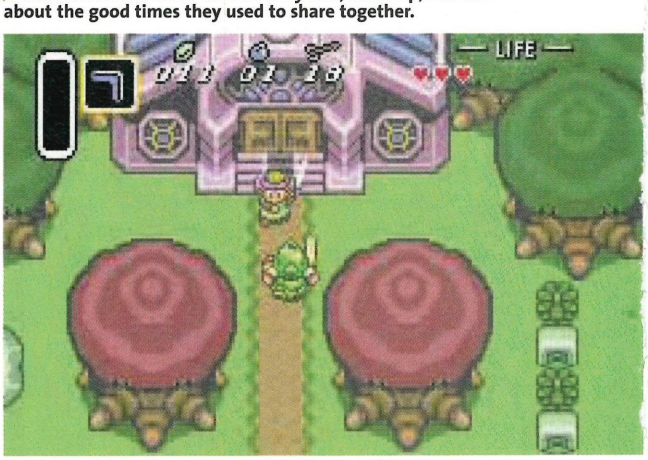
Every Zelda release is special. Just as some people measure their life in terms of football seasons or what they were doing when JFK died, every Nintendo fan worth their food seasoning will have been waiting for *A Link to The Past* and *Four Swords* for nearly a year now. And it will have seemed longer.

But this cart's only half-new. *A Link to The Past* is a straight conversion of the 1993 SNES game of the same name, while the original part of the package, *Four Swords*, is a multiplayer-only adventure. And a multiplayer-only adventure where everyone must have their own cart at that. But fear not – you'll find no trace of *Mario Advance*-style disappointment here. Because just like every other Zelda before it, *A Link to The Past/Four Swords* proves very special indeed.

Let's deal with *A Link to The Past* first. Because no matter how good the original was – and it was embarrassingly good – converting a ten-year-old game to a new console is a risky business, as anyone who's unlocked the patchy SNES tracks



Link and sword are re-united. They kiss, make up, and talk about the good times they used to share together.



The profusion of purple breast-like trees can only mean one thing: Lawrence Llewllyn Bowen. Link is hard on his high heels.

ONE FOR HYRULE, AND HYRULE FOR ONE

The Advance muskahounds take on the first ever multiplayer Zelda. And do okay...

★ **Bad to the bone – The skeleton heads that chase you around take on a whole new context in *Four Swords*. All you need is a voice shouting, "Elf Warrior is dying!" and you'd be playing *Gauntlet*.**

★ **Pull Together – The puzzles you'll encounter in *Four Swords* demand constant co-operation. Often it takes the form of you literally all pulling together in order to get on, as pictured here. Heave!**

★ **Push Over – At other moments, a more subtle linking of Links is what's required. You'll have to use items such as the Magnetic Gloves to be able to get one of your retinue over ravines, for example.**

★ **Money grabbing – Although the knock-over-pottery mechanics of *ALTTP* are the same, the four-player context changes things. Now you're all competing for the same money and hearts. Get out of it!**

on *Mario Kart* can attest. And when you first boot up *Zelda: A Link to The Past*, you can't help thinking that Capcom could have done a bit more visually.

But that's where the criticism ends. The genius of the Zelda games has always been in their balance. *A Link to The Past* is a huge 30 hours-plus adventure but it never feels intimidatingly big. Whether you're a games novice or geriatric you'll be able to play it. The plot zaps along like an episode of *Eastenders* with princesses being sacrificed, evil alternate universes opening up, and new tasks to test you every time you so much as blink. While the action itself is inspired, there are always new places to go, new characters to talk to and new baddies to battle.

Top Tip

Don't always go wading in. Forget the traditional scrolling-face-beating law, take it easy or you'll miss something.

Want examples? Well, in true Indiana Jones style, Advance found themselves in The East Palace searching for the Pendant of Courage. Well actually, we found ourselves ducking huge bubbles, duelling with odd elephant-creatures in the dark, being chased by giant shurikens, getting trapped in a room full of skeletons and – yes – even scrambling around for levers to open secret doors and stuff. Make no mistake, *A Link to The Past* is an intense, almost mythical experience.

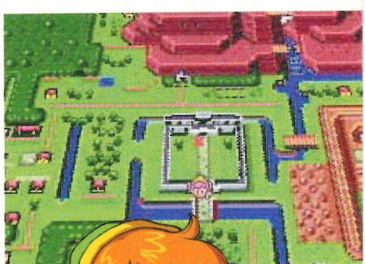
Unless you've played it before, that is. For if you're after something at all different from the SNES version, then you're going to have to round up some equally dedicated friends for the Zelda-goes-multiplayer *Four Swords* adventure.

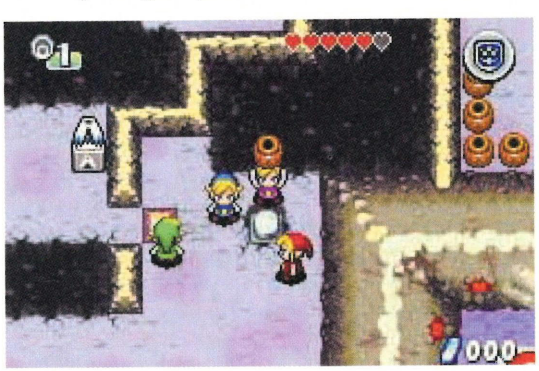
Surprisingly, the multiplayer aspect doesn't alter things as much as you might expect. It's still the same boulder-chucking, pressure switch-stomping, statue-dragging gameplay – just that now, because there are up to four of you, these things must be done simultaneously. For example, at one point one of your number will find a Link-shrinking Gnat Hat that enables the wearer to squeeze through tiny tunnels to open previously inaccessible doors. Ingenious stuff, though the image of four Links all fighting over rupees made us recall ancient coin-op *Gauntlet*. In a good way.

So while there are minor gripes (why isn't at least a part of *Four Swords* single player? Why didn't we get a new *Metroid Fusion*-type adventure?) they're besides the point. Like *Mario Advance 2* and *Yoshi's Island* before it, Zelda may have one foot in the SNES, but it's still an essential GBA title. And still very, very special. **SCOTT ANTHONY**

★ **The dark blue scenery spells dungeon. Not literally with letters though. We meant more in terms of atmosphere. Dolts.**

★ **Use the boomerang to take foes out from a distance. And to look cool.**





★ **Purple Link tries the old "they'll never notice me under the ceramics disguise." But that's just potty.**

★ **Traditionally *Zelda*'s always been rather smart, in multiplayer mode though, it's totally mental.**

LOOK 'N' FEEL
A superbly presented adventure, clearly the GBA's finest hour.

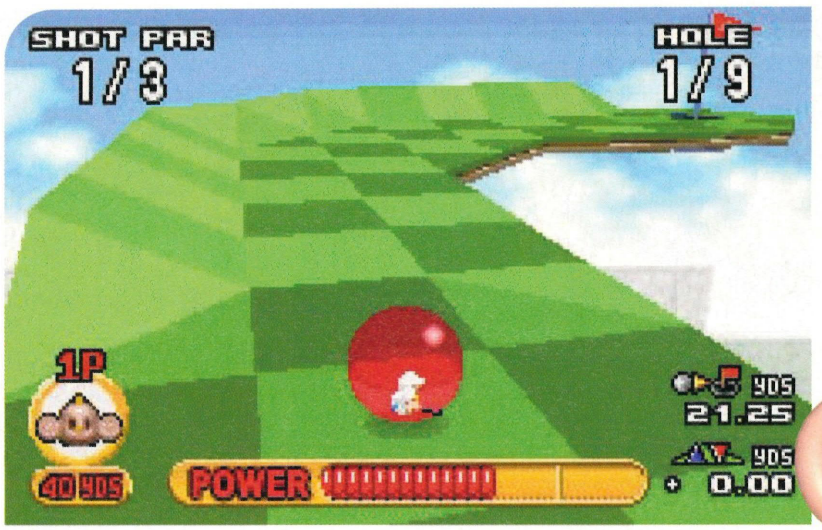
GAMEPLAY
You get 1x SNES classic and an all-new multiplayer adventure for your money.

LIFESPAN
You're looking at the very definition of classic. And links to the GC game too.

DIFFICULTY
It's quest in the best sense of the word. But wusses need not apply.

ADVANCE OPINION
One of the best SNES games ever, and a startling new multiplayer game. This is an essential GBA purchase. Go Link!

92%



SUPER MONKEY BALL JR

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Infogrames/Sega
- **PHONE** 020 7938 4488
- **WEB** www.infogrames.com
- **PRICE** £35
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

Whenever you see a console game converted to the GBA, you always expect to see some compromises. The screen is smaller, there's less buttons and it's not as powerful, so something has got to give.

But there are no compromises here. This is full colour, fully 3D, 60 levels and four mini-games and link-up capable. *Junior* goes toe-to-toe with its older sibling and only loses out 'cos big bro is a bit heavier.

They've even managed to compensate for a lack of analogue controls with the A button allowing an exaggerated tilt and B a subtler one. This takes a while to get used to but becomes second nature with a bit of practice.

Top Tip
Keep a stress ball to hand, there's no telling what you'll do when you fall off the edge of level 40 for the 40th time.

★ **Bonus games include Monkey Golf, Duel, Fight and Bowling. But sadly not Monkey See or Monkey Do.**

★ **Ape's available to play as in *Jr*? AiAi, MeeMee, GonGon and Baby. Ape's not available in this version... The Advance team.**

"An extremely intense, sensitive puzzler where the margin of error is oh so small."

This is all really impressive stuff. It's just that the nature of the game and the size of the format it's now on provides a dangerous combination. *Super Monkey Ball* is an extremely intense, sensitive puzzler where the margin of error is small – to put another way, it can be bloody annoying.

Indeed, this game can be more irritating than doing aerobics in an iron wool suit. Miss the goal by a second or topple off the edge after misjudging a camera angle and you'll want to chuck the game to the floor and grind it into a dust with your heel. The problem is, you can actually do that with the GBA. With the GC it would involve unplugging stuff. Now it's a mere flick of wrist.

So while *Junior* may raise a smile, it might herald the end of your handheld. Unless you're the Kofi Annan of gaming, with a Bud Ice temperament, be warned. **DAVE HARRISON**

LOOK 'N' FEEL
The GBA at its best, it's an amazing realisation of Sega's GC classic.

GAMEPLAY
Marble Madness but with monkeys. And bananas sub-games.

LIFESPAN
There's plenty of simian silliness to be enjoyed. But don't total your GBA first.

DIFFICULTY
Woe betide anyone who jogs you on the bus. They'll be sorry, oh yes.

ADVANCE OPINION
The GC classic comes to the GBA and, thankfully, *Junior* proves to be a chimp off the old block. Destined for cult status.

87%

We know what you're thinking. Why bother travelling the globe when you can enjoy awful graphics like this on your GBA.

DISNEY'S THE JUNGLE BOOK 2

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Ubisoft
- **PHONE** 01932 838 230
- **WEB** www.ubisoft.co.uk
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** Password
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

Slidey tile puzzles are all the rage in *Jungle Book 2*. As well as fruit you also have to swap pieces of fish skeleton around.

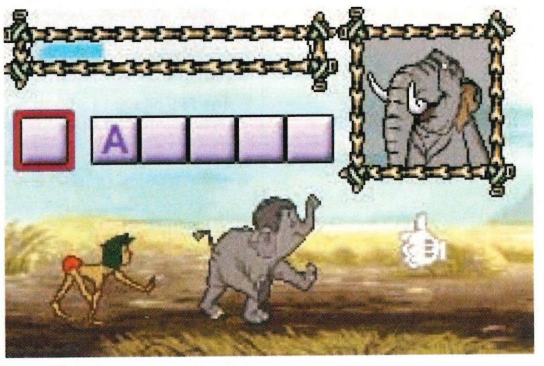
You could say the game world was an impressive size. Alternatively, the sprites are just far too small.

Hurrah! This summer sees an all-new sequel of that loveable racist/colonialist/imperialist Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book* hit the cinemas. And to celebrate, Ubisoft are releasing a game aimed at the kids market. That's kidz, to you.

In contrast to the big bold platforming experience that was *The Jungle Book* on the GBC, *The Jungle Book 2* is disappointingly downmarket. It plays a bit like a remedial *Zelda*, with a tiny Mowgli running about a huge forest bumping into butterflies, collecting what look like Oscar statuettes and earning experience points by completing slidey puzzles. (And if you don't like slidey puzzles, can we recommend sir stays well clear of this cart, because you'll have to play one approximately every 3.124 seconds.)

Top Tip
Hitting Start brings up a map that is helpfully marked with the location of all the key objectives. Sigh.

To be fair, *The Jungle Book 2* is a thoroughly non-violent, vaguely cerebal, sickly sweet little production that every gran in the country could feel comfortable buying. The flip side to this is that if you're over four and under 80 you'll probably find it deadly dull. Anyone fancy walking around for ages looking for a bit of wood? How about hitting A and B as fast as possible to avoid being hypnotised by Kaa? Thought not. If you're old enough to read this then you're way too old to see *The Jungle Book 2* as anything other than a collection of rather naff sub-games.



Smiley, smiley, happy, happy. Doesn't it just make you want to kill, kill, slaughter, slaughter? Or is that just us. Nurse!

As the song should go, *The Jungle Book* wants to be like us, but we don't like it at all. Not for a minute, no matter how bored we get or how much money if offers us. That Kipling should stick to making cakes. SCOTT ANTHONY

> *The Jungle Book 2* is nothing more than a collection of rather naff sub-games.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Baloo and gang are undeniably cute critters. But probably extinct now.

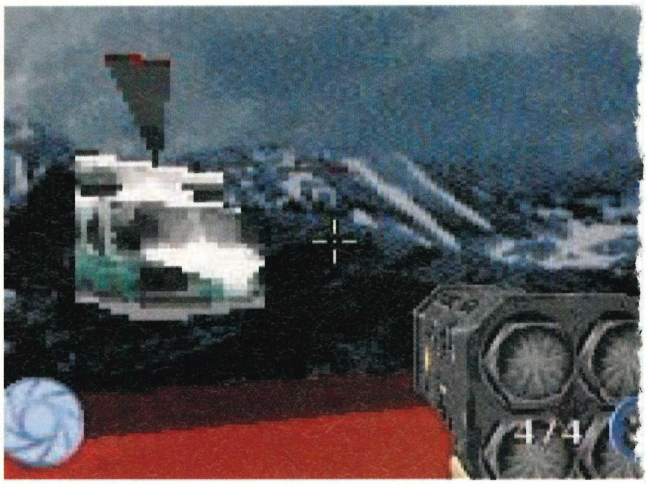
GAMEPLAY
It's all a bit like a Spatial Awareness GCSE. But not as interesting.

LIFESPAN
Won't outlast the inevitable marketing blitz.

DIFFICULTY
Most common or garden ants would be insulted by this.

ADVANCE OPINION
Outgrown *The Tweenies/Hoobs/Fimbles*? Then you won't get an awful lot out of this, we're afraid.

50%

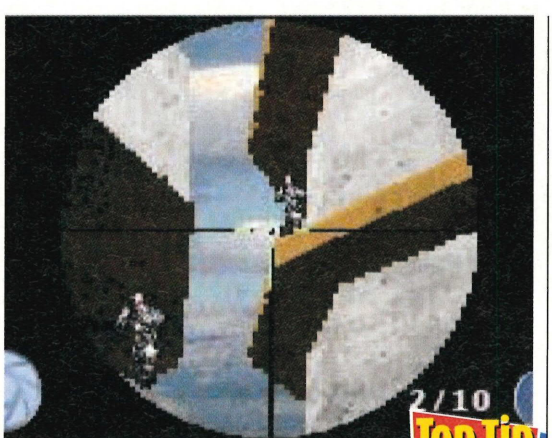


A thrilling Bond versus helicopter duel, you might think. But you'd be wrong, it's a cinch.

007 NIGHTFIRE

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** EA
- **PHONE** 01932 450 000
- **WEB** www.uk.ea.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now



The FPS bits get tedious. So EA have inserted some dull *Silent Scope* bits too.

Top Tip

Learn to snipe. It's the only way to get that all-important hit ratio up. And don't hang about while you're at it.

Ha, ha Mr Terrorist your machine guns are no match for my trusty car keys. No match at all. Not in the driving car stakes, anyway.

"Licence To Kill? This Bond needs permission from his mum to leave the table."

Bond is back, scream EA. Indeed, since they spirited the licence from Nintendo's grasp, 007's been kept busier than Ulrika's bedsprings.

Accordingly, *007 Nightfire* is a dumb blonde of an FPS that starts promisingly but then pales into mediocrity. A bit like the Pierce Brosnan films, one could say. And *Nightfire* does begin well, with Bond getting to blow up Tokyo huts, fire rockets at a helicopter from a cable car and use his laser watch to break into libraries.

So far, so dapperly dressed. The problem is that underneath the well-groomed exterior lies a plain old game. Everything is so railroaded. License to kill? This Bond needs his mother's permission to leave the table. Also, after the relative sophistication of *Ecks Vs Sever*, the baddies here are George Bush Jr dumb. The difficulty in *Nightfire* comes from having to complete the levels within set time limits. However, these targets are only revealed when you've finished the level, meaning you often have to replay sections several times. Fun it may be, but EA have made a disappointingly unintelligent MI5 game. The spy who loved me? The spy we were quite fond of for a few hours then got bored with, would be more like it. SCOTT ANTHONY

LOOK 'N' FEEL
More Moneypenny-ish than a glamourous Bond babe.

GAMEPLAY
Standard FPS with added adventuring gizmos. Not terribly interesting.

LIFESPAN
You'll blow its cover in weeks rather than months.

DIFFICULTY
Totally schitzo! Too easy *and* villainously difficult.

ADVANCE OPINION
It's the best handheld Bond, but in GBA terms it's still more Austin Powers than *Ecks Vs Sever*.

68%

Choose your car carefully, or just go for the green one. Either way, one with wheels might be a good bet.

TOCA WORLD TOURING CARS

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Ubisoft
- **PHONE** 0870 739 7670
- **WEB** www.ubisoft.co.uk
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

We're playing *TOCA World Touring Cars* on our new front-lit, flip-topping, Advance SP. But is *TOCA* a worthy game with which to christen our new toy? Simple answer – 'not really'. But it could have been worse.

Ubisoft, that also brought you *Colin McRae 2.0* on the GBA, has now developed *TOCA* for the wee screen. You, and up to three friends, can race 14 tracks (including Silverstone, Monza and Sugo) in a number of different championships.

Top Tip
Use the practice option. Getting your breaking points right is essential, and practice laps make all the difference.

Fans of the *TOCA* racing series will be happy at how much attention has been put into the performance of the cars, and the ability to change their settings. You can swap tyres, modify the balance of the car and change other spanner-related stuff. Sadly, all these options are served up on the worst interface we've ever seen.

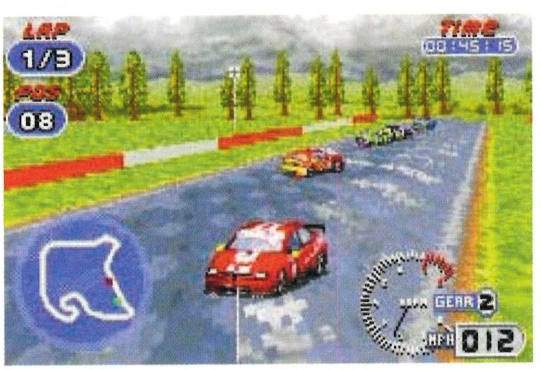
If you manage to make it as far as racing, and have played *Colin McRae 2.0*, you'll notice that it looks similarly blocky. But like its predecessor, the clumsy nature of the game's graphics don't detract from the racing. It's pleasant enough until the digitised speech kicks in.

We can only assume there's an empty bottle of Jack Daniels in the hands of our commentator, as he makes regular mistakes and often stops half way through a sentence. At first he's a slight distraction; give it a few laps and you'll want to hunt him down like a dog and shove his microphone somewhere sacred.

If you can play through *TOCA*'s foibles you'll find a pretty good racing sim underneath. Is it worth thirty of your finest pound coins though? Not really. **DAN OLIVER**

> "Give it a few laps and you'll want to hunt him down like a dog and shove his microphone somewhere sacred."

You can change a number of attributes via the venue options screen. One lump or two?



You can try reversing to victory, you'll fail of course. But we'll try anything once. Except parsnip.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
TOCA's graphics are blocky and the game's interface is horrible.

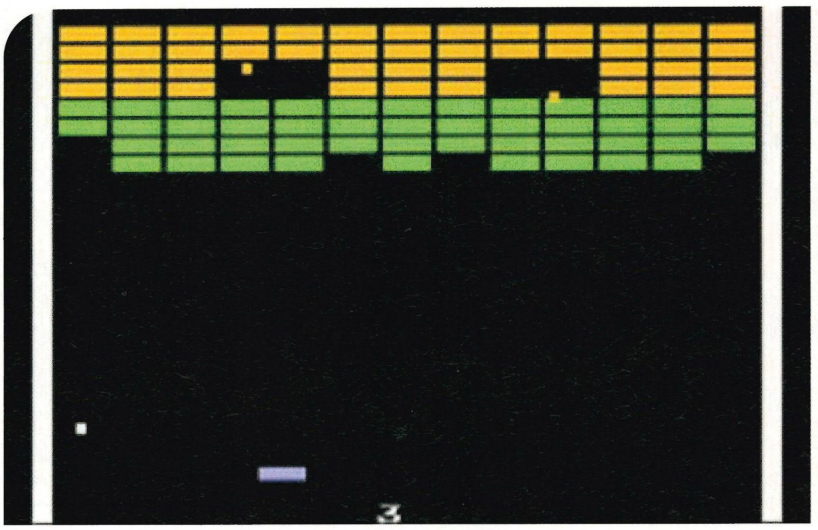
GAMEPLAY
Given time, *TOCA* proves to be a pretty decent racing sim.

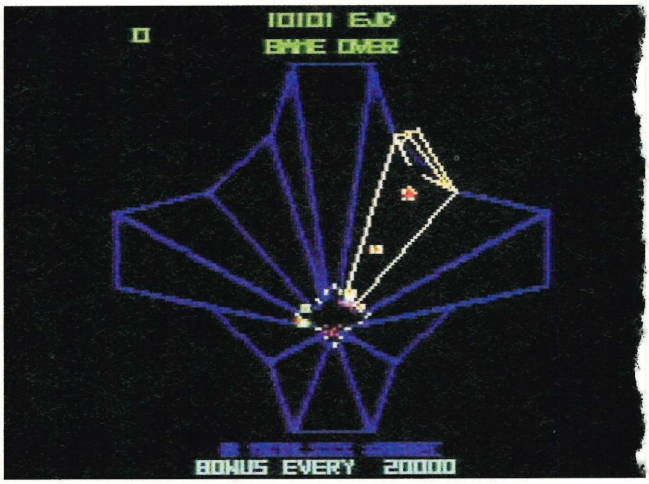
LIFESPAN
You'll complete the game in a week but you may return for the odd burn.

DIFFICULTY
Touch the grass, or get on the power too soon, and you'll be spinning off.

ADVANCE OPINION
The interface is awful and there's loads of annoying quirks but it remains a playable racer. Just one down the grid.

65%





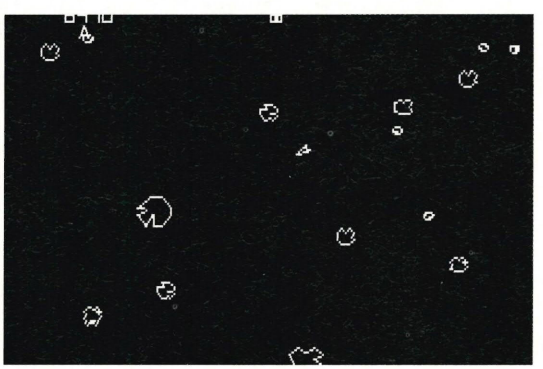
Tempest is probably the weakest conversion to the GBA, it is still fun though. Shakespeare wrote it, didn't he?

ATARI ANNIVERSARY ADVANCE

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Infogrames
- **PHONE** 0208 222 97 00
- **WEB** www.infogrames.com
- **PRICE** £20
- **SAVE** On cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

Game over, you'll be seeing this a lot when you first play *Battlezone*. And after you've been playing it for a while, too.



It doesn't look all that much but *Asteroids* was the king, bow down Advance curs!

For a few years, at the end of the '70s, a golden era dawned on the world of videogames and it was largely down to one company – Atari. Staggeringly (has it really been this long?) the company that brought you *Pong* and *Centipede* has reach its 30th birthday and, to celebrate this milestone, has been kind enough to pack six classics into one cart for your delectation.

Top Tip
Pressing select will change the orientation of your screen and makes playing games like *Centipede* far easier.

The six-game compilation pack includes *Asteroids*, *Battlezone*, *Centipede*, *Missile Command*, *Super Breakout* and *Tempest*. Digital Eclipse, the developer responsible for porting these games to the GBA, has also included an Atari trivia game.

In *Asteroids* you shoot boulders, in *Battlezone* you shoot tanks, in *Missile Command* you shoot missiles, in *Super Breakout* you destroy boxes and in *Tempest* you shoot alien spaceships. This was gaming's infancy, you know.

Thanks to what Digital Eclipse is calling the Meta-Emulation technique nearly all the games are carbon-copies of the original (they even include little bugs and cheats for those that remember them). What Digital Eclipse could never reproduce though was the original controls for these games – and that's where *AAA* falls down. Providing the option to play the games in portrait (turning your GBA on its side) is a nice touch, but it's not enough to make up for the shortfalls of the GBA's D-pad.

> "They can never reproduce 100 per cent of the original arcade magic – but it's damn close."

The games look accurate, they sound accurate but without *Missile Command*'s trackball, or *Battlezone*'s viewfinder, they can never reproduce 100 per cent of the original arcade magic – but it's damn close.

If you remember these games with fondness, or simply want to play the games that started it all, *AAA* is well worth a few buckaroos. **DAN OLIVER**

LOOK 'N' FEEL
The games look twenty years old. But that's to be expected.

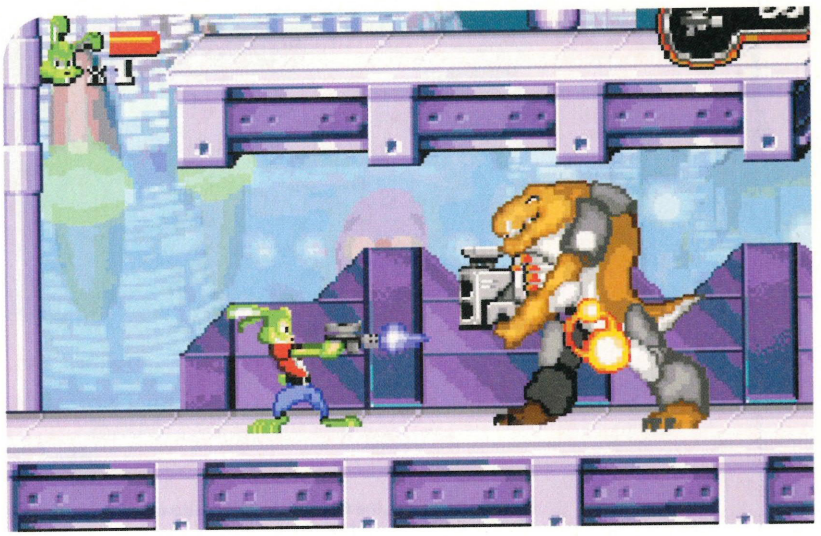
GAMEPLAY
Good gameplay is timeless and *AAA* has it in bucket loads.

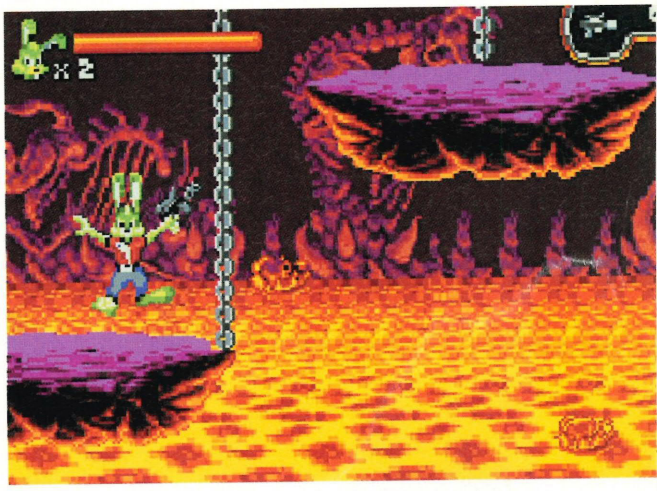
LIFESPAN
These seemingly never-ending games kept us going back for more.

DIFFICULTY
Some of these games were developed to be unbeatable. And they are.

ADVANCE OPINION
Almost identical to the arcade versions, these classics are let down only by the GBA's controls. Still great though.

81%





Run to the right, flip the switch, climb to the top, collect the pick-up... And all because the lady loves Milk Tray.

JAZZ JACKRABBIT

GAMEINFO

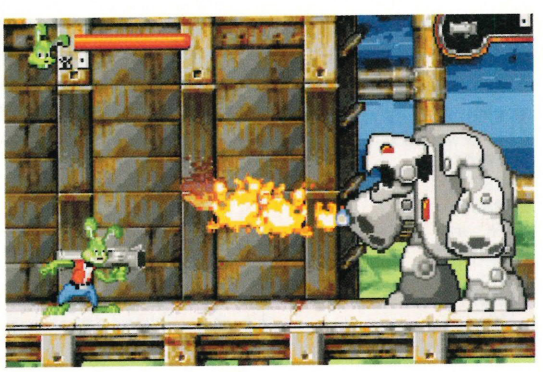
- **PUBLISHER** Jaleco
- **PHONE** 020 7633 0633
- **WEB** www.jaleco.com
- **PRICE** £25
- **SAVE** On cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Nothing causes a stir like the return of a classic, and this one lands lop-eared from the mid 90s. Jazz was the closest the PC ever got to a *Sonic* or a *Mario*, and his 2D brashness was always ripe for a handheld come-back. As such, this title's platform game credentials are in order, but it breaks out of the cutesy mould with plenty of gunfire. Would you expect anything less from Epic Games, the folk behind *Unreal*?

The rabbit hero (on some contrived galaxy-saving secret mission) bundles his way through some attractive scenery, which is detailed without being cluttered. As you help him along, you zap wave after wave of guards, while flicking switches to open doors. As well as cash pick-ups, you earn money by defeating bosses, in order to buy new weapons from R.A.B.T. headquarters. Sure enough, Jazz can upgrade his humble laser blaster to a machine gun, ricochet gun (handy for bouncing bullets around corners), a flame thrower, a rocket launcher and a gigantic Big Gun, which you shouldn't use in confined spaces. Oh, and he has exploding carrots as well, but doesn't everyone? The addition of a secret 'long-jump' mode (whereby Jazz flaps his ears to fly like a helicopter) means you can access remote places in each level.

Sadly the music is a little bleepy and repetitive. Even more sadly, so is the gameplay.

> "Very old-skool, possessing a kind of mindless charm that will leave you empty."



Jazz livens things up with quirky comments, tossing some personality into the game. Like it was salad.

Top Tip

If all your mates have the game you can play the full Multi-Pak battles. However, if you've only one cart then you're limited to three weapons and a deathmatch game. Sob.

Your exploits start simplistically and a little thought will usually enable you to blast your way through most of the reptilian bad guys, although they do start to pile on later. Touches of self-referential humour also help to break up the plot (at one point Jazz tells you he is NOT collecting stuff like coins or bananas as he travels). It's not clear whether having an assistant called Spaz is also a sick joke, but we assume it's just an innocent bunny name.

Jazz Jackrabbit is jolly, amusing and fun while it lasts – but it is very old skool. It possesses a kind of mindless charm while you're playing but is liable to leave you feeling empty when you turn the machine off. DAVE BRADLEY

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Classic side-on levels with a handful of endearing details.

GAMEPLAY
Run-of-the-mill bounding around with added shooting and gunfire.

LIFESPAN
Plenty of weapons and upgrades will reward perseverance.

DIFFICULTY
Your opponents start as pushovers but get progressively tougher.

ADVANCE OPINION
It's good to see Jazz back, but you'll have played much like this before. Make more effort next time please.

73%

To you and me, the flags of the international community. To Mr George Bush Jr, a veritable axis of evil.

PRO BEACH SOCCER

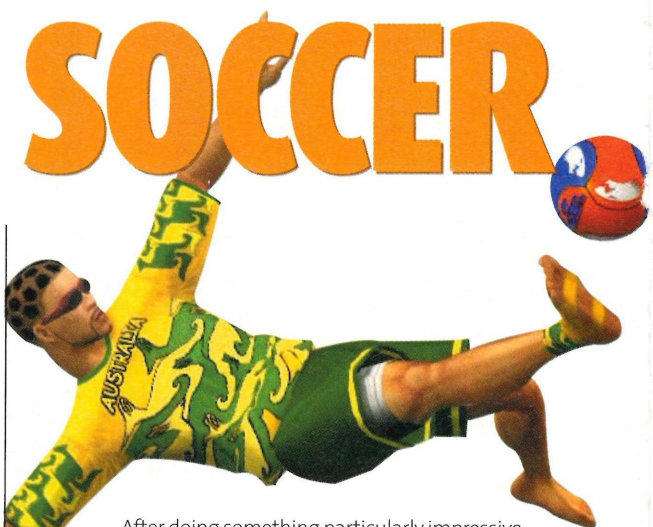
GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Wanadoo
- **PHONE** 02380 647 822
- **WEB** www.wanadoo.fr
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Ah, beach soccer. Isn't that what Eric Cantona dabbled in after his early retirement from proper football? If *Pro Beach Soccer* is what these sandy football exhibitions are really like, it's hardly surprising. It's the sporting equivalent of putting your feet up in front of the TV and sipping hot chocolate. Much of it is played at almost a walking pace. Players rarely seem interested in challenging for the ball, and tackling is a gentlemanly affair – stroll up to a player and he'll either give it up or pretend to trip over his own feet, leaving the ball behind for somebody else to have a go. Robbie Savages of the world need not apply.

To shoot, you have to hold down the button until the power meter is full, at which point the ball flies through the air like a missile, usually ending up buried in the back of the net. Various button combinations activate skills such as flicking the ball up and heading it to a team-mate, who then attempts an overhead volley. That's really as complicated as it gets.

Top Tip
Don't pick England, their passing rating is zero, which will get you nowhere. And as for Scotland...



After doing something particularly impressive, your players start glowing, indicating that they're in a 'state of grace'. This allows access to special abilities, such as the option to hold the right shoulder button and have the ball stick to their feet as if it was attached with velcro.

Pro Beach Soccer's a game that grows on you instead of administering a Kung-Fu kick from the start. It would have been better with a four-player mode, but find someone else with a copy of the game and you'll be in for an interesting seaside stroll. MARTIN KITTS

"A game that grows on you slowly rather than giving you a Kung-Fu kick from the start."

The Exhibition mode does not feature pictures of Victoria Beckham. (Sighs of relief all round.)

Nicely, *Pro Beach Soccer* advantages the more skillful football nations, not just the big names.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Players seem disconnected from the pitch, but the animation is nice.

GAMEPLAY
Fairly sedate, despite the small playing area. Good fun though.

LIFESPAN
You'll need to exploit the two-player mode to get the best out of it.

DIFFICULTY
Some of the computer teams are deadly shots. Watch out!

ADVANCE OPINION
A simple and enjoyable football game that certainly makes a change from the usual kick-and-rush, 11-a-side stuff.

75%

FIFA 2003

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** EA
- **PHONE** 01932 450 000
- **WEB** www.ea.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

"Contains The Most Imbecilic Flaw In A Game Ever."

Well it's *FIFA*, so it's a crime against the beautiful game, right? Not quite, because as a portable football fix the latest installment of EA's love-to-loathe-'em footie franchise isn't too bad at all.

Sure, it still contains The Most Imbecilic Design Flaw In A Game Ever (the insistence on having to manually switch between players), the dimensions of the pitch seem too small, and the dynamics feel like you're kicking a weighty ball of lead about, but *FIFA 2003* isn't a bad little runaround.

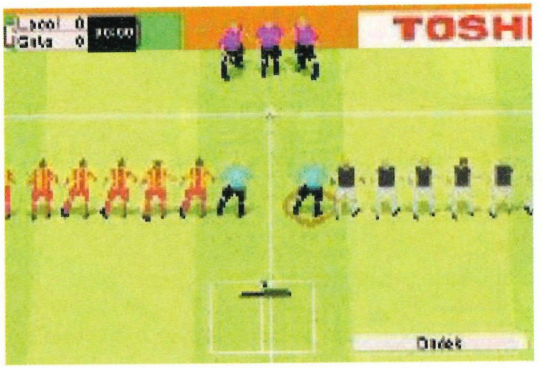
A lot of the charm comes from the licence – so it's Henry to Pires to slot it past Barthez – but a tiny name box in the screen's bottom right-hand corner isn't enough to lend personality to 22 identical isometric men on the field.

But your tactical choices do have an impact and its run-pass-kick simplicity is an experience you can gain genuine mastery at if you put in time. The boy's not done too bad...

ADVANCE OPINION
Put those *FIFA* prejudices away – this is above average footie. Think Blackburn FC, only on your GBA.

61%

★ **Watch Advance perform the classic 'make the goalie dive before the other team shoot' manoeuvre.**



★ **The teams line up in a highly unusual 1-1-1-1-1-1-1-1-1-1 formation. With the goalkeepers up front.**

MORTAL KOMBAT DEADLY ALLIANCE

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Midway
- **PHONE** 020 7938 4488
- **WEB** www.midway.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

"Sucks even harder than a Dyson... Stick to playing *Streetfighter*."

Now, where were we? Oh, yeah, we were saying nice things about the new home console versions of *Mortal Kombat*. We've been playing them a lot. So when Midway offered to send the new GBA version we were much grateful.

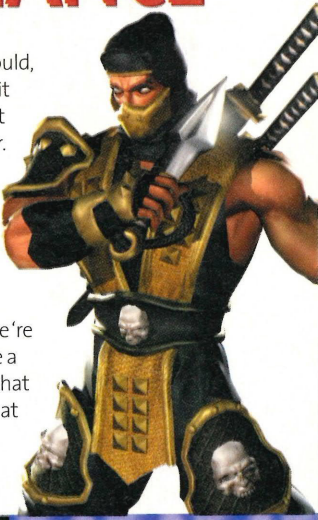
At least we were to start with. Because in the Advance office this morning we've drunk four cups of tea, surfed the internet aimlessly for the best part of 30 minutes and laughed at the ridiculous and quite horrifying Link/Editor Adam scans. Oh, and in the same time we've completed *MK:DA* on the GBA twice and unlocked two new characters. We'd go for the complete set, but we've run out of fun distractions to make it bearable.

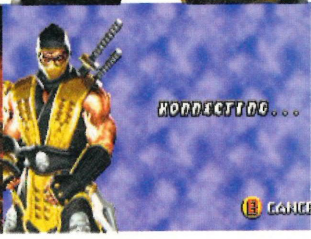
It sucks. Big time. The arenas are nice and Mode-Seveny, and that's the best thing about it. Otherwise you've big, ugly characters that move badly, and a critically knackered combat system that means you can usually win every time by repeating the same move.

★ **No, it's not a snot flinging contest, it's a devastating and awe-inspiring special move. Remember that.**

There's a two-player link-up that could, theoretically, be passable, but frankly it looks so bad that you're unlikely to get any fun out of it. Stick to *Street Fighter*.

To recap, you'll only be playing *MK:DA* for as long as it takes you to work out the Move That Lets You Win Every Time. And though the graphics are kinda picture postcard nice there's only the faintest trace of gameplay to be found. And that's if we're being charitable. Basically, it sucks like a Dyson and the piéce de résistance is that it transpires during the end credits that *MK:DA* had two testing teams. Two! They must have tested something else by mistake.

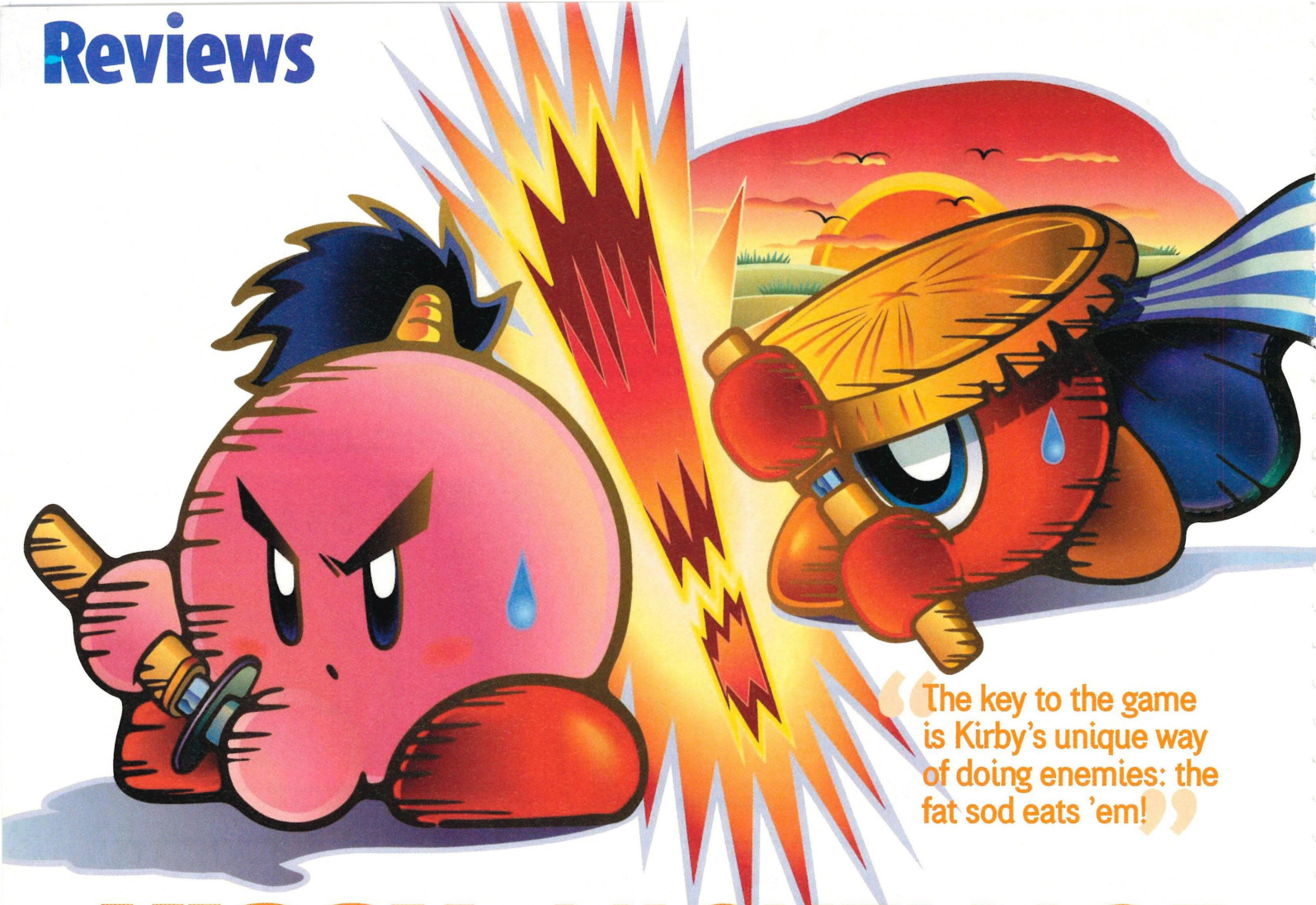




★ **Multiplayer mode offers a temporary reprieve from the one-punch fighting. Oh, the horror.**

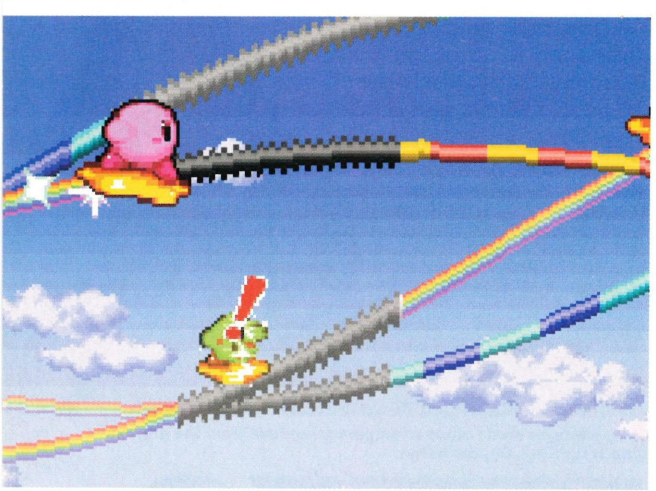
ADVANCE OPINION
Deserves to be to be taken down a dark alley and beaten savagely by its GBA fighting peers.

17%



"The key to the game is Kirby's unique way of doing enemies: the fat sod eats 'em!"

KIRBY: NIGHTMARE IN DREAM LAND



★ The best of the subgames is Kirby Grind – where you race other Kirbys along a pipe and jump over spikey sections.

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Nintendo
- **PHONE** 01932 895 390
- **WEB** www.nintendo.co.uk
- **PRICE** £35
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Yet another Nintendo character from yesteryear is getting the Advance treatment. Kirby, the pink blob that first saw light of day on the NES, makes his GBA debut in an all-new game that will be instantly familiar to his fans. But unlike *Mario Advance* or *Yoshi's Island*, this is no quick-and-dirty port. While it uses the same gameplay elements, the level layouts are completely new, and the graphics have been polished to make the best of the GBA.

It's a platform game, but a brilliantly realised one with superb gameplay dynamics that lift it above the ordinary. Key to this is Kirby's unique method of dealing with his enemies: the fat sod eats 'em! Stabbing the B button causes Kirby to take in a huge breath of air, sucking in any nasties within range. He can then use the unfortunate foes as weapons, by spitting them out again. But that's not all. Kirby's capable of imitating swallowed enemies' attacks, and so by giving them a taste of their own medicine!

And this is the clever bit. These special abilities are not only good for seeing off nasties, but have other side effects that can open up the playing area. There are multiple paths through each level, and only by experimenting will you get to see everything that there is to see...

There are many bosses to fight, but the same technique will see you through – spit their items right back at 'em!

Goodies above, bombs and the angled floor blocking 'em in... Could it be that they might make lasers bounce at right angles?

KOPY KAT KIRBY!

The ability to take on any of his enemies abilities gives Kirby access to more than 20 different types of attacks! Here's how the monster muncher gets to work...

Stand near an enemy and press B to suck him down the cakehole. A further stab of B spits him out as a projectile!

Press Down on the D-pad to swallow your foe and mimic his ability. Kirby sports a new hat to identify this new-found skill!

From now on, pressing B will enable you to use the new ability. They don't just offer new ways of killing enemies...

To check out your new attack, press Start to bring up this description screen for clues of how to use it!

Each level is split into several stages, and completing a stage opens up the path to the next stage, until you eventually reach the end-of-level boss. Simple sub-games are also revealed in this way, as are rooms containing 'free' abilities or rooms that warp you to previously completed levels. You can replay these at any time, to go back for things you might have missed.

Up to four Kirbys can take part simultaneously via link-up mode – just as long as all the players have a copy of the cart. There's nothing you can do in a multiplayer game that you can't do as a solo player, but it's great fun ganging up on the bosses to make short work of them. And if you have just a single cart you can still challenge each other in the simple subgames. Though they are very simple reaction-testers, which generally involve little more than pressing A at the right time, it's still better than nothing.

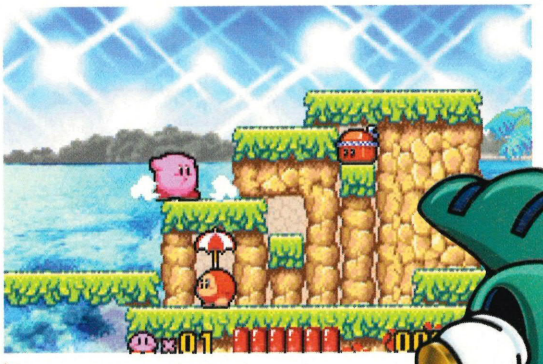
Top Tip
Different enemy types are usually there for a reason. Think about how hijacked abilities could be used to unlock new areas...

Our only real gripe is that *Kirby: Nightmare in Dream Land* just isn't that hard. Enemies can be vacuumed up with ease, and you'll find that you're a lot more dangerous once you've attained their abilities than they generally are. And although you can spend ages exploring all the secret paths through a level, you can also zip through them in no time. Unless you're the kind of gamer who likes to stop and stare this could be a problem. Indeed, unless you're the sort of gamer that likes to stop, stare, make a cup of tea, watch a bit of telly and nip down the pub, it probably will be.

But while it can be completed in a few sittings, there's plenty to come back for. Nintendo is the master of replay value, and to get the most out of the cart, you'll have to revisit the levels to uncover all the secret paths through the levels, and that'll take you a lot longer. ADAM WARING

Link-up allows four Kirbys to take part in a cooperative multiplayer game. It's the same adventure though.

Cute quacking ducks, smiley bees... It's a dangerous world out there in 2003.



Honestly, Kirby eats several levels of blobbys and then tells us he's only fat "cos of his glands."

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Kirby's a powder pink character in a day-glo world, cuteness exemplified.

GAMEPLAY
Lots of attacks to learn but there's no variety in their execution. Just press B.

LIFESPAN
You can zip through *Dream Land* in no time, but there's much to discover.

DIFFICULTY
We can't help but feel that the odds are stacked in Kirby's favour.

ADVANCE OPINION
Kirby proves that 'platformer' isn't a dirty word! An ingenious and appealing game, that's a little on the easy side.

89%

LEGO ISLAND XTREME STUNTS

Stay within range of The Brickster's boat (the little white circle helps you navigate) and you'll win a star.

The 2D skateboard park is not likely to challenge *Tony Hawk's* any time soon.

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** EA
- **PHONE** 01932 450 000
- **WEB** www.lego.com/software
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Lego? Everybody's favourite toy! As you might expect, this one holds joy only for the nippers. Its clunky graphics lack any kind of sophistication, and its bolted-together style is an amalgamation of derivative sub-games.

It all hangs around the concept that you're taking part in a Lego movie as Pepper, the stunt man. Complete one 'scene' (mini-game) and you'll be awarded points – get a bronze, silver or gold star and you'll unlock the next scene of the movie, which you can then access from a top-down map of the studio. Earn enough stars and you'll also open up sealed areas like the Cutting Room and Movie Theatre. 36 gold stars will get you into an Award Ceremony. All the time, your rival co-star, The Brickster, is snapping at your heels. Bless.

The puzzles range from a pizza-based variation on the classic three-in-a-row *Bust-a-Move* formula, to a *Spy Hunter*-style overhead racer. All of them are passably entertaining, although far too forgiving and none of them is as good as the original games on which they're based. All sprites are small and lack charisma. The most fun is to be had from your high-speed 2D speedboat chase (the Wave Catcher) which zips back and forth beneath Lego bridges running overhead. But, again, this is exactly like the water runs from *Spy Hunter*... Just without the guns.

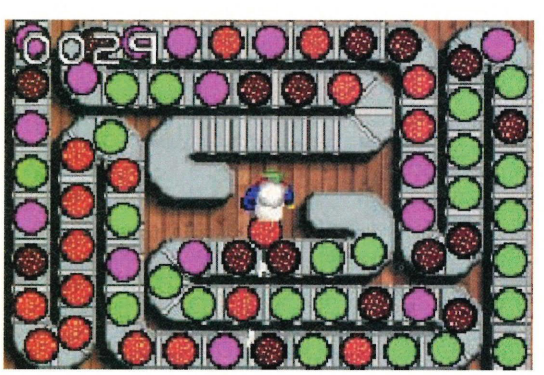
Top Tip

Be mindful of gravity in the Motorbike Mayhem level – make Pepper lean forward to drop the bike's nose, or lean back to tip its rear. This way you can avoid rolling over on long jumps.

Pepper's side-on bike challenge is also frustratingly simplistic. There's no doubt what this game is about – it's designed to keep your kid brother amused for half an hour. If that's what you need, then this is colourful, instantly rewarding, and full of Lego brickiness. You can't fault it for youthful enthusiasm and variety but, if you're a grown up, you can fault it for being unoriginal and tiresome. **DAVE BRADLEY**

> "The most fun is to be had during the 2D speedboat chase, it zips along beneath Lego bridges."

Spy Hunter meets *Micro Machines* meets Lego. Levels like this are fast and almost fun. Almost.



Ugly, ugly, ugly. But hey, it's a pizza flinging game, and you don't see many of those.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Blocky and charmingly amateurish, like an old Spectrum game.

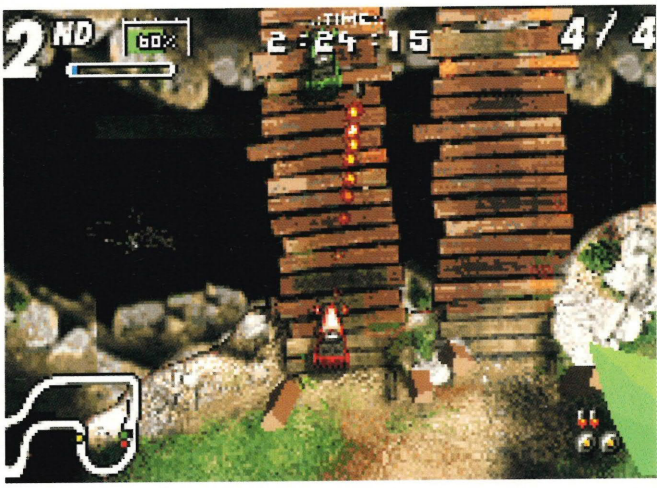
LIFESPAN
Unlocking new levels is fun, but they're never very challenging.

GAMEPLAY
Varied but deeply unsophisticated. *Zelda* it ain't.

DIFFICULTY
It's for kids! Which is why it's mostly button-hammering tedium.

ADVANCE OPINION
Puzzley fun lurks within, but it's so mundane that only five-year-olds need apply.

54%



The red car and green car are having a cracking race. But our money's on the rocket. Just look at the little fellow go!

KARNAAJ RALLY

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Jaleco Entertainment
- **PHONE** 01327 877 321
- **WEB** www.jaleco.com
- **PRICE** £25
- **SAVE** Password
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Take a helping of the classic top-down racer *Micro Machines*, add a pinch of *Death Rally* (circa 1996) and top it off with a title conceived in the mind of a retarded seagull – the result is *Karnaaj Rally*. The name only a mother could love.

The aim of *KR* (as we'll refer to it) is simple; win as many races as you can, using whatever means are at your disposal – including land mines and rockets. The more races you win, the more money you earn and the more equipment you can buy. Surely you know the drill by now?.

To try and spice things up a bit, each league has been set at a different point in history. In the lowest league you drive around in cars straight out of *The Flintstones* and as you progress, so do your vehicles. It's certainly not the most original scenario.

KR's plot may stink but Paragon Five has pulled out all the stops with the game's visuals. Combining 2 and 3D graphics, all of *KR*'s 22 tracks have been given a crispness and depth that we haven't seen before on the GBA. It looks absolutely lush.

Top Tip

KR converts your best lap and race times into an 18-character password. You can enter this password at the official site (www.karnaaj.com) and impress everyone on the inter-web.

Unfortunately, while *KR*'s graphics excel, its sound doesn't. There's a standard backing theme, a few blips and blops as explosions occur, and a bit of digitized speech at the start of each race – hardly impressive stuff. From now on every game developer should be made to sit down and have a listen to *Super Monkey Ball Jr*. Now that's how you do it.

If you're after a quick hit of explosive top-down racing, *KR* could be the fix you're looking for. Or you may want to check out Paragon Five's other GBA racer, a more faithful rendition of *Micro Machines* (see the review on page 43). Who said "one trick pony"? **DAN OLIVER**

> "If you're after a quick hit of explosive top-down racing, *KR* could be the fix you're looking for."

They turn right, they turn left, they brake, they accelerate and they race in okay-ish GBA games. Cars never cease to amaze.

Like every racing game ever, *Karnaaj Rally* is better when your mates play. Especially when they're rubbish.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Karnaaj Rally features some of the best graphics we've seen on the GBA.

GAMEPLAY
Good controls make for entertaining racing, but it's easy to master.

LIFESPAN
You'll get a week of good gaming and there's enough to keep you coming back.

DIFFICULTY
Some tracks may have you stumped, but they're few and far between.

ADVANCE OPINION
A luscious looking game let down by some poor sound, and tracks that aren't as tough as they need to be.

79%

SUPER PUZZLE FIGHTER II TURBO

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Capcom
- **PHONE** 020 8846 2550
- **WEB** www.capcom.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** Password
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

By all rights this should be the GBA puzzle game to send all other GBA puzzle games packing. It's got all the right elements in place: a dinky Ken, a dinky Ryu and a dinky Chun-Li all chucking miniature dragon punches and baby fireballs around willy-nilly, while the classic drop-and-rotate puzzler cascades at lightning speed behind them.

Add eight playable characters, four modes – including one where you play head-to-head on a single GBA – plus a detailed tutorial that'll polish old skills, and you'd think there'd be little that could touch this. But you'd be wrong.

It's a good take on the original game but there are two reasons why Bub and Bobs' scaly tails are still safe. First, you'll find yourself facing a learning curve that initiates you gently then runs you over repeatedly with a bin wagon. The result? A real uncertainty over whether skill or pure luck was responsible for your last victory. Secondly, you'll soon realise that the GBA's screen doesn't do you any favours when it comes to seeing the hollow boxes that get hurled at you by your opponent. Hardly devastating in itself, but still a real bind when it comes to recovery from your linked combos and enough of a handicap to really scupper your defence. Although if you really need an excuse to upgrade to an SP, this could be it. An expensive excuse though, admittedly.

"Has got all the right elements in place, like a diddy Chun Li."

ADVANCE OPINION

Fun but nowhere near good enough to burst the *Bubble Bobble*, um, bubble. Hideous for non SP'ers too.

79%

Super Puzzle Fighter II **That's II for twice as hard, we reckon.**

Mini-Ken ahoy. It's just a shame that there's no Mini-Barbie. Now that's something we'd pay quite a lot to see.

YU-GI-OH: THE ETERNAL DUELIST SOUL

GAMEINFO

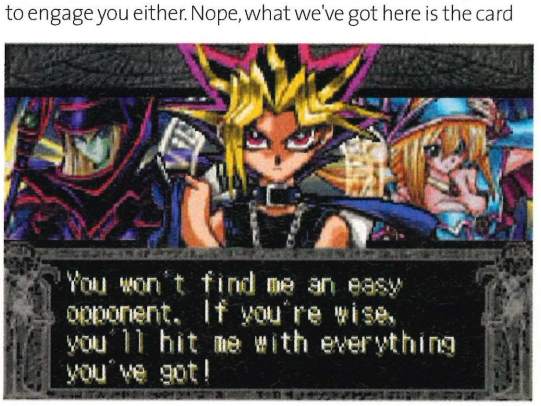
- **PUBLISHER** Konami
- **PHONE** 01895 470 503
- **WEB** www.konami-europe.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Like *Pokémon* and *Magic The Gathering* before it, *Yu-Gi-Oh!* is the latest collectible card game (CCG) to grab the attention of deck warriors all over the world. With hundreds of cards to choose from, each deck is unique and there lies the challenge – painstakingly building a killer deck that will beat down any and all comers. It will take time and skill, but for the dedicated, the rewards are rich.

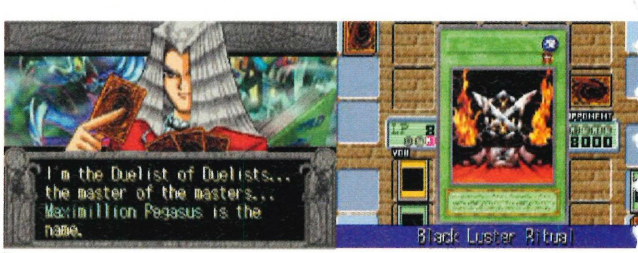
If you've never played *Yu-Gi-Oh!* before though, this isn't the place to start, because you won't have a clue how to play it. Not only is there no tutorial mode, but there's no story mode to engage you either. Nope, what we've got here is the card game, pure and simple. Albeit one with plenty of options in the main menu – card trading, password entry (so owners of real cards can input the printed codes and get them in the game), link battle, deck edit, etc.

Even though it is a game that has complex depths, it often seems rather slight. You've got creatures. They've got creatures. They all have varying powers. And because of the very nature of the game you're either going to love it, or not give a fetid dingo's kidney about it. Add 20% if you love the card game, and subtract it if you have no interest in it.

"If you've never played *Yu-Gi-Oh!* this isn't the place to start."



***Yu-Gi-Oh!* works best when you link-up with a friend. It's still targeted squarely at CCG fanatics, though.**



Maxmillian Pegasus isn't your real name we'd wager you big ponce. Can't we just call you Dave?

ADVANCE OPINION

A fun, strategic CCG that takes the no-frills approach and does it well. Fans of the card game will find everything they need.

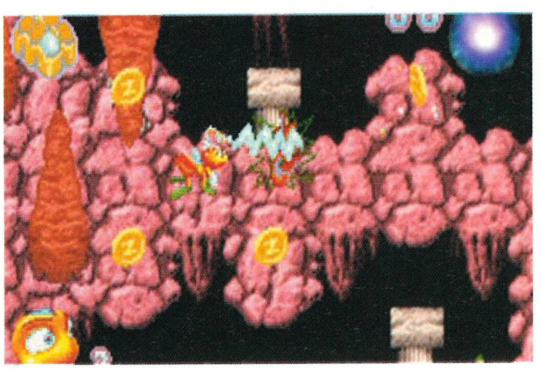
60%

Sub games break up the tedium. But not much.

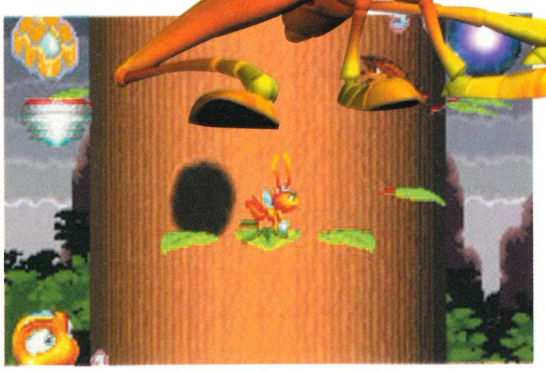
ZAPPER

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Infogrames
- **PHONE** 0161 827 8060
- **WEB** www.infogrames.com
- **PRICE** £20
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** 1-4
- **OUT** Now



We can't shake the feeling that *Zapper* was meant to be on a handheld, just not this one. The Sega Game Gear, maybe?



The boredom continues! Despite Infogrames' best efforts the *Frogger* formula has well and truly croaked it, sorry.

Despite being about 178 *Frogger*, Konami's ancient, road-hopping hero is still very much alive and well and starring in a whole series of modern updates.

> "*Zapper* stomps all over poor *Frogger*'s grave before its even made any funeral arrangements."

Top Tip

Use the shoulder buttons to rotate and the B button to hop forward over two spaces. Saves having to mess around with the D-pad.

But it seems nobody told the people who made this game, as *Zapper* stomps all over *Frogger*'s grave, long before the poor amphibian has even dreamt about making his own funeral arrangements.

It's incredibly similar to most of *Frogger*'s more recent outings, with the main differences being that Zapper is a large grasshopper rather than a warty old toad and that this game is stupendously fiddly to play.

Here, the aim is to hop around large mazes, collecting tokens and flipping switches to activate bridges or open alternate routes. Zapper can also fire short bursts of electricity from between his antennae to break open crates that may or may not contain bonus items.

Out to stop him are a selection of strange enemies such as cartoon rabbits and what look very much like toilet rolls with groping hands poking out of the sides. Avoiding them is a matter of timing, complicated by the annoying controls.

Zapper often needs to turn around to face a hazard so he can jump over it, but doing the intuitive thing and pressing the control pad in the appropriate direction makes him hop straight into it. You actually have to use the shoulder buttons to rotate him before you can carry on in the direction you want, which is incredibly frustrating.

It could have been better, but basing a concept on a series of games that wasn't all that good in the first place is a surefire recipe for a loser. MARTIN KITTS

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Having to move around from square to square doesn't require much.

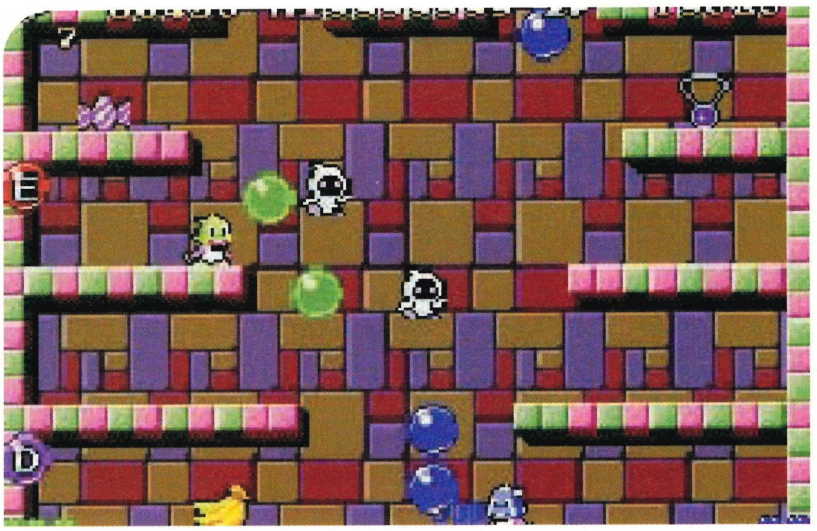
LIFESPAN
Mulitplayer and bonus time trial modes to keep you busy if you want.

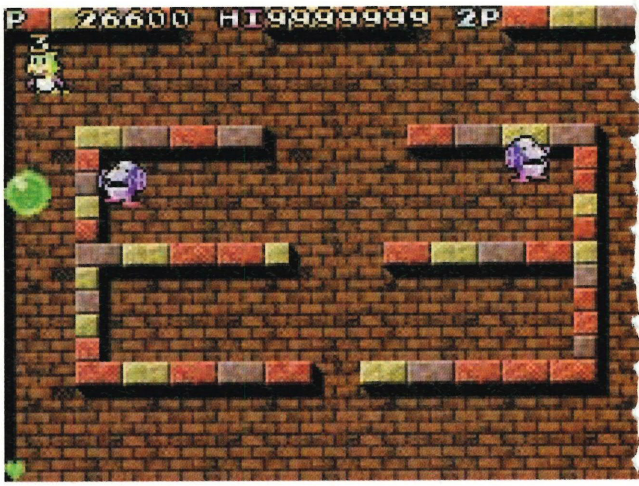
GAMEPLAY
Uninspired and uninspiring. Very basic by today's standards.

DIFFICULTY
Made harder by the awkward controls. Hardly worth persevering with.

ADVANCE OPINION
Companies complain that GBA games don't make any money, but it's hardly surprising if this is the best they can do.

30%





Ever wondered why dinosaurs became extinct? It's 'cos they caught prey in bubbles and ate fruit if *BB* is to be trusted.

BUBBLE BOBBLE OLD AND NEW

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Empire
- **PHONE** 020 8343 7337
- **WEB** www.empireinteractive.com
- **PRICE** £20
- **SAVE** Password
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

You can't beat the classics, can you? Yet when we see a modern update of a game we've spent a near lifetime on, our first reaction is usually a wary one. Like walking towards your car and realising that the glass on the pavement used to be your passenger window.

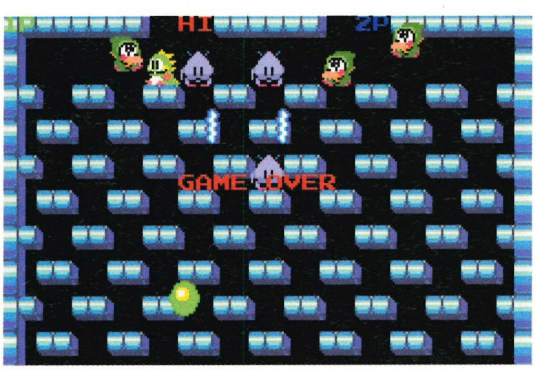
But fortunately, nobody's swiped the CD player out of *Bubble Bobble*, even if it does have that *Old & New* tag. And even more fortunately, it's no relation to the dismal Game Boy versions of the past. This is genuine *Bubble Bobble*, and it's as great as it ever was.

Top Tip
Grab the umbrellas! They only make brief and infrequent appearances but the brollies forward you on several levels.

To recap, for those who might not have run into *Bubble Bobble* before, it's a platform game with a strong puzzle element, involving two dinosaurs that blow magic bubbles. The bubbles are used to imprison bullies, which then turn into fruit when the bubble is popped (by jumping on it or introducing it to a dinosaur's spiny back). Chain reactions score big points, and the faster a screen is completed the better the chances of getting something really tasty on the next one, like a giant slab of cake or the queen mother of all watermelons.

It's a great solo game and a magical two-player experience (which is why it comes bundled with a free link cable). After about the halfway mark in the 100-screen journey, it starts to get pretty tough without the help of a second player. Anyway, things are much more fun throughout when the two dinosaurs are co-operating to burst bubbles, and competing like demons to steal the best bits of fruit. Various power-up items also appear from time to time, such as speed shoes and sweeties (for enhancing the bubbles).

> "A great solo game and a magical dual experience... A totally brilliant conversion."



The Space Invaders make a brief appearance... And make our appearance on the level briefer. There's a poem in that.

Aside from the item diary, the only real differences between *Old & New* versions are aesthetic – new look baddies, snazzy new backgrounds and a new theme tune. *Bubble Bobble* fans might be a little put out by the new music, but it's grown on us after a few hundred repetitions.

Tapping the left shoulder button scales the graphics to fit the screen, which is surely the only way to play, and there's a single-cart link-up mode with a taster selection of the first 12 screens. You'll have to get two carts if you want to play it properly but that's still cheaper than an arcade machine.

It's a brilliant conversion, and the fact that we've split our time fairly evenly between the two variations shows that the modern update isn't to be sniffed at. MARTIN KITTS

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Pleasantly retro in *Old* with pleasant bells and whistles in *New*.

LIFESPAN
The two-player mode ought only to be available on perscription.

GAMEPLAY
Head scratching, reaction testing, puzzle perfection. CLASSIC in capitals.

DIFFICULTY
Has that 'we'll crack it next time' gig down to a tee. It's a challenge.

ADVANCE OPINION
Classic game becomes cracking GBA cart and your £20 gets you a link cable to boot. Even a screaming banshee couldn't scream bargain any louder.

90%

ATV QUAD POWER RACING

GAMEINFO

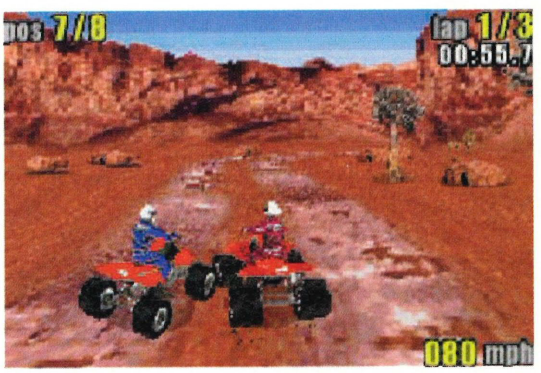
- **PUBLISHER** Acclaim
- **PHONE** 0207 344 5000
- **WEB** www.acclaim.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Another one that's leaving us colder than the meat section at Iceland. It's an 'into the screen' racer that replaces the customary ground-hugging automobile with the highly-sprung physics of the quad. Which, it has to be said, is this game's only saving grace. Over-compensate your turns while airborne and you'll bounce out of contention. Stray into the mud at the sides of the track and you'll slow to a crawl. And there's even a switchable camera that gives you two perspectives on the action.

Everything else is bad mind, the power-ups are brown and there are only two of them that boost your speed. (The third type pointlessly beefs up your height on jumps.) Not only that, but there are just three types of bike to unlock, each carrying four attributes that you can't upgrade. Sweet Jiminy! Grab your handlebars tight and steer clear of this rancid little toad of a racing game. Avoid, please.

ADVANCE OPINION
Quite frankly, we've had more fun racing stairlifts. For an unplayable mess it has nice handling, though.
36%

"Steer your handlebars clear of this rancid toad of a racer."



Riders fight for the right to give up and go and play something better. Like *Kirby*. Or tiddlywinks.

ATV racing is bloody awQUAD, ho, ho. Trust us, if you played it you'd have nothing but bad puns FOUR it either.

RAYMAN 3: HOODLUM HAVOC

GAMEINFO

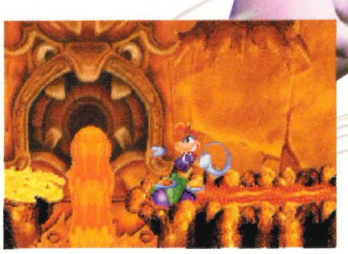
- **PUBLISHER** Ubisoft
- **PHONE** 01932 838 230
- **WEB** www.ubisoft.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

Rayman 3 in 'not that different from *Rayman*'s 1 & 2' shocker. Next month 'that Jennifer Lopez is pretty tasty, isn't she?'

Like the recipe for scrambled eggs, *Rayman* hasn't changed its format for donkey's years. Your divot pal Globox is in trouble again, the Lums are back in their cages and it's up to you to rescue the little sh... shysters for a third time running. Incredibly, this doesn't mean that *R3* is a pile of steaming old dog logs.

The front end is mechanically convincing, but the layout of the levels isn't as straightforward as the screenshots here might have you believe. As with all platform heroes, *Rayman*'s task is to get from A to B, but here there's no guarantee where B might actually be located. Up a climbable vine? Across a piranha-infested lake? On top of a floating flower head? There's a depth to level design that has you exploring every crevice in order to find first the Lums and then the way out. But for all the complexity in layout and sharpness of design, there's no getting away from the fact that there's little new going on in the foreground. Rayman does that thing with his hair, and that thing with his fist and – until you get two levels in and (hurrah!) uncover a water-skiing minigame – you'd be forgiven for thinking that you'd picked up *Rayman 2* by accident. Easy to get into, easy to master and just as easily forgotten.

"You could be forgiven for thinking you'd picked up *Rayman 2*."

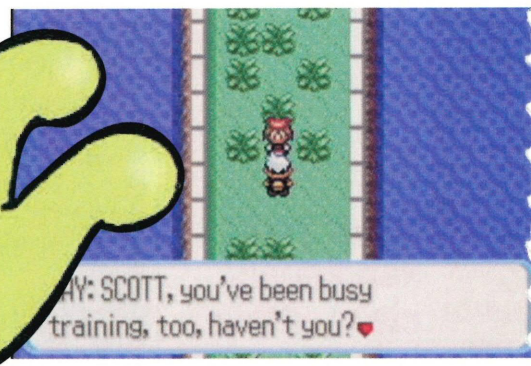


Watch out for that sea of lava. Now who should have had the plumbers in?

ADVANCE OPINION
It does what it does but it's been doing it for bloomin' ages. Not bad, but it's all looking rather tired now, thinks we.
79%

The fighting screens come with a crazy amount of info now, including gender. How very politically correct.

> "There's altogether less back-tracking and more meaningful action from the word go."



Meet your new rival, May. She's a complete sweetheart though – even when you beat her.

POKÉMON RUBY & SAPPHIRE

GAMEINFO

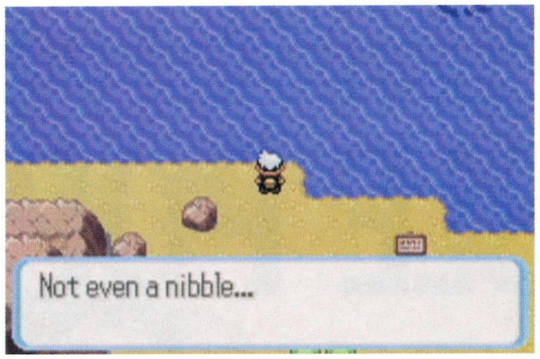
- **PUBLISHER** Nintendo
- **PHONE** 01932 895 390
- **WEB** www.nintendo.co.uk
- **PRICE** £35
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** July

We were worried about these two. For a few hours it looked like *Pokémon* was about to become the new *FIFA*. A lazy franchise that gets updated every year or so for no discernable reason other than to make cart-loads of cash. And your first impressions are likely to be disappointing, as the new games begin in EXACTLY the same manner as *Red/Blue/Yellow/Gold/Silver/Crystal*. What was Professor Oak and Veridian Forest in *RYB* has become Professor Birch and Petalburg Woods in *Ruby* and *Sapphire*, but that appears to be the sum lot of changes.

As experienced Poké fanatics we were also disappointed to learn that we had to quite literally start the beast-basketing quest from scratch again too, as it's impossible to upload any of the 251 beasties you might have caught previously in the Game Boy Color adventures onto a GBA cart. And then there were the graphics that completely fail to take advantage of the GBA's power...

But just as we were beginning to despair the game really kicked in. Because whereas *RBY* often felt rather haphazard – wander around in shrubs, fight Pokémon, wander around some more – it's clear that the action in *Ruby* and *Sapphire* has been locked more tightly into the plot. There's altogether

This doddery old freak is just one of the weirdos you have to help along. Rescue his gull and he'll take you sailing.



Even Poké-world isn't immune to the cod shortage, it seems. Either that or we're just natural land-lubbers.

less backtracking and more meaningful action from the first gym battle in.

In fact, as well as the ingeniously structured quest to become the master Poké-trainer there's also an epic yarn which pits you against Team Magma's (Or Aqua, if you're playing *Sapphire*) plot to destroy the environment. Nicely, the save-the-world story dovetails onto your Poké-training quest when you least expect it, bringing some pretty freaky characters into play with it. Like trainers who only fight with the lights out. Or who run beach bars. Or who are obsessed by some new rubbish card-collecting craze that appears to be Digimon. Oh, the satire.

The fights themselves are also much much improved. To begin with there's a provision for two-on-two battles now, as well as a huge variety of ultra-powerful HM and TMs (which allow Flying Pokémon to master Grass moves, for example). Then there are all new options such as the facility to make your Pokémon carry a power-enhancing pick up such as a, er, Silk Scarf into battle. Throw a whopping 351 Pokémon into the mix and you soon have a fighting system of mind-bending complexity that always affords the player a – yes! – fighting chance.

Top Tip

Making a map of the *Ruby/Sapphire* world and marking where certain Pokémon can be found pays dividends.

If all that wasn't enough, you can compete in some Crufts-type sub-quests as well. It sounds ridiculous, but preparing your Poké to compete for ribbons in the coolest, cutest, smartest, toughest and most beautiful Pokémon categories is more fun than it has any right to be.

When asked what prompted the creation of Mario, Shiguru Miyamoto replied that he wanted to recreate the feeling he had of living in a mini-world he had when he was a kid. Well, Pokémon is an entire imaginative UNIVERSE. We suggest you book a ticket now. **SCOTT ANTHONY**

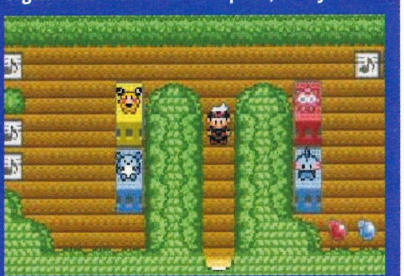
A WHOLE NEW WORLD

Much of *Ruby/Sapphire* will be familiar to fans of the series, indeed, just like previous games the *Ruby/Sapphire* cartridges can, and indeed, need to be linked up together if you want to catch the rarest mini beasties on offer. But while many of the principles may have remained the same, so much of the GBA games are different. Like what? Like the stuff below – and don't worry dear readers, there's plenty more surprises where this lot came from.

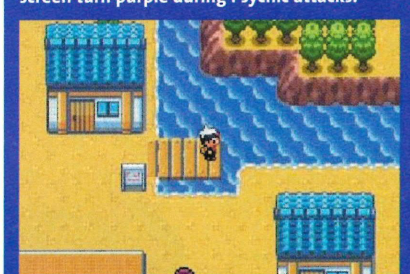
***Ruby* and *Sapphire* nick plenty of ideas from *Harvest Moon*. Learning to cultivate berries bestows your charges with new powers.**

New game, new characters. The not-very-sinister Devon Corp are everywhere. But no organisation can be that hapless, surely?

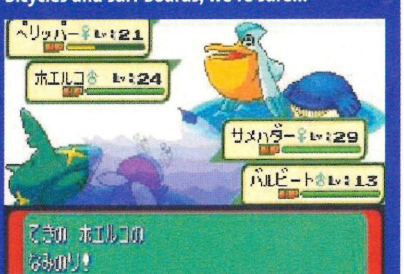
The graphical effects are limited. One of the nicest new features makes, um, the battle screen turn purple during Psychic attacks.



Every hero needs a retreat and now you get yours. The perfect secret hiding place for bicycles and surf boards, we're sure...



The new games go sub-quest mental. Earning the favour of locals is the only way to cross the game's oceans. Every good turn etc.



Two-on-two tag team fights are one of the biggest innovations on offer in *Ruby* and *Sapphire*. Best learn your types well, then.

It's Pokémon Crufts – every bit as ridiculous as the real Crufts but the winners haven't had plastic surgery. Allegedly.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Some nice touches but rather Etch-A-Sketchy by GBA standards.

LIFESPAN
Say goodbye to the Easter/Summer/Xmas holidays.

GAMEPLAY
Underneath the cutesy presentation it's a hardcore RPG.

DIFFICULTY
Perfectly pitched, maximum addictive but still testing for Poké-veterans.

ADVANCE OPINION
The deepest, most playable, and all round bestest Poké-game so far. Worryingly, there's plenty of room for more sequels too.

94%

★ ***Super Bubble Pop*** **makes a token effort at unseating *Tetris*. But the ancient puzzler's on another level completely.**

SUPER BUBBLE POP

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Jaleco Entertainment
- **PHONE** 01327 877 321
- **WEB** www.jaleco.com
- **PRICE** £25
- **SAVE** Password
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

Super Bubble Pop **is yet another attempt to re-capture the *Tetris* zeitgeist. You take on the role of a futuristic DJ (we have absolutely no idea why) that must clear a 3D grid of coloured bubbles, by grouping them in horizontal and vertical lines of three or more. As you do.**

There are four difficulty settings, affecting the speed and number of advancing bubbles, and as well as the standard bubble-popping action you can also get your hands on power-ups that enable rows to be frozen, time to be gained and, if you fill your power bar, the whole board to be cleared in one explosive sonic boom thing.

Top Tip

To turn off the sound on Bubble Pop go to Options and then select Jukebox. Now put an X next to all the tracks. Voila!

The three-dimensional nature of the game (where you have to consider the horizontal as well as the vertical) introduces a potentially interesting play on more conventional 'stackers', but is let down by the fact you can't really make out what's going on behind each stack of bubbles. Very very irritating indeed – which takes us nicely onto the in-game music.

If you like Euro cheese more than Terry Wogan you'll be bopping along to *Bubble Pop*'s soundtrack without a care in the world; if, like the majority of the world's population, you don't, you'll be scrambling to turn off this irritating dirge quicker than you can say "DJ Otzi". We found ourselves doing the latter.

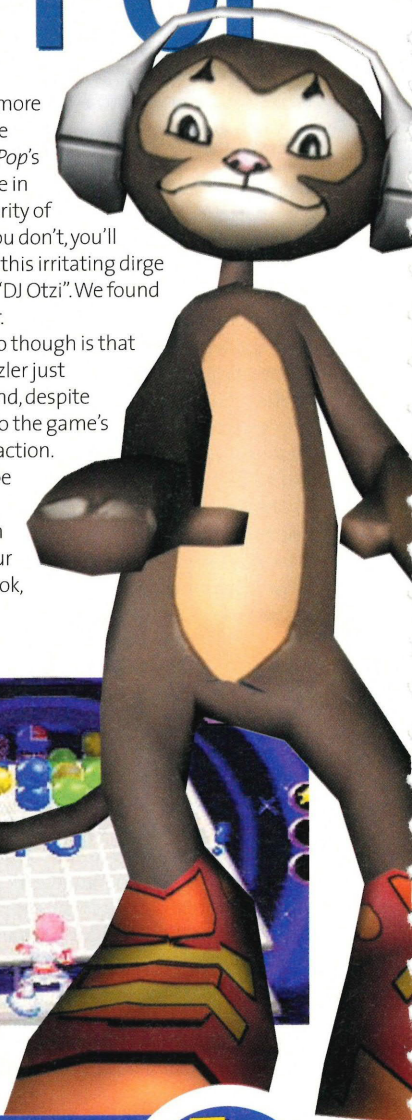
What it comes down to though is that this bubble-bursting puzzler just doesn't work well in 3D and, despite the obvious effort put into the game's music, it drove us to distraction. Hardened puzzlers may be won over, but we found ourselves fumbling down the back of the sofa for our original *Tetris* cart. Ooh look, we've just found a quid.

DAN OLIVER

"You'll be scrambling to turn off the irritating dirge quicker than you can say "DJ Otzi"."

★ **For your benefit we've turned the sound down – trust us readers you'd rather hear the new Justin Timberlake record.**

★ **You play a superstar DJ who looks like a monkey.**



LOOK 'N' FEEL
The GBA handles all the 3D multi-coloured action commendably.

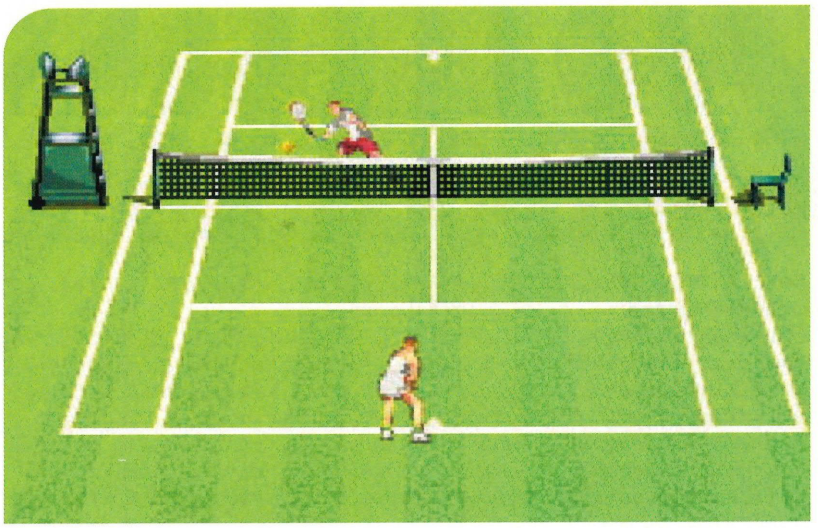
LIFESPAN
Pap and annoying from the off and still pap and annoying weeks later.

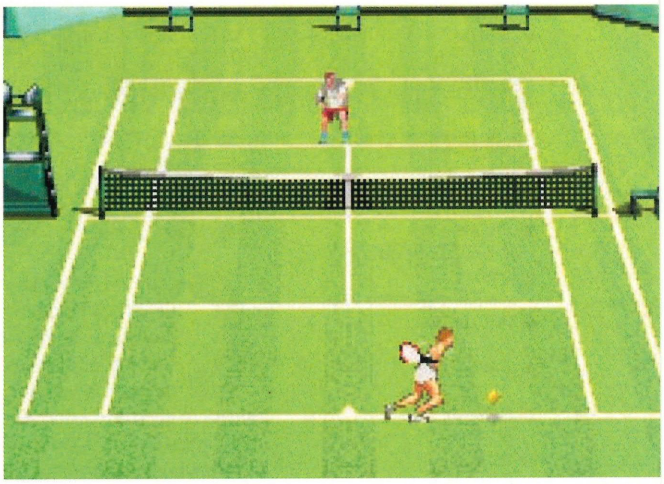
GAMEPLAY
As puzzlers go, it's a long long way off the Premiership.

DIFFICULTY
With four difficulty levels on offer there's plenty of scope.

ADVANCE OPINION
No multiplayer, annoying sound, confusing 3D and the feeling that you've seen it all before make this a deeply average game.

47%





First the umpire, then the ballboys... Will the players be replaced by green chairs too, we wonder?

VIRTUA TENNIS

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Infogrames/Sega
- **PHONE** 0207 7938 4488
- **WEB** www.infogrames.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Why should it always be such a revelation when great gameplay gets translated from the bigger consoles onto GBA? Great gameplay is great gameplay, regardless of size. Perhaps it's the result of so many good console titles receiving a half-arsed treatment at the hands of coders eager to cash in on licences... We've certainly seen enough of those in the past. Yes, that's you we're talking to *Medal Of Honor*, *Driver 2*...

Thankfully, that isn't the case as far as *Virtua Tennis* is concerned. If you've seen this game in action in the arcades or on the Dreamcast, then you'll know all about the all-round excellence that is on offer here.

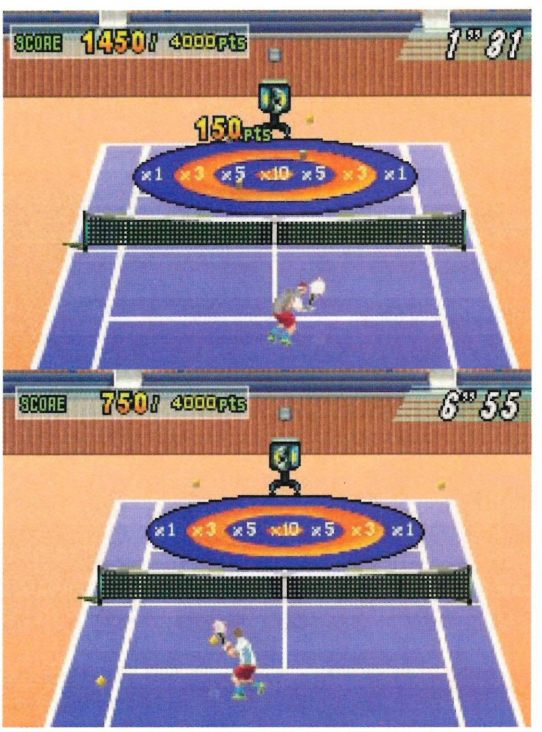
Twelve recognisable faces from the world circuit (although some, like the Williams sisters, are more recognisable than others – yes, that means you, Eddy Souw) are complimented by four difficulty settings and a mind-spinningly comprehensive World Tour mode. That's a mind-spinningly comprehensive World Tour mode that includes a reasonably detailed character editing option, alongside a pleasing array of mini practice games to hone your skills against.

Top Tip
The difference between a devastating volley and a pat in the air is timing. Practice it. Learn it.

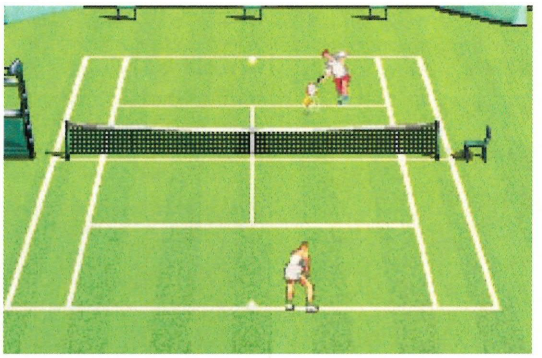
Don't get us wrong though, the profusion of extras aren't covering up failings at the game mechanic level. In fact, the bonus is that the game's awesome attention to detail, doesn't let up once you get out on the court. True, your choice of shots is fairly limited by there only being just the two action buttons on the GBA. But mix these up with a press forward for a follow through, or a pull back for a drop shot, and you'll soon have your opponents flailing on the tramlines. Smashing.

As with any other incarnation of this title though, the true brilliance of *Virtua Tennis* only shines through whenever you get enough mates together to have a bash at the multiplayer modes. Like all the best things in life. This game's about coming together, dominating each other, and learning to hate. Utter genius. JOHNNY BRYANT

> "This game's about coming together, dominating each other, and learning to hate."



Now we're no experts, but playing against a serving machine doesn't seem the smartest idea.



The perspective looks wonky, but the game is a Wimbledon champion of playability. Trust us.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
As lovely as Serena Williams in her little black PVC dress.

GAMEPLAY
Proves that two-button tennis can be as deep as a ream of stats.

LIFESPAN
For as long as you have friends, you'll have fun with this game.

DIFFICULTY
It's no walkover, but it's a fair challenge. You'll learn to love it.

ADVANCE OPINION
Sega's DC smash takes the best GBA tennis title game, set and match. An ace among duds.

85%

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Infogrames/Atari
- **PHONE** 0208 222 9700
- **WEB** www.infogrames.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

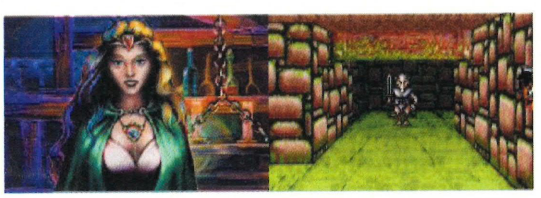
Combat's the make-or-break factor of any RPG, and yet this simple fact seems to have bypassed developers Pronto games by a moon mile. While the battles of the PC original – launched way back in 1991 – were good, solid rucks that featured the ability to slam doors down onto enemy heads mid-scrap, the fights of this GBA reimagining are as brittle as a freeze-dried twiglet. Run into a gang of orcs, skeletons or zombies and the 3Dish maze world suddenly flattens out into a basic top-down strategic view. Then everything slows... down...

The idea of missing an attack is one we all recognise. Even in the excellent *Golden Sun* there are times when an enemy's dexterity allows them to dodge a blow. But here, the rogue non-connecting shots are standard – at least to start with – while the *Conan*-style bone-shatterers are rarer than hen's teeth. All of which add up to enemy encounters that limp along while your uninspired stick-men miss again, and again, and again, and... Zzzzzz.

Things do improve as you start to acquire better weapons and build up your experience points but, here again, it all becomes muddled thanks to a useless interface. Now, there are menus in an RPG and there are MENUS. Take giving an item to a fellow party member. First, you've got to locate the character who's holding what you want to trade via a few taps of the R button. Then you have to identify the Inventory icon that leads you to a sub-menu entitled Trade Item, and so on. It wears your patience so thin that when the in-game puzzles finally start to arrive, you really can't be arsed to expend any energy on them.

Anything actually good about it, then? Well, the first-person exploration stuff is convincing, the ability to design your own characters a cool extra, and the fact that there are over 80 spells means there's plenty of depth. Problem is, there are only so many RPGs you can afford to play in one lifetime and this, regrettably, isn't one of them.

"When the in-game puzzles arrive you can't be arsed to do them."



Eyes drawn to the breasts on the left? Congratulations, you're normal. Or were you gawping at the Orc? You big freak.

ADVANCE OPINION

Beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, but this is a pretty ugly offering by anyone's standards.

41%

DAVE MIRRA 3 FREESTYLE BMX

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Acclaim
- **PHONE** 0207 344 5000
- **WEB** www.acclaim.com
- **PRICE** £35
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

There are 11 huge and good-looking levels in this bike-'em-up sequel. There are a range of big name BMX riders (so we're told). You can even create your own rider. But for us, the coolest thing about *Dave Mirra*'s latest wheel-fest is the soundtrack.

Neatly digitised is, amongst others, *Advance*'s preferred Green Day track, *Basket Case*. The style of play is enormously familiar – it's not as polished as any of the *Tony Hawk's* series, and it doesn't do much more than the other BMX titles. But it remains possible to pull off a range of impressive stunts, and the control system (which is slightly less intuitive than you'd hope for) gives the impression of freedom. The biker animation, however, while acceptable lacks the character of everybody's skateboarding favourite. The interface and selection screens are sadly messy too. Which leaves the game's saving grace as the super-competitive link up mode. Oh yes, and the great music. Rock on.

We've heard it said that when this cart looks in the mirror, it sees a *Tony Hawk's* game, except not as good. Bit harsh perhaps.

It's true, Dave-O's bike looks more like a scooter than an extreme sports-mobile, but the game still rides like a mean 'un.

"Not as polished as the *Hawk's* games but still tops."

ADVANCE OPINION

A wheelie good extreme sports game that'll ease the wait to the Hawkster's next outing.

76%

It's a boat race! Like that one between Cambridge and Oxford, but not featuring those teams, or rowers, or on The Thames.

MICRO MACHINES

GAMEINFO

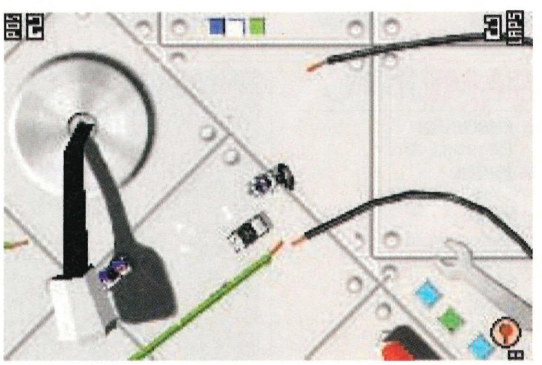
- **PUBLISHER** Infogrames
- **PHONE** 020 8222 9700
- **WEB** www.infogrames.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Got fond memories of the bubble-headed drivers of *Micro Machines V3*? Then you'll feel right at home here. From the Danger Ranger – think a porky Buzz Lightyear – to frail old Aunt Betty on her vintage motorbike, this has all the character appeal that made the original great.

Top Tip
Being an old-skool racer, there're no short cuts other than learning the race layouts off by heart.

The weapons of mass destruction are back too. *Micro Machines* has always taken whacking the opposition out of contention seriously, and no more so than here. Old favourites return alongside new road killers. Bubble traps, freeze bombs, grenade launchers, electro rays...The list goes on, as does the spread of race options.

If you're after a nifty fix, try Quick Race, while Championship mode allows you to customise victory conditions by limiting the number of opponents, or by offering you a knockout or cup route to domination. Fancy a more violent day at the races? Then Bombtag turns all the courses into destruction derby arenas .

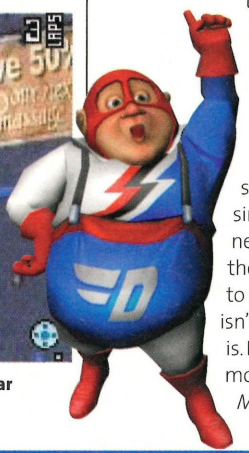


***Micro Machines*, they call it. But what if it wasn't that the cars were small but the spanners were very big. It's a thought. eh?**

So initially, everything seems as it should be in the Machine room. Then you hit the overly sharp brakes and realise that, despite the respray, this is still a vintage roadster. For all its charm the game remains resolutely 2D and the time needed to master all the tracks is far too long. There are ways to boost your chances of survival – collect all the on-screen letters and trade them for extra lives – but as the power ups move from lap to lap, it's a haphazard business.

The multiplayer modes do offer salvation in the fact that they cater for both single and multipak link modes, but you'll need to find four mates willing to condition themselves to the way *Micro Machines* plays to really set the competition alight. Which isn't to say this is anything but a solid karter. It is. It's just that, for the same amount of money, *Mario Kart* does everything *Micro Machines* does, only better. **JOHNNY BRYANT**

Despite the higher-than-the-sun difficulty level, the car sparring is always top notch. Get it on Advancers.



"A more than solid Karter, albeit one that is not quite in the *Mario Kart* league."

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Big is beautiful, they say. But *Micro Machines* looks pretty tasty too.

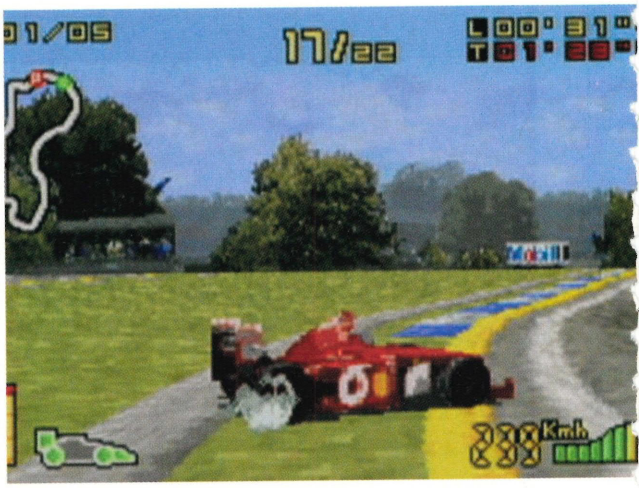
GAMEPLAY
It's 2D driving, which should be about as fashionable as flares. But it isn't.

LIFESPAN
Like a big tree, or a small universe, you could get eons out of this.

DIFFICULTY
If they made driving tests this hard, there'd only be 47 people driving.

ADVANCE OPINION
Old fashioned, top-down, racing that eschews the something-for-everyone appeal of *Mario Kart* for hardcore kicks.

83%



They say there's a fine line between success and failure but they're wrong, we're just not very good. Even with trolleys.

F1 2002

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Electronic Arts
- **PHONE** 01932 450 000
- **WEB** www.ea.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

We're waiting to pounce on the green light. Waiting to pounce from the back of the grid, that is. How cunning of us.

Somehow we've managed to spin off the track again – it's that old mistook the brake for the accelerator thing.

Formula One has come under severe criticism over the last couple of years, but no matter how predictable or not the real thing may be, videogame F1 just keeps on motoring, for better or for worse.

This GBA version is notable for its impressive 3D graphics and intense speed, although it isn't without some severe flaws. It zooms along at an almost *F-Zero*-esque pace, with 21 computer opponents to compete with and trackside scenery constructed of 3D polygons, just like the big console versions.

Top Tip

Make good use of the brakes. The game will drag you through corners, but you'll spin out if you approach too fast.

However, you'll do well to recognise individual tracks by their signature landmarks. The courses have their curves and straights in all the right places, but only veteran F1 fans accustomed to SNES and Mega Drive games will be able to tell the difference between, say, Monaco and Melbourne. Equally, the banked corner at Indianapolis is completely flat, and there are no slopes where there ought to be.

The game's difficulty level is intense too, compounded by the fact that you can't see more than a couple of hundred metres ahead. Chicanes often come as a complete surprise, and despite the car being artificially dragged around corners (there's little freedom of movement here), it's all too easy to end up spinning out of control. (We understand how you manage to do it so often now, Jenson.)

Despite its slickness there's no doubting that *F1 2002* suffers in comparison to its peers, either. There are better-looking and better-handling GBA racing games, particularly *V-Rally* and the aforementioned *F-Zero*. *F1 2002* smacks of overambition, attempting something that the GBA just isn't capable of.

Cutting-edge coding is fine by us, but it has to be backed up with playable and exciting gameplay. Sadly, *F1 2002* doesn't really have that. **MARTIN KITTS**

> "Despite its slickness *F1 2002* suffers badly in comparison with *F-Zero* and *V Rally*."

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Fast and smooth, but you can't see corners until you're through them.

LIFESPAN
There's a two-player mode and the full range of F1 season options to explore.

GAMEPLAY
It just doesn't handle like console F1 games, and isn't a great deal of fun.

DIFFICULTY
Harder than it should be, thanks to the low visibility and poor handling.

ADVANCE OPINION
The most technologically advanced sport on Earth comes to the most humble console around, with predictable results.

55%

TARZAN RETURN TO THE JUNGLE

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Activision
- **PHONE** 01753 756 100
- **WEB** www.activision.co.uk
- **PRICE** £20
- **SAVE** Password
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

What would Tarzan do if he had one of those 'can't-be-arsed' days? He'd probably lounge in his hammock for a while, take a swing down to the river, then meet up with Jane for a few Um Bongos. Attractive propositions, especially when faced with yet another dull, side-scrolling platformer. Actually, that's a bit harsh, as *Return to the Jungle* does offer some you acrobatic scope when it comes to leaping around.

As far as vine connoisseurs go, there are few that can beat Tarzan. He can swing on them, slide down them, monkey bar along them or use them as bungie ropes to gain height... And it's all animated with snake-like grace. The kicker is the way you get him to perform these feats of agility. For longer bounds you need some speed, via the B-button, but to leap into the air you need to then press the A-button. A bad design moment, to be sure. Bearable, as long as you're not involved in the split-second timing of the deadly vine slides. A couple of unjustified deaths later, and you're wondering if Jane might be up for a night on the town...

"Another dull platformer... Yet another bad design moment."

ADVANCE OPINION

Me average platformer, you'd be well advised to save you cash for *Yoshi's Island: Mario Advance 3*.

52%

Return To The Jungle sees Tarzan make an unlikely return to the Gambian Forest from, er, his retirement home in Bognor.

LEGENDS OF WRESTLING 2

GAMEINFO

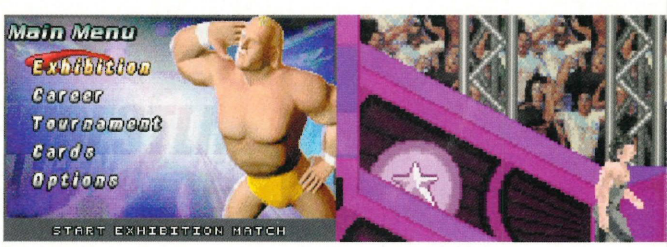
- **PUBLISHER** Acclaim
- **PHONE** 0207 344 5000
- **WEB** www.acclaim.com
- **PRICE** £10
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

Okay, it may have Hogan in it – albeit before his recent 'Hollywood' resurrection. It may have 39 other classic faces from the history of the WWF, WCW and British wrestling – whoa, Big Daddy! It may have a well-structured career mode that sees you touring the States while tackling title bouts and facing the fluctuating popularity of the fans. It may even have a clever reversal system that triggers off a golf-style swing-o-meter with hit zones that vary in size depending on your chances of turning the tables. But all of that amounts to nothing if you can't climb up onto a turnbuckle and piledrive an opponent through the canvas.

And there's the rub. Because the wrestler controls are absolutely shocking and they leave you perpetually on the defensive rather than encouraging any flair in the grappling action. Landing punches and kicks is relatively easy, but try to pull off a rope move (especially when you're facing in the opposite direction) and you're left frantically tapping the buttons while your opponent pins you in yet another submission hold. As far as control systems go, this is about as responsive as a tortoise in a fridge. Which is a shame as a lot of work's obviously gone into the game, with details such as unique attacking moves for each wrestler and audience feedback really setting the scene. It only makes the shoddy fighting system all the more difficult to understand. And we're *still* waiting for a really decent GBA grappler.

"This as about as responsive as a tortoise in a fridge... A real shame."

Men aren't men unless they wear tights and slap each other. No, we don't believe a word of it either.



Sadly, Acclaim's latest is a legend in the Moors Murderer sense of the word only.

ADVANCE OPINION

A wrestler that submits in the first round. Considerably worse that the mediocre *WWF* title.

39%

★ Freeze! We know you were playing something boring on that Macintosh! Hands up!

TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL

GAMEINFO

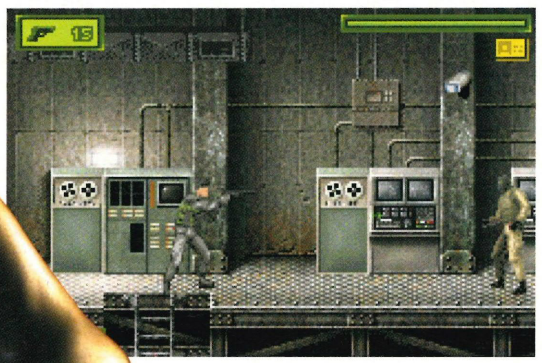
- **PUBLISHER** Ubisoft
- **PHONE** 01932 838230
- **WEB** www.ubisoft.co.uk
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To Cart
- **LINK-UP** With Gamecube only
- **OUT** Now

Yes, it's hard not to gaze wistfully at the beautiful 3D environments of *Splinter Cell* on the X-Box without feeling a little depressed at the GBA's version being... lawks a mercy... a side-scrolling platformer.

But then again, what else could it be? Top-down shooter? Seen that in *Perfect Dark* and *Metal Gear Solid* way back on the GBC. 3D shooter? It's never going to match the original, and making a GBA game about skulking around in the dark would have officially been the stupidest idea ever. So fine. Side-scroller it is. Oh, and Tom Clancy had something to do with it.

As on the big consoles, stealth is the key to winning *Splinter Cell*. Blitz through the levels and you'll quickly set off every alarm in the place and be beaten up by a small army of hired goons – slide into a handy alcove while they walk past and you're not going to break either your face or your cover. Luckily, you have a number of advantages, including a wide range of moves, such as grappling a pipe to shimmy across the ceiling, night-vision glasses, and the R

No shooting this guy – he's tucked away in the background. Make a break for it too early and he'll sound the alarm.



Levels are based on the 'real' *Splinter Cell*, but you won't ruin anything by playing them.

button. By pressing this you can scan the nearby area to see the guards and their movement patterns, as well as the vision cones on the security cameras. Accidentally sound an alarm, and you have to dash for a control panel before the timer runs out and the mission is automatically failed. No word yet on whether this is Tom Clancy's favourite feature. It may well be.

Visually, *Splinter Cell* is superb. While individual missions can get repetitive, the backgrounds are high resolution and packed with detail, and the entire game wrapped in stylish futuristic spy trappings. Animation is fluid and realistic, and the special effects well integrated. The only downside is that the controls can be very, very fiddly – which isn't a problem on the very, very easy opening levels, but can be infuriating when Sam Fisher: World's Greatest Spy refuses to tap a life-saving alarm switch or only casually taps the guard trying to remove his Tom Clancy-approved spleen.

Top Tip
Plug the GBA into your Gamecube to use it as an in-game map, and to detonate the spanking new pipebombs.

For their part, the enemies aren't the brightest fish in the barrel – happily swarming into your guns when an alarm bell is sounded, but wavering if you leave their immediate vision by jumping or up a forbidden staircase. It's little things like this that remind you that you're just playing a linear platform game, and a bit more tactical thinking wouldn't have gone amiss considering the license. Which is a Tom Clancy one, doncha know?

Ironically, despite the great TC, plot is one of *Splinter Cell*'s big let-downs. Beyond name dropping and a general mission to take-down the evil terrorist/isotonic sports drink Nikolade, the full storyline has been trimmed down to the most basic mission descriptions, offering little in the way of mystery. To stick it out to the end, you have to be able to get into the hide-and-seek action – and while this is by no means unsatisfying, at times you will start to long to swap Sam for Samus. And a backpack full of missiles. **RICHARD COBBETT**

GO FISHER!

James Bond? Pffft. Mere amateur. Austin Powers? Long in the bad tooth. Sam Fisher is your modern secret agent – wandering invisibly through the world's troublespots on behalf of the National Security Agency, with only the weapons on his back and years of training to keep him stay in one piece. This means that he's much readier to save the world than most of the others however – and here are just four of his special abilities...

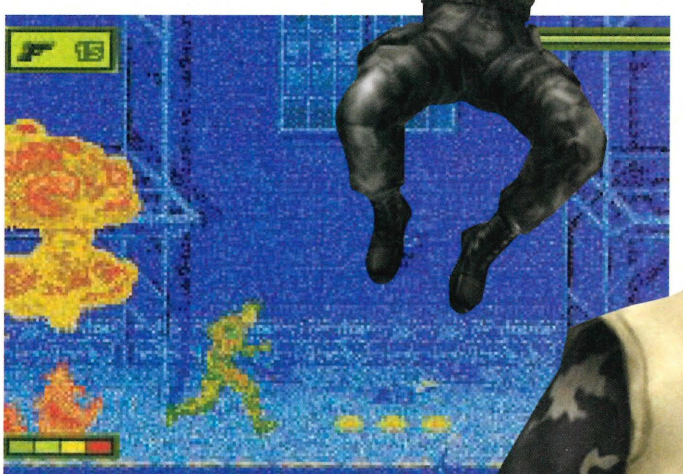
With well-honed arm muscles, there's little Fisher can't hang from, and the architects of the world have cheerfully provided plenty.

Swinging into action like a secret-agent Spiderman. Fisher still remembers when the Alliance of Evil put superglue on the far wall.

Not only can Fisher hang like a Mexican bandit, he's quick on the draw. Get level with an enemy and bring them down in seconds.

Bored with sneaking around? Grab yourself a rifle, and blow away terrorist scum while dancing around and singing Zippity-Doo-Dah.

> "Visually, *Splinter Cell* is superb. The backgrounds are hi-res and packed with detail."



Who turned off the lights? Switch to your infra-red night vision goggles to get around in the dark.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Excellent. Hi-res backgrounds and silky smooth animation for all your moves.

GAMEPLAY
Platforming with a dose of hide-and-seek. An acquired taste.

LIFESPAN
You'll only play it once, but you can plug it into the Gamecube version too.

DIFFICULTY
Not many levels, and autosaving makes progress straightforward.

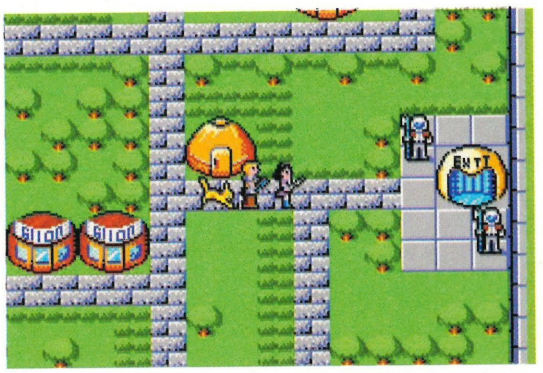
ADVANCE OPINION
Not the cheap cash-in that it may initially seem, there's plenty of fun here if you're prepared to be a bit more disciplined than usual.

84%

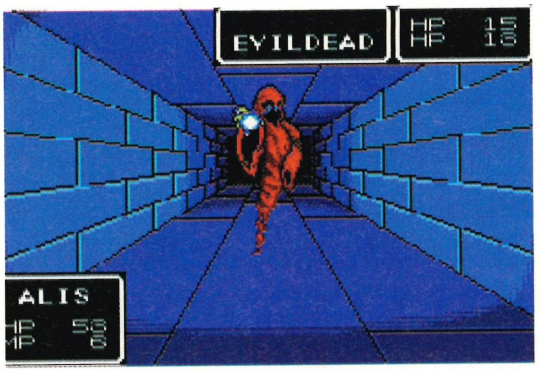
PHANTASY STAR CHRONICLES

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Infogrames/Sega
- **PHONE** 020 8222 9700
- **WEB** www.infogrames.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now



The original *Phantasy Star* was released two days before the first *Final Fantasy*. Not a lot of people know that...



Mr Evil Dead, haven't we seen you somewhere before? Oh yes, that's right, you used to sing in Westlife.

At this rate, the GBA is going to end up half MegaDrive, half SNES. Still, we're not going to complain, especially when the games are as classy as this, the first three games in the *Phantasy Star Collection* series.

Of course, young gamers on the block will only recognise the name from the super slinky Dreamcast and Gamecube versions, and they'll be in for a shock. Because what you get here are three adventures from the dawn of time, ie. pre-*Final Fantasy*. Or 1987 to be precise.

Now you might think that playing such relics today would be a let down, but you'd be wrong. This is classic old-skool role-playing, complete with first person dungeons and the overhead outdoors locales. What could be more fun than heading through the Algo Star System, chatting to townsfolk and getting all statistical when fire ants and flying eyeballs rear their ugly heads? Particularly fetching is the way that you get to play through generations of questors. You're not just controlling some bod called Aron, but Aron son of Nial and grandson of Rhys. All of whom you will have controlled previously.

They may not have the best graphics, but the gameplay is timeless and even young RPGs heads will be amazed at how influential these games were to become.

"What could be more fun then travelling through the Algo system?"

ADVANCE OPINION

No frills RPGs that offer at least 90 hours of solid play... But little in the way of graphical flourishes.

81%

ISS ADVANCE

GAMEINFO

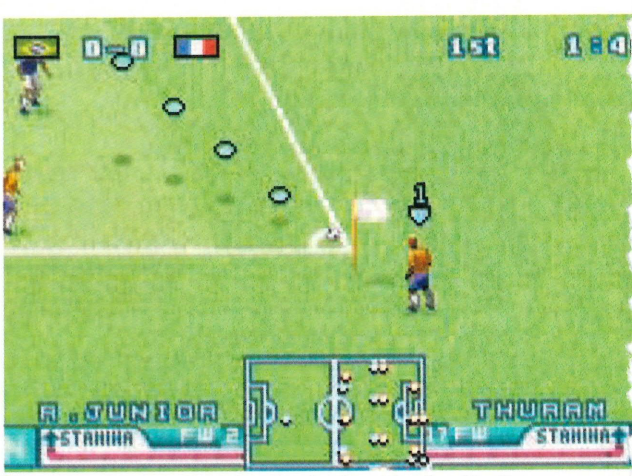
- **PUBLISHER** Konami
- **PHONE** 01895 470 503
- **WEB** www.konami-europe.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Ever play *ISS* on the SNES? It was superb! It started off the series that eventually morphed over the years into the *FIFA*-conquering *Pro Evolution* on PlayStation2. Without 16-bit *ISS* the beautiful game just wouldn't be as beautiful as we know it.

Consequently, we were more than a little excited about *ISS Advance*. It certainly looks just like SNES *ISS* and it feels like the SNES *ISS* too... Sadly though Trev, in the final analysis it's nowhere near as good as the SNES *ISS*. Oh arse.

The problem with all GBA football games is that you're trying to squeeze a 22-man sport played on a big field on to a small screen and it doesn't always fit. You'll always have a slightly restricted view of the action, one feels.

Like those annoying loud blokes you sometimes find yourself sitting next to, the game goes over the top when *it* scores...



Our intrepid corner kicker is quite clearly getting fazed by the biggest corner flag ever known to man. Look at it!

The particular problem with GBA *ISS* is that because of the limited action on the screen you have to rely even more on the even smaller radar at the bottom of the screen to know where your players are. This is not a satisfactory system for playing a flowing passing game without getting eye strain.

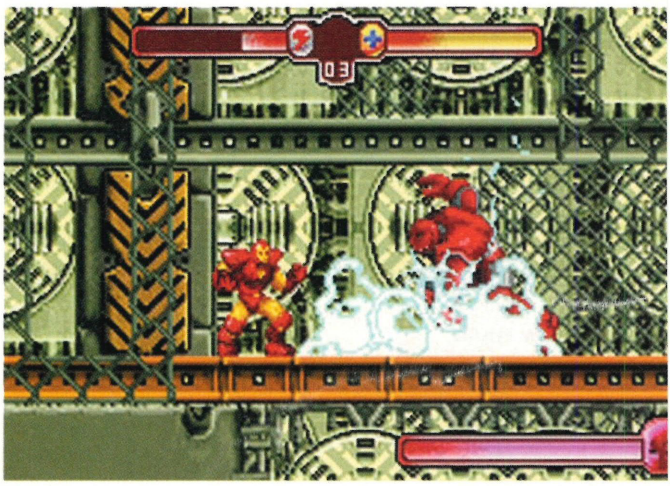
So *ISS Advance* is playable, it is fun, but it's also a bit of a let down considering its heritage. It's the best footie title on the GBA but if your eyesight's even remotely impaired this might not be for you. That includes you, Mr David Seaman.

"The best footie game on the GBA... But still a bit disappointing."

ADVANCE OPINION

Not the definitive *ISS* experience we were hoping for, but still able to leave the likes of Steve Gerrard on their bum.

77%



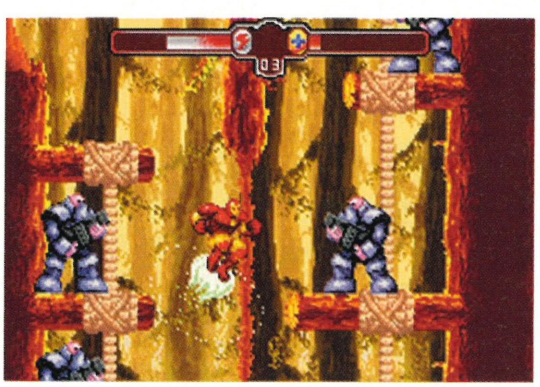
Iron Man utilises the deadly cleaning power of soap suds to dispatch a big bloke with sun burn. That's superheroes for you.

THE INVINCIBLE IRON MAN

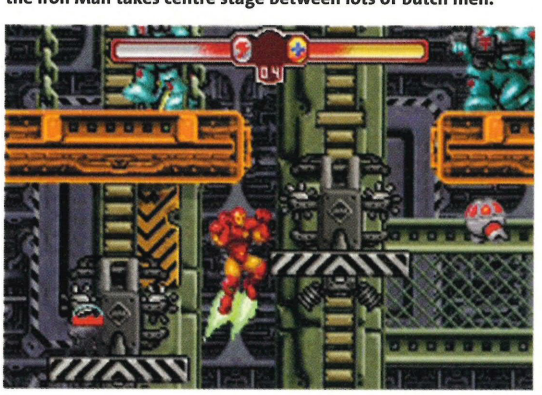
Pretty levels and effects abound, it's just a shame that they're so soporific to play. From Iron Man to gently rusting fogey.

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Activision
- **PHONE** 01753 756 100
- **WEB** www.activision.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now



Like some throwback to a hideous Tina Turner video of yore, the Iron Man takes centre stage between lots of butch men.



People who have studied the screen above will notice a similarity developing. A repetitive game, yes. A repetitive...

"Just another scrolling platform game where you shoot a procession of weak enemies."

Of all the superheroes, Iron Man has always struck us as being pretty cool, what with all his heavy weaponry and mechanically enhanced strength. But he's far from invincible, and being just a man in a suit of armour, he isn't really all that super, either. So much for the title.

And on the GBA he's just another scrolling platform game character, with the ability to shoot balls of blue plasma at a seemingly endless procession of weak enemies.

He can perform enormous rocket-assisted jumps, clearing entire platforms in a single bound, and his energy weapon can be charged to knock out foes in just one blast rather than the usual two or three.

And that's your lot. There are no extra weapons or powers to collect. There's no incentive to explore the game's nine levels, other than to find a tiny selection of still artwork. Every level is essentially the same, with identical enemies, and only a different background theme to remind you that you did indeed complete the previous one.

Top Tip
Use a combination of simultaneous dashing and shooting to blast through all the flat areas of the game's levels.

The difference between the handful of enemy types seems to be nothing more than the type of shots they fire – some need to be jumped over to avoid getting hit, while others force you to duck unless you fancy copping a faceful of laser beam.

The game's saving grace is its sharp graphics and smooth animation. If you can forget that the same background elements keep scrolling past over and over again, it's actually quite pleasant to look at. But for the price of this cartridge, you might as well buy a few *Iron Man* comic books and admire those instead. MARTIN KITTS

LOOK 'N' FEEL
A touch repetitive, but the animation and artwork is very nice indeed.

GAMEPLAY
A bit like Capcom's *Mega Man*, only without as much variety.

LIFESPAN
With only nine levels, it isn't going to last you all that long.

DIFFICULTY
It's the number of enemies that wears you down, not their toughness.

ADVANCE OPINION
A typical licensed platform game. No originality, no surprises, and very little replay value.

45%

TREASURE PLANET

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Ubisoft
- **PHONE** 01932 838 230
- **WEB** www.ubisoft.co.uk
- **PRICE** £20
- **SAVE** Password
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

The film just bombed in the US and, unless every kid under eight suddenly decides that space pirates are the coolest thing since spitballs, then the same fate probably awaits this game. Which is a crippler for the GBA version of Jim Hawkins' adventures, as it's damn near the top of its class.

Like *Spyro*, *TP* presents Jim's world in wonderful, isometric pseudo-3D (may the 2D platformer rest in peace). What this means, as you play, is that levels stretch out around your character, giving you room to explore, room to stalk enemies before pummelling them, and room just to mess about in at your leisure.

We'd hazard a guess that you're meant to step on the red button, Jim. Just don't ask us which one.

As a character, though, Jim is actually quite limited – especially when it comes to steering diagonally – but his shortcomings are there for a reason. Call upon Morph – your constant, floating, pink, companion fish-type-thing – and you'll be able to utilise any one of seven different skills. If you end up staring at a stone blocking your path, then a quick shoulder barge with a 'Morph Smash' will see you right.

Plus, what starts out with a basic 'Morph Look' at the room ahead, soon develops into taxing combination of increasingly complex puzzles, 'seeing' enemies and run after run of skittish platforms. Which makes it a shame that *TP* has no in-game save points as mid-level death is harsher than a shivered timber shoved up the old sea-dog.

"Damn near the top of its class... A wonderful adventure."

ADVANCE OPINION

Rubbish film. Don't be put off by the ropy old licence though, there's a great game buried beneath it.

81%

SHINING SOUL

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Infogrames/Sega
- **PHONE** 0161 827 8060
- **WEB** www.infogrames.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Flick the switch once this cart slots home, and the first thing you have to do is choose between one of four character types; Warrior, Wizard, Archer or inhuman Dragonute. On a whim, we opted for the bowman and... Hey, that dude looks just like Link! Could we be in for a sprawling adventure matched only by the retro joys of *Golden Sun*? Short answer: no. What you get is an okay hacker in the mould of EA's *Lord of the Rings* but with improvements to item management. Wow...

You start your adventure in Prontis – a town which acts like a central hub where you can buy better weapons and spells before heading out to thwack monsters. Each of the four character types has their own predictable style of attack and

We always expect the unexpected from Sega, though, er, *Shining Soul* is actually quite ordinary. How unpredictable.

Not only did he take our items and tuck money but also our marbles, our break time mars bar and footie stickers. Sob.

with these you're called upon to clear levels of enemies until a portal to the next stage opens. Sadly, there's no indication how many monsters you need to top to achieve this. So you wander about, batter enemies, pick up items that improve your battering ability and... What? Sometimes skewering an obvious mini-boss does the trick; in others you're just killing time till a lucky strike pops the exit. Then there's the fact that whenever you select the item screen to re-equip, you do it in real time. Cue monsters beating you to a pulp.

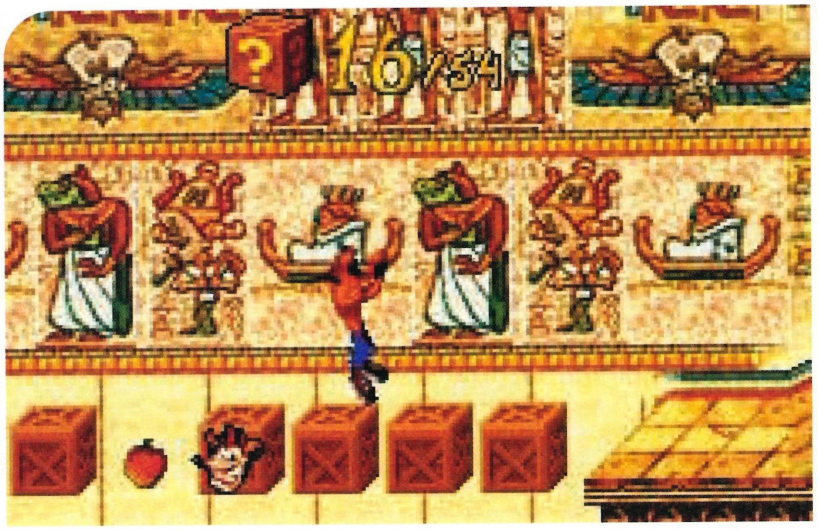
So, we're down on this – but not that down, as arcade boss battles and a *Gauntlet*-style multiplayer ensure that it remains a playable slice of RPG-lite pie.

"A big *Golden Sun*-type adventure? The short answer is: no."

ADVANCE OPINION

Disappointingly lightweight RPG that resembles EA's *LOTR* game and ancient coin-op *Gauntlet*, more than anything.

67%



The Atlaspheres add quite literally a world of fun to the *Crash* universe.

CRASH BANDICOOT 2: N-TRANCED

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Vivendi
- **PHONE** 0118 920 9100
- **WEB** www.vivendi-universal-interactive.co.uk
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

Nintendo-types used to sneer at Mr Crash Bandicoot. A poor marsupial's Mario, they'd say. Last year's *Crash Bandicoot XS* blew any such complacency away. Brilliantly produced, perfectly coded and promoted by some kind of modern day Goebbels for a Chrimbo release, it sold a staggering 500,000 copies.

Unsurprisingly, *Crash 2* is a follow-up of the 'if it ain't broke don't fix it' school, with the action following the alternate-side-and-into-the-screen-scrolling, crate-smashing and fruit-collecting path of its predecessor.

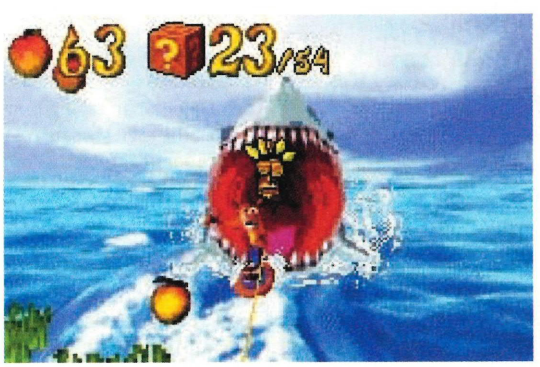
Top Tip
Crash's one-hit-and-you-die nature makes mastering the double jump and slide moves totally essential.

However, just when it was in danger of all getting a bit too predictable comes the introduction of the Atlasphere levels. Playing like a cross between *Gladiators* and *Super Monkey Ball*, they see *Crash* and cuddly pals having to negotiate isometric 3D levels in the manner of ancient classic *Marble Madness*. These new levels are silly, short and stupidly addictive and, nicely, you can play them head-to-head too.

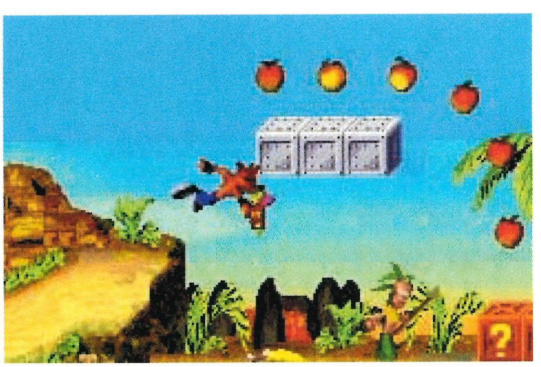
Other additions to N-snare *Crash* fans are all new baddy N-Trance, a link-up with the first game to open new levels option, some enhanced Crash moves (which have to be earned) and some new types of crates. Bit dull that last one.

And that's our only quibble. While *Crash 2* does more than enough to avoid accusations of being just Cash-in Bandicoot, there's still little here that you haven't seen before. Granted it's rarely done so well, but next time it'd be nice to see some new ideas. Then *Crash* really would be genius rather than just great. **SCOTT ANTHONY**

"To the surprise of no one, *Crash 2* is a sequel of the 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' variety."



Shark racing is just one of the many into/out of the screen sections. It's fintastic watery wavey action.



Hurrah for the Aku Aku mask, without it we'd always die in the same place. Always. So, um, hurrah.

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Aside from the music, it all looks and feels rather majestic.

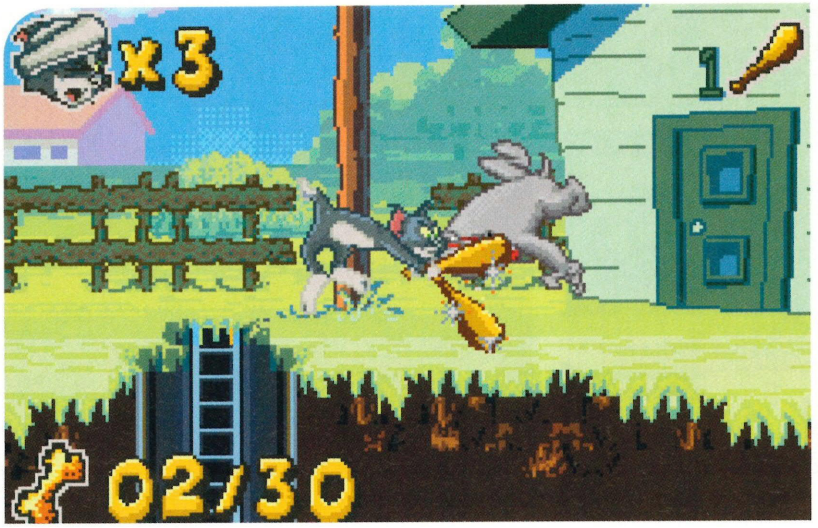
LIFESPAN
40 levels, modes a-plenty and link-up options to boot.

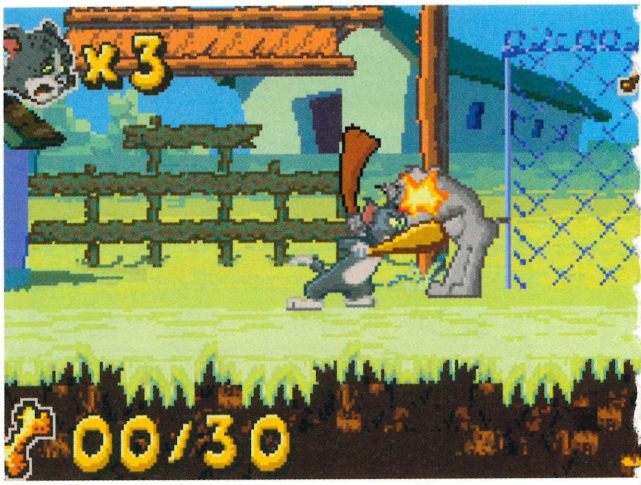
GAMEPLAY
The *Crash* formula, now with added Atlasphere. Platform perfection.

DIFFICULTY
It's a one-hit-and-you-die kinda game, so by definition tricky.

ADVANCE OPINION
A super-varied platformer that lacks only in surprises. It's well worth taking *Crash 2* out for a spin.

81%



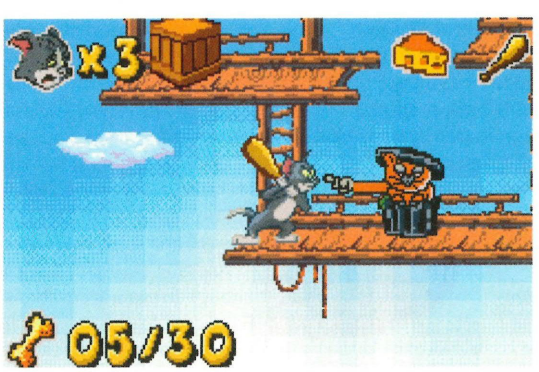


Repeatedly hitting A is the only way to win fights, the thing is the dogs are always that little bit quicker. The planks.

TOM & JERRY IN INFURNAL ESCAPE

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Ubisoft
- **PHONE** 01932 838 230
- **WEB** www.ubisoft.co.uk
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** Password
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now



Even though the ginger cat offers us nothing but help, we still felt inclined to bash it over the head. That'll learn him.

They don't make much of a band these two. What with Jerry on trumpet and Tom on, erk, baseball bat.

"The imaginative objectives soon lapse into 'tired and tested' platforming."

Had French miserablist Jean Paul Sartre worked in the Advance offices, erm, instead of the intellectual Parisian South Bank, his famous maxim, "hell is other people," would probably have come out as "hell is licenced games."

Except that irony of ironies, this underworld-set licence has more to recommend it than most. Condemned to The Other Place after Jerry drops a piano on his head, Tom is given nine chances to win his place back in the land of the living by MephiSpikeles. (Who's been busy with The Big Book Of Knowing Puns, then?)

Top Tip
When you have a club use the R button to throw it boomerang-style, because Tom's cat-o-cat fighting is weak.

Admittedly, it doesn't take long before the imaginative settings and ooky objectives – collect three lost souls in under two minutes? – fall into the tired and tested platforming-with-occasional-puzzles routine. Even so, only those with the hardest of hearts could fail to be amused by TNT barrels exploding in our hero's face and the ridiculously extravagant bandaging Tom's face gets wrapped in when he suffers the merest scratch. Okay, so it's not Woody Allen.

The game's problems come from more prosaic levels than the celestial plain. Namely, that the sprites are too big and that Tom leaps less athletically than Pavarotti. The amount of times that Tom will unwittingly headbutt some still off-screen cat trap or rare power-up-that-totally-shags-up-the-level-if-you-activate-it-too-early is quite astounding. Still, with only five scenarios to play through, you won't be frustrated for long.

Usually it's dull to watch other people play games. *Tom & Jerry* is amusing to look at but awful to play. **SCOTT ANTHONY**

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Big and beautiful sprites. It has to be said that Hades looks rather nice.

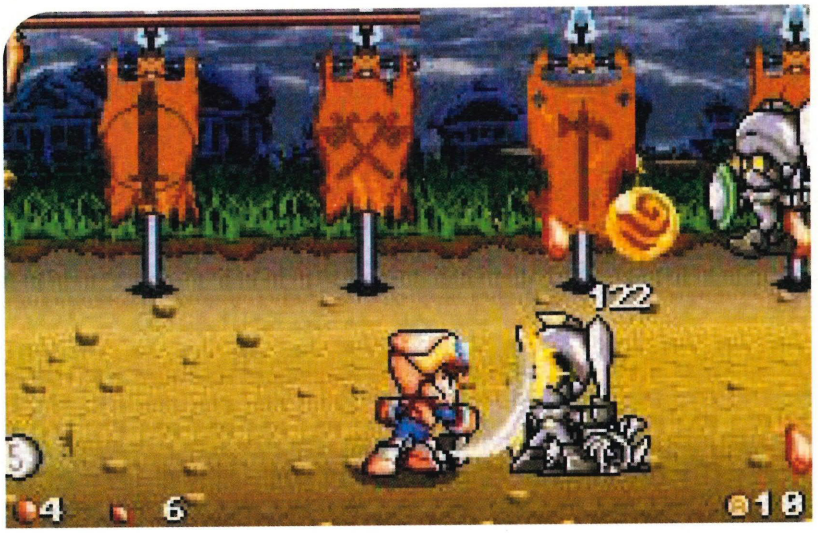
LIFESPAN
Unlike Dante, there are 15 levels to hell here. But only five levels proper.

GAMEPLAY
Average-to-dull platforming with better-than-mediocre jokes.

DIFFICULTY
It's from the New Kid Co, specialists in games for infants – so no.

ADVANCE OPINION
A beautifully drawn platformer which is let down by bad design. A division toon release.

58%



Flamin' 'eck! Our big-headed hero chooses THE most inappropriate times to burst into flames.

KIEN

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** GMX
- **PHONE** No phone number
- **WEB** www.gmxmedia.net
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

Exactly what is it that defines an RPG? If it's numbers floating out of monsters' heads, collectable items, and the occasional 'Level Up' message after X amount of successful battles, then *Kien* is indeed an RPG.

But the term originated in the days of pen-and-paper games, when players would (not quite literally, but sometimes to a life-consuming degree) assume the role of whatever character they had created. Role-playing game, see. In that case, *Kien*'s claim to possess 'role-playing elements' is nonsense. It's essentially a platform game with a touch of fighting. It's as much an RPG as *Super Mario World*, and only a fraction as much fun.

Top Tip
Jump to avoid fireballs and the like. You can evade just about every enemy in this rather cowardly manner.

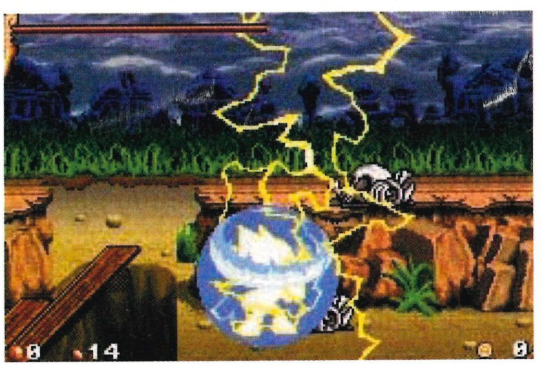
Kien is all about a couple of adventurers with extraordinarily large heads, pitching in for a relentless battle against the continually respawning hordes of the undead. Depending on where your personal preference lies, you can play as a boy who's good at physical combat or a girl who's better at the mystical, magical stuff.

Either way, you'll have to have your button-mashing thumb at the ready, since there are few places to stop and take a breather, or admire the nicely drawn backgrounds.

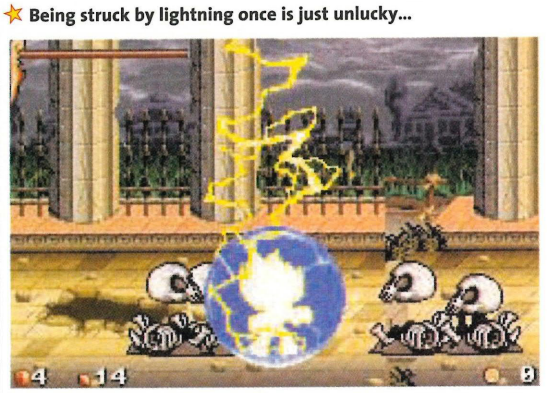
It doesn't have the finesse of an honest platform game, or the depth of a proper RPG, but what it lacks in substance it makes up for in size. The levels are large and the route through them is less linear than many other GBA titles.

Kien is hardly going to set the world on fire, but if you're in the market for something big and not too taxing, it could just about be worth a look. **MARTIN KITTS**

Today we've gone for the matching hair-lycra suit combo.



Being struck by lightning once is just unlucky...



Being struck by lightning *and* attacked by skeletons doubly so.

"Lacks the finesse of a platformer, but what it lacks in substance it makes up for in size."

LOOK 'N' FEEL
A lot depends on whether you take a shine to the big-headed characters.

LIFESPAN
The levels are big enough to keep you puzzled for a fair amount of time.

GAMEPLAY
Platform game standards mixed with a bit of collecting and upgrading.

DIFFICULTY
Not exactly the hardest thing in the world, but there's lots of it.

ADVANCE OPINION
Not as innovative or exciting as it seems to think it is, but there's a reasonably long quest in this cart.

69%

Donald Duck in a leather jacket, with no pants on, on Clapham Common. You do the math.

DISNEY SPORTS SKATEBOARDING

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Konami
- **PHONE** 01895 470503
- **WEB** www.konami-europe.com
- **PRICE** £30
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

Entertainingly, evil pooch Pete will bash you over the head if he spots you. How very *Jackass*.

Doubtless you'll be thrilled and surprised to learn that stages are cleared by collecting five Checkpoint icons.

"Just doesn't have enough moves to compete with any of *Tony Hawk's* GBA's outings."

Extreme sports Disney. It sounds ridiculous, but it so nearly works. *Disney Sports Skateboarding* is the latest fruit of Uncle Walt and Konami's quest to make Mickey and his mates cool and, despite ourselves, we can't help but be a little impressed.

Konami are the arcade masters and skateboarding is drenched in their trademark Japanese acid urban weirdness. Even the hapless, pantless Donald Duck looks slightly deranged after the Japanese firm's equivalent of Trinny and Suzannah have covered him in spraypaint and leather. It's all very *Jet Set Radio*.

Top Tip
Unless you like being ignored by your character, book into some kind of anger management lessons.

The game also adds a rather *Dancing Stage* edge to the standard *Tony Hawk's* trickster fare. From the first tutorial to the last skatepark *DSS* is drenched in terrible but kinda ace J-Pop and the tricks themselves carry a whiff of *Parappa* about them. Still, while Disney is an improvement on Konami's *ESPN* series, it doesn't have enough moves to compete with the Hawkster's GBA outings. This could be forgiven (*TH3* is rock hard, after all) if the Disney characters weren't so apt to ignore your bidding. "We said do a bloody Super Barrel not a Popcorn" you'll find yourself shouting at the screen. It's funny the first time, but not the 118th.

Ultimately, *DSS* is a triumph only of style over substance. Eight imaginative skateparks, four characters, plenty of game modes and a giant dog trying to beat you up can't compensate for controls which are too unresponsive and finickety to make the game rewarding to play. Great skateboarding games are about acrobatics, sadly Mickey and friends are just arthritic. SCOTT ANTHONY

LOOK 'N' FEEL
Disney meets *Dancing Stage*, it's all a bit crazed. Scrap that, it's deranged.

GAMEPLAY
Tony Hawk's-lite with extra heavy and unresponsive controls.

LIFESPAN
The frustration will grind you down before you get near the end of it.

DIFFICULTY
Sadly, even simple tricks are rather tricky to pull off with aplomb.

ADVANCE OPINION
Not the monstrosity it could have been, but dodgy controls mean *DSS* doesn't even graze the knees of greatness. Average.

58%

INTERNATIONAL KARATE +

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Ignition
- **PHONE** 01992 703 970
- **WEB** www.ignitionent.com
- **PRICE** £15
- **SAVE** No
- **LINK-UP** Yes
- **OUT** Now

"The zimmer pushing great grand-daddy of fighting games."

Yes, you're right. That trainer bloke was styled on Mr Miyagi in *Karate Kid*. (Oh, ask your dad.)

Back in the days of the Commodore 64 *International Karate +* was the daddy of fighting games. Predictably though, in 2003 it struggles to be anything more than the zimmer-pushing great grand-daddy of fighting games.

It's a single-screen fighter that pits you against two opponents for round after countless round for as long as you can take it. And just as the gameplay loops round in ye olde arcade cabinet-style, in similarly old-skool fashion the difficulty level starts at tough and then quickly progresses to impossible. Eventually, you might attain a black belt. Experience has told us you probably won't bother.

Depending on your age *IK+* will seem appealingly retro or just badly put together, but to be honest our biggest complaint is with the thinness of the gameplay. It's all very well GBA publishers hoping to cash in on the ageing gaming populace by re-hashing old classics like *Jet Set Willy* and *James Pond*, but these games are decades old and need to be updated properly, not just straight converted.

As it is there are simply too few moves available here (push the direction pad in a random direction and press A) and too little variety in the bouts to hold your attention for any length of time. We'd recommend you put the £15 towards *Tekken* or *Streetfighter* instead.

ADVANCE OPINION

It's a game originally created for the C64. Your memories of it are almost certainly better than the dismal reality.

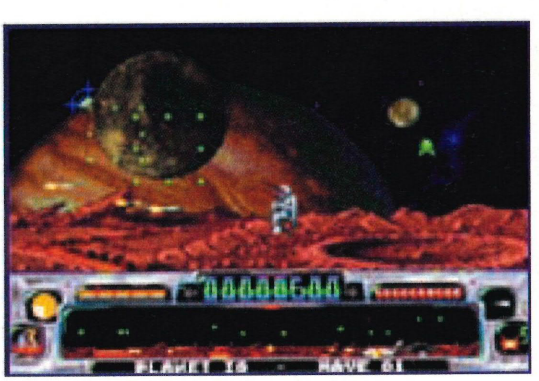
54%

SUPER DROPZONE

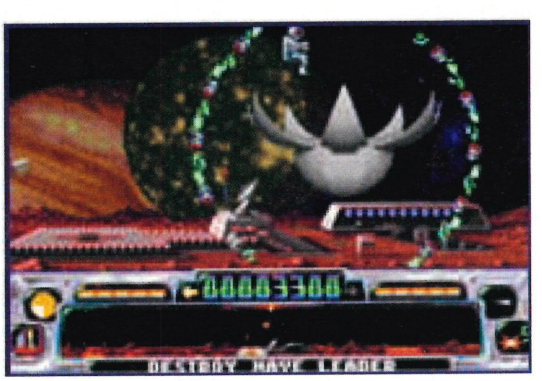
GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER** Ignition
- **PHONE** 01992 703 970
- **WEB** www.ignitionent.com
- **PRICE** £15
- **SAVE** To cart
- **LINK-UP** No
- **OUT** Now

"A truly ancient *Defender* clone... totally dull."



Like all old shooters, *Super Dropzone* is often little more than a memory test. Learn those attack patterns good, boy.



In the old days people thought that bosses that killed you instantly were fun. A bit like Greek theatre.

So you've just been to the shop to buy your new GBA SP. It's cute, it's cool, and Nintendo reckon it's going to change the face of the universe forever, bringing world peace with it. It also plays games. Some good, some bad, some... *Super Dropzone*.

It sounds harsh, we know. But even at budget it's hard not to be galled by the cheek of Ignition in re-releasing this ancient *Defender* clone without seeing fit to change Archie McLean's decades-old source code AT ALL.

For those visiting *Dropzone* land for the first time, it's a shooter which sees your jet-packed man fly through wrapped-around levels blowing aliens up.

But *Super Dropzone* is extremely difficult to control, let alone master. Unless you're a big fan of the series we doubt you'll get anything more out of it than the few 10p credits' worth of play that it was originally intended for. As part of a retro pack fine, on its own dull.

ADVANCE OPINION

If you still enjoy *Space Invaders* this is for you. But this is one emulation-tastic offer we can pass on.

50%

DR MUTO

■ **PRICE** £30 ■ **FROM** Midway ■ **SAVE** To cart ■ **LINK-UP** No

Another side-(yawn)-scrolling (Zzzz) platformer (snuffle) with A TWIST! (Eh?) Ah, thought that'd jolt your interest. You see, Dr Muto isn't the kind of quack that wears a stethoscope and pats your tongue with a lollipop stick. No, no, no. He's a doctor of the 'mad science' variety, which means he can 'mutate' into one of four different forms.

It all combines to bring about a welcome shuffle to the standard platforming deck. And then everything goes flat... Combat is simplistic, as attacks take down even the toughest of enemies with the minimum of fuss. Opt for Muto in his human form, for instance, and there's very little that can stand up to your Splizz-gun. But what really floors this is the fact that you really don't care about Muto as a character – even in his cute mousey form. As such, you continually take more risks to keep playing down to gnat-sized proportions.

57%

MINORITY REPORT

■ **PRICE** £30 ■ **FROM** Activision ■ **SAVE** To cart ■ **LINK-UP** No

You don't need to have special spooky precognition skills to spot a movie licence when it veers into view over the event horizon. This time it's the surprisingly decent Spielberg sci-fi yarn, *Minority Report*, a film about judging events before they happen. Like assuming games from films will be rubbish. Erm...

So yet another Hollywood plot finds itself morphed into a gun-toting platform game. As diminutive future-cop John Anderton you have to solve crimes before they happen. Suddenly you too are charged with an as-yet-uncommitted act of waywardness, and must go about proving your innocence. Cue ten levels of lifts, exploding spyderbots, grenades and flashing health power-ups. The chunky visuals are detailed and the action is fast and furious but repetitive. And just to keep you on your toes, the display has an irritating habit of flicking back the other way every time your character turns around. Curses.

68%

THE JUSTICE LEAGUE: INJUSTICE FOR ALL

■ **PRICE** £35 ■ **FROM** THQ ■ **SAVE** To cart ■ **LINK-UP** No

The Green Lantern is one of our favourite superheroes. Wanna know why? Cos he's afraid of the colour yellow, which is the funniest, stupidest weakness anyone could ever have – it's like Spider-Man being afraid of flies. Though between you and me, we're kind of scared of the colour beige.

Anyway, Greenie's in this game, along with chums Superman, Wonderwoman, Batman, Martian Manhunter, The Flash and Hawkgirl, and a super, spiffing platformer it is too. You're in charge of two of the Justice League at any one time. Each has unique powers which are faithful to the comics, and the vast choice of heroes means each level always plays pleasingly different from the last.

84%

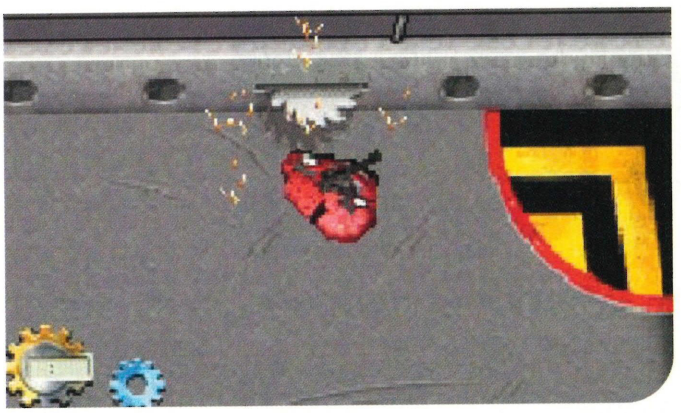
ACE LIGHTNING

■ **PRICE** £25 ■ **FROM** BBC ■ **SAVE** To cart ■ **LINK-UP** No

You've probably seen *Ace Lightning* on telly by now – a fairly smart and funny live action series featuring computer-generated characters who've supposedly escaped from a video game. It's a bit like *The Wizard Of Oz* for the silicon generation, we suppose. But without a girl called Dorothy, or any songs.

Its big problem is that it doesn't understand what kind of games people really play, so it's full of embarrassingly cheesy superheroes and monsters. The game of the show is even worse, shockingly limited and basic platform junk that's insulting to anyone over ten. Pre-schoolers might enjoy controlling thunderbolt-spewing Ace as he searches a fairground for all the pieces of a world-saving amulet, but we're betting you crave more from your games. If you've got any deep connection with the TV show you might enjoy this at a push. But it's a long hard push and you might not want to put your back into it. Not so Ace now, eh...

49%



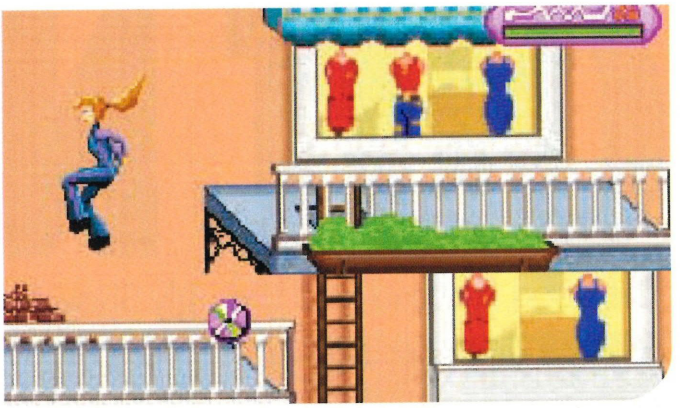
ROBOT WARS EXTREME DESTRUCTION

PRICE £25 **FROM** BBC **SAVE** To cart **LINK-UP** Yes

Activate! *Robot Wars* games have never been exactly famed for being the height of gaming excellence, but the series is so strong that it tends to sell like the proverbial warm delicacies anway. So it comes as a pleasant surprise that this latest GBA outing does the series a few favours at last.

A proper 3D engine means *Extreme Destruction* looks ace, and can be rotated and spun about endlessly. Combat is a little fiddly to control but the build a robot, multiplayer and challenge modes ensure it offers a decent lifespan, while soundbites from Jonathon Pierce give it that authentic *Robot Wars* feel. There's a shortage of bearded men weeping over their remote control shopping trolleys, however. Cease!

76%



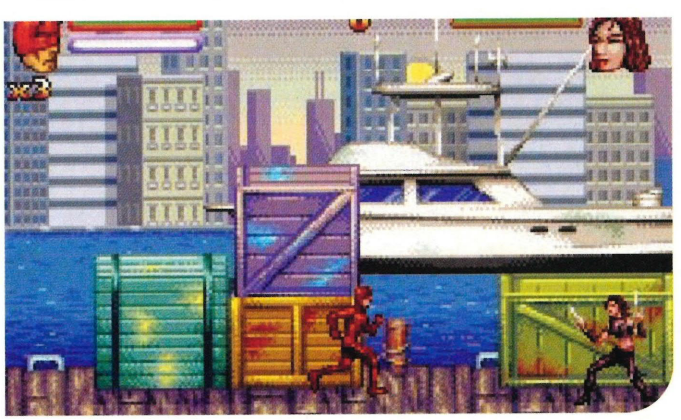
SECRET AGENT BARBIE

PRICE £35 **FROM** Vivendi **SAVE** To cart **LINK-UP** No

Not a plastic toy, but a real sleuth, busy solving some contrived mystery or other. Gadgets at your disposal include a robot spy puppy and a smoke-screen makeup set. Okay, so it's easy to be cynical and your first thoughts are likely to be along the lines that you'd find a Miss Marple game more exciting.

Push past the pink tweeness of *Secret Agent Barbie*, however, and there's genuine fun to be found lurking in the closet here. It strives to be a passable platform game – it's under-paced but there are some neat climbing-rolling-hiding stealth moves, and a few tiny sub-games break it all up. The levels are small but imaginatively designed and there's some well-intentioned but uncomfortable variation in pace too (like the supremely odd street driving stage). It's all unbearably cute to look at, but overall it's unexpectedly engaging. Whatever next, an imaginative licence?

64%



DAREDEVIL

PRICE £35 **FROM** THQ **SAVE** To cart **LINK-UP** No

The problem with a *Daredevil* game is that after Elektra and Kingpin you're scraping the barrel for characters to fight with, so what we get is DD jumping across cityscapes, beating up thugs and perpetually wandering back and forth across the screen in search of the little red arrow that indicates the exit.

That said this is coded by Griptonite, so there are enough cool touches to give the basic mechanics a bit of flair. Fundamentals first, though. A triple tap of A gives Daredevil a punchy combo while B looks after the jumps. Tap R, though, and you're treated to a nice photo-negative view of the world as Daredevil's heightened perceptions come into play. There's also a juicy selection of 40 unlockables that feature movie clips and Marvel artwork. But it remains a very standard beat 'em up/platform hybrid with no hidden areas, no minigames and no reason for you to fork out for it unless you're a dedicated fan of the man in red.

54%

DEFENDER

PRICE £25 **FROM** Midway **SAVE** To Cart **LINK-UP** Yes

Back in the days of yawn, when arcade machines were made out of cast iron, *Defender* was the most complicated game ever. Seriously, you'd have more chance of knocking up a nuclear reactor with some drawing pins and a packet of graph paper then getting to grips with it.

Then again a space game obeying the rules of physics, where you're not just fighting for your own survival but defending innocent civilians and where you can not only thrust up and down but also left and right... Surely nobody could control it? Well, it was a massive hit in 1980. This GBA remake has three play modes. Classic is the original fast-as-you-like coin-op experience which, despite being punishingly difficult, is very entertaining. XG is the same but with pretty backdrops. XGP is the 2003 update – slow, ungainly and ultimately unrewarding. Avoid, unless you're wrinkly enough to remember the original fondly.

52%

Reviews

OUT NOW!

The good, the bad, and the ugly. Showdown at your GBA emporium.

ADVANCE WARS
NINTENDO

Easy pick-up colourful strategizing for the war-monger who is far too busy to ever read a manual. This is one of the finest GBA titles you can buy.

96%

ATLANTIS THE LOST EMPIRE
THQ

Just another addition to the growing tide of barely distinguishable platform games that threatens to swamp the GBA.

55%

BOULDERDASH EX
KEMCO

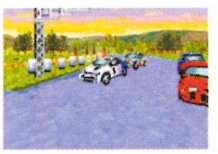
Back in its day, this gem-bagging, rock-dodging, puzzler was all the rage. Like a strong plot in a movie, a strong gameplay dynamic will always succeed. Top hole!

79%

CAESAR'S PALACE
THQ

Gambling without money is a complete waste of time in the real world, so why on earth would anyone want to pay for the privilege on your GBA? Dull and pointless.

15%



COLIN MCRAE 2.0
UBISOFT

A fine rally title which comes unstuck through some unsightly visual shamble. Only a player with nerves of iron will be able to master this cart. You have been warned.

81%

CRUIS'N VELOCITY
MIDWAY

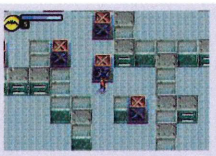
The solid scenery beats the flat look of other GBA racers, but this offers a fraction of the fun of *GT Advance* or *Mario Kart*. As a game, this makes ditchwater taste exciting.

38%

AGGRESSIVE INLINE
ACCLAIM

Passable, rather than inspiring. This roller-skating simulation feels lacklustre when compared with the beauteous and wonderful *Tony Hawk's* series.

69%



BATMAN VENGEANCE
UBISOFT

Slicker than The Penguin, sexier than Catwoman, tougher than The Riddler's brainteasers. Enough to keep even the most nimble-fingered superhero happy.

87%

BOXING FEVER
THQ

Good looking, but overly simplistic bruiser which seems to demand of the player only two rounds of action before one of you is down and eating canvas. Average.

54%

CASPER
MICROIDS

An enjoyable ghostly romp with gameplay that belies its kiddie subject matter. Looks like a platformer, but this unusual puzzler plays like a close-up version of *Lemmings*.

75%

COLUMNS CROWN
SEGA

Lord alive, it's more *Tetris*-alike. Coloured blobules fall from the sky. Change their order and then watch they don't build up too far. Seen it, done it. Haven't you?

70%

DARK ARENA
THQ

By-the-numbers first-person shootin', which benefits from a brightness button. This is sexy stuff for those who've already shot more than their bolt on *Ecks* and *Doom*.

79%

ALIENATORS EVOLUTION
ACTIVISION

Tied-in with the deeply average *Evolution* sci-fi flick, this climbing, running, key-finding melee is fun at first but soon becomes tiresome.

63%

BLACK BELT CHALLENGE
XICAT INTERACTIVE

This chunky dwarven bust-'em-up will find fans, but mainstream appeal may prove illusive. Shame, it's a tidy enough game.

78%

BREATH OF FIRE
UBISOFT

Showing its years a little, but a solid and magnificently long 40-50 hour adventure none the less. Get stuck in and this will prove a welcome distraction for some time.

79%

CASTLEVANIA HARMONY OF DISSONANCE
KONAMI

Smart stuff for the gamer with a gothic bent. Lots of atmosphere equals big chills per minute. This vampire-fest is very worth having.

86%

COUNTER TERRORISM SPECIAL FORCES
LSP

What a top piece of palm-gripped actioneering this is. Simple blasting of tooled-up troops. Nice graphics, cool sounds. We really like this.

82%

DEADLY SKIES
KONAMI

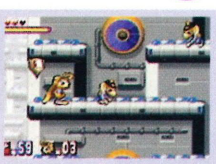
A genuinely new take on the flight sim – rather than being consigned to the cockpit, your view is from above the plane. Not the largest game, but a solid gunner all the same.

76%

AN AMERICAN TAIL FIEVAL'S GOLD RUSH
SWING!

Rank controls, a pensionable concept and a mouse in a cowboy hat. Surely all you need to know. No? Alright dammit, it's glitchy too.

34%



BLENDER BROTHERS
INFOGRAMES

You're a floppy-eared dog, in this saccharine bouncy, climby, nasty-avoiding platformer. A cheeky little gem that has been crafted with the love of a hot mother. Foppish.

80%

BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT
UBISOFT

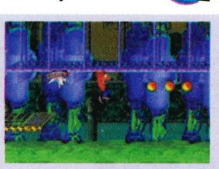
Britney. Dancing. In miniature. Just for you. What more could you want? Yes, we would all like to play with Ms Spears, but this is frustrating.

61%

CHESSMASTER
UBISOFT

Solid dependable chessmanship from a name that has been around for years. Not quite as groovy as *Virtual Kasparov*. It's earnest and oh so serious.

76%



CRASH BANDICOOT XS
VIVENDI UNIVERSAL

Great-looking GBA debut for PS2's fox-faced bounder. You'll beat the main game through in no time, at all but all the crates and the time trials will take you forever.

81%

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN
METRO 3D

Strategem-brained generals will get off on this. The rustle of chain-mail gets chaps hyped for war – a strategy game of distinction.

68%

ARMY MEN OPERATION GREEN
3DO

Isometric toy-soldiering with heaps of different weapons and vehicles. Targeting can be awkward as your vision is often obscured. Not bad.

69%

BOMBERMAN TOURNAMENT
ACTIVISION

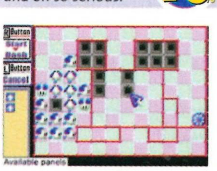
The single-player mode is pretty decent, with some sweet RPG elements to keep things fresh. But the multiplayer mode is where it's at.

82%

BROKEN SWORD THE SHADOW OF THE TEMPLARS
BAM!

Old-school 2D adventure fun, which amongst the glut of driving and shooting games makes for timely cerebral refreshment.

91%



CHUCHU ROCKET
SEGA

Engrossing little puzzler comprising mouse and rocket action. Hours and hours can pass and you'll never look up from the screen. Absolutely, completely absorbing.

90%

CREATURES
SWING

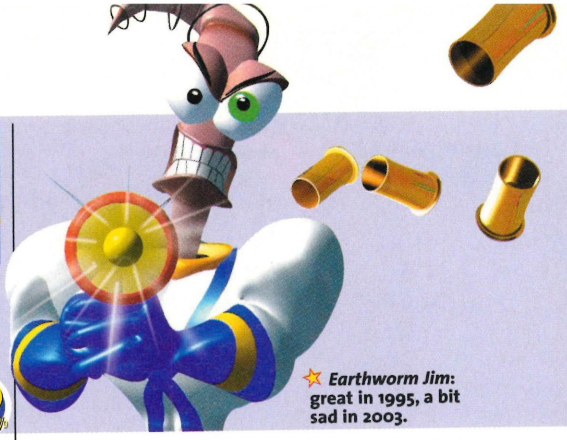
This artificial Intelligence simulator makes for repetitive gameplay, but is strangely fascinating all the same. More like a living toy than a conventional game.

80%

DENKI BLOCKS
RAGE

A teasingly robust puzzle-'em-up, which boasts that easy-to-learn, hard-to-master quality. The puzzles start off easy enough, but before long become brutally taxing.

85%



☆ *Earthworm Jim*: great in 1995, a bit sad in 2003.

DEXTER'S LAB
BAM!

A great little platform collect-'em-up with a neat isometric perspective. It's no *Mario Advance*, but a great way to spend an afternoon nonetheless.

82%

DOOM
ACTIVISION

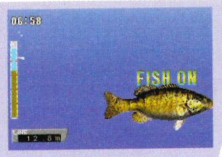
A fantastically faithful version of the daddy of first-person shooters. While single-player is good, terrifying fun, the multiplayer kill-or-be-killed deathmatch is pure brilliance.

93%

DROOPY'S OPEN TENNIS
LSP

A remarkably pleasing bat 'n' baller featuring everyone's favourite manically depressed K9. Funny and silly, but with a sturdy game mechanic propping up proceedings.

82%



ESPN BASS TOURNAMENT
KONAMI

Nice looking um... fish and water and it can prove initially quite exciting. This will wane quickly though, leaving you just waiting for a bite.

62%

DINOTOPA THE TIMESTONE PIRATES
TDK

This stone-age privateering platformer is an acceptable little title for the younger gamer, but it's light on surprise, thrills and verve.

68%

DOOM II
ACTIVISION

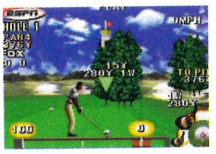
It's always been a great blast, but now it's pocket-sized. Tough, challenging, and the multiplayer option is the second-best thing you can do with two people.

90%

DUKE NUKEM ADVANCE
TAKE 2

This is pretty basic but it's always enjoyable. It just doesn't offer the same quality and depth as other first-person shooters out there.

80%



ESPN FINAL ROUND GOLF 2002
KONAMI

A decent enough golfing sim, but a little too dry to be in the same league as the classic golf games of years gone by. For enthusiasts only.

65%

FILA DECATHLON
THQ

Tracky-top peeps sponsor this jumpy, runny, vaulty medal-a-thon. Old-school button-thwacking is the name of the game, but the package is lacking in substance.

65%

FROGGER ADVANCE THE GREAT QUEST
KONAMI

Where once *Frogger* was a violently original concept, now it seems it's merely a label to be slapped on a run-of-the-mill platformer. 'Oppit!

44%

DISNEY'S LILO & STITCH
UBISOFT

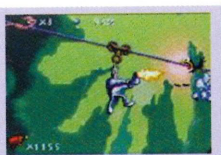
The animation is the toppest of top drawers, and while it's cute as a talc-sprinkled baby cuddling a kitten, it also offers a challenge to the most hairy-handed man gamer.

79%

DOWNFORCE
TITUS

Surprisingly goodish F1-alike racer. There's a modicum of pop-up, but blasting around Vegas, Geneva, or one of the ten other trackettes is thumb-burningly nippy.

75%



EARTHWORM JIM
THQ

Basically, it's exactly the same as its 16-bit cousins, right down to the absence of saved games. What was once a stylish platformer now looks rather dumb. Avoid.

60%

ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS
KONAMI

Numerous sub-zero sporting fancies, only one of which resorts to the trad-button-slapping control. Refreshing. It's not easy though.

77%

FINAL FIGHT ONE
UBISOFT

The arcade classic shrunk down to pocket-sized proportions. Proof indeed that it's possible to do a decent side-scrolling beat-'em-up on a hand-held.

80%

FROGGER'S ADVENTURES TEMPLE OF THE FROG
KONAMI

Frogger's good looks and simple gameplay make this an appealing package.

78%

DISNEY'S MAGICAL QUEST
NINTENDO

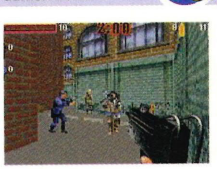
Pretty wholesome platforming fancy that'll put a short-lived smile on your face. Mickey fans will lap it up, others may feel it's style over content.

64%

DRAGON BALL Z THE LEGACY OF GOKU
INFOGRAMES

With more work, this RPG could have been great. Place it next to Nintendo's *Golden Sun* and it simply doesn't compare. A shame.

55%



ECKS VS SEVER
BAM!

As a single-player first-person-shooter, this is great stuff, with rock-solid missions. The multiplayer is a little lacking, though, and it never seems as polished as *Doom*.

88%

ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING
KONAMI

Half of this is good, half of this is good old fashioned annoying. All of it isn't as good as *Tony Hawk's*. You'll be more angry than gnarly.

60%

FIRE PRO WRESTLING
BAM!

Hundreds of options, modes and tournaments and a superb four-player option make this the choice for the man comfortable within a spandex girdle.

84%

F-ZERO MAXIMUM VELOCITY
NINTENDO

More than just a rendition of the SNES classic, this takes Ninty's futuristic racer a step further and is a lightning-quick beaut of a game.

89%

DISNEY'S PETER PAN RETURN TO NEVER LAND
UBISOFT

Only serious fans need apply. The ever-youthful Master Pan's exploits are a mite on the dull side and the combat really creaks along.

62%

DRIVEN
BAM!

This isometric racer is a great alternative to some of the other racing games out there, it's clear that a great deal of thought and effort has gone into making this.

83%

ECKS VS SEVER 2
BAM!

One of the GBA's increasingly rare essential titles. With a superb multiplayer mode, this is far and away the best first-person shooter available for the system.

90%

EXTREME GHOSTBUSTERS
WANADOO

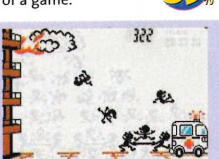
Based on the cartoon on the telly, this isn't a terrible platformer by any means, but it's far less original that a packet of ready-salted crisps.

55%

FLINTSTONES BIG TROUBLE IN BEDROCK
SWING

Terrible, repetitive platform borgasmotron. Irrespective of anyone's infatuation with the tiresome jurassic *Simpsons*, leave this well alone.

23%



GAME & WATCH GALLERY ADVANCE
NINTENDO

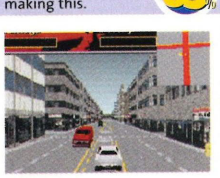
An updated old-school classic that's still simple, but even more addictive thanks to its updated gameplay. One for the retro fans.

70%

DONALD DUCK ADVANCE
UBISOFT

A nice-looking, Duck-jumping, collecting endeavour for younger gamers. No one gets hurt and it's all very lovely. Look for the smart cut-scenes.

69%



DRIVER 2
INFOGRAMES

The name is legend in the PlayStation world, but on GBA it backs over its own foot. Don't be roped in by the hype. Despite high expectations, this is a disappointment.

48%

EGGO MANIA
KEMCO

A *Tetris* variant incorporating a rotating egg man. Inspired stuff... huff. If you don't have such a title in your collection it's worth a look – competent but fairly unoriginal.

75%

F-14 TOMCAT
THQ

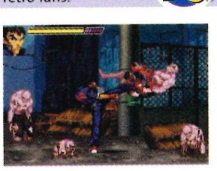
Cramming the world and its arse onto the GBA's screen, this flight-sim is complex, clever and involving. Just use a screen magnifier to get the very best from it.

72%

FORTRESS
THQ

An ungainly twist on the *Tetris* theme, you use the falling blocks to build up a wall to protect your citadel. It's an interesting idea on paper, but loses it in the translation.

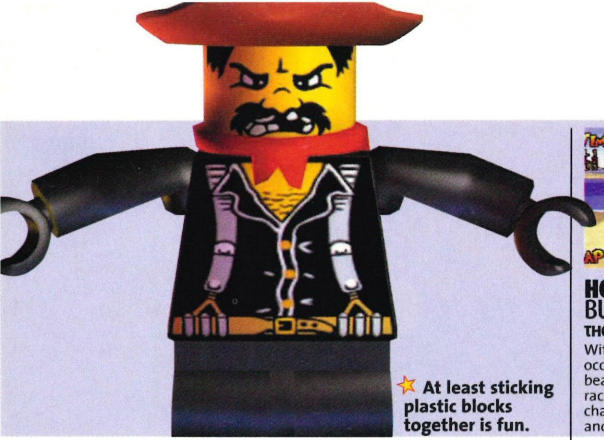
64%



GEKIDO ADVANCE KINTARO'S REVENGE
ZOO

A highly engrossing beat-'em-up/adventure hybrid that looks as fancy as a lady in a nice dress. This thumping good game really packs a wallop.

86%



★ At least sticking plastic blocks together is fun.

HOT WHEELS BURNIN' RUBBER
THQ

With glitchy invisi-cars on occasion, this is no *Mario* beater. Yet this simple racer has much charm, with 20 tracks and four modes.

72%

JACKIE CHAN ADVENTURES LEGEND OF THE DARK HAND
ACTIVISION

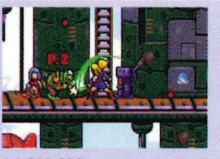
Walk right, hit blokes, make them disappear, hit new blokes, make them disappear, repeat to fade. You get the idea. It's ok. Ish.

59%

KAO THE KANGAROO
TITUS

Just what we need – another by-the-numbers platformer. This is as average, mediocre and tedious as it gets, and certainly not worthy of your 35 treasured notes.

29%



LADY SIA
TDK

Beautifully presented platforming action with excellent hand-drawn visuals. Although flawed in some places, this is definitely well worth a look. Nice.

80%

GO! GO! BECKHAM
RAGE

This obviously was meant to be *Mario* with a football, it's a little too simple. It is deeply cute, though, and will appeal to hardest of hardcore Beckham fanciers. Yak!

70%

GT ADVANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
THQ

The first and best 'realistic' racer on the GBA. There are tons of tracks to unlock, with loads of performance-altering options to tinker with.

87%

HOT WHEELS VELOCITY X
THQ

Fun, and tougher than you might think. This is an involving title which suffers in comparison with *Mario Kart*. All in all, as midget racers go, you could do a lot worse.

75%

JIMMY NEUTRON BOY GENIUS
THQ

Once you've got the jetpack and its fuel you can fly anywhere – a fact that robs the game of any challenge. Only fans need be interested.

57%

KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER
ACTIVISION

Essentially *Tony Hawk's* on a never-ending half-pipe. The best of the surf-'em-ups, but there's more fun to be had with other extreme titles.

78%

LEGO BIONICLE TALES OF THE TOHUNGA
LEGO MEDIA

Fun to play, and the adventure is big enough to have you hooked for some time. *Bionicle* is enjoyable, but it's hardly groundbreaking.

72%

GODZILLA DOMINATION
INFOGRAMES

An uninspiring, and unchallenging by-the-numbers beat-'em-up that's only partially redeemed by the top multiplayer option.

49%

GT ADVANCE 2
THQ

A very acceptable companion game to the original *GT Advance*, and a very tidy rally simulation in its own right. Add to this the deeply agreeable two-player mode.

84%

INSPECTOR GADGET ADVANCE MISSION
LSP

While Inspector Gadget's first GBA outing isn't exactly awful, it isn't exactly inspired, either. This is an extremely pedestrian platformer.

70%

JONNY MOSELEY MAD TRIX
3DO

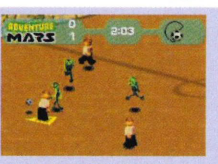
Unimpressive skiing 'n' trix yawn-bucket. Use rails and ramps to perform your maddest trix. Or don't bother and leave it on the shelf, in the shop.

59%

KING OF FIGHTERS EX
SNK

This good-looking bruiser is eventually let down because because it's too damn easy. Opponents simply stroll towards your fists without a care in the world.

63%



LEGO FOOTBALL MANIA
LEGO

Oh good Christ, no! There's football. There's quirkily amusing comedy football. And there's this. This is just rubbish football of the highest order. It sucks the big one.

16%

GOLDEN SUN
NINTENDO

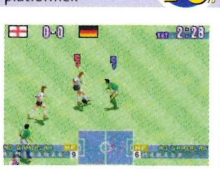
Stunning RPGism that gets the best from the GBA. As dense in some quarters as a home console adventure, this simply has to grab you if you have a GBA.

94%

GUILTY GEAR X ADVANCE EDITION
BBI

A faithful-enough translation of the original 2D battler. And yet we are severely hampered by the loss of a visual sparkle. Not a good effort.

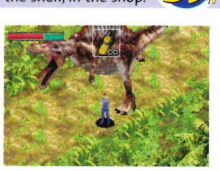
50%



INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER
KONAMI

Flashy football with intelligent passing that doesn't match its SNES granddaddy, but still plays a sweet version of the truly beautiful game.

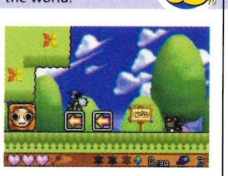
80%



JURASSIC PARK III DINO ATTACK
KONAMI

Gruesome controls mar this otherwise reasonable diversion into making the once extinct toothy ones, extinct once more.

68%



KLONOA EMPIRE OF DREAMS
NAMCO

Its kidish kitty in trainers vibe belies the brain gnawing tricksiness beneath – this is a challenging and incredibly smart platformer.

88%

LEGO ISLAND 2
LEGO MEDIA

This is nothing outstanding, but it is a very solid and fun game that will win the hearts of Lego fans. Everyone will enjoy this light-hearted, comical adventure.

80%

GRADIUS ADVANCE
KONAMI

A slick, accomplished blast from the past that puts most other handheld shooters to shame. Power-ups are are balanced and the levels are tough, but not unfairly so.

90%

HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
ELECTRONIC ARTS

Very, very pleasing rendering of J K Rowling's speccy wiz. Wondrous-looking wandery action for all the family. A tad on the easy side, though.

82%

INVADER
XICAT

By-numbers vertical scrolling shooter in the *Xevious* mould. Handy selection of weaponry, but this isn't original enough to ever set the galaxy alight. Samey stuff.

60%

JURASSIC PARK III DNA FACTOR
KONAMI

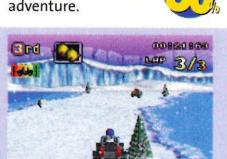
Yuck! This is rotten to the core and a shameless cash-in on a movie that wasn't much cop. If you enjoy playing shoddy games, this is for you.

21%

KONAMI KRAZY RACERS
KONAMI

Somewhat displaced by the arrival of the superb *Mario Kart*, this is still a decent cutesy racer that lacks the depth of its newer rival.

85%



LEGO RACERS 2
LEGO MEDIA

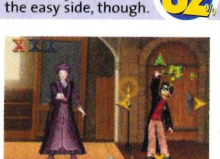
There's nothing much wrong with *Lego Racers 2* – it's a very slick and enjoyable karting game, with plenty to do and loads of fun to be had. It's just not *Mario Kart*, though.

79%

GREMLINS STRIPE VS GIZMO
WANADOO

Don't play this after midnight or you'll turn into a gibbering fool. Don't play it before midnight, either. Repetitive and far too short.

54%



HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE
ELECTRONIC ARTS

Like the books, this is a gripping adventure packed with classic moments.

86%

IRIDION 3D
THQ

The 3D graphics are quite smart – making this look like an absolute treat – it's just a shame that it plays like a dog. If it wasn't so hard, it might have been pretty good.

68%

JURASSIC PARK III PARK BUILDER
KONAMI

This *Theme Park*-inspired title is a bit limited on the park-building side of things, but it's niftily designed and tough to put down.

78%

KURU KURU KURURIN
NINTENDO

Another quirky ace for Nintendo. Guide a rotating stick around some devilishly tricky mazes without touching the sides. Brilliant.

90%

MANIC MINER
JESTER INTERACTIVE

This is retro platforming for the Speccy generation – make one mistake and you lose a life. No saves, no passwords, you outathere. This is tough love in a cart.

60%

★ *Mario Kart*: The best four-wheeled fun on GBA.

MANIC RACERS ADVANCE
KONAMI

Side-on racing anyone? The samey play and twitchy controls conspire to irritate beyond acceptability. In summary: you'd have to be a complete maniac to buy this.

36%

MEDAL OF HONOUR UNDERGROUND
ZOO

A big brown misery of a game. Shooting WWII Nazis is a strong gaming premise, but in this treatment you simply won't be bothered.

44%

MIDWAY'S GREATEST ARCADE HITS
MIDWAY

Okay, they may look a bit crap, but these are ideal whip-out-'n'-play tests of your gaming mettle, and spot-on conversions of arcade classics.

78%

MOTO RACER ADVANCE
UBISOFT

Simplistic gameplay, perhaps, but as quick-fix arcade racers go this is superb. Easy to see and play, this is the sort of thing the GBA was made for.

87%

MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT
NINTENDO

The most fun racer ever. *Mario Kart*'s friendly exterior hides a steely heart that'll stretch even the skillest of gamers. An absolute must.

95%

MEGAMAN BATTLE NETWORK
INFOGRAMES

Imagine taking all the bad bits from a sub-par RPG and tarting them up with the *Megaman* façade. To be brutally honest, it's a bit dull.

35%

MIKE TYSON BOXING
UBISOFT

The management side seems to offer little influence, while the action is more than a tad muted. Not what you'd really expect from a deranged, ear-biting ex-con.

53%

NAMCO MUSEUM
NAMCO

Though all four games were good for their time, their time was 20 years ago. And none of the games have had so much as the teeniest enhancement. Strictly for retro-heads only.

50%

PINBALL OF THE DEAD
KEMCO

The best pinballer on the GBA. Horror-themed flipering with lovely presentation. But ultimately it's pinball. If you love pinny, deal done. If not, it won't change your mind.

70%

POWERPUFF GIRLS MOJO JOJO A-GO-GO
BAM!

Horizontally scrolling shooter starring the cartoon chicks. A brave attempt at doing something different with a license. Shame it fails to inspire.

62%

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX
ACTIVISION

Not quite as much fun as the board-based *Tony Hawk's*, but *Mat Hoffman* is an enjoyable, action-packed and fun-filled extreme sports game.

79%

MEGAMAN BATTLE NETWORK 2
UBISOFT

The transplanting of platform fiend Megaman into this RPG/*Pokémon*-light world just doesn't work. The result is dull and rubbish.

42%

MONSTER FORCE
VIVENDI UNIVERSAL

A nice enough-looking, kiddy-horror with just a dollop of charm. The gameplay is strictly OAP, though. No real puzzles, just kill the ever-increasing mass of foes.

64%

NO RULES GET PHAT
TDK

It might have skateboards and an 'extreme' name, but this feeble platformer is a million miles away from *Tony Hawk's*. There's no real flow to it – a total stop-start experience.

35%

PINK PANTHER PINKADELIC PURSUIT
WANADOO

Great fun and appeallingly cute, just as long as you don't expect it to revitalise the central game mechanics of the platforming genre.

64%

PREHISTORIK MAN
MIDWAY

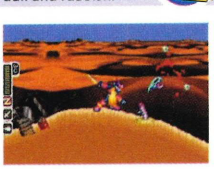
Platformers are two-a-penny on the GBA, but persevere and you'll discover that caveman Sam has a few tricks up his prehistorik sleeve to lift this above the ordinary.

83%

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2
ACTIVISION

Two-wheeled japes aplenty, the steep learning curve and expansive levels offer a lasting challenge. An *xtremely* close second to *Tony Hawk's*.

79%



MEGAMAN ZERO
CAPCOM

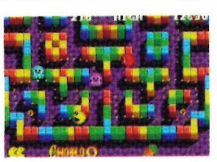
Looks nice, and it's challenging to say the least. *Mega Man Zero* is very tough. Tough in that it's unforgiving and is often unfair. Frustrating is an understatement.

70%

MONSTERS INC
THQ

A big hairy side-scrolling misery. Such a great flick, such a lame game. Collect bits of Boo's door, if you can really be bothered. This is one game that's truly scary.

42%



PAC-MAN COLLECTION
NAMCO

Four *Pac-Man* themed games on the one cart. Think of it as one outstanding arcade update with three complete bonus games of variable quality. A retro treat.

90%

PITFALL THE MAYAN ADVENTURE
ACTIVISION

Another mediocre rehash of this ancient platformer. The decent visuals and super-smooth animation does nothing to help.

70%

PUYO PUYO
SEGA

A competent but rather arcane puzzler which trades on its transparent nuisance blobs for interest. Yet another fine-but-dull falling block teaser to add to the pile.

75%

MECH PLATOON
KEMCO

A fantastic strategy game second only to *Advance Wars*. Complicated without being too fiddly, with enough to make sure you won't stop playing for some time to come.

90%

METROID FUSION
NINTENDO

Arcade action fused with some corking new ideas makes for a great *Metroid* game. It's fantastic fun while it lasts, but sadly it's all over a little too quickly.

85%

MORTAL KOMBAT ADVANCE
MIDWAY

The tired Kombatants get another fist-clenching, knuckle-dragging run out. They should have stayed in bed. Very, very not good indeed.

23%

PHALANX
KEMCO

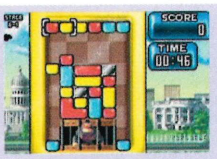
An old-skool 2D shooter resurrected for the small screen. There's nothing particularly new here, but if it's a tough test of the reflexes you're after, look no further.

81%

PLANET MONSTERS
TITUS

A maze-based squish-'em-up, *Planet Monsters* is a fast and competent puzzler, but as an alternative to the superb *Bomberman*, it fails to engage in the same way.

78%



RAMPAGE PUZZLE ATTACK
MIDWAY

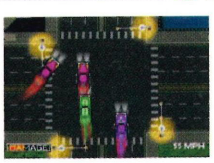
This falling-block puzzler is one of those ideas that probably looked great on paper, but in practice it's far too fiddly to be much fun.

55%

MEDABOTS AX ROKUSHO VERSION
UBISOFT

Pokémon meets *Robot Wars* meets *Megaman* with a visual sprinkle of *Advance Wars*. Sadly, the interface lets the whole thing down.

60%



MIDNIGHT CLUB STREET RACING
REBELLION

An early (for early read 'poor') PS2 game given the top-down 2D treatment for your GBA. This is too reliant on trial-and-error to be successful.

60%

MOTO GP
THQ

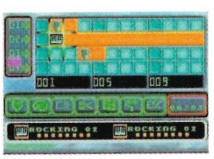
Bi-wheeled racing comes to the GBA in this cycle Grand Prix. Its old fashioned handling is balanced by the sheer pace of the asphalt fury. Worth a gander.

68%

PINBALL ADVANCE
ZOO

The nonsensical fancy that is 'pin and ball' creaks its way into the GBA with a leaden groan of a pastime that is woefully past its time. Bloody hell, is it dull.

39%



POCKET MUSIC
RAGE

Hardly up to studio standard, but an amusing distraction all the same. Six musical styles are yours for the mauling, but your opus is limited to five and a half mins.

83%

RAYMAN ADVANCE
UBISOFT

Superb to look at, the animation on *Rayman* is top-notch and the environments crystal clear. It's just a shame it plays like any other platformer under the sun...

80%

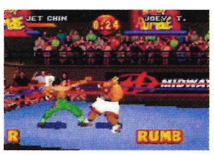
☆ *Street Fighter's* Cammy. We could have sworn she was winking at us.

SHREK HASSLE AT THE CASTLE
TDK
The strongest *Shrek* title available on the GBA. Beautiful renders in a pedestrian platformer. Not groundbreaking, but pleasant enough.
61%

SPIDER-MAN THE MOVIE
ACTIVISION
The best Spider-Man title on the GBA yet. Good-looking and, beneath the gorgeous veneer, a gripping game. Great stuff.
80%

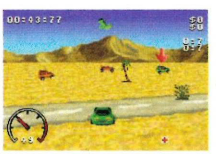
STAR WARS JEDI POWER BATTLES
THQ
Oh how we wanted this to be stoopid good. It's not though. Nice graphics aside, it's let down by poor jumping. Fortunately, there is another...
65%

SUPER DODGEBALL ADVANCE
UBISOFT
Ball game where points are scored by hurling it at the opposition. A delicious slice of old-skool gameplay. It's quick, slick, fast and fun.
85%



READY 2 RUMBLE ROUND 2
THQ
Wretched. Nasty visuals and shallow and dull gameplay makes this instantly forgettable. About as much fun as sucking on a sweaty sock.
32%

RUGRATS CASTLE CAPERS
THQ
If you want a good blast, look elsewhere. The camera problems and background graphics make this a real chore to play.
60%

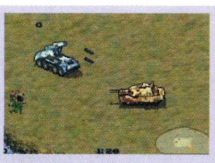


SMUGGLER'S RUN
TAKE TWO
With no multiplayer option, only four controllable vehicles, and a single mini-game, it's a shallow representation of the early PS2 mini-hit. Manages to redefine dullness.
29%

SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS SUPER SPONGE
THQ
Virtually without any redeeming factors. Appaling platformer which is most entertaining when combined with a large hammer.
20%

STAR WARS 2 NEW DROID ARMY
THQ
Great-looking *Star Wars* fun with some nice touches, but it doesn't quite set the universe alight. Enough lifespan to keep a Jedi happy.
73%

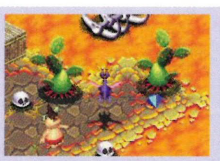
SUPER GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS
CAPCOM
This Capcom classic is enjoyable – but only if you're looking to rekindle some fond memories of gaming yesteryear. Rock hard, too.
75%



REIGN OF FIRE
BAM!
A dragon in need of extra puff. Has some nice ideas, but what promise was there gets smothered in a sea of mediocrity. Still, we laughed when our trousers caught fire.
57%

SCOOBY-DOO CYBER CHASE
THQ
Fails to capture the essence of the student's favourite show , but you can change between characters, and there are cool little mini-games.
54%

SNOOD
DIGITAL WORLDWIDE
Bust-a-Move only with Snoods (disembodied multi-coloured heads for the uninitiated). Snoods are too big, rendering the playing area cramped. Very middle-of-the-road.
58%



SPYRO SEASONS OF ICE
VIVENDI
With gorgeous graphics and great gameplay, *Spyro Seasons of Ice* is every bit as good – no, better, dammit – than the old PSone games.
89%

STAR X
BAM!
A valiant but triumphantly flawed attempt to compress the joys of classic *Starfox* onto the GBA. One look at it reveals there is a thin line between ambition and lunacy.
54%

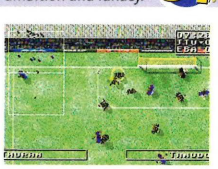
SUPER MARIO ADVANCE
NINTENDO
Not the all-new *Mario* game that everyone was hoping for, but a decent enough romp all the same. Not a patch on Super *Mario Advance 2*.
89%

RIPPING FRIENDS
NINTENDO
The single-player challenge is rather easy, but with co-op and four-player deathmatch modes to contend with, this will keep you laughing for a good while.
70%

SCOOBY DOO THE MOVIE
THQ
You'd have to be a remarkably forgiving fan of the canine coward to want to mess with this drivel. Scooby, dooby... don't.
37%

SONIC ADVANCE
SEGA
Great looking and as sprightly a platformer as you could want. Designed solely for the GBA, the topaz hedgehog has never looked better – buy this now!
91%

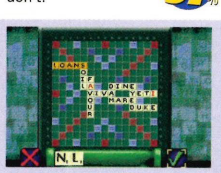
SPYRO 2 SEASON OF FLAME
VIVENDI UNIVERSAL
A sparkling gem of a game. How they managed to cram all this into the little GBA is anyone's guess, but we're certainly glad they have.
91%



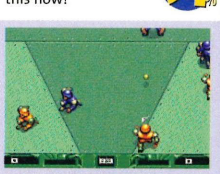
STEVEN GERRARD'S TOTAL SOCCER 2002
UBISOFT
Not the prettiest soccer sim, but this is the most playable and addictive football game yet to hit the GBA. This is easily top of the league.
88%

SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2
NINTENDO
All back to '92 for a serving of 'tash-meister action that's aged with a Judy Dench-style dignity. The best 2D platformer ever.
94%

ROBOT WARS ADVANCED DESTRUCTION
BBC MULTIMEDIA
Fans of the BBC TV show will have a good time with this unusual battle game.
80%

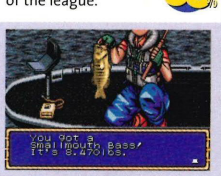


SCRABBLE
UBISOFT
Like playing with your Mum, you can't use swear words, but it has a comprehensive built in dictionary. As a representation of the classic word game it's fine and dandy.
75%



SPEEDBALL 2
WANADOO
The old Amiga classic. But this is nowhere as near as good as playing on a proper monitor, and unless your mate has it too, there's precious little point in playing.
60%

SSX TRICKY
ELECTRONIC ARTS
A decent 'boarding game that is king of neither the tricking or the racing, but combines the two fairly well. Pulling off tricks is too hard, but the racing is intuitive and fast.
74%

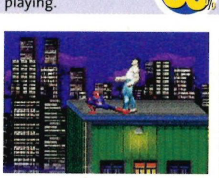


SUPER BLACK BASS
UBISOFT
Drab looking angler, but one that aspires towards realism by offering a huge set of lures and a drivable boat. It won't keep your attention long though. Fish off!
60%

SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2 X REVIVAL
UBISOFT
As great to play now as it ever was. It's just like having the arcade beat-'em-up in your pocket. This is well worth the investment.
90%

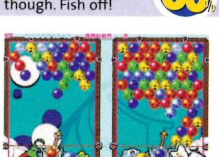
ROCKET POWER THE DREAM SCHEME
THQ
This skateboard-based platformer has some very good ideas, but ultimately you'll be more annoyed than entertained.
59%

SHAUN PALMER'S PRO SNOWBOARDER
ACTIVISION
Not terrible, just not great. With *Tony Hawk's* doing the rounds, what extreme sporter would chose this middling pile of slush fun instead?
60%

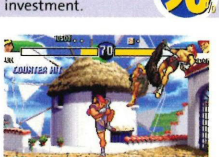


SPIDER-MAN MYSTERIO'S MENACE
ACTIVISION
This is fantastic stuff, offering tons of rock-hard, beautifully designed levels and superb animation. Ace, whether you're a Spidey fan or not.
90%

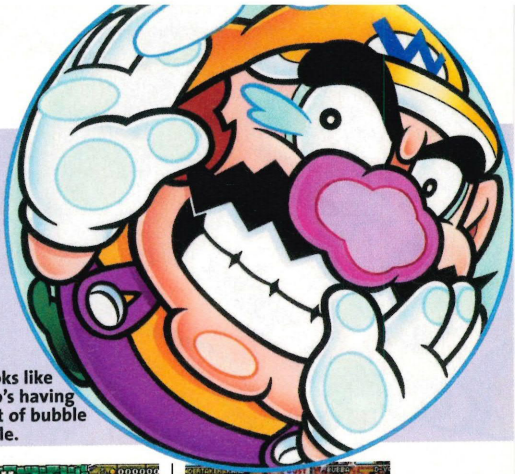
STAR WARS 2 ATTACK OF THE CLONES
RADICAL
While the movie lifted galactic hopes previously shattered by *The Phantom Menace*, this brings them back to the depths of a Sarlacc pit. Shame.
44%



SUPER BUST-A-MOVE
UBISOFT
Bust-A-Move is one of the better puzzlers available for your GBA, especially in two-player mode. If you've not tried it before, we strongly suggest you give it a go now.
86%



STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3
THQ
The daddy of all beat-'em-ups. A near-flawless conversion of one of our favourite fighters. If you're after a brawler, there really is no substitute.
91%



☆ Looks like Wario's having a spot of bubble trouble.

TANG TANG
TAKE 2

A puzzle-based single-screen platformer, *Tang Tang* is a Frankenstein of a game, where elements of bygone classics have come together and gone horribly wrong.

45%

THE MUMMY
UBISOFT

Not a serious game for the serious gamer, but aimed at the young 'uns. It's a simple and horribly clichéd example of, if you like the cartoon, go for your life.

51%

TINY TOON ADVENTURES WACKY STACKERS
SWING!

More *Tetris* ja vu, only this time with um.... a pig in dungarees. Four play modes and playability in two-player mode make this a tasty buy.

78%

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4
ACTIVISION

The bomb-diggy. The money-mark. The mack-daddy. This is the best skater on the GBA. Only better than that. Thumb-crackingly essential.

95%

TEKKEN ADVANCE
NAMCO

Sprites for polygons as the PS2's benchmark battler hits GBA. All in all, good stuff, although the AI can let it down on occasion. The feel is all there though.

85%

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS
UBISOFT

A generic *Rainbow Six* clone with a filmic badge, but not to bad for it. It's enjoyable enough as stealth-'em-ups go, but it is a wee bit lacking a the depth stakes.

70%

TOM AND JERRY THE MAGIC RING
UBISOFT

Tiresome running-and-hitting-people-with-things trial which is a waste of everyone's time. Even you reading this now, so stop. Seriously, stop...

38%

TOP GEAR GT
KEMCO

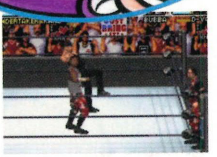
This one stinks, to be honest. Unlike *Advance GT*, this isn't even in proper 3D, so it plays like a Game Boy Colour title, only with ever-so-slightly-better-looking graphics.

34%

WARIO LAND 4
NINTENDO

Wario's GBA debut is a sublime platformer, make no mistake, but it's a little on the easy side and not as involving as previous games in the *Wario Land* series.

90%



WWE THE ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA X8
THQ

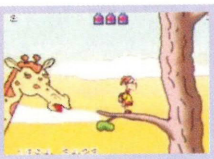
You like wrestling? You like GBA? What are you waiting for – this is the best grappler currently available for your pocket pal.

78%

TETRIS WORLDS
THQ

It's *Tetris*, but with the Russian flavour replaced by a weird 'worlds' thing, and some minor gameplay tinkering. You're better of with a GBC copy of *Tetris DX*.

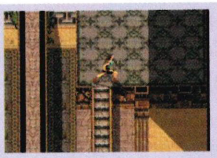
56%



THE WILD THORNBERRYS CHIMP CHASE
THQ

Dubious collision detection in this monkey kidnapping, bestial bound-about. Heaps of platforming levels, but this is ordinary fare.

54%



TOMB RAIDER THE PROPHECY
UBISOFT

Lara's latest isn't terrible, but it's a lot of hard, tedious work for very little reward. Only the most hardened of raiders need apply.

65%

TUROK EVOLUTION
ACCLAIM

Limited and familiar action with the 'saurus assassin. Will pass the time, but there really is an awful lot better out there. A little predictable, seen it, done it, kind of fare.

66%

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?
ZOO

Worth a punt for knowledge-o-holics, but most will tire of the pause-ridden formula. You'd be brainier buying an encyclopedia.

67%

WWF ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA
THQ

Stylistically, *Road to Wrestlemania* is really impressive, and there's loads squeezed in here, but it just plays like a damp squib.

64%

THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT
SWING

Scandalously dull platformer created off the back of a tired old license. Looks ok, handles ok, but... still maybe the dullest game ever made.

21%

THUNDERBIRDS
SCI

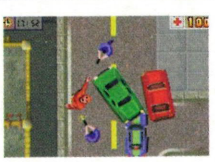
Good for lovers of the threadbare plotting of your typical 'Birds adventure. All the craft are here for scrolling, shooting fun. Sadly, not in 'Superanimation'.

67%

TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX ROGUE SPEAR
UBISOFT

Sneaky, sneaky catchy terrorist. Mince about with your three chums as you take out the baddies with guns. Very good it is too.

88%



URBAN YETI
TELEGAMES

You're a yeti in this horrifyingly bizarro mix of a *Grand Theft Auto*-style top-down adventure and four retroesque arcade games – but yet... it really works!

77%

WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING 2
KONAMI

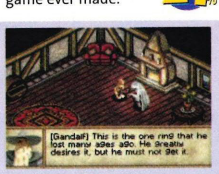
Ropy animation and fiddly controls render this a big, wet disappointment. Never rewards your efforts admirably. Keep your powder dry .

44%

XXX
ACTIVISION

This snowboarder-turned-spy movie license is nice to look at and okay to play, but you'll complete it in a weekend and just won't ever want to come back to it.

64%



THE LORD OF THE RINGS FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING
VIVENDI

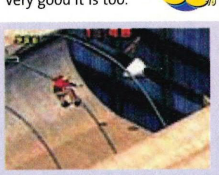
The one based on the book. Not impressed. It's just dull for very long periods, with intermittent slow fighting mixed in. Sorry, but it's true.

43%

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR GOLF
ELECTRONIC ARTS

Yack-a-doodle! This ain't pretty. Woods might by the one of the world's top chaps with an iron, but this is one shoddy piece of gaming.

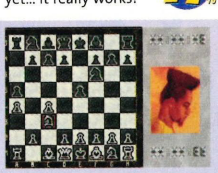
35%



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2
ACTIVISION

One of the first games to come out for the GBA, this is still the best extreme sports title – except, of course, for *Tony Hawk's 3*. Or *4*.

90%



VIRTUAL KASPAROV
TITUS

With a story mode and (yes) appearances by Kasparov himself, this manages to infuse the dusty world of chess with some entertainment. Wow. Total genius.

82%

WOLFENSTIEN 3D
BAM!

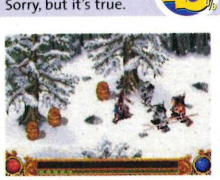
The fact that this is virtually identical to the ageing PC duffer is neither here nor there. When push comes to shove, it's too darn old. It just don't cut it no more.

52%

YOSHI'S ISLAND SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 3
NINTENDO

When there's such thing as a gaming museum, *Yoshi's Island* will take centre exhibit as the 2D platforming emperor. It doesn't get any better.

95%



THE LORD OF THE RINGS THE TWO TOWERS
ELECTRONIC ARTS

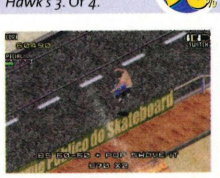
It does what it does rather well. But long-term gameplay is hampered by repetitive bludgeoning. Not really enough to it.

60%

TINY TOON ADVENTURES BUSTER'S BAD DREAM
SWING

No simple by-the-numbers platformer. Among the running, jumping and puzzle-solving you've got an excellent combat system, too.

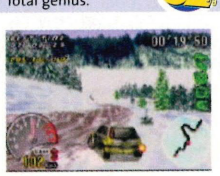
68%



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
ACTIVISION

Initially tough, but soon evolves into a pop-shoving + nose grinding + 50-50 + no complying + car plant of a game. Which is good.

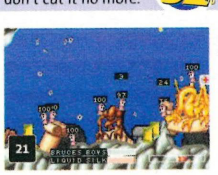
93%



V-RALLY 3
INFOGRAMES

A stonking rally experience. It's tough to imagine what they might have left out. If you can handle the colossal amount of solitary racing, this could be the drive for you.

85%



WORMS WORLD PARTY
NINTENDO

Little worms. In armies. With guns. A true gaming classic which, while looking a little dated nowadays, still plays a game of beautiful bomb-lobbing aggression.

83%

ZONE OF ENDERS THE FIST OF MARS
KONAMI

The saucy PS2 game made gamers' eyes bleed with pleasure. This, well, it's nothing like it. Reasonable, but too stoppy-starty, sadly.

62%

VIEWTIFUL JOE

We go hands-on with Capcom's superhero stunner!

PLUS! The UK version of *The Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker* playtested, *Conflict: Desert Storm*, *Ikaruga* and a free games rack!

AND...

BURNOUT 2

The world-first Gamecube review of Criterion's brilliant racer – only in **NGC**

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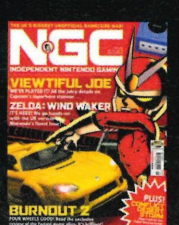


SPACE MAPS AHOY!

METROID FUSION

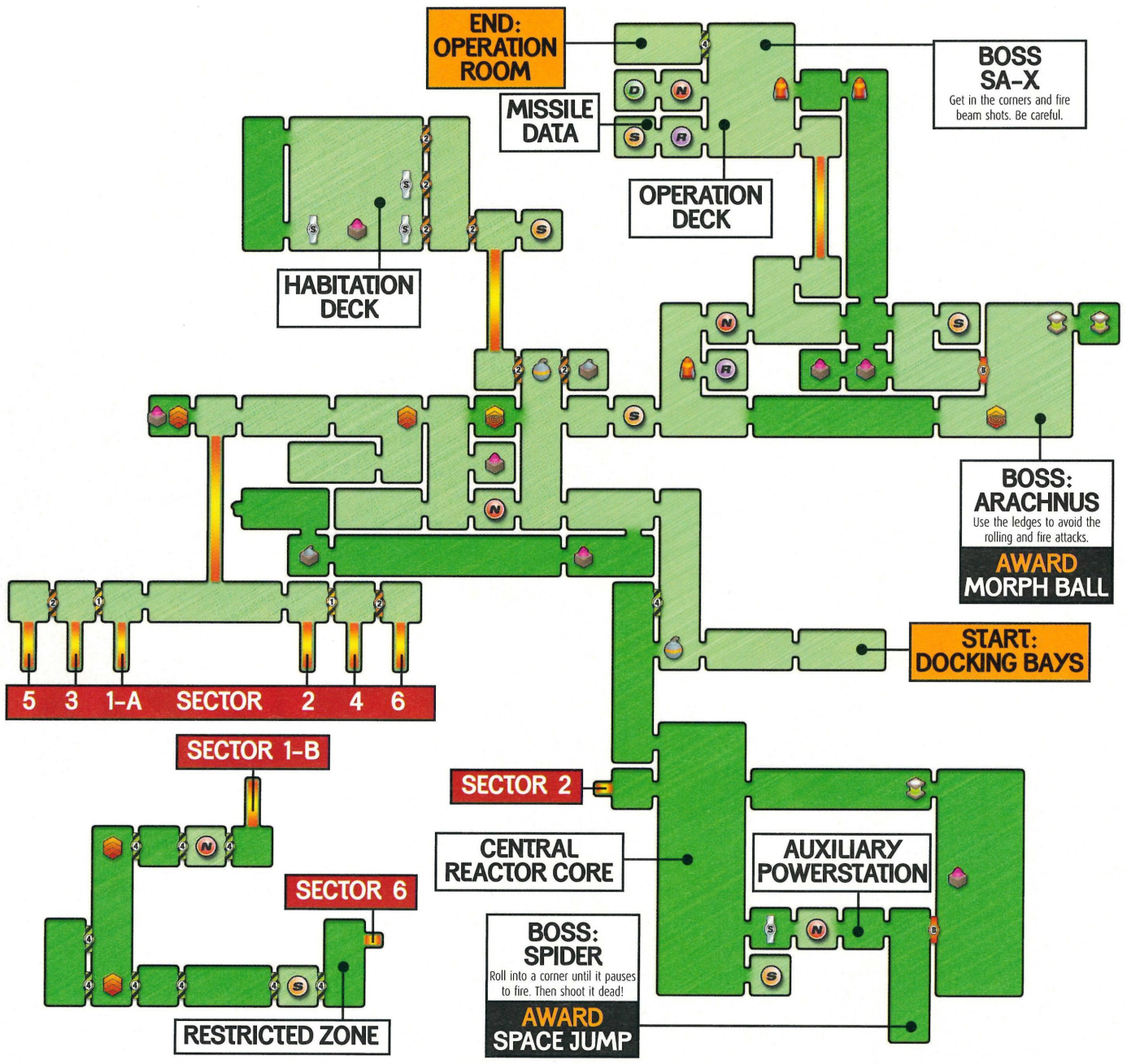
Finding Auntie Samus' new adventure tough going? Well wonder aimlessly in the space dark no longer, as Advance goes mapping mental. We love it when the plans come together ...

REVEALED!

The maps over the next four pages give you the layouts to every sector. You can't access everything at once mind, as some doors are locked, and you'll need certain power-ups to progress. Use the Key on page 66 to find out exactly what you'll need to access any given area.

MAIN DECK

The game's heart dissected ruthlessly and without anaesthetic

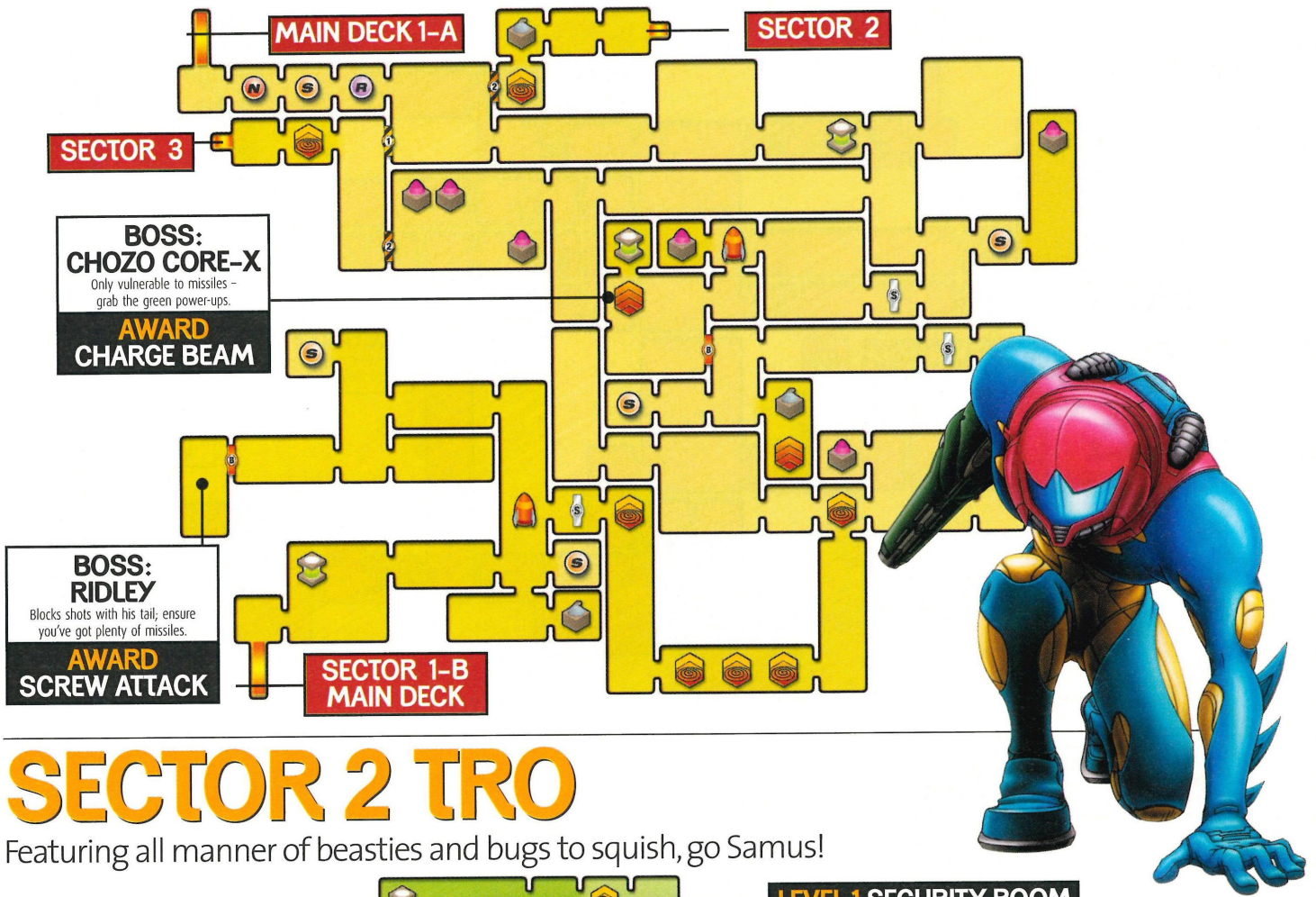


KEY

- POWDER BOMB TANK
- REQUIRES MISSILE TANK
- MISSILE TANK
- REQUIRES POWER BOMB
- ENERGY TANK
- REQUIRES SCREW ATTACK
- REQUIRES SUPER MISSILES
- REQUIRES SPEED BOOST
- ACCESSED AFTER FINDING LEVEL 1 SECURITY ROOM
- ACCESSED AFTER FINDING LEVEL 4 SECURITY ROOM
- NAVIGATOR ROOM
- DATA ROOM
- ACCESSED AFTER FINDING LEVEL 2 SECURITY ROOM
- BOSS DOOR
- RECHARGE ROOM
- SAVE ROOM
- ACCESSED AFTER FINDING LEVEL 3 SECURITY ROOM
- SECURITY ROOM

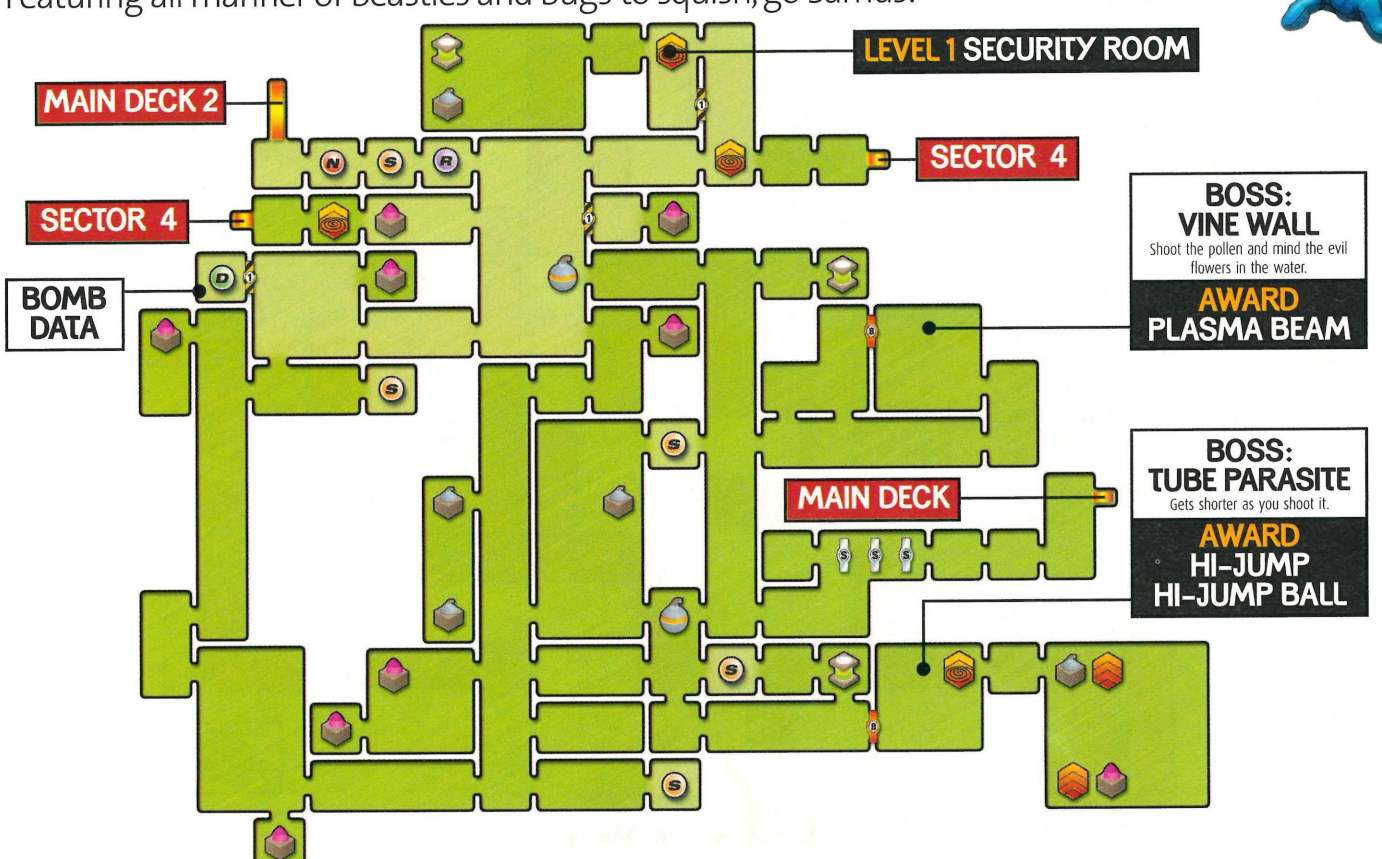
SECTOR 1 SRX

Take out Chozo Core-X and then take charge (well, the Charge Beam)



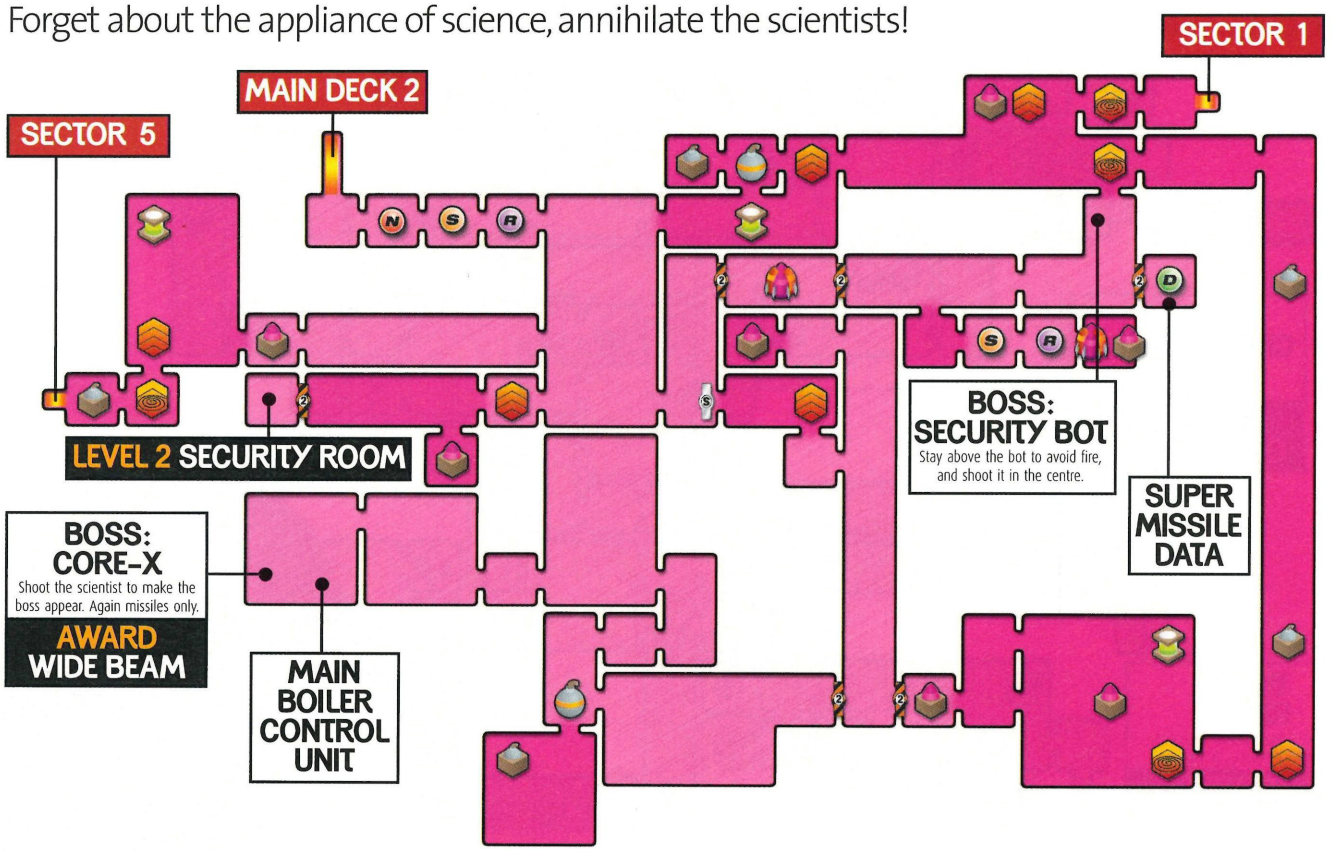
SECTOR 2 TRO

Featuring all manner of beasties and bugs to squish, go Samus!



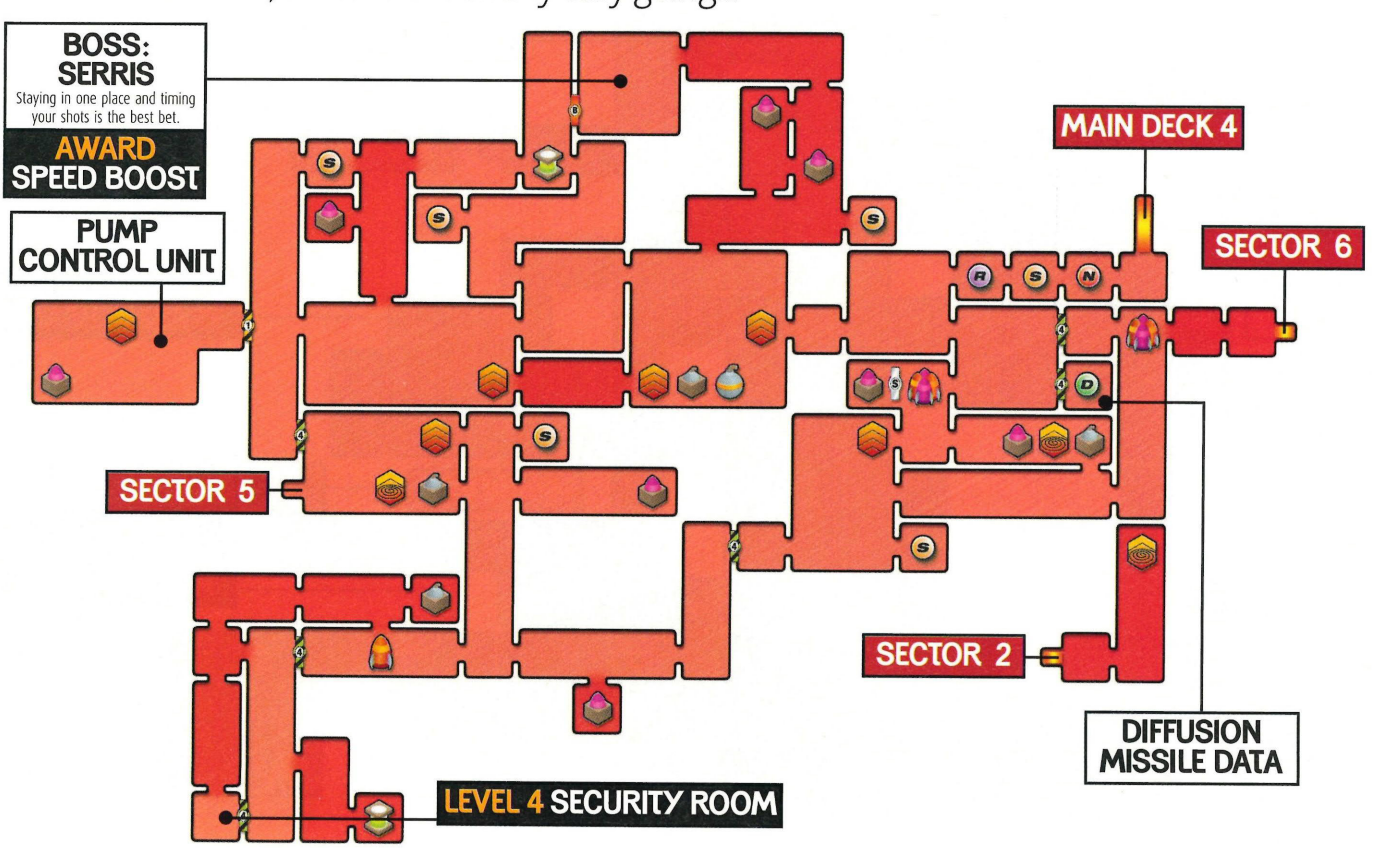
SECTOR 3 PYR

Forget about the appliance of science, annihilate the scientists!



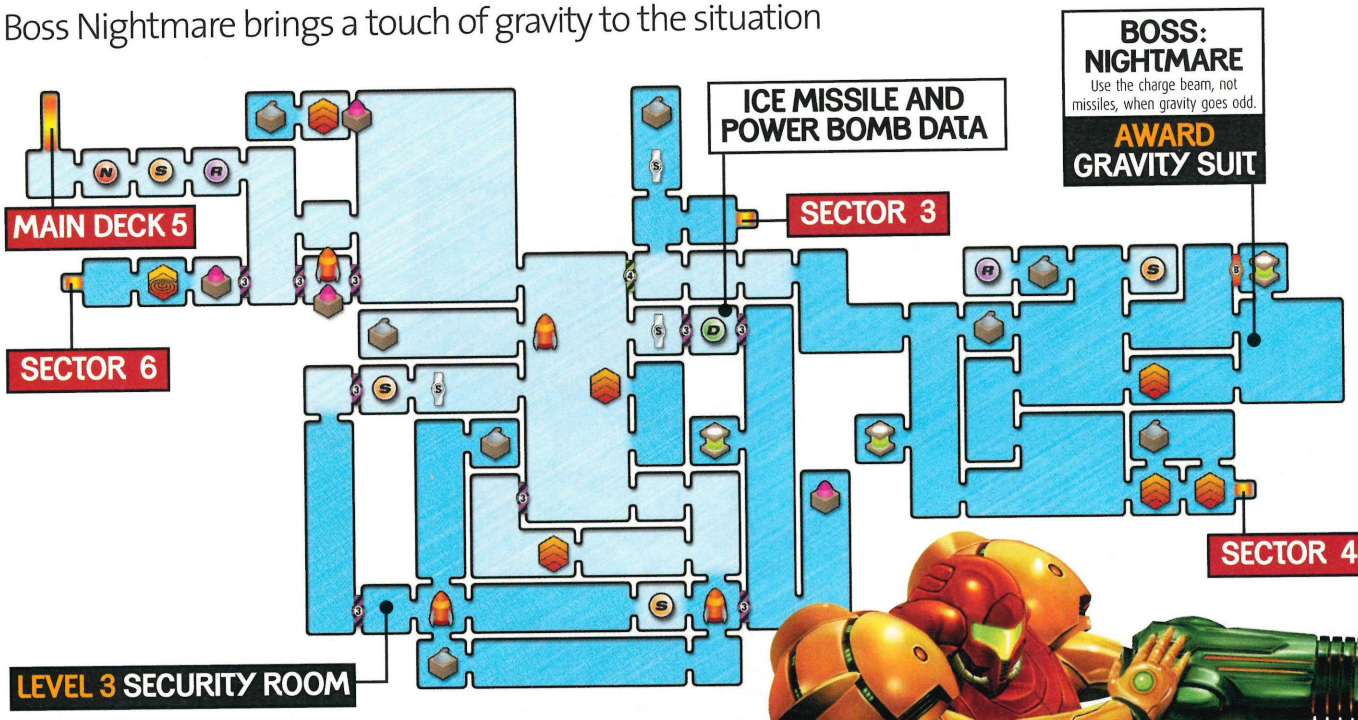
SECTOR 4 AQA

Just one boss here, but it's not Serris-ly easy going...



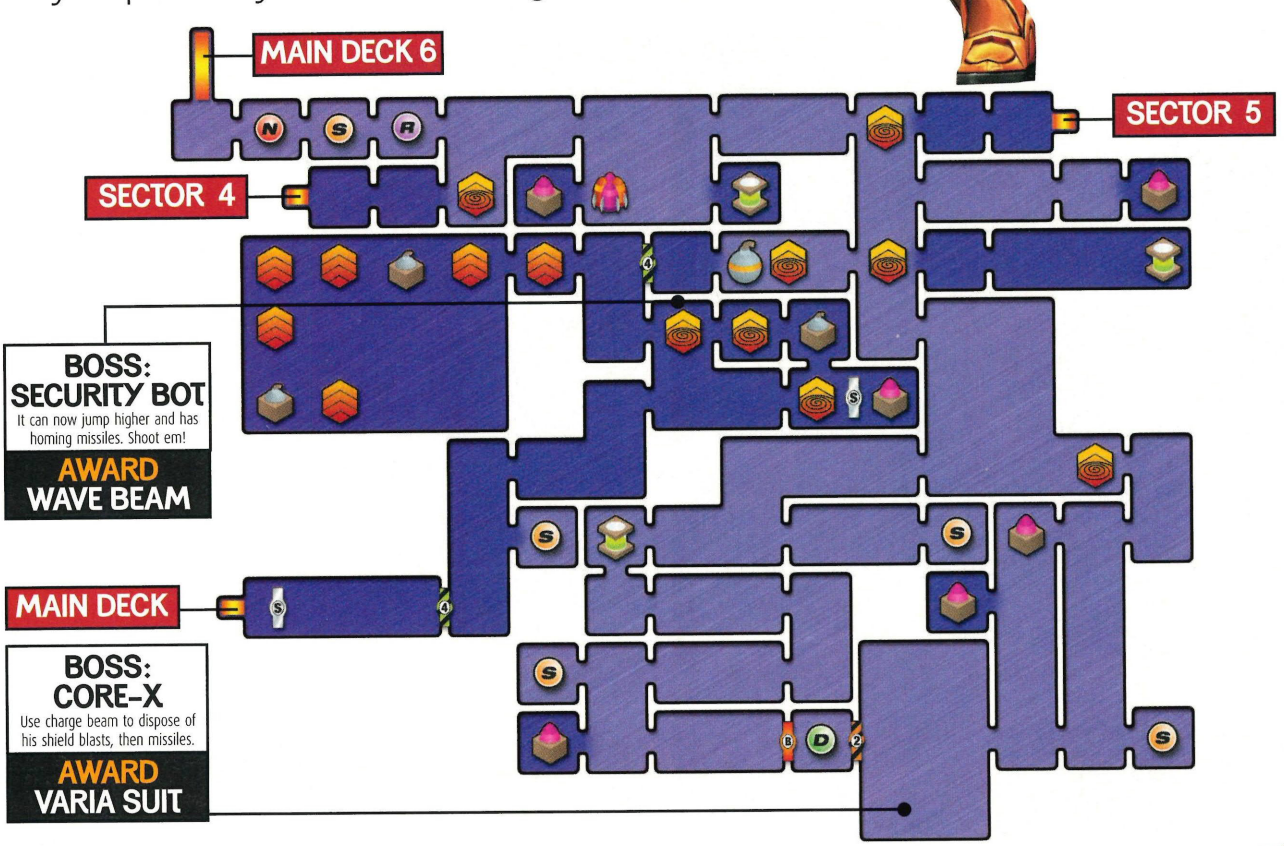
SECTOR 5 ARC

Boss Nightmare brings a touch of gravity to the situation



SECTOR 6 NOC

Hit your prime as you battle Core-X again...



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FULLY MAPPED SOLUTION!

ZELDA
A LINK TO THE PAST

Solution by Efrem Orizzonte

Welcome to another great Nintendo adventure! *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past* for the Game Boy Advance is the faithful reproduction of the stunning Super Nintendo classic of 1991. This game is packed-full of action, mistery, and adventure, in the grand tradition of the *Zelda* series. You will face thousands of enemies and explore the most incredible places as you struggle to find the key to the elusive Golden Power, with which only you can restore peace to the world. Will you ever succeed in your mission? Only you can determine it!

In *A Link to the Past*, you play as Link. Your first mission will be to save Princess Zelda from a deep dungeon inside a castle, but from there your way will lead to more perilous adventures, up to a mighty confrontation with the Lord of Darkness himself!

Luckily, you are not alone on your journey. You will meet many friendly folk that will give you clues and items – which eventually build up a huge inventory. Every one of them is vital to advance on your mission, so be sure to look everywhere and to leave no stone unturned!

But if you do get stuck – and you will – we're here to help! Turn the page for the most comprehensive *Link to the Past* solution ever!

REVEALED!

- EVERY DUNGEON **FULLY MAPPED!**
- COMPLETE, STEP-BY-STEP **WALKTHROUGH!**
- HOW TO **BEAT** EVERY **BOSS!**
- MAPS FOR **LIGHT** AND **DARK WORLDS!**
- FIND ALL THE **HEART PIECES!**
- TACTICS FOR EVERY **ENEMY!**
- PLUS **INVALUABLE HINTS** AND **TIPS!**

HINTS AND TIPS

Your journey is a long and perilous one, and you're bound to find yourself stuck sooner or later. The following advice help you figure out your own solutions...

- When you get a new item, try using it in different ways. An item usually has many different purposes, and one of them may just be what you need to advance.
- Usually (but not always), the item you find in a dungeon is the key to defeating the boss – or at least to beating it more easily. The Bow in the first dungeon is a perfect example.
- There are secrets everywhere. Use various items at different places and you may discover lots of things.
- You can keep Faeries and Bees in bottles if you catch them with the Bug-Catching Net. A Fairy will revive you with seven hearts when you die, so it's very useful to have some when you go into a dungeon. Bees can attack enemies.
- Avoid shops if possible. Everything they sell, can be found for free elsewhere.
- Avoid fortune tellers, too. They can give you hints on what to do next, but it's not worth the money.
- Look carefully at walls. Many of them can be bombed to open up secret passages. To know if a wall can be bombed successfully, try poking at it with your Sword – if it makes a different-than-usual sound, lay a bomb!
- If you're stuck in a room, first of all, kill all the enemies. Second, look for a switch. Third, look for a secret passage. One of these methods is sure to open the door – unless it is a one-way door.
- Four torches close to each other spell a secret passage or a trigger to a door. Light them up when you see them.
- Sometimes there may be invisible floors in a room. Light a torch to see them, or use the Ether Medallion.
- Bombs and blocks can be thrown beyond thin fences. This can help you hit objects that are out of reach.
- Always have some money with you. It may turn out useful.
- If you need keys, kill everyone and break every pot. It's not unusual to find keys on even the weakest enemies.
- Never leave a dungeon if you haven't opened the big chest. You'll need each and every item to complete your quest.
- Use the maps. They're there to help you find your way. If you're trying to find a way to get to a chest or door, think how the maps of different floors could be superimposed. Maybe you can fall to your target from the floor above...
- Never let your Magic Power get too low. Magic items are very important, and sometimes essential, especially against bosses.
- If you throw an empty Bottle in a fairy pond, the Fairy will fill it with Magic Medicine.
- Use the Magic Mirror wisely. Many secrets are linked to its correct use.
- If you're stuck in a dungeon, use the Magic Mirror to go back to the entrance and reset everything. This can also be done to backtrack faster.
- When you get a new item, explore the new areas it allows you to reach. A single item can open up a whole new world!

INVENTORY

There are loads of items to be found in the game, and each is esssential for completing the game. This is what they all do!

BOMB
Bombs can do everything! They can hurt enemies, activate triggers, and create secret passages in fragile walls and floors. You will definitely want to have some bombs with you at all times.

BOOK OF MUDORA
This mysterious tome is the key to the ancient language of the Hylian. You will need it to decipher some inscriptions.

BOOMERANG
The Boomerang can stun enemies, hit switches, and collect items for you. There are two to find – the blue, regular one, and a magic one that flies much farther.

BOW AND ARROWS
The Bow is an excellent long-range weapon, and a very powerful one at that. You can use wooden and Silver Arrows with it. Silver Arrows are secret, but you'll need them to defeat the Lord of Darkness!

BUG-CATCHING NET
Received from the sick boy in Kakariko Village. It's used to catch bees and fairies, which can then be put into Bottles. It can also deflect certain projectiles.

CANE OF SOMARIA
This Cane creates magic blocks that you can move around and use to keep triggers pressed. You can also use the blocks as weapons to throw them against enemies.

CANE OF BYRNA
This magical artifact will defend you against enemy attacks, and it will attack enemies as well. Use it sparingly though, as it uses up your Magic Power fast!

FLUTE
The Flute can help you travel the world faster, but before you can use it, you must find someone willing to give you a ride... wonder who it might be?

GLOVES
Gloves are needed to lift heavy stones and boulders. The Power Glove helps you lift light-green stones, while the Titan's Mitt allows you to lift dark-green, heavier boulders.

HOOKSHOT
The Hookshot is the most versatile item in the game! It's a weapon, but it's also the only way to cross large gaps.

LAMP
The Lamp lights your way ahead in pitch-black rooms and caves. You can also use it to light torches in dungeons, and to burn down bushes.

MAGIC BOTTLES
There are a total of four Magic Bottles. You can store Potions in them, but you can also catch Bees and Faeries with the Bug-Catching Net and put them inside a Bottle. Who knows – they may turn useful later on!

MAGIC CAPE
The Magic Cape makes you invisible and invincible! No one can damage you while you're wearing it, but watch out – it drains your Magic Power like crazy!

MAGIC HAMMER
The Hammer is useful to stomp poles blocking your way. However, it's also quite a powerful weapon, so don't dismiss it as just a road-opener!

MAGIC MIRROR
This magic item can take you back to the Light World from anywhere in the Dark World. It can bring you back to the entrance of a dungeon, too, should things become a little too hot to handle!

MAGIC POWDER
This mysterious Powder can make a lot of crazy things! Just try sprinkling it on objects and enemies and see for yourself!

MAILS
Your Mail is your armor, and it can reduce the amount of damage received. The Blue Mail will cut damage in half, and the precious Red Mail will reduce it to one-quarter.

BOMBOS MEDALLION
This Medallion summons the power of fire. A powerful explosion will set every enemy onscreen alight!

ETHER MEDALLION
A blast of polar wind will be summoned when you use this Medallion. It's also necessary to open the entrance to a particular dungeon...

QUAKE MEDALLION
Use this magic to rock your enemies! The Quake Medallion will shake the earth with extreme violence. You'll need it to open the door to a certain dungeon, too...

MOON PEARL
The Moon Pearl allows you to travel to the Dark World in human form. Without it, you won't be able to do anything there, so you'd better find it!

MUSHROOM
A mysterious mushroom that grows in the Lost Woods. It smells like rotten fruit, but maybe someone will find it useful...

PEGASUS BOOTS
Run like the wind! These shoes give you the power to run very fast and smash into objects and monsters. There are many things you can do with them, so try running everywhere you can!

POTIONS
Potions may save your life at difficult times, so keep some in stock. The Red Potion will heal your energy, the Green Potion will give you Magic Power, and the Blue Potion will restore both completely.

ICE ROD
The Ice Rod can freeze your enemies! Use it against fire enemies to make them totally powerless!

FIRE ROD
Burn, baby, burn! This powerful Rod can set many enemies on fire. It's the bane of ice enemies, and it can also light up unreachable torches.

SHIELD
The Shield defends you from enemy projectiles. A magic shield can even block fire, but to repel magic and to stop the most powerful beams, you'll need the Mirror Shield.

SHOVEL
Use this handy spade to dig holes in the ground. You may never know what you may find...

SWORD
The Sword is your main weapon. There are four levels of power: the normal Sword, the powerful Master Sword, a Tempered Sword, and the almighty Golden Sword. With a Golden Sword, no one will be able to stop you!

ZORA'S FLIPPERS
You will need these to swim in deep water. Swimming is required to get to some places, so you'd better find these precious Flippers as soon as you can!

LIGHT WORLD ENEMIES

1 ARCHER: When he spots you, he runs away from you then faces you to shoot arrows. Try to corner him to kill him more easily.

2 BALL-AND-CHAIN TROOPER: This strong enemy guards Princess Zelda's prison and the Castle Tower. He hurts a lot, so it's best to attack from a distance. The Boomerang can stun him momentarily.

3 BAT: Bats live in dark dungeons and caverns. They usually attack in groups, but they're very weak.

4 BLUE SKELETON: A weak enemy, it will jump backwards if you attempt to strike him.

5 BUBBLE: If this wandering spirit touches you, it will drain you of life as well as of Magic Power. The only way to defeat it is to use Magic Powder to turn it into a Faerie.

6 CRAB: Crabs are slow in their vertical movements, but they become incredibly fast when they walk sidewards. They're very weak and easy to kill, too.

7 CRAWLER: Very weak, a single Sword hit will kill it.

8 GREEN CYCLOPS: This enemy hurts a lot and he's also very resistant. Use arrows to kill him more easily.

9 RED CYCLOPS: This strong foe can only be beaten with arrows.

10 ELECTRIC FISH: Don't touch this thing! Using your Sword on it will only have you damaged by a powerful electrick shock. Attack with the Bow or some other kind of missile.

11 FIRE RHINO: This creature periodically stops to spit fire.

12 FLOOR TILES: In some rooms, the floor tiles will rise and attack you. They're very precise, so it's difficult to avoid them. Strike as they come for you - they're pretty fragile.

13 GARGOYLE: This tiny creature is very annoying. If you hit it with your Sword, it will petrify for some time, and when it does this it may block your way forward.

14 LEEVER: This enemy can hide under the sand. It's not too tough to defeat, but it attacks in large groups.

15 MOLDORM: This worm crawls randomly around at a disturbing speed. Hit it in the head to defeat it.

16 OCTOBALLOON: This rare enemy flies peacefully until you come too close. Then, he suddenly explodes, releasing many tiny Octoballoons.

17 OCTOPUSPHERE: This monster is very resistant unless you're using a very powerful Sword. The best way to dispose of it is to make it fall into a hole in the floor. The red ones are much stronger and faster than the blue ones.

18 OCTOROK: This small octopus moves around very fast, spitting out small rocks.

19 POE: A ghost that lives in the graveyard. He flies around in large movements, but can be easily defeated.

20 RAT: Very weak, you can kill it with a single blow from your Sword.

21 ROCK: An indestructible boulder that falls from the top of Death Mountain. Do your best to avoid them.

22 ROPE: This snake is found in the secret passage in Hyrule Castle. He's stronger than bats and rats, and when he sees you, he springs forward very quickly.

23 SANDCRAWLER: Comes out of a pool of quicksands and shoots fireballs. The quicksands can immobilize you if you step into them.

24 SANDMAN: This enemy lives under the sand in the Desert of Mystery. You can see one of them is coming when you see his eyes above the sand.

25 SHOOTING EYE: This powerful enemy is invincible. When it sees you, it will shoot a very damaging laser beam that your shield cannot block. Hide behind walls, or keep moving to avoid it.

26 SOLDIER: Soldiers are found almost everywhere in Hyrule. They attack with a sword and can defend with a shield. Just hit them with whatever you have. Blue soldiers are stronger than green soldiers.

27 SPARROW: A bird that flies down on you from above. He'll chase you around should he miss with the first attack.

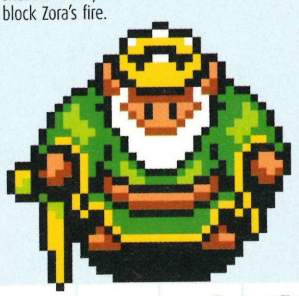
28 SPEAR SOLDIER: This is a red soldier that uses a spear instead of a sword.

29 STONE STATUE: Found only near the East Palace, this enemy will spring to life if you get too close to it. Try to avoid combat as it's very tough to beat.

30 TEKTITE: A spider that lives on Death Mountain. He jumps around aimlessly.

31 VULTURE: Vultures fly around you in circles. They're pretty hard to hit, so the best thing is to just leave them alone.

32 ZORA: An aquatic monster that comes out of the water and spits fireballs. It can walk on shallow water, too. Your small shield cannot block Zora's fire.



DARK WORLD ENEMIES

1 BLUE JELLYFISH: This monster is pretty weak, but it will periodically emit elecrticity that will damage you if you hit when it's sparkling. You can attack safely with long-range weapons.

2 RED JELLYFISH: Same as Blue Jellyfish, but when hit will split into two smaller ones.

3 BOMB CYCLOPS: This big, tough monster paces around while throwing bombs. Just leave him alone - it takes a lot of hits to defeat him.

4 BOUNCER: This prancing monster will get smaller as you attack it. After the first hit, strike the head for an instant kill.

5 BUG: A green bug, very easy to kill.

6 CHAIN CHOMP: This enemy is invincible and hurts a lot. It will periodically lunge straight at you in a swift movement. Stay out of its range of attack.

7 DARK ZORA: A mutated Zora.

8 FIRE SNAKE: You can't defeat this long snake made up of round flames. Just keep your distance from it.

9 FLOOR MASTER: if you hear a 'flop' sound, move! The Floor Master will fall from the ceiling, trying to get you. If it does, you'll be returned to the last entrance to the dungeon that you crossed.

10 FLYING EYE: Looks and acts like a bat.

11 FORK BULL: A human-like bull brandishing a fork.

12 SPEAR BULL: Same as the Fork Bull, but armed with a spear.

13 GIANT TRAP: This huge trap will spring towards you should you cross its line of movement. Move quickly!

14 GIBDO: This tough mummy takes a lot of hits to die. But if you have the Fire Rod, a single swipe will kill a Gibdo.

15 GREEN BAG: Although small, this monster packs a punch. Be careful and try to avoid it.

16 GREEN GORIYA: A monster that mimicks your movements.

17 H2O: This watery creature will leave the water surface and bounce on the walls before submerging again.

18 HELMASAUR: This small dinosaur cannot be hit from the front because of the mask protecting his face.

19 HORN BIRD: Acts like a sparrow.

20 HORSEMAN: A man with a horse head. The red ones can spit fire.

21 ICEMAN: The only way to kill this monster is the Fire Rod. Watch out, his vertical movements are extremely fast.

22 JELLY SPECTER: This monster has a red core that becomes vulnerable once it detaches from its translucent body.

23 LASER EYE: This very dangerous enemy cannot be destroyed. You can only block its laser if you have the Mirror Shield.

24 LICKER: This creature can stick out its tongue and steal one of your items.

25 LYNEL: A centaur that lives on Death Mountain. It spits fire.

26 MAN-EATING PLANT: This monster jumps around aimlessly. It hurts, so be careful.

27 MARSH WORM: This worm lives only in the Misery Mire. It's pretty innocuous, so just leave it alone.

28 MOBLIN: This monster walks around brandishing a spear. He's very weak.

29 OCTOPUS: Very similar to an Octorok.

30 PENGUIN: This enemy only lives in the Ice Palace. It can slide on the ice to come at you. The Hookshot scores an instant kill.

31 RED GORIYA: Only arrows can defeat it. It spits fire if it faces you directly.

32 RED SKELETON: If it evades your attack, it will throw a bone at you.

33 SKULL: It waits on the ground, disguised as a stone skull. It springs to life when touched.

34 STALFOS KNIGHT: It will collapse when hit, but will soon be back on its feet. The most effective way to kill it is to stun it, then lay a Bomb on it.

35 THIEF: He lives in the Village of Outcast. He's invincible, and if he touches you, several of your items will be scattered around for him to steal.

36 TURTLE: You must use the Magic Hammer to flip this monster on its back and expose its weak belly. Its shell is impenetrable.

37 WATER CRAWLER: A monster that comes out of the gratings on the walls in the Swamp palace.

38 WATER FLEA: The main enemy found in the Swamp Palace.

39 WIZROBE: This wizard will appear and disappear continuously, casting spells when he's solid. You can bounce his spells backwards with a Mirror Shield.

40 ZOL: a jellyish creature that waits nder the floor until you walk past it. The Hookshot can kill it while it's still under the floor.

TOWER OF HERA
CASTLE TOWER
HYRULE CASTLE
DESERT PALACE

LIGHT WORLD

Our quick-and-dirty guide shows you the light!

PART 1

1. When your uncle leaves home, get out of bed and get the Lamp from the chest. You can get a tutorial on the controls from the guards outside.
2. Head for Hyrule Castle and go to the right. Lift the lone bush at the end of the road and fall into the well to get the Sword and Shield from your Uncle. Exit the secret passage to the grounds, and enter Hyrule Castle.

→ HYRULE CASTLE GUIDE pg 78

3. Before you leave the Sanctuary, open the chest to get a Heart Container. Now go to East Palace area and look for Sahasrahla's hideout. After you've talked to him, enter the East Palace.

→ EAST PALACE GUIDE pg 80

4. Return to Sahasrahla with the Pendant and he'll give you the Pegasus Shoes.
5. In Kakariko Village's Library, ram the shelf to get the Book of Mudora.
6. In the village, enter the bar from the back door to find a Magic Bottle. Visit the sick boy and receive the Bug-Catching Net. Then, go buy another Magic Bottle from the merchant.
7. Go to the Lost Woods to get the Mushroom.
8. Give the Mushroom to the Witch at the Witch Hut.
9. Go to the Northeast shore of Lake Hylia and use a bomb to open up a secret cave in the wall. Enter this cave and you'll find the Ice Rod.
10. Go to Desert of Mystery and visit Sahasrahla in the cave.
11. Go to the entrance to the Desert Palace and use the Book of Mudora in front of the monolith to access the Palace.

→ DESERT PALACE GUIDE pg 81

12. Return to the Witch Hut and receive the Magic Powder. Lift the boulder near the hut and go to Zora's Falls.
13. Go to King Zora and buy Zora's Flippers.
14. Go to the Waterfall of Wishing and throw the Boomerang and the Shield in the pond to receive the Magic Shield and the Magic Boomerang.
15. Visit the Pond of Happiness in the middle of Lake Hylia to increase your maximum amount of bombs and arrows.
16. Swim Northeast from the Pond of Happiness cave and under the bridge. You'll find a man who'll give you a Magic Bottle.
17. Go East from the Lost Woods and lift the big rock near the cave. In the cave you'll find an old man. Help him get back to his home and he'll give you the Magic Mirror.
18. Go to the top of the mountain and use the teleporter. In the Dark World, stand on the Spectacle Rock's print and use the Magic Mirror. Enter the Tower of Hera.

→ TOWER OF HERA GUIDE pg 82

19. Go to the Lost Woods and enter the tree stump in the West area. Retrieve the Master Sword from the stone. When you return, you'll receive a message from the Sage. Go back to the Sanctuary and talk to him.
20. Enter Hyrule Castle and exit from one of the Southerne side exits. Break the seal to the Castle Tower and enter.

→ CASTLE TOWER GUIDE pg 83
→ DARK WORLD GUIDE pg 76

PART 2

21. Dig in the Haunted Grove to find the Flute. Play it in front of the weathercock in Kakariko Village.
22. Go to the blacksmith's area and use the Hammer on the pole to access the cave. In the cave, use Magic Powder in the cup to double your Magic Power.
23. Go to Death Mountain and use the teleporter. Drop from the edge of the cliff and enter the cave. Collect the Cane of Byrna and warp back to the top of Death Mountain.
24. Go West from the Tower of Hera and Use the Book of Mudora in front of the monolith to receive the Ether Medallion.

→ DARK WORLD PART 2 GUIDE pg 76

HEART PIECES — LIGHT WORLD

Though not essential, they certainly help! Collect four pieces to increase your energy.

#1: Bomb the wall inside this house. Outside, talk to the woman and complete the race in less than 15 seconds.

#2: In Kakariko, drop into the hole near the cave and bomb the wall inside.

#3: Bomb the wall in the basement of the green-roofed house in Kakariko.

#4: In the Lost Woods, look for a three-by-three bush cluster. Cut down the middle bush. Fall through the hole.

#5: Dash against the pile of rocks near Sanctuary and enter the cave below.

#6: Enter the building in the swamp and go to the second room. Pull the right lever and exit to find the Piece.

#7: In the Desert of Mistery, go to the cave and bomb the South wall where Sahasrahla lives.

#8: When you leave the Desert Palace via the South-West exit, go South to find this Piece.

#9: After getting Zora's Flippers, swim South and go West to the fenced area.

#10: Drop down the edge South of the cave on top of Death Mountain and enter the cave you'll find. Explore it to find the Piece.

#11: This Piece is on top of the Spectacle Rock before entering the Tower of Hera.

#12: In the Dark World, go West from the Ice palace and into the circle of stones. Use the Magic Mirror to reach the island with the Piece.

#13: In the Dark World, go South and West from the Haunted Grove and use the Magic Mirror to find the cave with the Piece.

#14: After reaching the Dark World, go to the lumberjacks' hut and dash against the odd tree. Fall down to find the Piece.

#15: In the Dark World graveyard, climb the ladder in the back and use the Magic Mirror to reach the cave with the Piece.

#16: Go to the North-East corner in the Misery Mire and use the Magic Mirror. Lift the green boulder and get the Piece inside the cave.

#17: West of the Turtle Rock is a secret cave under a boulder. Inside, cross the invisible bridge (use Ether to see it) and use Bombs to get outside on the small island. Use the Magic Mirror to find the Piece.

SKULL WOODS
#1
#2
#3
#4
#5
#6
#7
#8
9
GANON'S TOWER
19
3
8
THIEVES' TOWN
4
10
12
1
20
16
1
5
11
2
4
MISERY MIRE
6
15
14
5
SWAMP PALACE
6

DARK WORLD

Don't be stuck in the dark – we show the way!

PART 1

1. Your journey in the Dark World starts on top of the Pyramid. Go to the Dark palace area.
2. Follow the arrows to the big ivy-covered area. When you get out of it, you'll meet Kiki the monkey. Pay him to follow you to the entrance to the Dark Palace. Then pay another 100 Rupees to have him open the door.

→ DARK PALACE GUIDE pg 84

3. Go to the bridge West of Dark Palace and use the Hammer to get through and reach the Haunted Grove.
4. Talk to the old man to receive the Shovel. Warp to the Light World.

→ LIGHT WORLD GUIDE PART 2 pg 74

PART 2

5. Go to the West end of the Southern swamp and use the Magic Mirror to get to the Bombos Medallion.
6. Go outside the Swamp palace and use the Magic Mirror. Enter the building and pull the right lever to drain the swamp. Return to the Dark World and enter the Swamp palace.

→ SWAMP PALACE GUIDE pg 85

7. Go North to the area below Death Mountain. Drop an object in the circle of stones to receive the Quake Medallion.
8. Use the Hookshot to reach the graveyard area. Get near the top-right pile of stones and teleport to the Light World. Dash against the tombstone to open a passage and enter it to find the Magic Cape.
9. Go to the Skull Woods.

→ SKULL WOODS GUIDE pg 87

10. Go to the gargoyle statue and pull its fork to access Thieves' Town.

→ THIEVES' TOWN GUIDE pg 88

11. Go South from the village and free the frog. Take him to the blacksmith in the Light World and have the dwarves temper your Sword.
12. Go to the Dark World and you'll find a chest in the empty blacksmiths' house. Take it to the man near the Desert of Mystery and he'll open it and give you a Magic Bottle.
13. Go to the island in the middle of Lake Hylia in the Light World and lift the green stone to find a teleporter that will take you to the Ice Palace.

→ ICE PALACE GUIDE pg 89

14. Warp to the Light World and use the Flute. Go to location #6 and lift the green stone to find a teleporter to the Misery Mire.
15. Use the Ether Medallion in front of the Palace (146) to open it up.

→ MISERY MIRE GUIDE pg 91

16. Buy a Super Bomb from the Bomb Shop and take it to the cracked wall in the Pyramid. Blow up the wall and enter the secret room. Drop the Bow and the Sword into the water to receive the Silver Arrows and the Golden Sword.
17. Go to the top of Death Mountain in the Light World, and go East from the Tower of Hera. On the hill at the end of the road, smash the poles in an anti-clockwise pattern starting with the lower-right one to reveal a teleporter.
18. Use the Quake Medallion on the symbol and the Turtle Rock will open. Enter it.

→ TURTLE RTOCK GUIDE pg 92

19. Go to Ganon's Tower. The Crystals will open it up for you .

→ GANNON'S TOWER GUIDE pg 94

20. The dark bat will smash the top of the Pyramid. Before you fall down the hole, make sure you have a lot of Faeries or Potions, and that your Life Meter is full. Then, enter the Pyramid.

THE PYRAMID

In the centre room of the Pyramid, the final showdown with Ganon begins. Ganon will rotate his pitchfork, then throw it in the air like a boomerang while he teleports to another location. Hit him repeatedly with your Sword while he is solid, and avoid the pitchfork.

After a few hits, Ganon will release fireballs that will turn into fire bats every time he stands still. These deal quite a lot of damage, so do your best to avoid them. Keep hitting him with your Sword though – just don't stay too close when the fireballs start spreading.

At some point when you've hit him enough, Ganon will jump and break one side of the floor when you hit him after he's teleported. When this has happened for all four sides of the floor, Ganon will switch to another technique. If at any time now, you fall into the pit that surrounds the floor, you will be forced to exit the Pyramid and start the battle again from the start.

Now Ganon will keep teleporting and using a fire bat to attack you, but the two torches in the room will quickly burn out, making Ganon invisible. Use the Lamp or the Fire Rod to light them up again, and hit Ganon with your Sword. He'll freeze and turn blue. While he's frozen, quickly shoot one Silver Arrow into him. Repeat this pattern until four Silver Arrows have hit, and Ganon will finally die.

Now all you have to do is walk on up and witness the excellent ending sequence!

HEART PIECES – DARK WORLD

There aren't as many Heart Pieces, but you'll still need them before you face Ganon!

#1: On the Pyramid, follow the path from the Palace of the Four Sword to find this Piece.

#2: Go West from the Haunted Grove and pay the old man 80 Rupees to dig. Keep on playing until you find the Piece.

#3: Enter the cave East of the Skull Woods and use the Magic Cape to go past the rebouncer on the second floor to get to the Piece.

#4: In the Village of Outcast, enter the house with the chest sign. Keep on playing the game until you find the Piece.

#5: In the Village of Outcast, near the abandoned blacksmiths' house, smash the poles with the Magic Hammer and a cave will open. Get the Piece inside.

#6: In Misery Mire, enter the building on the left to find the Piece.

#7: Leave Turtle Rock through the exit in the room with the big chest and use the Magic Mirror to reach a cave containing the Piece.

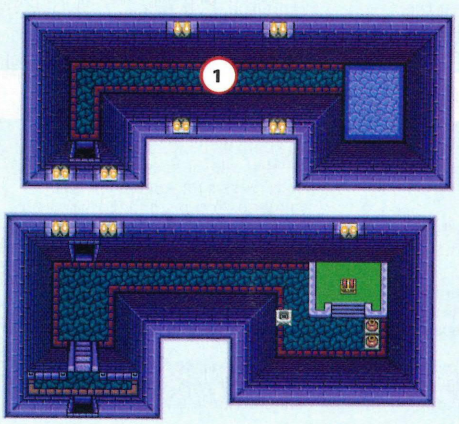
HYRULE CASTLE

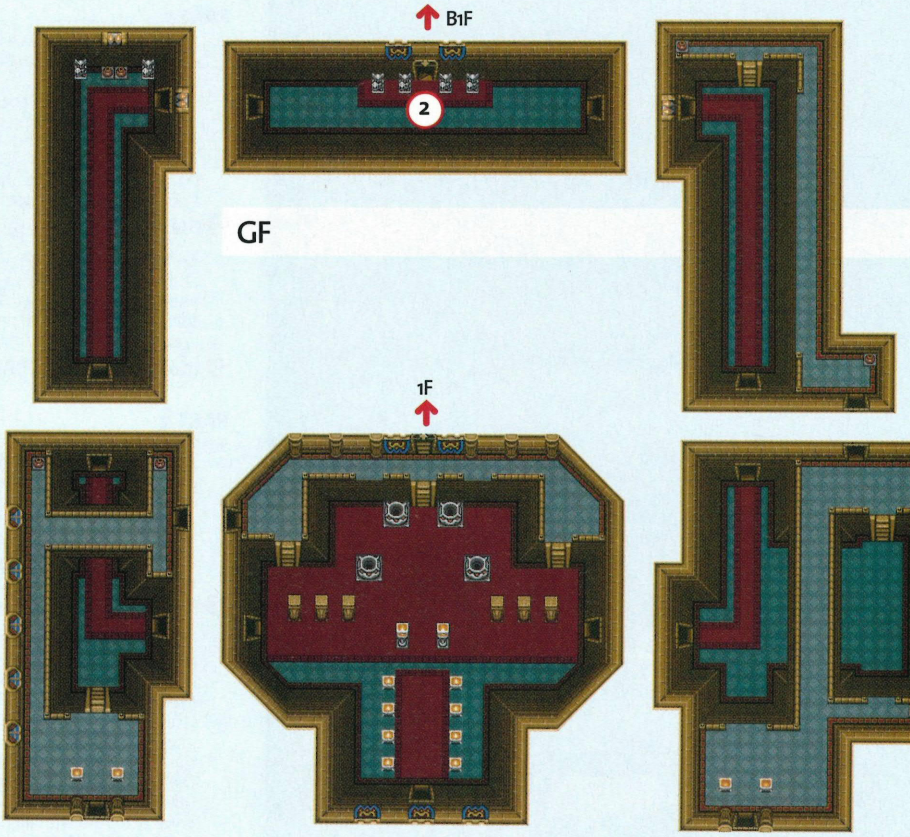
There's hassle in the castle – Princess Zelda's been kidnapped! Go, Link!

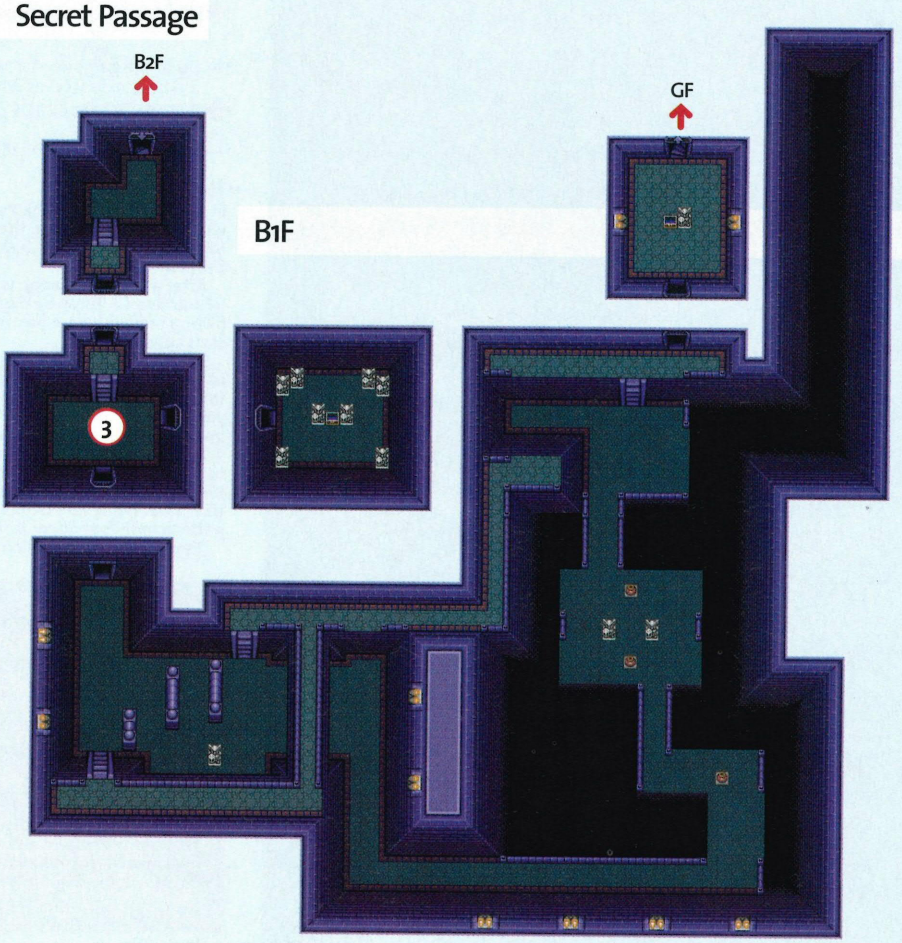
The dark and dingy dungeons make getting around tricky. Luckily, we've turned on the lights in our maps!

Hyrule Castle is a good introduction to dungeon-style action. You'll meet many soldiers here, and also a few weedy monsters. The path is straightforward, your objective clear – find Princess Zelda and escape! Use the Castle as a training ground and learn how to fight and escape effectively. And, of course, look everywhere for clues – you never know what you might find!

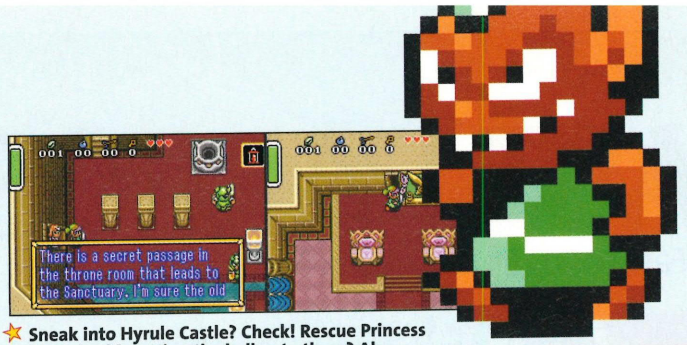
1. Dropping down from the well, you'll find yourself in a secret passage. Have a word with your Uncle, and he'll give you the Sword!
2. You reenter the castle from the main door. From the starting hall, go left and follow the path to this stairwell. Go down.



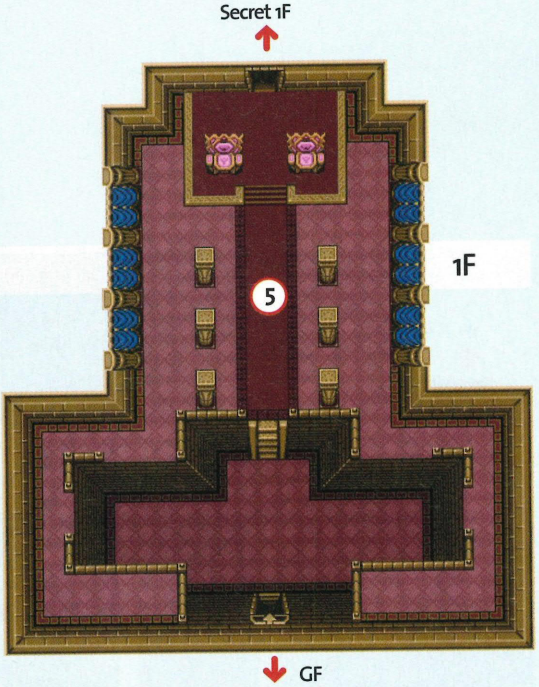


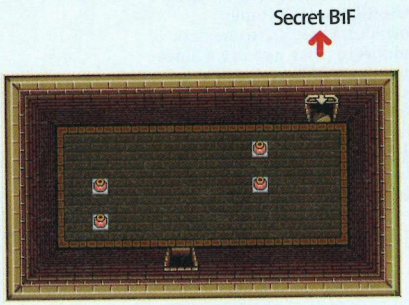


3. Kill the Soldier in this room to open the doors. Go right and defeat the guard there to get the Key for the door in the previous room. Also open the chest to find the Boomerang!
4. You must defeat the Ball-and-chain Trooper to get the Big Key needed to rescue Princess Zelda. You can stun the Trooper with your Boomerang, then hit him with your Sword. To make the battle easier, pick up some pots from the empty cell and throw them at him. They're much more powerful than your Sword.
5. After you've saved Zelda, take her to the throne room. When she advises you to do so, push the decoration behind the throne rightwards. A secret passage will open up.
6. Go right at the crossroads and open the chest you'll find to get a Key. Use it in the locked door ahead.
7. Kill all the enemies in this room. One rat has the Key you need to open the door.
8. Only one room left! Go to the right lever and pull it backwards to open the South door. You can now access the Sanctuary.



Sneak into Hyrule Castle? Check! Rescue Princess Zelda? Check! Getting the hell outa there? Ah...





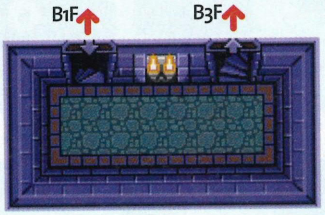
IN THIS DUNGEON:

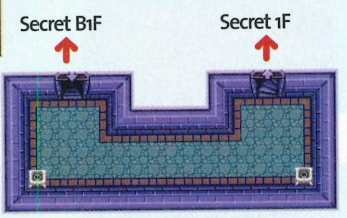
ENEMIES

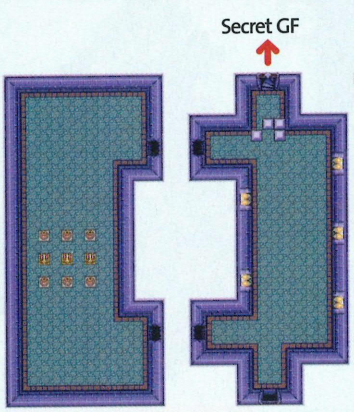
- Soldier
- Ball-and-chain Trooper
- Bat
- Rat
- Rope

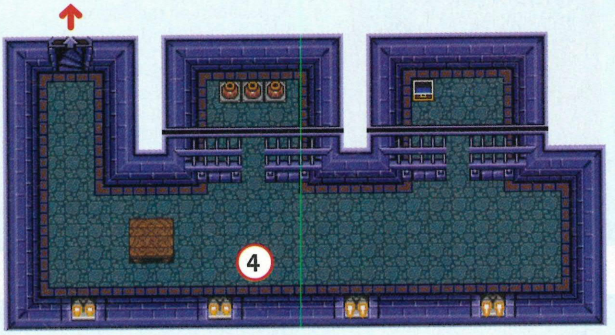
SPECIAL ITEM

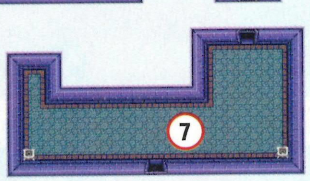
- Boomerang

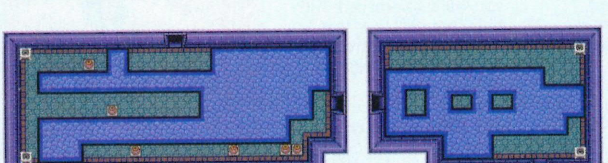


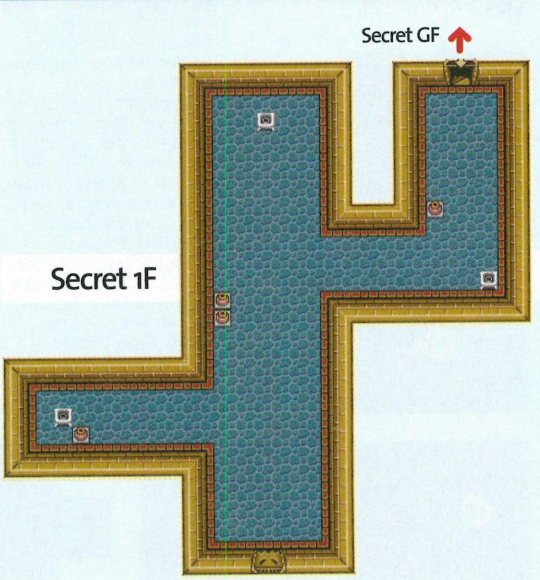


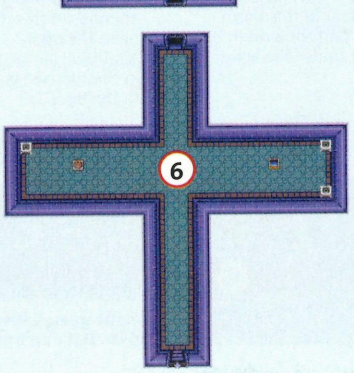


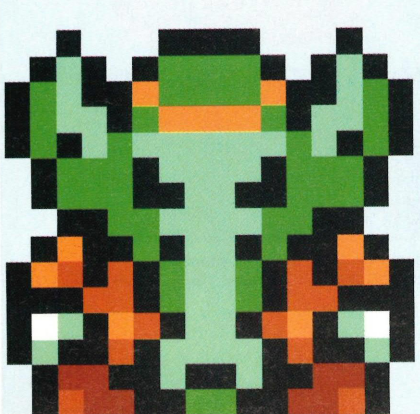












EAST PALACE

Head East, young Link. And don't forget to take a bow...

BOSS BATTLE!
ARMOS KNIGHTS

The Armos Knights aren't very dangerous. They circle around the room clockwise, and they can only hit you if you're standing in their way. Stay next to the lower wall and you'll be safe.

Use your Sword or Arrows to kill the Knights. Arrows are better – you'll only need three per Knight. When they line up against the wall, take your chance to strike them more precisely.

When only one Knight is left, he'll turn red and start jumping around, trying to land on you. You can hit him even when he's in the air, so just keep shooting Arrows to defeat him.

The East Palace is the first true dungeon you have to explore. It isn't very complicated, although finding the Big Key isn't totally obvious. There are some dark rooms to cross, and in the final rooms you'll have fun with switches. The item you'll find in this dungeon is among the most important in the whole game and is very useful in beating the Boss, so remember to take it.

1 Don't bother entering either side door, as they lead nowhere. Instead, lift the centre pot and press the switch under it to open the middle door.

2 There are three different-looking tiles on the floor, but only one is a real switch. Step on the lower of the three and the doors will open.

3 This is a tricky room. Bubbles will come down the centre corridor as you make your way up. Hide in the indentations in the wall to avoid them as you walk, and watch out for big bubbles – they fill the entire width of the passage.

4 You'll find 100 Rupees in this chest. Make sure to open it, you'll need all the money you can find.

5 As usual, lift all the pots to find items. Under the centre pot you'll find the switch to open the doors.

6 Open up this chest to find the Map of the dungeon.

7 There are no switches here, but Skeletons will appear soon after the doors have closed. Kill them all and the doors will open again.

8 The chest here has the Compass. Make sure you get it!

9 This room is pitch-black except for the light from your Lamp. Make your way to the right and press the different-looking tile on the floor to open the door next to it.

10 Another dark room. Go to the upper-right corner and pick up the pot you'll find there. There's a Key under it. Use it to open the other door in the previous room.

11 This is a very important room. First, kill all the moving enemies, and the Bubbles will leave the pot they're guarding. Now lift that pot and press the switch under it and the chest with the Big Key will appear.

12 The big chest contains the Bow and ten Arrows. As soon as you open it, skeletons will fall from above, so escape quickly and open the door to the North.

13 Drop from the edge of the platform into either vase to reach a secret room with Faeries. A teleport there will bring you back here.

14 This is another dark room, but at least you can light a torch to see better. Kill the Green Monsters to get a Key that you will use in the locked door in this room.

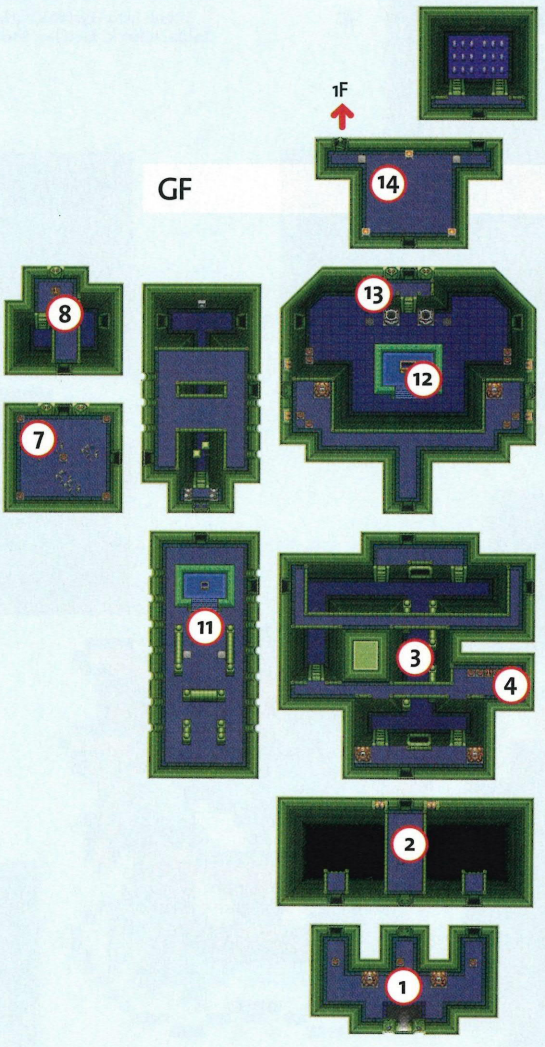
15 You will find the switch to the door under the lower-left pot.

16 There are three switch tiles here. Two are fake, but the lower one opens the door. Kill the Green Cyclops with Arrows and press the switch to continue on.

17 As Bubbles come out of every wall, you'll have to find yet another switch if you want to proceed. The only true switch is the upper-left one. Carefully approach and press it, then continue left.

18 The Red Cyclops here can only be defeated with Arrows. You will need two to kill him. Killing all the enemies in this room will open the door.

19 Again, kill all the monsters in the room to gain access to the Boss' lair.



Duck into the alcoves to dodge the big bubble-things!

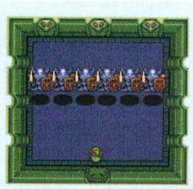
IN THIS DUNGEON:

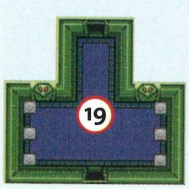
ENEMIES

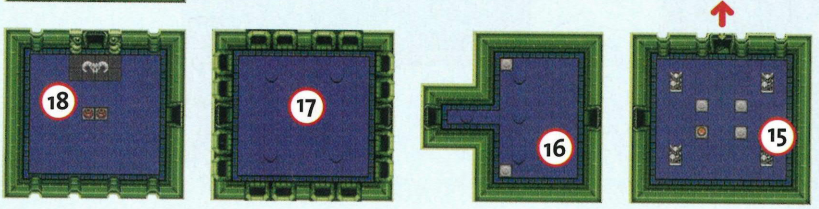
- Blue Skeleton
- Green Cyclops
- Crawler
- Bubble
- Red Cyclops

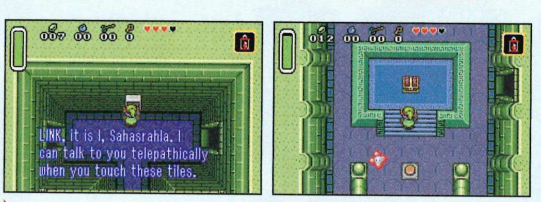
SPECIAL ITEM

- Bow







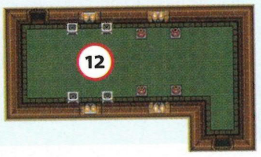


It's the game's first proper dungeon, and there's plenty to discover. But don't get distracted, find the Bow and kill the boss!

DESERT PALACE

There more here than just heat and sand, if you know where to look.

The Desert Palace is a little more complicated and challenging than the first dungeon. The starting floor is quite big and there are some rooms that lead to nowhere but stacks of monsters. You'll have your first meeting with the laser-spitting Shooting Eyes, and you'll also learn what it means when you find four torches close to each other...



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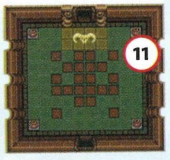

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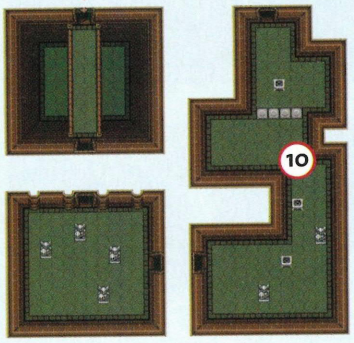


1. You'll notice a Key resting on top of a torch. Watch out for the Shooting Eye and ram into the torch as you did to get the Book of Mudora. The Key will fall to the ground for you to collect.
2. Kill all the monsters to eliminate any nuisances, and lift the pot that you'll find above the two centre torches. Press the switch under it and the chest containing the Map will appear.
3. The chest in this room holds the Compass. To open the North door, you'll have to kill all the monsters in the room, except of course the Shooting Eye.
4. From the door, dash through the room to the very top, where you'll find the chest containing the Big Key. Don't run on the way back or you'll surely get hit by the Bubbles that will be released from the walls.
5. There are many pots here. Under one of the pots on the left there's a switch that opens the doors.
6. Here's the big chest! If you have the Big Key, you can open it to collect the Power Glove. With this item you can lift pale-green stones and boulders.
7. The third block from the left in this room can be moved to open the North door. The door leads to a room with a couple of Faeries. Once you've got the Power Glove, leave the Palace through the Southwest exit. Outside the Palace, go straight South along the walkway to find a Piece of Heart. Then, go back up and behind the palace turrets to find an entrance blocked with green stones. Lift them up and get inside.
8. Watch out for the Shooting Eye, and move the block in the group on the right to open the door.
9. In this room the Floor Tiles will rise and attack you. They're extremely precise, so get your Sword ready to destroy them as soon as they come for you. If you don't want to fight, quickly lift the lower-left pot and grab the Key under it. Use the Key to unlock the North door, and go upstairs.
10. One of the pots near the North end of the room hides a Key. Keep moving to avoid the spinning Eyes' laser beams, and make your way North.
11. This room has some more killer Floor Tiles for you. The Key to the door is under the upper-right pot this time, so if you want to get out quickly, you know where to look.
12. After killing the Red Cyclops, you'll realise that this is a dead end. Or is it? Look closely and you'll notice that four torches may be a little too many for an already well-lit room. Try lighting them all up and... surprise! A secret door! This leads straight to the dungeon's Boss.

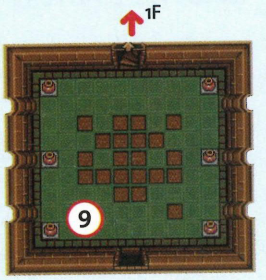
IN THIS DUNGEON:

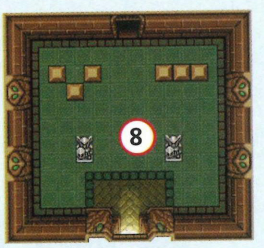
ENEMIES

- Shooting Eye
- Leever
- Sandcrawler
- Floor Tiles
- Green Cyclops
- Red Cyclops

SPECIAL ITEM

- Power Glove





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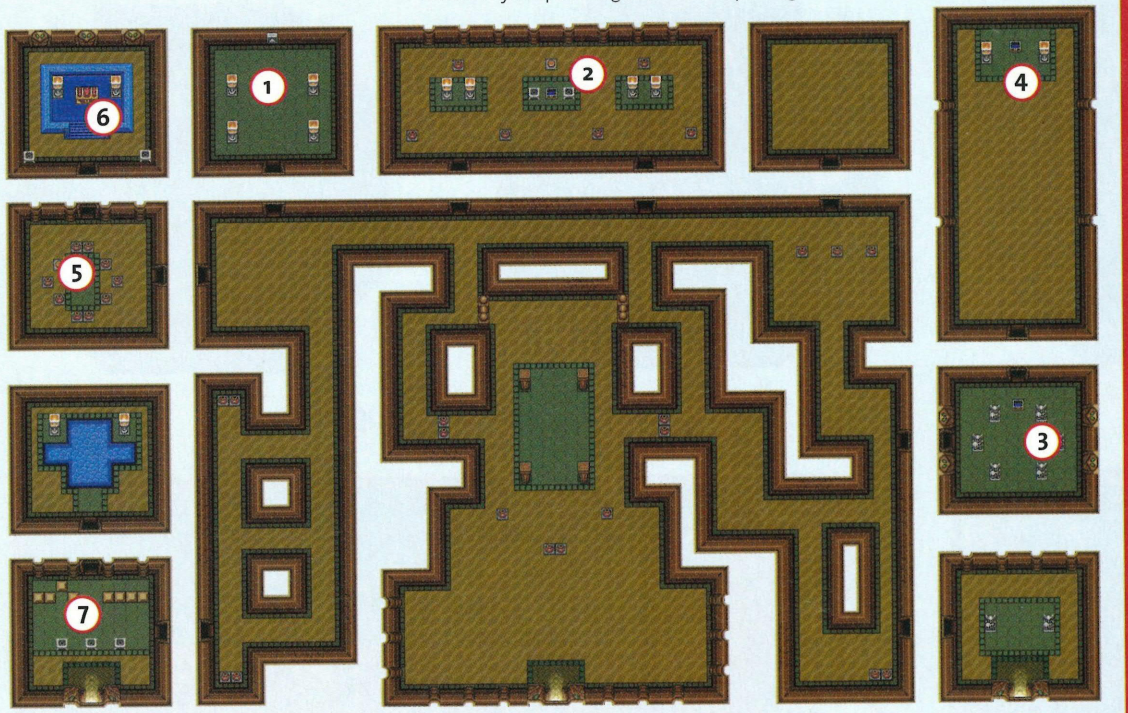

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BOSS BATTLE! LANMOLAS

Lanmolas are three huge worms that live in the sand. They spray harmful debris diagonally from the point where a worm emerges, so position yourself accordingly.

Lanmolas' weak point is their heads. The best moment to strike is as soon as they get their head out of the sand – hitting them while they're moving may be tricky.

You can use Arrows, but the Sword is more reliable in this battle. When only one Lanmola remains, he'll move faster and spray more dirt around. Try to hit them all evenly if you can.

TOWER OF HERA

Take me to the Moon... Pearl. Careful here, it's a long way doooown!

The Tower of Hera is the first dungeon where you'll find crystal switches to lower blue and orange blocks, as well as some teleporters. The layout of the dungeon is pretty straightforward, but getting to the big chest can be troublesome. Add in star tiles and fall-through floors and you'll get quite a complicated task. Remember not to leave without the special item or you won't be able to get on with your mission later.

1. From the entrance, walk down the stairs on the left to reach this room. Get the Key and go back upstairs. Use the Key to open the upper-left door.
2. It's those pesky stone Floor Tiles again, but this time you'll have to fight to the death. Stay close to the left wall and stab them as they come at you. Destroy them all and the door to the right will open.
3. Four torches await you in this room. Lift the pots to find Magic Power refills if you need them, then use the Lamp on the torches. This way, the chest with the Big Key will appear. With the Big Key, you can go upstairs from the entrance.
4. This chest here contains the Map. Although it's not a complicated dungeon, you may as grab it as you pass.
5. You don't need to backtrack and hit a crystal switch in order to proceed here. If a hole and/or a coloured block stand in your way, step on a star tile to change the location of the holes and clear the way ahead. Holes are also useful to get rid of enemies.
6. The Compass can be found in this chest. Touch the stone plate to hear some very important advice.
7. The big chest contains the indispensable Moon Pearl, but getting to it from this floor is impossible. Maybe you need some help from above...?
8. The lonely star tile on this floor is the key to getting to the Moon Pearl. When you step on it, a hole will appear in the upper-middle portion of the room. Fall down this hole from above and you'll land on the floor below, just next to the big chest.
9. Falling down the upper hole in this group will take you on quite a ride. However, it's also very useful as it gets you to a secret room with some welcome Faeries. Nice trick, isn't it?

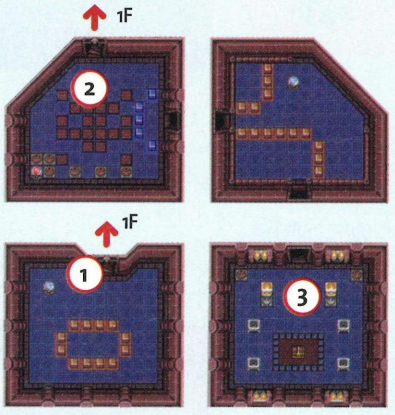
IN THIS DUNGEON:

ENEMIES

- Moldorm
- Fire Rhino
- Floor Tiles
- Bubble
- Octopusphere

SPECIAL ITEM

- Moon Pearl



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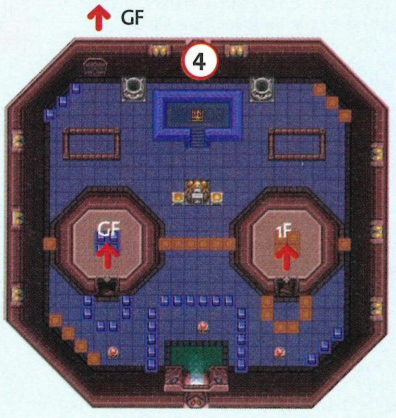

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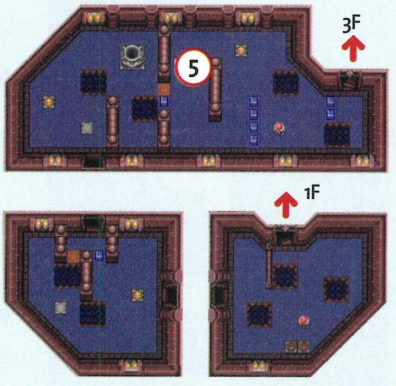

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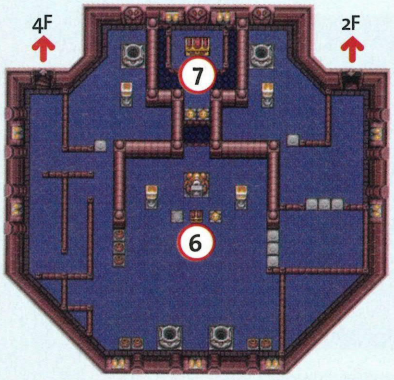

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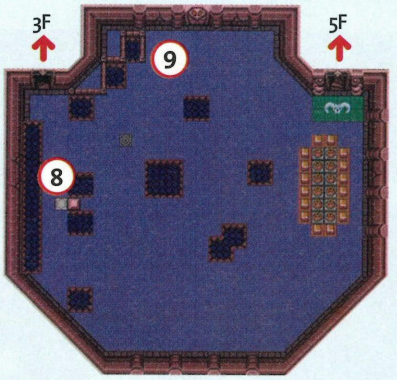

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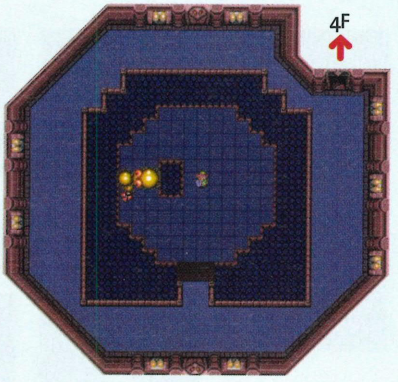

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It's those pesky Floor Tiles! Timing is everything, so adopt the stance and unsheath your weapon!

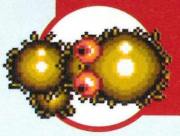
BOSS BATTLE!

MOLDORM

Moldorm is huge, and his movements are random, quick and unpredictable, so keep moving or he'll have an easy time disposing of you. Hit him on the tip of his tail with your Sword.

Be careful – if you move too far, or if Moldorm hits you, you may fall down the edge of the floor and to the room below. You won't receive damage, but you'll have to restart the battle.

It takes six hits to defeat Moldorm. Before you score the final hit, he will get much faster, trying his last to defeat you. Keep moving and strike as soon as he turns his back on you.



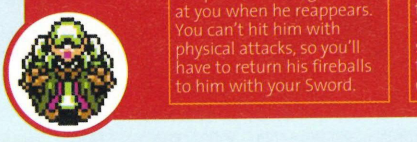
CASTLE TOWER

Princess Zelda's got herself in a spot of bother again. To the rescue!

The Castle Tower is where Agahnim is about to perform his dark rituals on Princess Zelda – the cad! Although the Tower is short and straightforward to navigate, it's very heavily guarded. Avoid combat as much as you can and concentrate on reaching the evil wizard on the top floor.

1. Here, as in many other rooms in the Tower, you'll have to defeat your enemies to obtain a Key. Your opponents here are two Ball-and-chain Troopers, but usually you'll encounter groups of Soldiers.
2. This floor is very dark. Use torches to light up the place for a while. In the maze-like room, find the chest with the Key inside, and use the key on the lower-right door.
3. Kill the enemy in the middle of the room and you'll be awarded with a Key.

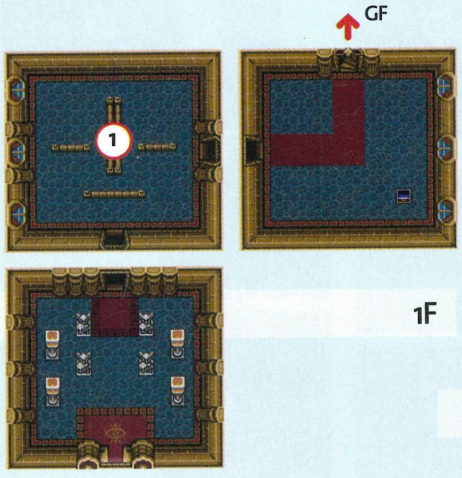
BOSS BATTLE!
AGAHNIM

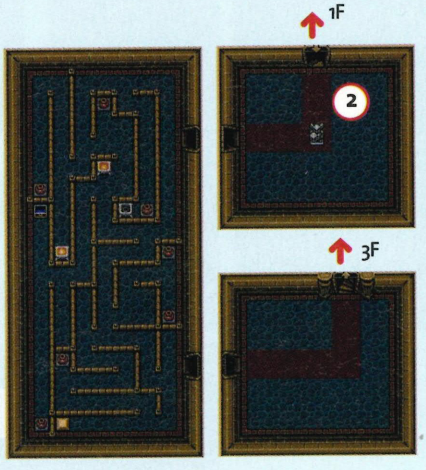


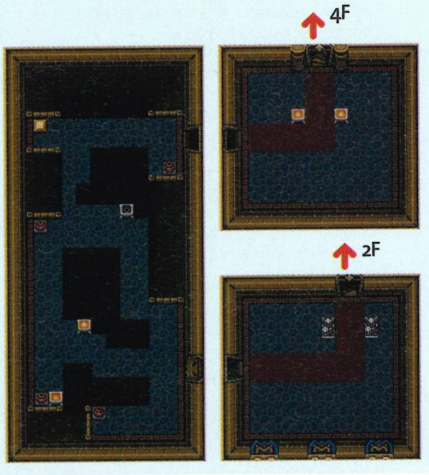
Agahnim teleports around the place, shooting fireballs at you when he reappears. You can't hit him with physical attacks, so you'll have to return his fireballs to him with your Sword.

At times, Agahnim shoots six little blue spheres, and these can't be returned. They follow you and will scatter around if you hit them. Quickly hit them and defend with your Shield.

When Agahnim teleports to the upper-middle part of the room and doesn't turn towards you, he's about to release a streak of lightning towards the door. Stay close to avoid this attack.



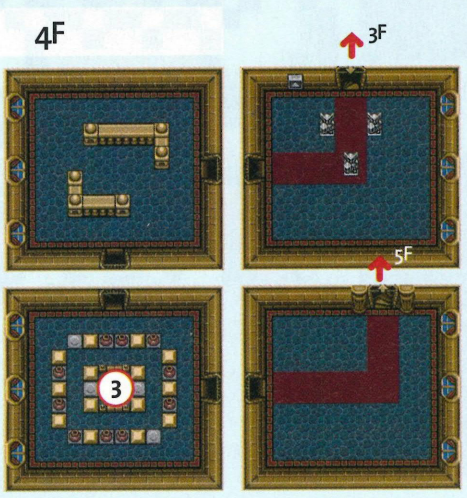


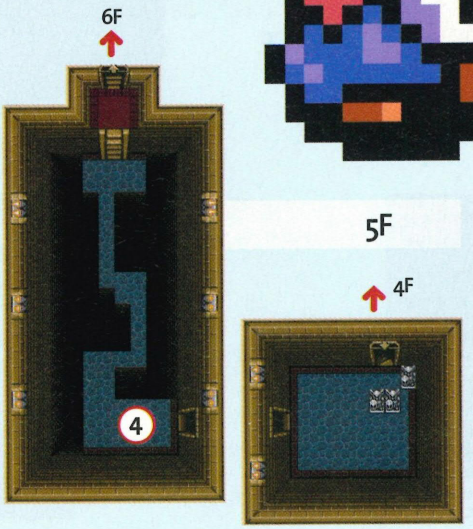


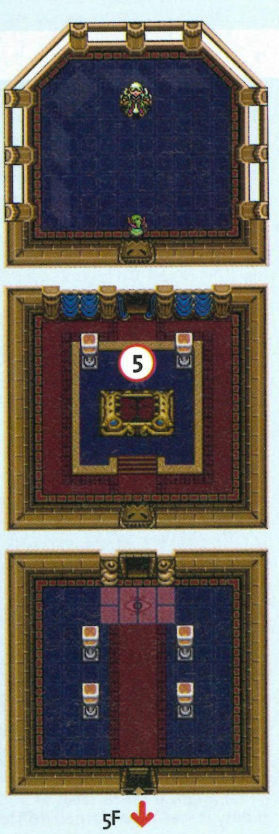
4. Almost there! Walk on the narrow pathway, pushing guards off the edge, and you'll soon reach the final stairwell.
5. When Agahnim disappears, cut the curtains in the back of the room with your Sword to find a secret door.

IN THIS DUNGEON:
ENEMIES

- Soldier
- Spear Soldier
- Archer
- Ball-and-chain Trooper







DARK PALACE

After this dungeon, you *will* be scared of the dark...

The Dark World sure starts out with a bang! This dungeon is much bigger than the ones you've visited before, and much more complex as well, with many twists and turns and a lot of dangerous enemies wherever you turn. You'll have to get past a lot of dark rooms, and the need for Keys will keep you wandering for a while. Be sure to bring a lot of Bombs, and maybe some Faeries – the Boss here is the hardest yet.

1. From the entrance, choose the path on the left and go downstairs. In this room there are four pots. Lift the lower-left pot, press the switch under it, and a chest will appear. Inside is a Key. Now return to the entrance and choose the opposite path.
2. The Red Goriya in this room can counter-mimic your movements, This means that if you go left, he goes right; if you go up, he goes down and so on. If you face him directly, he'll spit fire at you. To defeat him, face towards him, but not directly at him, and shoot an Arrow. Now move away so that the monster counter-mirrors your movement and gets hit by the Arrow. When the monsters are dead, the door will open.
3. The dungeon Map is hidden in this chest. Pick it up and bomb the side walls to find some Faeries and a Key. You can't proceed from here, so return to the entrance now and take the centre door up.
4. In this big room, go left from the entry door and walk upon the bridge. You'll notice a wide crack in the floor. Bomb it, and fall through the created hole. On the lower floor, go up and open the door.
5. From the door on the catwalk below you'll get to this chest, which contains the Big Key. Now fall back down.
6. Break the pot at the end of the line of blocks and press the switch below it to make a chest appear. Take the Key from inside and use the teleporter. Return to the big room you fell down from.
7. This time, walk along the bridge on the right. When you get to two blocks, move aside the lower one to clear the way up.
8. Open this chest for a Key and go up. Walk left and unlock the upper-left door.
9. This bridge will start to collapse shortly after you've entered the room. If you can't cross it in time, you can retry by reentering from the South door. Reentering from either door at the North side of the room won't recreate the bridge though. Now enter the room on the left.
10. This maze-like room is very dark, and there are no torches to help you see your way better. Watch out for the Helmasaurs and their fire, and make your way down and to the right. Here you'll find a chest with a Key inside. Once you have it, go slightly up along the wall and you'll find a crack. Bomb it and go to the other side.

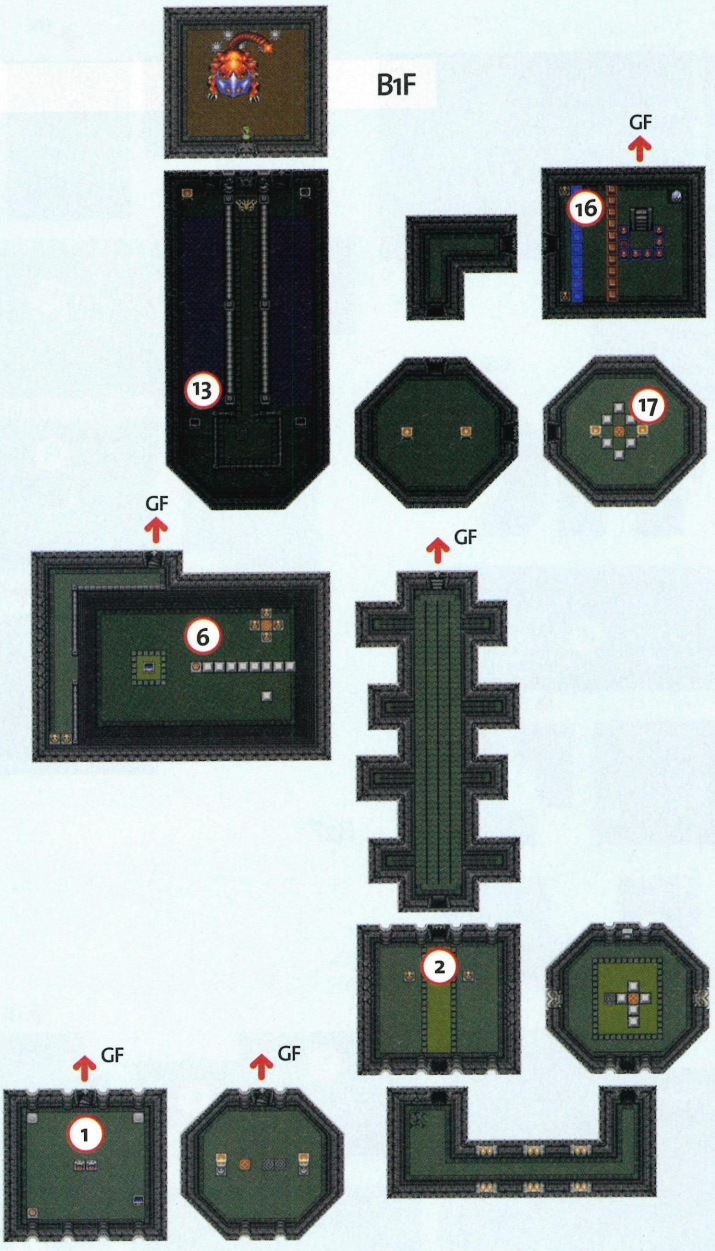
BOSS BATTLE! HELMASAUR KING

The Helmasaur King attacks with his tail. You know this is coming when he stops and shakes it. He can also spit out fireballs that will divide into four, so keep an eye on these.

To hit the Helmasaur King, you must first destroy his mask. Use the Magic Hammer or Bombs to do this. Bombs are smarter as you can stay further back and avoid getting hit.

Once you've destroyed his mask, the King's head will be defenceless. Now you can really damage him. Use your Sword or Arrows, and try not to get crushed as he'll move really fast now.

Yet another useful item to add to your inventory. If only it wasn't so darned difficult to find!



11 At last, you can lay your hands on the big chest. Inside you'll find the Magic Hammer, a very useful item that can help you defeat the Turtles in this very palace.
12 This chest contains the Compass. Go downstairs in this room.
13 Yet another dark room, but it's full of money and it houses two chests. The one on the left side has another Key for you. When you have it, return to the room before the collapsing bridge, jump to the centre of the room, and use the crystal switch located South to gain access to the East exit.
14 Hit the crystal switch so that it's orange, and walk up towards the door. Break all the pots on the right to find a switch, but you'll find that it must be kept pressed to work. So, try the statues and you'll see that one can be moved. Push it all the way to the switch, and you'll be able to continue North.
15 This passage is a dead-end, but the green statue there sure is looking suspicious. Why not try shooting an Arrow into its eye? Voila! There's the exit you where looking for.
16 A set of dark rooms is waiting for you. In this one, stand between the two lines of coloured blocks and use the Boomerang or an Arrow on the crystal switch to get to the door. Go past the small corridor and in the third room, kill all the Turtles with your Hammer and Sword to open the door.
17 Push down the upper-right block to reach the teleporter. Step into it and you'll be in a narrow passage going up. Go up, defeating Turtles on your way, and you'll reach the Boss's lair.

IN THIS DUNGEON:

ENEMIES

- Helmasaur
- Turtle
- Blue Jellyfish
- Red Jellyfish
- Green Goriya
- Red Goriya
- Octopusphere
- Bubble

SPECIAL ITEM

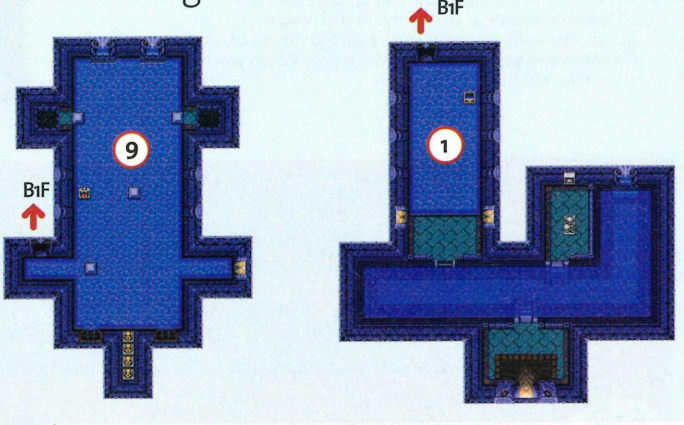
- Magic Hammer

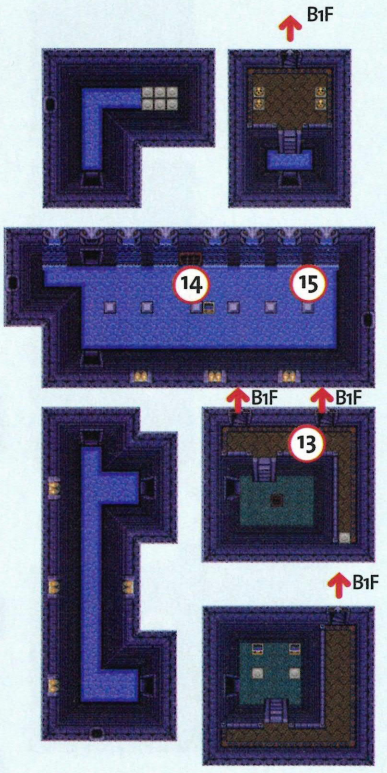
SWAMP PALACE

Get your swimmers on – you're due for an absolute drenching!

The Swamp Palace is ingeniously designed and involves a lot of backtracking. You'll have to swim a lot – even where there's no water at first. The way isn't very convoluted, but the need to backtrack and to trigger several switches can be frustrating at times. Finding the way to the final section is also quite hard, but at least the Boss is quite easy to beat.

1 From the entrance, swim left and up the broken ladder. Defeat all the enemies here and a chest will appear. Get the Key inside and use it on the North door.
2 Walk into the niche in the new room and you'll notice a crack in the wall. Bomb it and you'll be able to reach the chest containing the Map to the dungeon.
3 Back into the previous room, go down and lift the last pot you'll find to get a Key. Use this in the nearby door.
4 Walk down the ladder. The road to the left is blocked, so go up and through the door. Get a Key from under the vase you'll find in the next room, and come back to use it in the locked door.
5 Use the Hammer to smash down the poles and reach the strange lever. Push it from the right and soon it will move, making water flow and open the way to the broken ladder in the room below.
6 From the large room with the big chest, go South and travel along the passage. At the end of this passage you'll find two blocks, move the lower one and a chest hiding the Compass will appear near you.





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7 From the large room, take the lower-left exit and soon you'll find another blockade. Again, go up and get a Key from under the vase, then return to the large room and use the newfound Key in the locked West door. In the next room you'll find another lever to make water fill the passage. Make sure the crystal switch is orange before you leave this room.

8 This time the blocks will give way if you push them. Push the lowermost block aside, and the one above it upwards. This will allow you to get to the stairs.

9 In this room you can fall through either hole at the top of the room – however, falling down on the left will just take you to a treasure chest, and you'll have to go back up. Make sure that you fall through the right-hand hole to proceed.

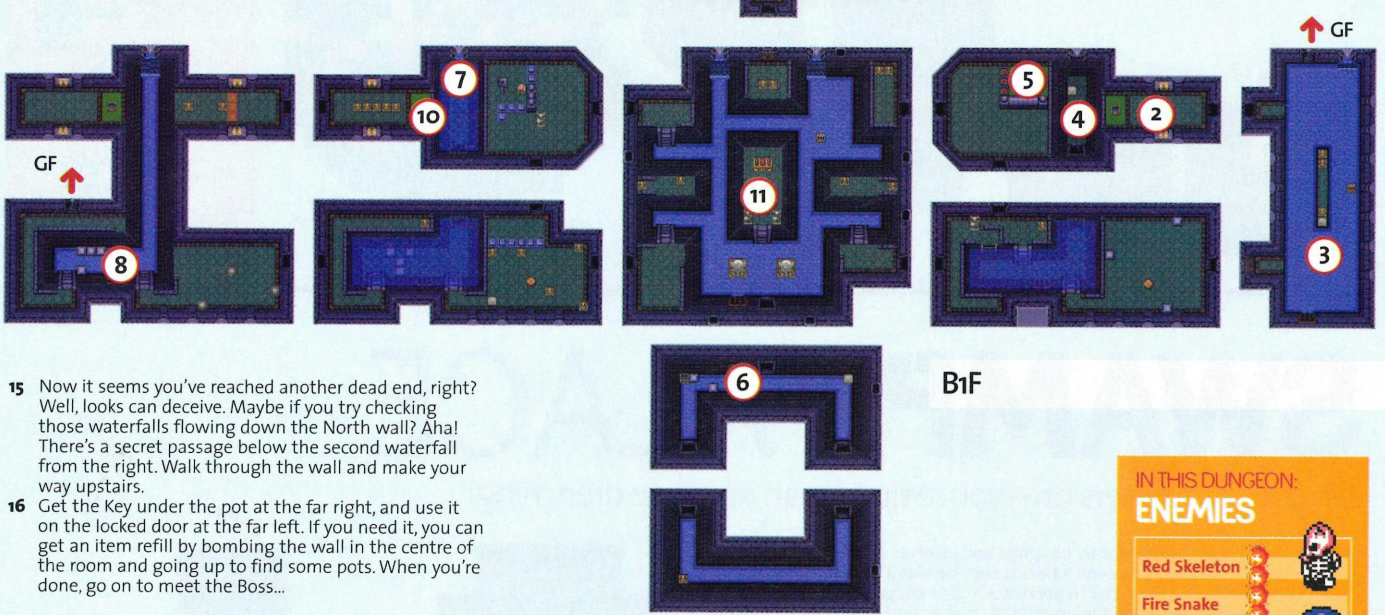
10 If you had lowered the orange blocks, the path here will be free of obstacles and you'll be able to reach the chest containing the Big Key. Now you can return to the large room.

11 Open the big chest to find the almighty Hookshot. Use it on the skull pot on your right to get up to a ledge where you'll find a Key under another pot. Use it again at the back of the big chest to reach the North door.

12 In this small corridor, go left and break the pot near the door to reveal a switch. Push the nearby statue onto it and the doors will open. To continue on through the dungeon, take the door on the right and go up to the stairs going to the lower floor.

13 Push the lever here to drain the floor of water, and make your way to the wide room in the North.

14 This is quite a puzzling room. The first thing to do here is to push the third block from the left to find a chest with 20 Rupees inside. You can also take the exit on the left to find some items in the next room.



B1F

15 Now it seems you've reached another dead end, right? Well, looks can deceive. Maybe if you try checking those waterfalls flowing down the North wall? Aha! There's a secret passage below the second waterfall from the right. Walk through the wall and make your way upstairs.

16 Get the Key under the pot at the far right, and use it on the locked door at the far left. If you need it, you can get an item refill by bombing the wall in the centre of the room and going up to find some pots. When you're done, go on to meet the Boss...

IN THIS DUNGEON:

ENEMIES

- Red Skeleton
- Fire Snake
- Blue Jellyfish
- Red Jellyfish
- Water Crawler
- H2o
- Water Flea
- Zol

SPECIAL ITEM

- Hookshot

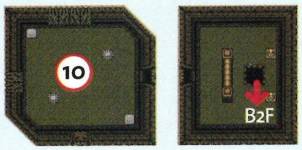
BOSS BATTLE!

ARRGHUS

Arrghus is defended by a group of cloud-like things. Use the Hookshot to draw them close to you, then hack away with your Sword. There are 13 of them, so this will take some time.

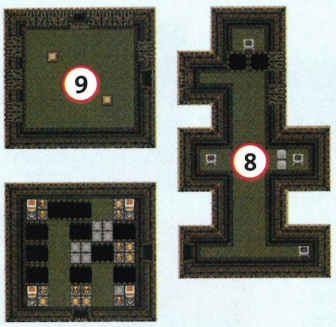
Stay away from Arrghus who'll try to crush you. When he stops, he'll send the remaining clouds flying around. This attack has a good reach, so stay afar and keep attacking.

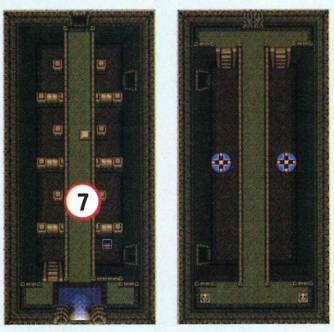
When Arrghus is alone at last, he'll try to land on your head, then he'll start bouncing on the walls. All you have to do is to hit him with your Sword and avoid his feeble attacks.



SKULL WOODS

If you go down to the woods today... you'll have a Mothula of a battle!





At a first glance, the Skull Woods palace seems painfully big and complex. Indeed, it can pose a lot of trouble, with its many entrances and rooms – and some enemies, such as Gibdo the mummy, inflict a lot of damage. You'll also find Floor Masters – hands that fall from the ceiling and bring you back to the entrance if you get caught. Once you've learned how to navigate it, however, the dungeon becomes pretty simple, and you'll find out that you don't need to visit many of the rooms. The final part of the palace is very challenging nonetheless, with lots of traps and a difficult Boss. Keeping your Magic Power high will be your main concern here.

1. Enter the Skull Woods palace from entrance #4. Defeat all the enemies in the room, then lift the middle pot to find a switch. This one needs to be kept pressed if you want to cross the North door. So pay attention to the Floor Master from above, and push the right statue until it's lined up with the switch. Now get between the statue and the door, and pull the statue on the switch.
2. The chest in this room contains the Big Key. Having it in your possession, you should now exit the palace and enter it from entrance #8.
3. In this room, step on a star tile, then bomb the West wall to open up a passage. Go to the next room and pull the lever on the wall (you' can't reach it if you don't step on a star tile first). The wall below will blow up, clearing a path to the big chest. Open it to find the Fire Rod.
4. After you've got the Fire Rod, make your way toward entrance #6. On the way there, get the Map from this chest. Then, get out.
5. You may want to get the Compass from this chest. However, note that it's not necessary to visit this area altogether, as much of the palace is just there to get you lost and confused.
6. Once you're ready to proceed, enter the palace from entrance #4 again and make your way left to the next exit (#2). Get out, and from the exit go left and North to reach a strange-looking skull. Get your Fire Rod ready and use it on the tip of the skull to burn it down and reveal entrance #1. Now, use this new entrance to slip back inside.
7. This room is easier than it seems, but can be annoying. When you go down the steps, you'll notice that you can walk below the centre bridge above. However, the passages leading up are only found on one side of the bridge, and each time the passage is on a different side. Make your way to the next room and, when you're there, get to the South door. There, get the Key inside the chest and return to the entrance to unlock the North door.
8. Kill all the enemies here, then shift your attention to the torches. You can use the Lamp to light the first three, but the fourth can only be reached with the Fire Rod. Light them all quickly and go through the door before it closes again.
9. What's this? Another dead-end? No, just use your Sword against the vines on the North wall and you'll find your way out.
10. The Gibdo in this room holds the Key that opens the East door. Grab it and proceed to the next room, where you'll have to fall through the hole in the floor for your encounter with the dungeon boss.

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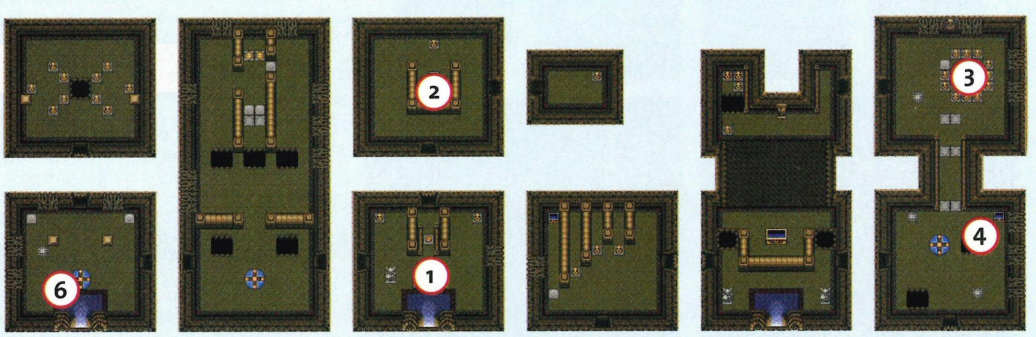

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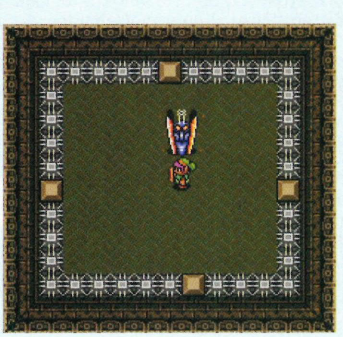
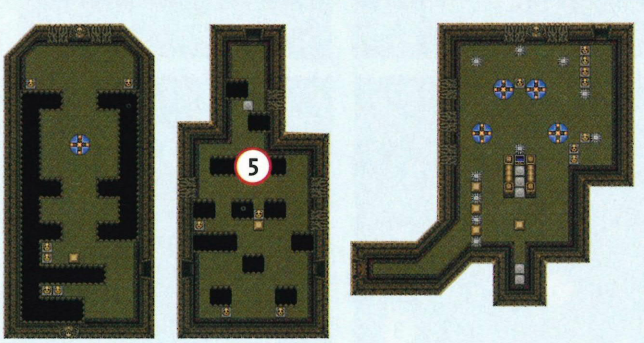




IN THIS DUNGEON:

ENEMIES

- Gibdo
- Jellyfish
- Floor Master
- Octopusphere
- Moldorm
- Helmasaur

SPECIAL ITEM

- Fire Rod

BOSS BATTLE!

MOTHULA

This battle is hard as nails. Mothula flies around randomly, stopping only occasionally to shoot three bursts of fire rings. They spread to cover quite a big angle, so keep on the move.

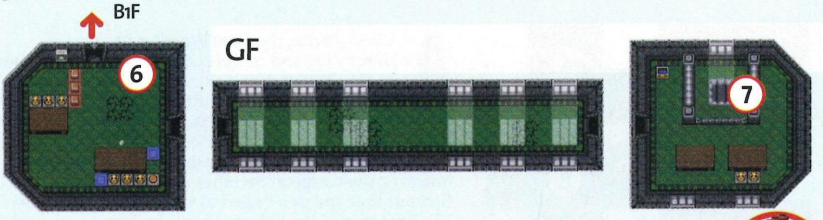
The floor here is a giant treadmill, and to make things worse, spikes travel on it from one wall to the other. They block your attacks too, so you'll have to time them right.

Use the Fire Rod to damage Mothula. It's hard because it moves quickly and there are many obstacles. Switch to the Sword if you run out of Magic Power, but it's much harder this way.

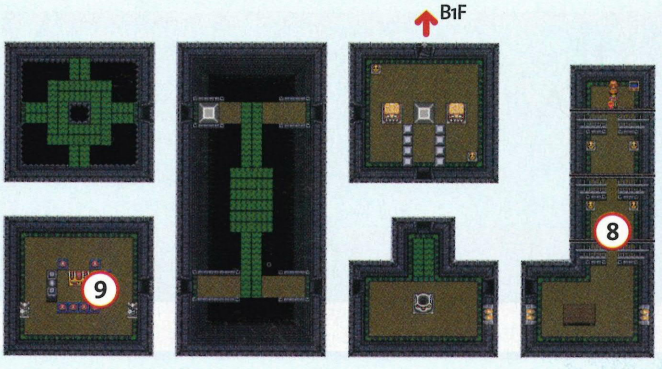
THIEVES' TOWN

A spot of breaking and entering to get your mitts on the Titan's Mitt...

Thieves' Town is short and somewhat easy, although the first few rooms may seem rather convoluted. On the lower floor you will find a big surprise, but not as big as the one you'll have when you finally meet the Boss – *if* you meet him... Locating the Boss is harder than finding your way through the dungeon itself, which is is pretty straightforward. The main focus here is on the final battle, and without a doubt, it's a tough battle for anyone.



1. From the entrance, drop to the floor below and go up and to the left to find the chest containing the Map. Once you have it, find your way up and to the next room. From here, go right to the next room, and down to the next still.
2. Go up the steps on the left and make your way on the walkway to the chest containing the Compass. Then, drop down to the floor again and make your way left and back to the first room.
3. You're now in the most hidden corner of the first room. Open the chest and you'll get the Big Key. Go back to the previous room with it and up to the next, and climb to the upper level. Go North and unlock the door.
4. This room takes you straight to the Boss room, as the Compass shows, but you'll find out that there's nobody here. So for the moment, find a Key under one of the pots at the top of this room, and use it on the South-West door. Now go all the way left, then up to the room past the long corridor.
5. The pot in this room contains a Key. Get it, then hit the crystal switch and go upstairs.
6. You can pull the lever on the wall here, but it won't open the door. Instead, break the pots by the South wall and you'll find a switch that does the trick. Go right and past the long corridor.
7. If you need bombs, you'll find three in the chest. Now lay a bomb, pick it up, and throw it past the small fence in the middle of the room to the crack in the floor. This opens up a hole for sunlight to pour through. Go back downstairs and follow the upper corridor to another stairwell, this one going down.
8. Lift the big block and go down, then right. Make your way up, defeating the monsters, and you'll find a young maiden trapped in a cell. Rescue her and get the Key from the nearby chest, then go back to the previous room and take the opposite door.
9. You'll have to be very quick here. Use the Magic Hammer to smash down the poles and open the big chest to get the Titan's Mitt. You have to make this fast because the floor will start to collapse.soon after you enter. With the Mitt in your possession, go back upstairs and to the Boss room.
10. Still no Boss around, huh? Don't worry though, just bring the girl to the square of light in the middle of the room and... Shock! Prepare for a big fight!



BOSS BATTLE! BLIND

Blind moves left and right, shooting fireballs and, occasionally, a laser beam that can't be blocked. Periodically, he'll spin around and move to the opposite side of the room.

Hit Blind in the head with your Sword. After some hits, the head will detach and start flying around, shooting fireballs. Then the body will grow another and resume attacking.

Focus your attacks on Blind, as the flying head is invincible. Soon, another head will detach and join the first, and a third will appear. Cut this one off to win the battle.

IN THIS DUNGEON: ENEMIES

- Horseman
- Jelly Spectre
- Bug
- Fire Snake
- Flying Eye
- Skeletons
- Jellyfish

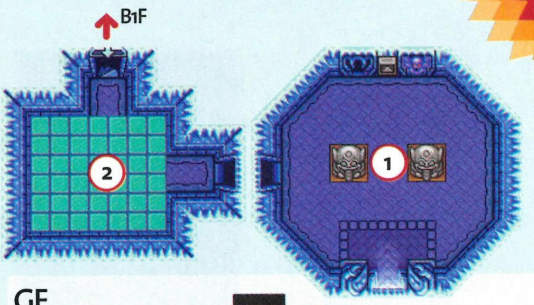
SPECIAL ITEM

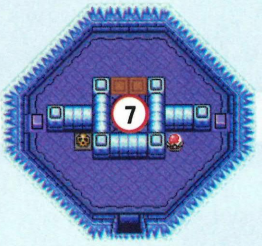
- Titan's Mitt

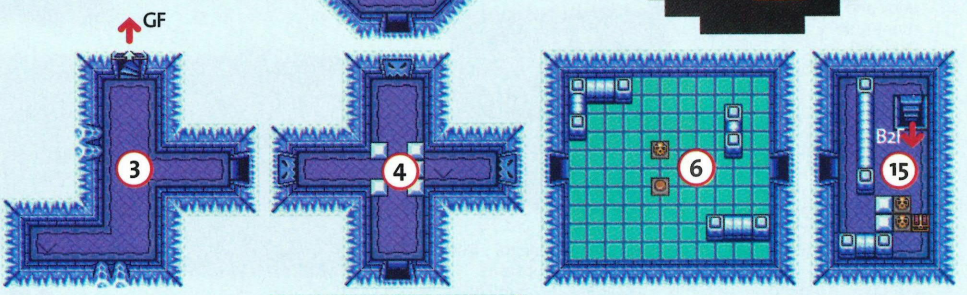
ICE PALACE

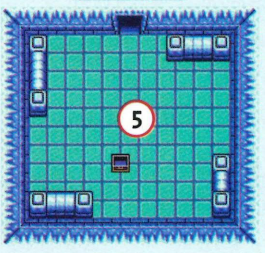
There's something odd about this deep and complex dungeon. It leaves you... cold!

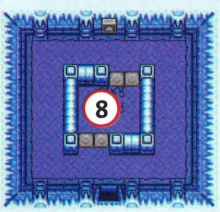
The Ice Palace is one of the most complex dungeons in the game. Its floors aren't that big, but it's the way they're linked together that will have you scratching your head for a while. This dungeon also features what is probably the most difficult puzzle you'll ever come up against – the big block on the fifth underground floor. To lift this block and get access to the lower floor you'll have to work out how to open the way to – *and* eventually return to – the room where it is located. This will take some thinking out. Luckily, after all that the Boss is quite easy.

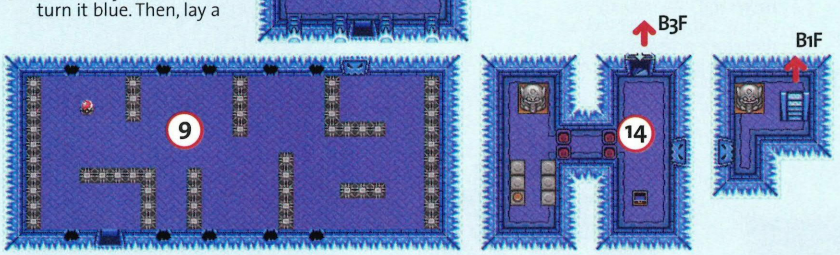


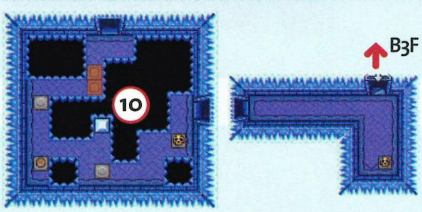


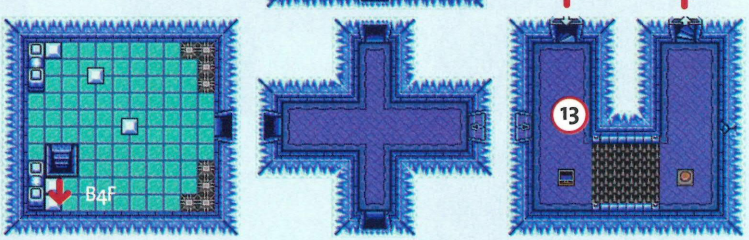


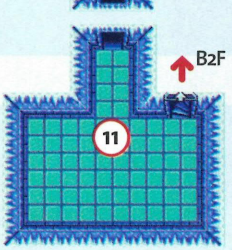












1 Take some steps into the room and an Iceman will come at you from the wall. The only thing that can kill him is the Fire Rod – one blast will do the trick. This will open the door to the next room.

2 Kill all the enemies in this room and you'll receive the Key you need to open the door. Go downstairs.

3 To open the door on the right you'll have to press the switch found in the lower-left corner of the room.

4 This room will reset its layout every time you enter it. The centre block can be moved to open the way ahead. For now, push it rightwards and go down.

5 Destroy all the penguins in this room and the chest with the Compass will appear. When you're done, go back up and to the right.

6 To open the doors again you'll have to find and press the switch hidden under the lower pot. The ice will make the task a little harder than you want, but it's also a good training for what's to come. Open the doors and go back and up.

7 Hit the crystal switch to turn it blue. Then, lay a bomb near it and go to the upper side of the room. When the switch turns orange, lay another bomb on the cracked floor to create a hole. Fall through it to the lower floor.

8 Two Stalfos Knights will attack you when you step on certain parts of the floor. Stab them with your Sword, then when they collapse, use bombs to finish them off. This will open the South door.

9 Take care in this room – the treadmill will lead you toward the spikes, and black enemies will come out the holes in the walls. Kill all the Jellyfish to get a Key, hit the crystal switch, and proceed to the next room.

10 The lower-left pot in this room hides the switch to open the next door. Avoid the spinning fire blade and go ahead and downstairs.

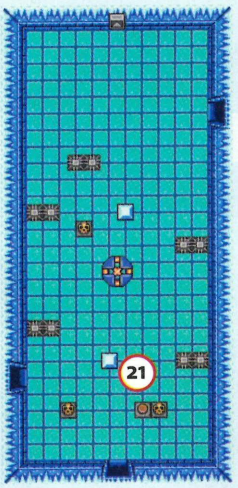
11 Slay all the enemies in this room and the North door will open up. Go up and avoid the giant trap. Go through the North door here, too.

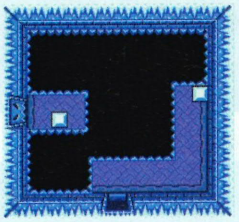
12 The floor in this room will collapse soon after you enter. You can't avoid it, so just let it come and fall to the floor below. From there, go right and follow the path to the stairs going up.

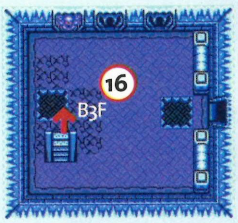
13 Use the Hookshot on the pot to cross the spikes safely. Lift the pot to find a switch, and press it to make a chest appear. Use the Hookshot on the chest and get the Key inside, then Use the Magic Cape to cross the spikes again and go up the stairs on the right.

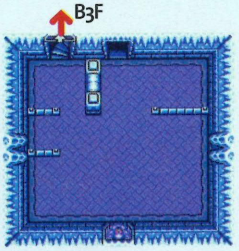
14 Kill the Stalfos Knight and lift the big block to find a Key. On the left, kill another Stalfos, then find and press the switch under a pot to find the chest with the Map. Finally, pull the statue's tongue out and the East door will open. Go through it, and up the steps in the next room.

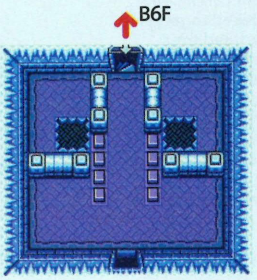
15 The chest here contains the Big Key. Now move the blocks so that you can get to the

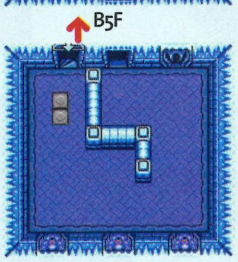


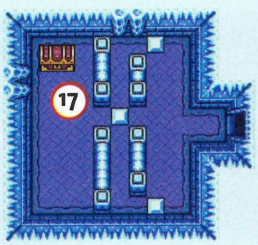


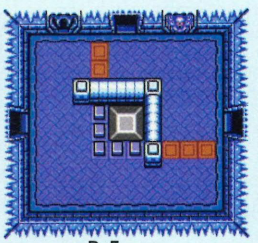


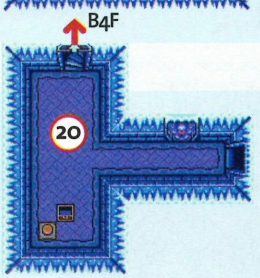


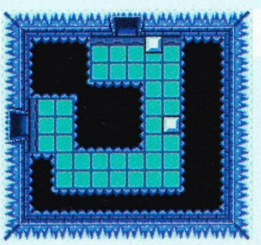


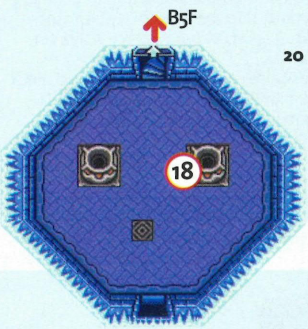


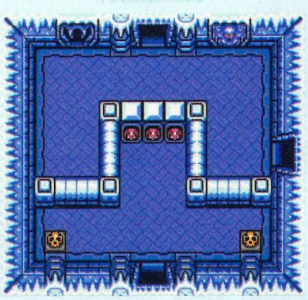


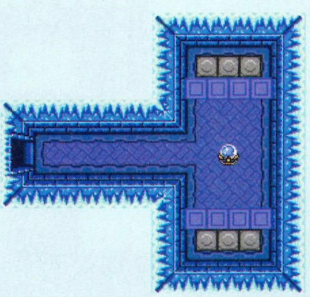


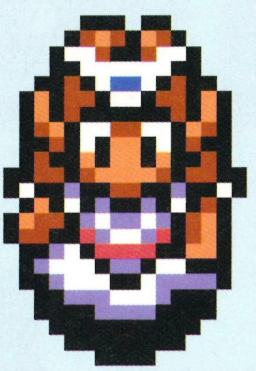












door, and from the next room retrace your steps to Floor B3F. Here, go to the room with the giant trap, but this time, go left and downstairs.

16 Lay a bomb on the cracked floor above the steps and it will blow up, revealing a hole that you can fall through. Do so.

17 The big chest contains the invaluable Blue Mail. At last, you have something stronger to defend yourself from enemy damage. Now move the blocks to open the way to the door, and in the next room, go up and descend the steps in the following room.

18 Go down and to the right, and hit the crystal switch. Now return upstairs (where you can fall into either hole to reach a secret room with Faeries) and to the room with the big block, and from there, go right.

19 There's a Key under one of the pots next to the entrance, and you'll find the switch that opens the doors under a pot on the right side of the room.

20 Find the switch under the pot and press it to uncover a chest with a Key inside. Go upstairs.

21 Press the switch you'll find under a pot, and go through the left door. Fall down the hole to the room below, and go right to get back to the room with the big block. Lift the block and fall down.

22 Go to the left side of the room and pull back the statue. Lift the big block to uncover a hole, and fall through it to finally face the Boss!

IN THIS DUNGEON:

ENEMIES

- Penguin
- Iceman
- Bubble
- Giant Trap
- Zol
- Jellyfish
- Stalfos Knight

SPECIAL ITEM

- Blue Mail

BOSS BATTLE!

KHOLD STARE

Kholdstare is imprisoned in a big block of solid ice. Use the Fire Rod to melt the block, and watch out for the icicles falling from above. They'll give you Magic refills if you need them.

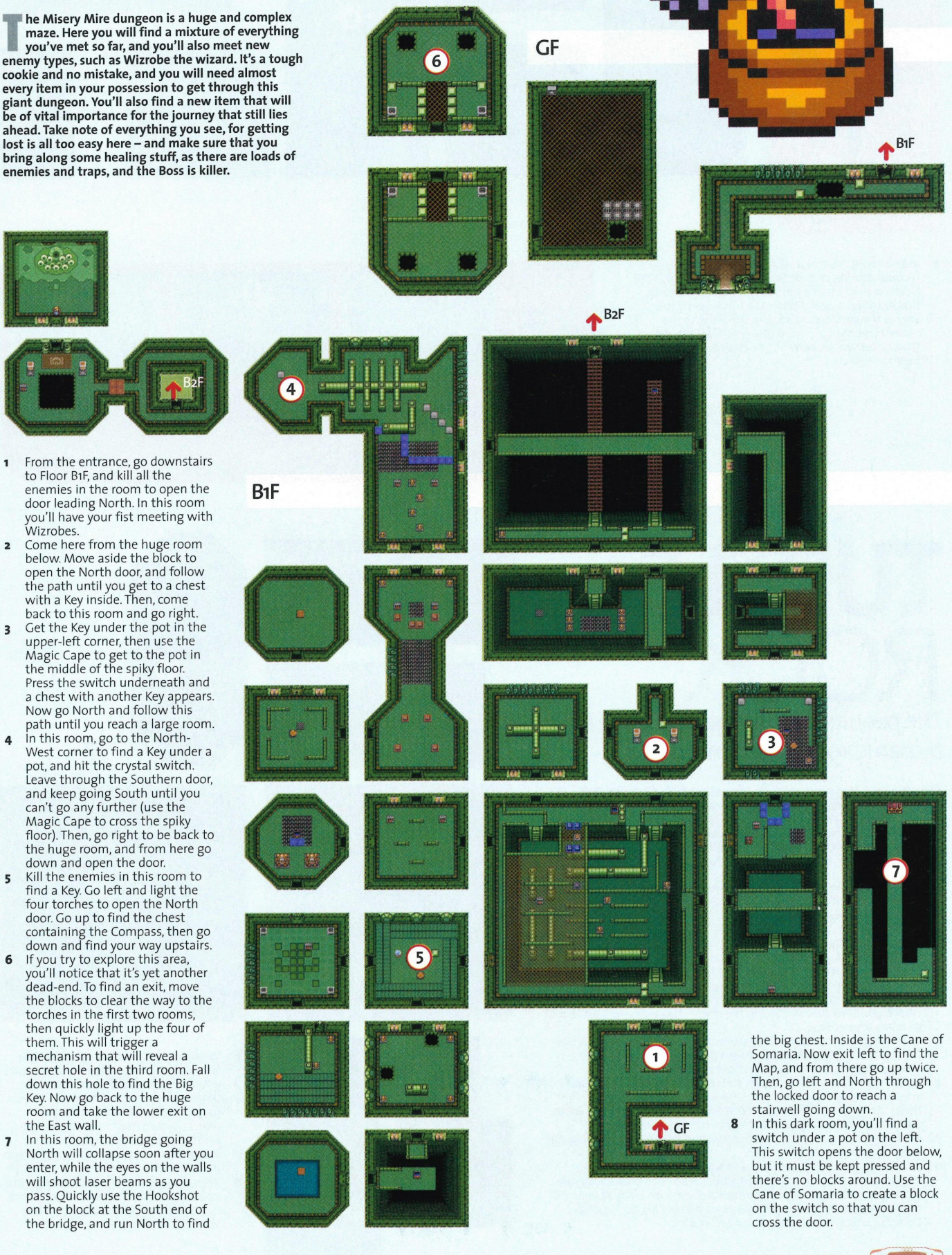
Once the block is gone, three Kholdstares will attack you. They seldom come directly towards you, so you just have to avoid running into them, or being hit by a falling icicle.

Attack the Kholdstares with the Sword or the Fire Rod. The Rod is much stronger, but it consumes your Magic Power quickly. Anyway, the battle is quick and easy, so the Sword is just as good.

MISERY MIRE

Don't be so miserable – it's a toughie, but so rewarding...

The Misery Mire dungeon is a huge and complex maze. Here you will find a mixture of everything you've met so far, and you'll also meet new enemy types, such as Wizrobe the wizard. It's a tough cookie and no mistake, and you will need almost every item in your possession to get through this giant dungeon. You'll also find a new item that will be of vital importance for the journey that still lies ahead. Take note of everything you see, for getting lost is all too easy here – and make sure that you bring along some healing stuff, as there are loads of enemies and traps, and the Boss is killer.



1 From the entrance, go downstairs to Floor B1F, and kill all the enemies in the room to open the door leading North. In this room you'll have your fist meeting with Wizrobes.

2 Come here from the huge room below. Move aside the block to open the North door, and follow the path until you get to a chest with a Key inside. Then, come back to this room and go right.

3 Get the Key under the pot in the upper-left corner, then use the Magic Cape to get to the pot in the middle of the spiky floor. Press the switch underneath and a chest with another Key appears. Now go North and follow this path until you reach a large room.

4 In this room, go to the North-West corner to find a Key under a pot, and hit the crystal switch. Leave through the Southern door, and keep going South until you can't go any further (use the Magic Cape to cross the spiky floor). Then, go right to be back to the huge room, and from here go down and open the door.

5 Kill the enemies in this room to find a Key. Go left and light the four torches to open the North door. Go up to find the chest containing the Compass, then go down and find your way upstairs.

6 If you try to explore this area, you'll notice that it's yet another dead-end. To find an exit, move the blocks to clear the way to the torches in the first two rooms, then quickly light up the four of them. This will trigger a mechanism that will reveal a secret hole in the third room. Fall down this hole to find the Big Key. Now go back to the huge room and take the lower exit on the East wall.

7 In this room, the bridge going North will collapse soon after you enter, while the eyes on the walls will shoot laser beams as you pass. Quickly use the Hookshot on the block at the South end of the bridge, and run North to find the big chest. Inside is the Cane of Somaria. Now exit left to find the Map, and from there go up twice. Then, go left and North through the locked door to reach a stairwell going down.

8 In this dark room, you'll find a switch under a pot on the left. This switch opens the door below, but it must be kept pressed and there's no blocks around. Use the Cane of Somaria to create a block on the switch so that you can cross the door.

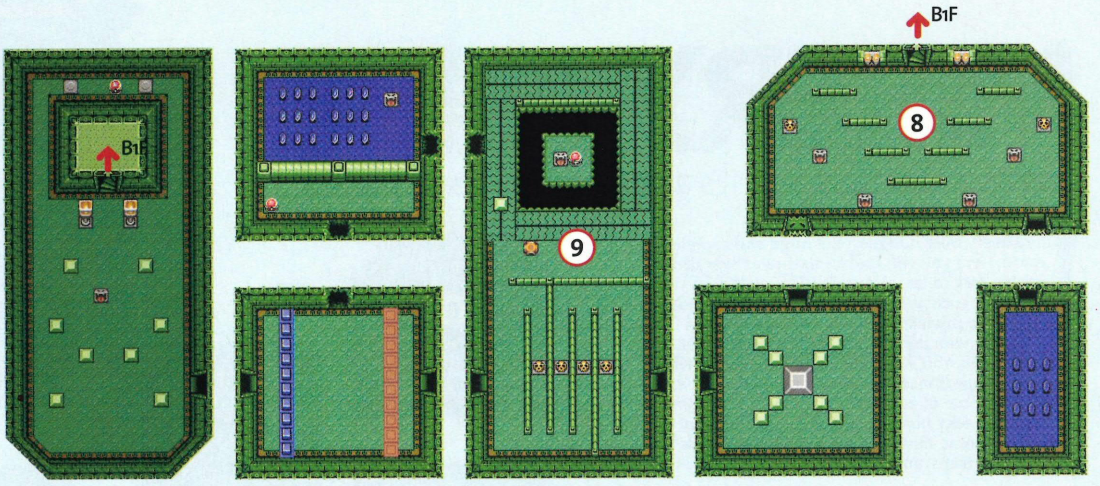
IN THIS DUNGEON:

ENEMIES

- Zol
- Wizrobe
- Skeletons
- Bubble
- Crawler
- Giant Trap
- Floor Tiles
- Laser Eye

SPECIAL ITEM

- Cane of Somaria



B2F

9 In this room, hit the crystal switch before you go through the West door. In the next room, bomb the North wall to open a passage, and go through to find another crystal switch. Hit this to clear the way in the previous room, and continue to the stairwell going up. Before you go up though, hit the crystal switch. Now all you have to do is to reach the Boss.

BOSS BATTLE!

VITREOUS

Vitreous sits in the middle of a pool of poisonous jelly. Don't step into the pool or you'll be damaged. Vitreous will send little eyes at you that you can destroy with your Sword.

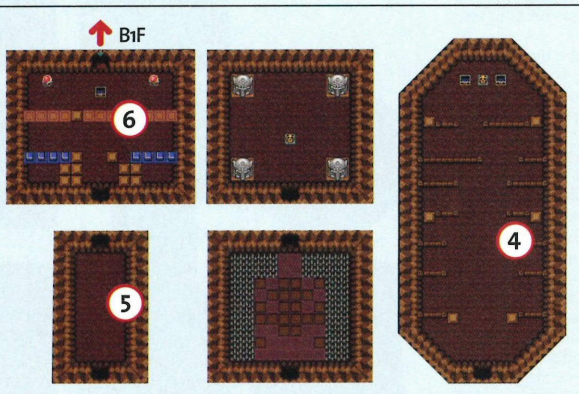
The little eyes can hurt you plenty, so be careful. Also, Vitreous will occasionally become solid and shoot lightning towards the South wall. Stay close to the walls to avoid this.

You can throw bombs at Vitreous to hurt many little eyes at once. When they're all gone, Vitreous will get out of the jelly to attack you. Use your Sword on him and he'll go down quickly.

TURTLE ROCK

The penultimate dungeon is Turtle Rock by name, rock hard by nature...

Turtle Rock is the last obstacle between you and Princess Zelda. It's a huge, dark maze full of traps that will test your skills like never before. You'll learn yet another use for the Cane of Somaria, and face enemies and situations that you never have. Getting to the Boss can prove very hard, and the Boss himself is an excellent test of your combat skills. Don't give up, your quest is nearly over!



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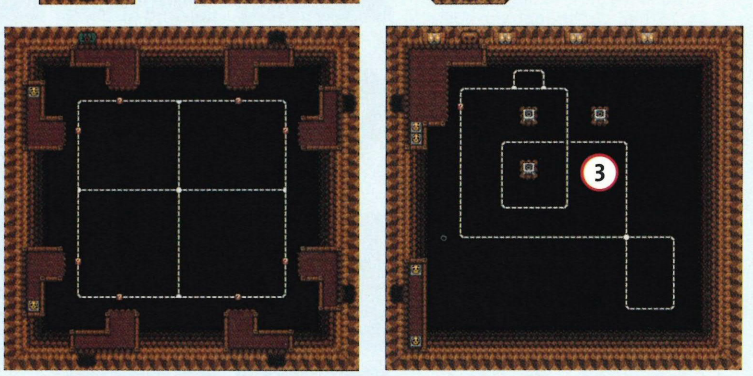
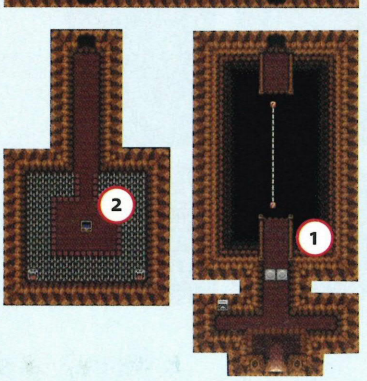




1. The first room in Turtle Rock will immediately introduce to you the new feature of this dungeon. You must use the Cane of Somaria on the question marks to create platforms that will move on the white rails. You can change directions at crossroads if you want, but you can't stop the platform until you get to a point where you can get down safely. Try it and go to the next room.
2. The chest with the Compass lies in this room. However, you'll find that you can't get out, for the door will close when you face it. To leave the room, face Southward and charge your blade. Hold it and walk backwards to avoid facing the door – this way, you'll be able to make your escape.
3. Create a platform and use it to circle around the four torches, Use the Fire Rod to light them up from a distance, then quickly go through the North door before it closes again.
4. Stay close to the walls to dodge the rolling spike logs, and make your way to the top of the room. Here you'll find two chests – one holds the Map, and the other has a Key. Go back to the huge room past the entrance, and use this Key in the upper-left door.
5. Kill the prancing monster in this room and he'll release the Key you need to open the door.
6. It's hard to get past this room without getting hurt. Lower the coloured blocks in the lower part of the room and move aside the top block in the right group to make a chest with a Key appear. It's nigh-on impossible to make it without getting hit by the Chain Chomps, which move very fast and hurt a lot.
7. When you get to this floor, go to the lower-right part of the first room and enter the pipe. In the room with the lava, enter the pipe directly below you to get to this room. Here, kill the prancing monster to get the Key you need to get out. This way, you can reach the chest with the Big Key in the middle of the lava room.
8. After you get the Big Key, return to the upper-right entrance of the lava room, but this time, enter the pipe on the left. Kill the monsters in the next

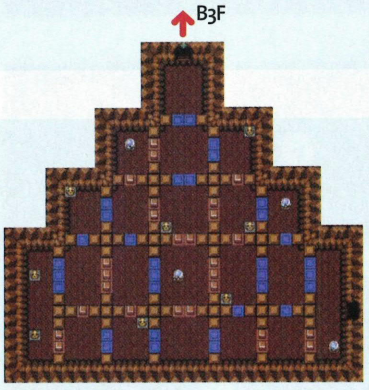
room, then go down and left. Avoid the beams from the Laser Eyes and bomb the South wall to create an exit. Get out. Outside, collect the final Piece of Heart before you reenter the dungeon.

9 The big chest contains the Mirror Shield, the ultimate shield for your defence. This can even block the laser beams from the eyes. Proceed Northwards.

10 Avoiding the rolling spike log, get the Key from the chest and use it to unlock the door. Climb down the steps to the lower floor.

11 This room is extremely tricky. Your first goal here is to reach the middle platform where the switch to the South door is located. Unfortunately the room is pitch-dark and you'll have to move on platforms between a lot of fire blades. Once you've pressed the switch you still have to reach the door. Use the Map to find the way.

12 This chest holds the Key that you need in the previous room. Get it and unlock that door. In the next room, just make your way to the Northern exit, which eventually leads to the Boss.



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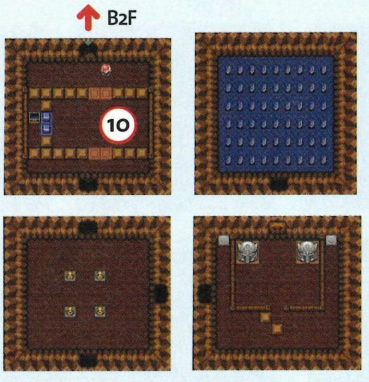


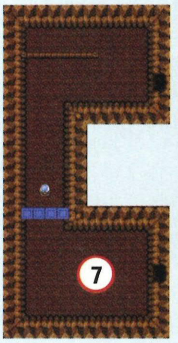
IN THIS DUNGEON:

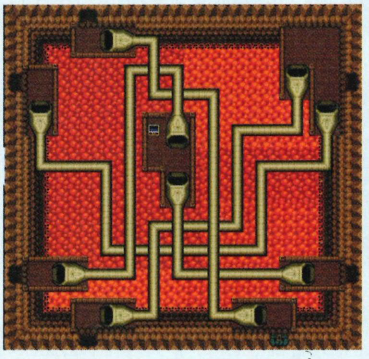
ENEMIES

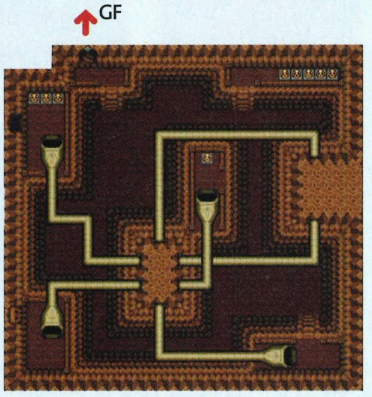
- Skeletons
- Bouncer
- Chain Chomp
- Bubble
- Laser Eye
- Zol
- Floor Tiles
- Helmasaur

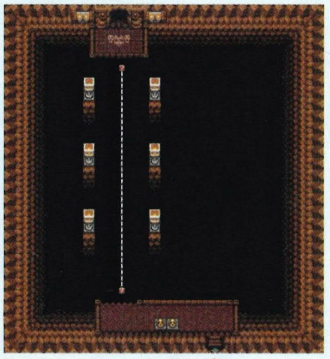
SPECIAL ITEM

- Mirror Shield









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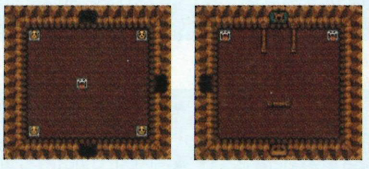
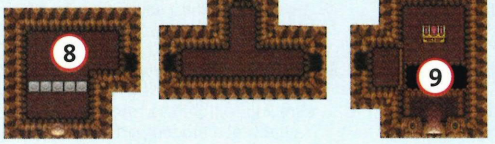




It's tricky finding which pipe leads where – unless you follow our guide, of course!

BOSS BATTLE! TRINEXX

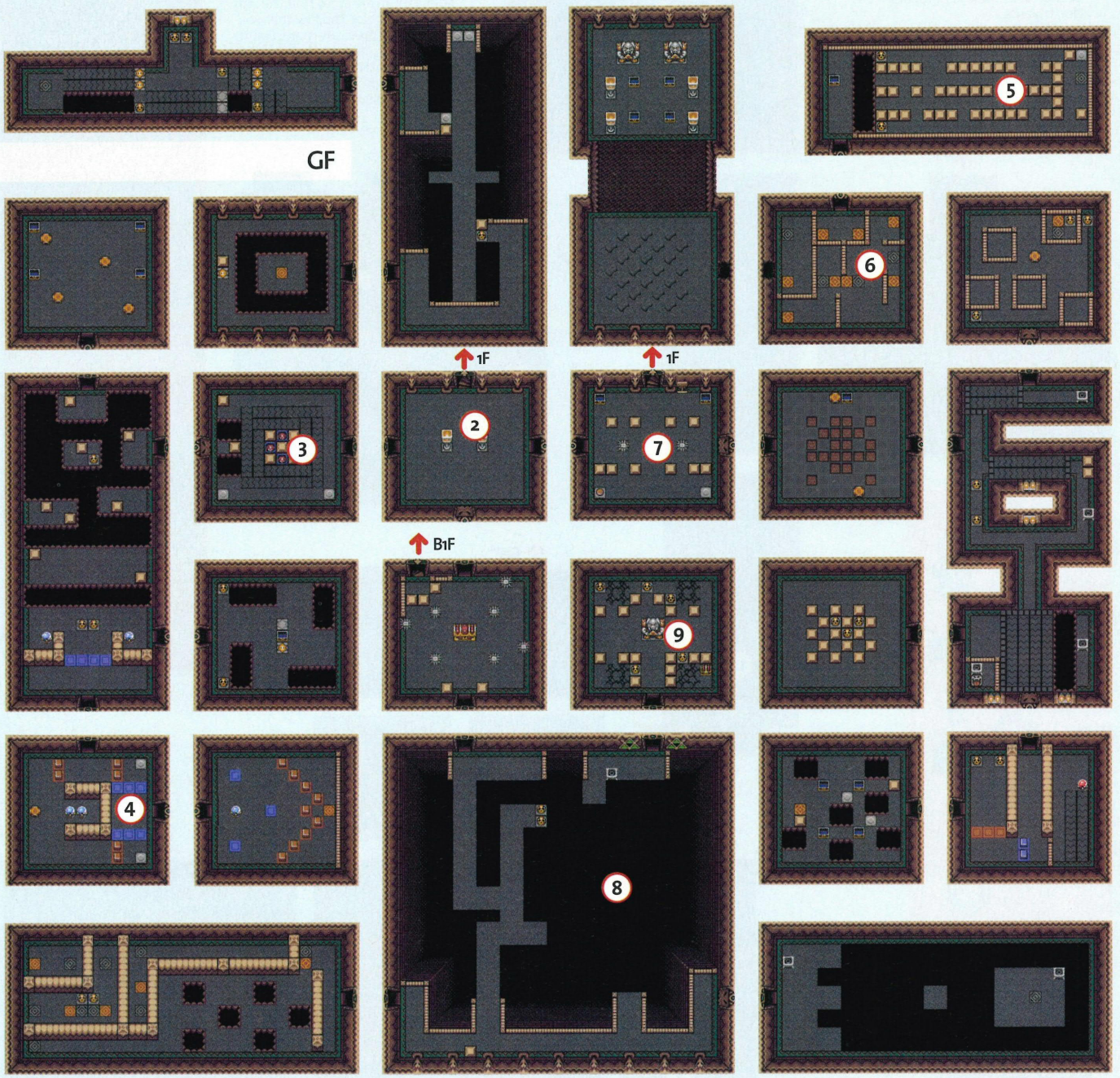
As the name suggests, Trinexx has three heads. The blue head spits ice that makes the floor slippery, while the red head spits fire. It's best to concentrate on the ice head first.

Use the Fire Rod on the ice head to stun it, then use your Sword. Do this until it dies, then switch to the Ice Rod to take care of the fire head. Keep an eye on the middle head's attacks too.

With the two heads gone, the rock shell will explode and Trinexx will grow a serpentine body for his final struggle. Hit the flashing portion of his body with your Sword to kill him.

GANON'S TOWER

Time for the final showdown as you rescue Zelda – yet again!



Ganon's Tower is the last dungeon in the game, and it's by far the biggest, too. It can actually be divided into two parts – the ground floor, where you'll find the Big Key, and the upper floors, which you'll climb to get to the Boss. This is the ultimate test for your skills, as you'll find every possible challenge and make use of everything you've found so far. Once you manage to find the Big Key, you'll find out that the rest of the Tower is pretty straightforward. This last dungeon is as challenging as it is fun.

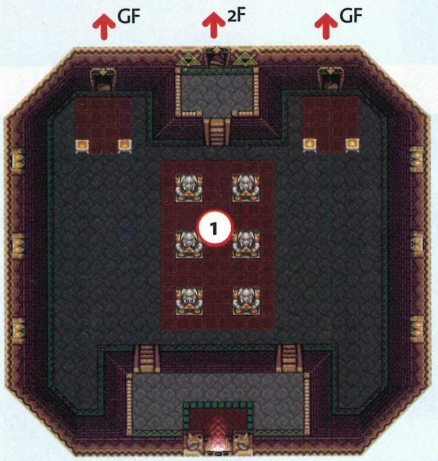
1. You can go down either stairwell here. There are two ways to get through the ground floor – you'll find the Map along one, and the Compass along the other. They both lead to the same room anyway, so there's no need to go through both. We suggest that you take the left stairwell, as the road there is simpler.
2. Get the Key from above by ramming into the torch. Then, go left to the next room.
3. Break the pots here to find another Key, then use the Magic Hammer on the poles in the middle of the room. Push aside the middle block to open the door, and step on the star tile to make the hole disappear.
4. Get the Key under the pots here, then lay a bomb near the crystal switches and position yourself properly to be able to reach the door when the bomb detonates.
5. Make your way to the left. When you see a lone block, push it aside and a chest will appear. Use the Hookshot on this chest and open it for a Key, then continue South.
6. There is a long series of teleporters to get through before you finally get past this room. Keep on the left side of the room, and try to get to the lower corner.
7. If you choose the right path, you'll have to avoid a lot of Floor Masters on the way. In the room with the crystal switch behind the wall, use a Somarian block to hit the switch. In the room with the collapsing bridge, use the Magic Cape to make things easier.
8. This is the most important room on the ground floor. Go to the upper-left door, but don't go through it. Instead, use the Fire Rod to light the torch you can see on the far left. This will reveal a hidden path above the big gap in the middle of

the room. Quickly cross this path before it disappears again, and go through the door marked with the Triforce.

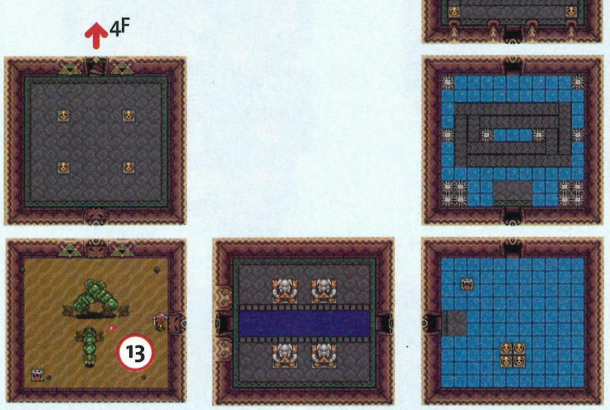
9 Lay a bomb on the lower-right cracked floor and tumble through the resulting hole.

10 It's the Armos Knights again! They're no match for you this time around – defeat them as you did in the East Palace and the doors will open. Go up and get the Big Key from the chest, then go back upstairs. Open the big chest and you'll find the Red Mail. You can now finish exploring the ground floor if you so desire. When you're done, use the Magic Mirror to return to the entrance, and from there proceed to the next floor.

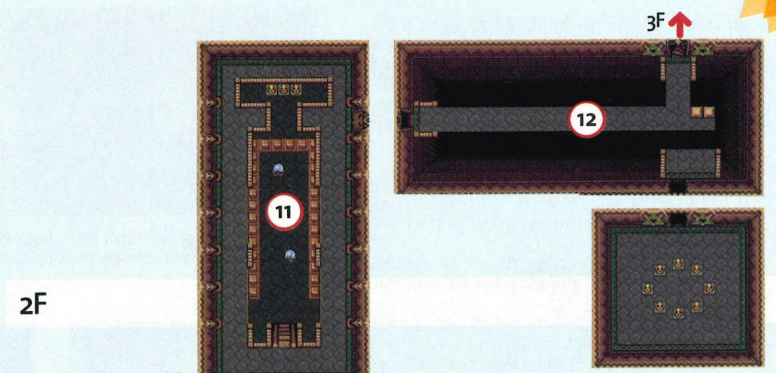
11 Kill all the monsters in the previous rooms to clear the way ahead. In this room, climb down the steps and go up until you find the pot that hides the switch to the door.

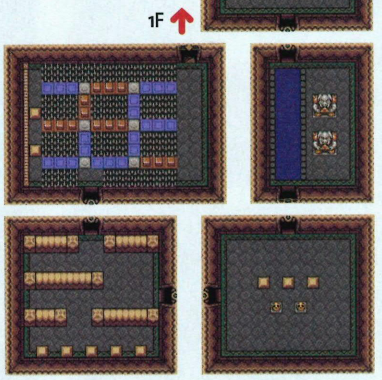


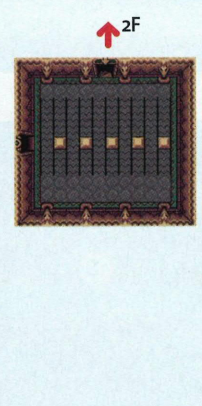
Some of the puzzles you face are enough to make your brain bleed.

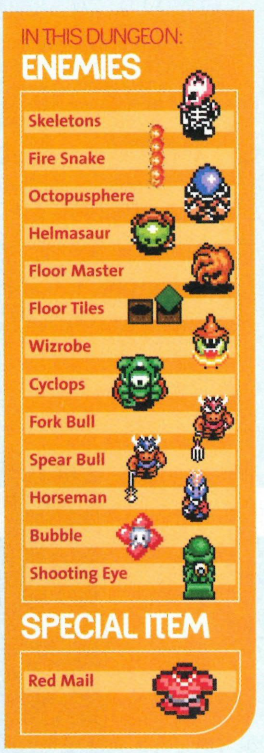


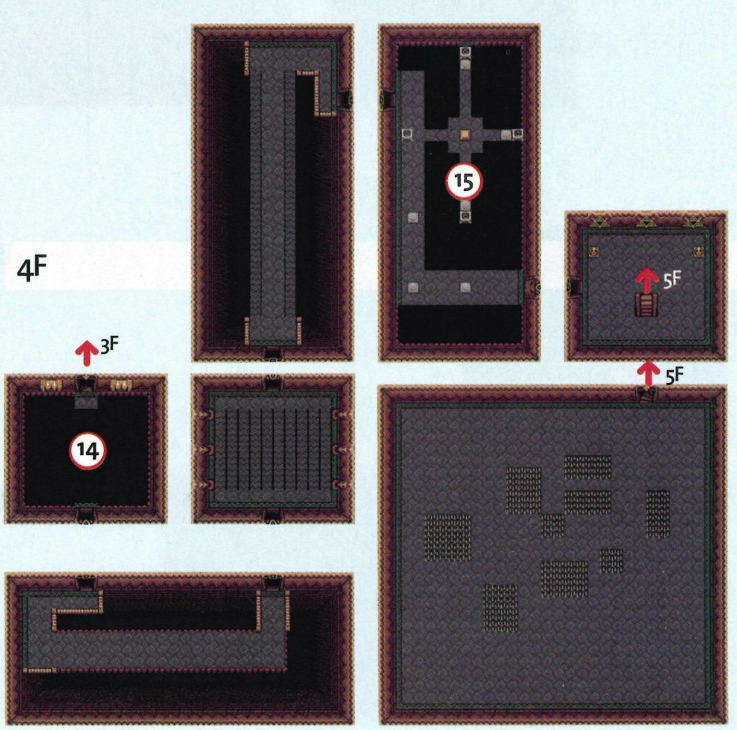
You need fear nothing once you've found the Red Mail. Apart from the even-tougher monsters...











12 Watch out for the bubbles that come from the walls. At the end of the bridge, you can bomb the South wall to open up a passage. To reach it, dash against the nearby blocks to bounce backwards and past the pit. In the room below are some Faeries. Now proceed to the next floor.

13 In this room you'll have to defeat the Lanmolas again. With your stronger Sword, this will be a piece of cake. Once you're done with them, you're free to climb to the next floor.

14 Use the Ether Medallion to see the invisible walkway, and kill the Wizrobes to open the door.

15 Here you'll have to light the four torches and quickly make it to the exit door. Clear the way to the torches first, then light them all up in an clockwise pattern, starting off with the upper one.

16 This is a troublesome room. You have to light the four torches to open the door, but the floor will start to collapse soon. The problem is that the fire monsters will block your fireballs if they stand in the way. Keep trying until you do it.

17 Lay a bomb, pick it up, and throw it on the treadmill near the South wall. If you throw it right, it will blow up and open a passage in the wall.

18 Here you'll have to defeat Moldorm again. If you fall down, you'll have to climb back up and restart the battle. Once Moldorm is dead, a chest will appear in the South part of the room. Use the Hookshot on it and proceed to the final floor...

The only thing we don't like about this dungeon is that it's the last one in the game. Still, you can try your hand at the *Four Swords* adventure next!

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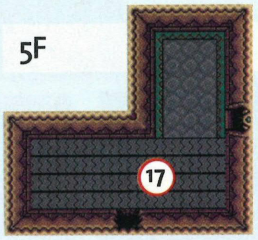

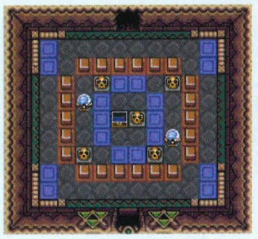

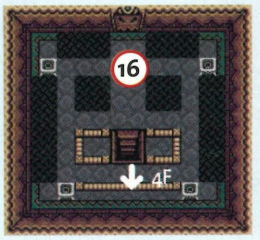

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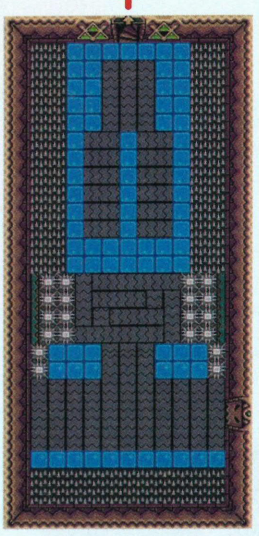

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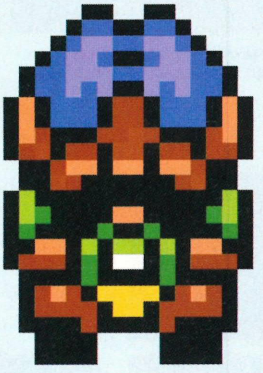
BOSS BATTLE!
AGAHNIM

It's the final showdown with Agahnim. This evil wizard creates two clones of himself, and the three of them attack you at the same time. You can easily make out the clones.

Agahnim can still shoot the blue spheres – something his clones can't do. However, this time he isn't able to shoot lightning, so you have one less problem to worry about.

The clones are invincible, but you can repel their fire to hit the real Agahnim. If you're good, you can score multiple hits against him. Stay on the move and this battle will be over soon!



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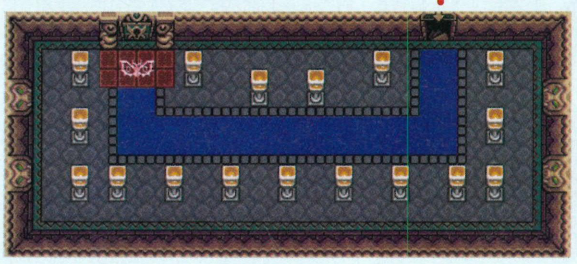

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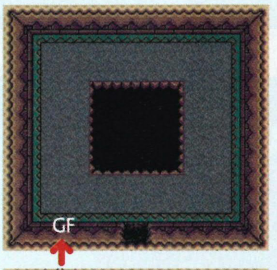
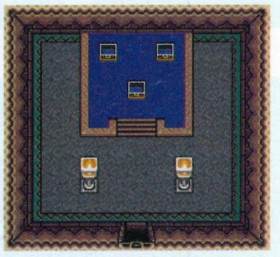
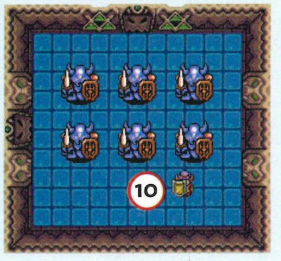
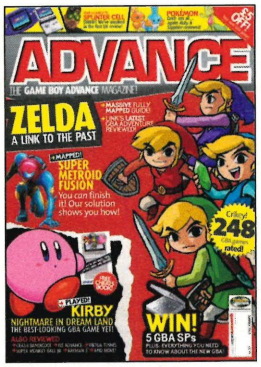






FEEDBACK



OFF CUTS

"I love GBA. Woohoo!!"
Craig Wood

"I was wondering if you knew when *Contra/Probotector Advance* is coming out for the GBA. I'm actually desperate!"
Thomas Brookland

"You call yourselves pro game raters, then why did you give 95% to *THPS3*? Tony Hawk would have a fit if you told him that. I think its worthy of a 99% rating."
Elliott Burrowes

"Nice Games... Are they real!? I want them... I wanna make shoes and chairs and bureaucrats angry!"
KingStoph

"I nearly cried when you said *GTA3* would not be coming out on GBA."
Paul Holmes

"I would rather have heard more about a top notch RPG like *Lufia*, than generic crappy platform cash in #94395."
Paul Teevan

"I was starting to get worried when I saw all the PS2 and Xbox magazines I thought maybe I was the only one with a GBA."
Lenny Reed

A selection of whining claptrap, ill-informed drivel, utter tosh and some questions. That's democracy in action. Or the letters page.

"OUT OF AMMO"

I think a lot of people would agree that it would be great if you added a section where we could write in asking for help on specific games so we could stop losing all our lives/running out of ammo/ pulling out our hair.

I've only got the *Spyro* and *Crash* games, but I love my GBA and I would be heartbroken if I had to change it to the newer model. What do you think, are Nintendo taking a step backwards, or are there more things that the Game Boy Advance SP has to offer?

ALEX SUTTON
NORTHWICH, CHESHIRE

STAR LETTER

Splendid idea, Alex, and if we get enough requests for tips or cheats, we'll start up a section next issue. In the meantime our tips book should keep you going. Especially as it has cheats for both your games...

And though we reckon the SP is an excellent machine, there's no reason to bin your GBA just yet. Light aside, it's essentially the same and plays exactly the same games.

"SOMEWHAT SPORADIC"

"The next issue will be in the shops sometime during summer 2002" indeed! There I was thinking the best (if somewhat sporadic) GBA mag had folded when I walked into Smiths this morning to find issue 3 on the shelf! Nice to see it back.

BAL SAGOTH,
EMAIL

We'd love to produce Advance regularly. Truth is, even we don't know when we'll be working on the next issue. Keep hassling us, and perhaps The Men Who Wear Ties will allow us to publish more frequently...

"GET IT FIXED"

My screen is scratched. Can I get it fixed, or get a new screen? Your mag is boss, great, whatever.

LIAM BRIDGEMAN
EMAIL

Oh dear. You ought to be more careful. However, you can indeed get a new screen and, what's more, it's an official Nintendo product. If you can't order one from your local games emporium, give Xyramax a tinkle (0870 011 3630) – they'll flog you one for a tenner.

And while you're at it, perhaps you should invest in a carry case for your GBA to prevent it from getting all scratched again in the future...

"JUST NITPICKING"

I just finished reading through issue 3 of your magazine and I have to say that I was very impressed. It would be nice to see another feature or two, as it seems to be made up almost entirely of reviews. That's not a terrible thing, as it's one of the main reasons for buying this kind of magazine, but a bit more variety would be nice.

The news section was nice. There are so many great games coming out: *Zelda*, *Kirby*, *Wolverine*, *Jazz Jackrabbit*, *Kien*, *Crash 2*, *Lost Vikings*, *Daredevil* and *Iron Man*. This year's going to be great!

Finally, is there any way I can order back issues so that I can read all the reviews in detail? The reviews backlist is nice, but having every issue of Advance would be nicer.

STEPHEN COOPER
THATCHAM, BERKSHIRE

We hear what you're saying, Stephen, but there are so many great GBA games that we just have to fit in. Sadly, every issue of Advance so far has sold out.

"TURN A SCREW"

I've heard a rumour that you can turn a screw on the back of the GBA under the sticker to alter brightness. Can you tell me if this is true as I don't want to void my warranty?.

TONY SANCHEZ
IRTHLINGBOROUGH, NORTHANTS

There is a potentiometer under the sticker which tinkers with the contrast, but it won't make your games more visible and can damage your GBA permanently. Not recommended.

WRITE IN AND WIN!

JOYTECH

Got something to say? Then say it! Send us your musings and not only could your prose appear in the pages of what is, undoubtedly, the world's premier Game Boy Advance magazine, but you've got a chance of winning a stack of wondrous goodies, too.

Yes, the author of the Star Letter gets a splendid JOYTECH accessory bundle to keep their Game Boy Advance company. Not only that, but you get the choice of GBA or GBA SP accessories to match the machine you own. Here's the beef:

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CLASSIC MOMENT 03

PLAYING WITH ZELDA – UNDER THE COVERS

We've seen the light – and can play GBA at night...

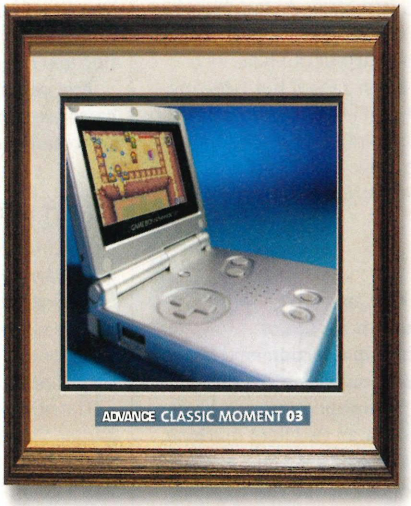
We've actually had two classic moments with *The Legend of Zelda: A Link to the Past*. The first was way back in 1993 when the game was released on the SNES. It did what Nintendo does so well: Take a genre (RPG), strip away all the tedious bits (stats), and wrap it in a slick, arcadey package so that it appeals to everyone, not just the hardcore.

Ten years later, on 28 March 2003, *Link to the Past* appeared for GBA, and we're amazed at how well the game has stood the test of time. And best of all, it was so long ago since we played the original, we've forgotten all the puzzles, and so it's almost as if we're playing a completely new game.

28 March is important for another reason. It was also the day that Nintendo launched its GBA update, the SP. The original was much criticised for its dark screen. No longer do we have to sit directly under a halogen spotlight just to see what we're doing.

And so to the 29 March, after a night with Zelda and the GBA SP. What was meant to be a quick ten minutes until we dozed off turned into a two-hour marathon, all taking place under the bedcovers.

And we've been taking Zelda to bed with us every night since.



THE QUICK QUIZ

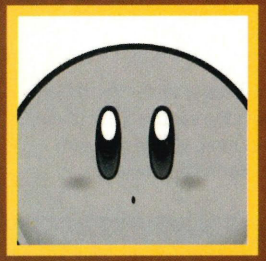
Read the magazine from cover to cover? Let's see how observant you've been. You'll find the answers to the following throughout the mag – and at the foot of the quiz. No cheating now!

01. How many games has Wario managed to cram into his *Micro Megagames* cart?
02. What do you get from the Thieves' Town to help you on your quest?
03. How long does the GBA SP's rechargeable battery keep going for?
04. How many tracks can you belt around in *TOCA*?
05. What are Bub and Bob?
06. How highly would Elliot Burrowes rate *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3*?
07. What on earth is Zapper?
08. What was the UK's sixth best-selling game when we last looked?
09. What does the Game Boy Player add-on for the Gamecube allow you to do?
10. What's Bokura no Taiyo mean in English?
11. What is Sam Fisher's job?
12. In which game would you find Sector TRO?
13. Who created the arcade game *Missile Command*?
14. What sucks even harder than a Dyson?
15. Where does your adventure start in *Pokémon Ruby/Sapphire*?

Answers: 1. 200. 2. The Titans Mitt. 3. Ten hours with the light on, 18 hours without. 4. 14. 5. Dinosaurs. 6. 99% 7. A grasshopper. 8. *Super Monkey Ball Jr.* 9. Play GBA games on your TV. 10. My sun. 11. Secret Agent. 12. *Metroid Fusion*. 13. Atari. 14. *Mortal Kombat: Deadly Alliance*. Petalburg Woods.

THE CLASS OF 1993

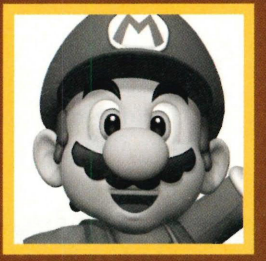
Little did these Nintendo favourites know what would become of them...



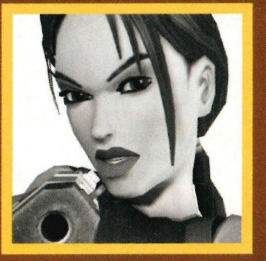
Kirby
Most likely to: win pie-eating contest

The Incredible Hulk
Most likely to: need anger management

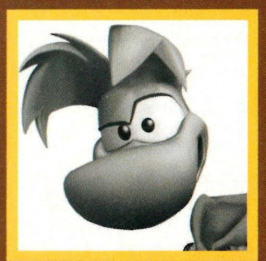
Crash Bandicoot
Most likely to: run away



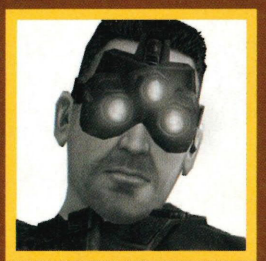
Mario
Most likely to: put in your bathroom



Lara Croft
Most likely to: suffer from backache

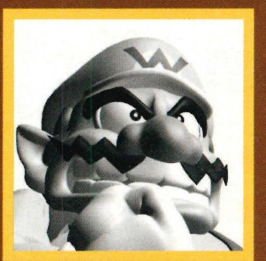


Rayman
Most likely to: need prosthetics



Sam Fisher
Most likely to: be found in your attic

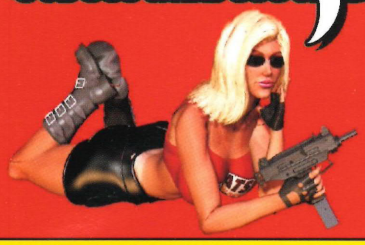
Princess Zelda
Most likely to: need rescuing



Wario
Most likely to: win and lose a fortune

Sami
Most likely to: annex Poland

CALL ME 24/7, I'VE GOT WHAT YOU NEED!



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I. Jones: Emperor's Tomb
J. Cameron's Dark Angel
James Bond: Nightfire
Jet Set Radio Future
LMA Manager 2003
Max Payne
Medal of Honor Frontline
Minority Report
Mort.Kombat: Deadly All.
Need for Speed H.Purs.2
Nightfire
Project Gotham Racing
Rocky
Sega GT 2002
Shenmue 2
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Splinter Cell
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
The Sims
The Thing
Time Splitters 2
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Aladdin
Aliens: Thanatos Enc.
Alone in the Dark 4
Blue Pokemon
Bob The Builder
Castlevania 2
Castlevania Legends
Crystal Pokemon
Dragon War. Monsters 2
Harry Potter
I.Jones The Last Crusade
James Bond 007
L.of Zelda: Links Awake.
Legend of Zelda: Seasons
Links Awakening (Zelda)
Lucky Luke
Mortal Kombat 2
Mortal Kombat 4
Pokemon Blue
Pokemon Crystal
Pokemon Gold
Pokemon Red
Pokemon Silver
Pokemon Yellow
Polaris SnoCross
Powerpuff Girls: Bat. Him
Silver Pokemon
Simpsons: Thouse Horror
Tony Hawk's 2
Tony Hawk's 3
Wario Land 3
Yu-Gi-Oh!: Dark Duel St.
Zelda: Links Awake. DX
Zelda: Oracle of Seasons
Plus many more...

PS2

Ace Combat 4: S. Skies
Age of Empires 2
Atlantis 3: New World
Blade 2
C.Bandicoot: W.of Cortex
Commandos 2
Conflict Zone
Conflict: Desert Storm
Crazy Taxi
Devil May Cry
Devil May Cry 2
Dragonball Z: Budokai
Dynasty Warriors 3
Escape Monkey Island
FIFA 2003
Final Fantasy 10
G1 Jockey
Getaway
Gran Turismo 3
Grand T Auto: Vice City
Grand Theft Auto 3
Harry Potter C.of Secrets
Headhunter
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
J. Cameron's Dark Angel
Jak & Daxter
James Bond: Nightfire
Kingdom Hearts
LMA Manager 2002
LMA Manager 2003
Lord of Rings Two Towers
Lord of Rings: Fel. of Ring
Max Payne
Medal of Honor Frontline
Metal Gear Solid 2
Metal Gear Solid 2: Sub.
Minority Report
Monkey Island (Escape)
Mort.Kombat: Deadly All.
Need for Speed H.Purs.2
No One Lives Forever
Onimusha 2
Onimusha: Warlords
Pac-Man World 2
Premier Manager 2002
Pro Evolution Soccer 2
Project Zero
Ratchet and Clank
Red Faction
Reign Of Fire
Res.Evil: C. Veronica X
Robot Wars
Rocky
Silent Hill 2
Sims
Smackdown! 4: Shut Y.M.
Soldier of Fortune
Soul Reaver 2
Splinter Cell
Stuntman
Summoner 2
Syberia
Tenchu: Wrath of Heaven
Terminator: Dawn of Fate
The Getaway
The Sims
The Thing
This is Football 2003
Time Splitters 2
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell
Tony Hawk's 4
Top Gun: Combat Zones
Ty the Tasmanian Tiger
Vice City, G.T.A.
WWE Smackdown! S.Y.M.
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Nightfire
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Pikmin
Rayman 3
Reign Of Fire
Resident Evil
Resident Evil Zero
Robotech: Battlecry
Rocky
Rogue Leader
Sanity's Requiem
Scooby Doo: 100 Frights
Simpsons: Road Rage
Sims
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle
Sonic Mega Collection
Spiderman The Movie
Spyro: Ent.the Dragonfly
SSX Tricky
Star Wars: Bounty Hunter
Star Wars: Clone Wars
Star Wars: J. Knight 2
Star Wars: Rogue Leader
Starfox Adventures
Super Mario Sunshine
Super Monkey Ball 2
Super Smash Bros Melee
The L. of Zelda: W.Waker
The Sims
The Two Towers
Tiger Woods Golf 2003
Time Splitters 2
Tony Hawk's 3
Tony Hawk's 4
Top Gun: Combat Zones
Turok: Evolution
WWE Wrestlemania X8
X-Men: Next Dimension
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A = 01
A Link to the Past
Advance Rally
Advance Wars
Aggressive Inline
Alienator: Evol. Conts.
An American Tale:G.Rush
Animal Snap
Army Men Advance
Army Men: Op. Annihilat.
Army Men: Op. Green
Asterix: Bash Them All
Atlantis: The Lost Empire
Attack of the Clones

B = 02
Back Track
Ballistic: Ecks Vs. Sever 2
Batman Vengeance
Bomberman Tournament
Boxing Fever
Breath of Fire
Breath of Fire 2
Britney's Dance Beat
Broken Sword
Bruce Lee: Return of Leg.
Bubble Bobble Old+New
Butt Ugly Martians: BKM

C = 03
Castlevania: C of Moon
Castlevania: Concerto
Castlevania: Harmany D.
Chimp Chase
Chu Chu Rocket
Contra Advance
Crash Band. 2 N-Tranced
Crash Bandicoot XS
Cruis'n Velocity
CT Special Forces

D = 04
Daredevil
Dark Arena
Desert Strike Advance
Dexter's Lab: D. Strikes
Dinotopia: T'tone Pirates
Disney's Lilo and Stitch
Disney's Treasure Planet
Donald Duck Advance
Doom
Doom 2
Dragonball Z: L. Goku
Driven
Driver 2 Advance
Dual Blades
Duke Nukem Advance

E = 05
Earthworm Jim 1
Earthworm Jim 2
Ecks vs Sever
Ecks Vs. Sever 2: Ballistic
Eggo Mania
ESPN Final Round 2002
ESPN Int.Winter Sports'02
ET The Extraterrestrial
Evolution Cont.: Alienator
Extreme Ghostbusters

F = 06
F-14 Tomcat
Fairly OddParents
Fellowship Of The Ring
Final Fight One
Final Fire Pro Wrestling
Final Round Golf
Fire Pro Wrestling 2
Fire Pro Wrestling A
Frogger: The Great Quest
F-Zero: Max. Velocity

G = 07
Game & Watch Gallery 4
Gekido: Kintaro's Rev.
Golden Sun
Golden Sun 2
Gradius Galaxies
Gremlins
GT Advance 2
GT Advance 3: Pro Conc.
GT Advance Champ.
Guilty Gear X

H = 08
Harry Potter
Harry Potter C.of Secrets
He-Man: P. of Greyskull
Hey Arnold: The Movie
High Heat Baseball 2002

I = 09
Ice Age
Inspector Gadget Adv.
Int. Super Soccer
Int. Winter Sports 2002
Iridion 3-D

J = 10
J. Neutron vs J. Negatron
Jackie Chan Adventures
Jazz Jackrabbit
Jedi Power Battles
Jimmy Neutron: B Genius
Jurassic Park 3: DNA Fact
Jurassic Park 3: P.Builder

K = 11
Kao the kangaroo
Kim Possible
Kirby: N. in Dreamland
Klonoa: Empire of Dream
Konami Arcade Advanced
Konami Krazy Racers
Kong
Kuru Kuru Kururin

L = 12
L. of Zelda: Link Past
Lady Sia
Land Before Time
Lara Croft: The Prophecy
Legacy of Goku
Lego Bionicle: Tohunga
Lilo and Stitch
Lord of Rings Two Towers
Lord of Rings: Fel. of Ring

M = 13
Major Lgue Baseball '02
Manic Miner
Mario Adv. 3: Yoshi's Is.
Mario Advance
Mario Kart Super Circuit
Mario World / Advance 2
Masters of the Universe
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 2
Medabots AX
Medal of Honor Underg.
Mega Man Battle Net. 2
Megaman Zero
Men In Black: The Series
Metroid Fusion
Midnight Club
MLB Slugfest 2004
Monster Force
Monster Jam Max. Destr.
Monster Rancher 2
Monsters Inc
Mort.Kombat: Deadly All.
Mortal Kombat Advance
Motocross Maniacs Adv.
Muppet Pinball Mayhem

N = 14
Nancy Drew: H. Mansion
NBA Jam 2002
New Droid Army
NFL Blitz 2002
NFL Blitz 2003
NHL 2003
Nicktoons Racing

P = 16
Pinball of the Dead
Pitfall: The Mayan Adv.
Planet of the Apes
Pokemon Blue
Pokemon Crystal
Pokemon Gold
Pokemon Red
Pokemon Ruby
Pokemon Sapphire
Pokemon Silver
Pokemon Yellow
Power Rangers: T. Force
Power Rangers: W. Force

R = 18
Rayman Advance
Reign Of Fire
Road to Wrestlemania
Robot Wars: Extreme Dst.
Ruby Pokemon

S = 19
S Palmer's Snowboarder
Sapphire Pokemon
Scooby Doo Cyber Chase
Scorpion King
Shrek: Hassle at Castle
Smugglers Run
Sonic Advance
Sonic Advance 2
Space Invaders
Spiderman The Movie
Spiderman: M's Menace
Spy Hunter
Spyro: Season of Flame
Spyro: Season of Ice
Star Wars Jedi P. Battles
Star Wars: Att. of Clones
Star Wars: New Dr.Army
Street Fighter 2 Revival
Street Fighter Alpha 3
Super Bust A Move
Super Mario Advance 2
Super Mario Advance 3

T = 20
Tekken Advance
The L. of Zelda: L. to Past
The Two Towers
Tomb Raider: Prophecy
Tony Hawk's 2
Tony Hawk's 3
Tony Hawk's 4
Treasure Planet

W = 23
Wario Land 4
Wolfenstein 3D
WWE Rd to W'mania X8
WWF Rd to Wrestlemania

X = 24
X-Men: R. of Apocalypse

Y = 25
Yoshi's Island
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Monst. 7
Yu-Gi-Oh! Eternal Duelist

Z = 26
Zelda: A Link to Past
Zelda: Links Awake. DX
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