

# MA

ezine

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## INSIDE

Limbofunk interviews an actual former Nintendo Gameplay Counselor.

Also, we sit down with the man who gave us a home, Dain Anderson.



**Name: Tony Clayton**  
Became GPC: August, 1989  
Hobbies: Skiing, Golf, Bass Guitar  
Best NES Accomplishment: Beat Chaos in Final Fantasy with a Knight and Ninja at Level 26  
Favorite NES Game: Mega Man II



**Name: Tom Kristensen**  
Became GPC: March, 1990  
Hobbies: Riding Motorcycles, Playing Soccer, Reading, Parachuting, Fishing  
Best NES Accomplishment: Completed Jackal with one Jeep  
Favorite NES Game: A tie between Metroid and Final Fantasy



**Name: Josh Shepard**  
Became GPC: August, 1989  
Hobbies: Skateboarding, Art, Music, Climbing, Hiking, Skiing  
Best NES Accomplishment: Completed Kid Icarus in one life  
Favorite NES Game: Romance of the Three Kingdoms



**Name: Caesar Filori**  
Became GPC: September, 1989  
Hobbies: Music, Beating other GPC's at Baseball Stars, Playing Australian Rules Football  
Best NES Accomplishment: Completed Contra in 15 minutes, in one life, with the Power Glove  
Favorite NES Game: Mega Man III

# HAPPY HOLIDAY EDITION

## LOOKING BACK AT THE WII LAUNCH

> **JUSTIN KLINGENMEYER** *penguin*

Seeing as it was the three year anniversary of the Wii this past November, I wanted to write a little article about my experience of getting a Wii on the release date. This goes back to November 18th 2006, the eve of the Wii's launch in America.

I had checked around at several stores and found out which ones were going to be getting consoles in, and decided to camp out at my local Wal-Mart Supercenter. We got there around 3 pm and there was already a line of people waiting outside. Many were sitting there talking about videogames or playing their Nintendo DS systems in anticipation for the release. We were smart and brought a cooler and some lounge chairs and blankets as it was getting cold (well, as cold as we know it in Florida) and we didn't want to be waiting out there all night freezing our butts off. So my friend Steve, his brother Aaron and I sat down and started getting giddy for midnight to arrive.

A couple hours pass and it starts getting dark out, when all of a sudden we hear this big booming sound. All of a sudden a giant fireball rises into the sky a few miles to the north, and a giant pillar of smoke follows. I will always remember it, everyone sitting outside stood up, and it was dead quiet. So we watched and listened as we heard a convoy of sirens come and go, and the smoke continued to billow into the cool night. About an hour later someone went inside where they had the news on in the electronics section, and it turns out a winery about 2 miles away had exploded, taking out a cafe next door and damaging part of the Outback Steakhouse building about 20 yards away.

By this time most of us were in shock and had completely forgotten about the Wii.

As the cold settled in and time passed by, the shock from the night's events faded away and the clock inched closer and closer to midnight. At around 11:30 PM an associate from the electronics department came out to say they had 20 Wii systems, and would be giving out tickets to those in line. So they start to hand out the tickets, and by the time they get to where we are they are out of tickets, turns out we were #22 in line, so we missed it by

2 people. As you can imagine we were quite disappointed after waiting in line for 8 hours. So we leave and decide to try and go to another store in a few hours for the morning release. There was an old K-Mart down by Fort Myers Beach that was going to have some Wii systems when they opened at 8 am. So we got up around 5:30 and headed over to try and get one.

We get there around 6:00 and to our surprise nobody is there! About 30 minutes later someone else comes up and gets in line behind us, as we wait for opening time. Around 7:00 a Manager comes out and tells us they have 5 Wii systems, and said he will be giving out tickets. Success, we were first in line and were able to get systems. The only catch was due to the limited quantities, we had to buy it as a bundle, with a System, a Game and Accessory, or the System with two games. Thankfully I had some extra cash with me and could afford to get the extra stuff that they made you buy. So 8:00 rolled around and I remember marching back to the electronics department, on a natural high of the moment realizing that I will be one of the first people to own a Wii system. So we get back to electronics and I show them my slip, and a guy hands me a Wii system and tells me to pick 2 things off of the cart. So I of course picked the Legend

of Zelda as it was a launch title and I had heard so much about it, and I picked up the classic controller to use with the Virtual Console.

After the disappointing night of waiting, and the enthralling rush in the morning, Christmas came early for Penguin and I felt like a kid again on Christmas day, opening my presents and gazing in wonder at the contents inside. Getting my Wii was a day I will always remember, and I still have my Wii line ticket to this day. If you have never been to a system or game launch I would recommend you do it at least once in your life, as it can be a great experience, and you never know what could happen!



## TINHEAD - MICROPROSE'S UNRELEASED SNES GAME, REVEALED!

> **EVAN GOWAN** *badinsults*

Tinhead was an unreleased game, intended for a 1994 release. It was cancelled after developer Microprose ran out of money. A completed ROM image of the game exists, and it was released commercially in the US on the Genesis.

Tinhead was one of the many action platform games planned for release on 16-bit systems. The game was in production at the UK development studio, Microprose. Unlike Boo!, a game in development at about the same time as Tinhead, this game was completed. It was in development for the SNES, Genesis and Amiga. The Genesis version was released in the US by Accolade and Spectrum Holobyte, though remained unreleased on the SNES for unknown reasons. According to game producer Stuart Whyte, the Amiga version was in development but never finished (Stuart Whyte is the current executive producer at Lionhead studios, responsible for the Fable series). The game was never released by Microprose due to the game maker running out of money. A working title for this game was Waldo.

### ROM Image

A ROM image of the unreleased SNES version of Tinhead exists, though its source is unknown. If I were to guess, this game was leaked out onto USENET during the 90s. Another possibility is that the ROM image came directly from Stuart Whyte's website, though considering the "SMC" extension, I would bet against that. Also, the ROM image is PAL, so if you try playing this in a flash cart on an NTSC SNES (which is all the rage nowadays), the game will run too fast. Aside from the extra speed, I did not notice any glitches when I played it on my NTSC SNES. Believe me when I say this will hamper any efforts to pass this game. The game itself appears to be finished.

### The Game

Tinhead was complete, but I have to rank this as a second rate platformer, among the Zools, Bubsys and Aero the Acrobats of the 16-bit platforming realm (though Aero the Acrobat 2 is freaking awesome). With the glut of platformers out there, surely this game would have been buried among them. Perhaps the competition for



marketable releases for the Genesis was lighter, making it justifiable for release on that platform. Whatever the reason it was not released on the SNES, we may never know. The story behind Tinhead is some intergalactic goblin, known as Grim Squidge, has stolen all of the stars in the galaxy by sucking them up in his vacuum cart and scattering them elsewhere. Tinhead, the protector who guards the edge of the galaxy gets a distress signal and goes to rescue the stars. Not exactly an inspiring story, but then again, what platformer from the early 90s had one?

The game is a platformer, with a strong shooter aspect to it. The game has more in common with Super Mario than Contra, though. There are four levels in the game, each broken up into three "sectors", and further split up into two sub-sectors. This means each level has six parts. After each sector, you get a password to save your progress. At the end of each level, there is an end boss. This game is a collect-o-thon, though the main things to look for are batteries (which increase Tinhead's health) and tin balls (which increase the amount of shots you can fire simultaneously). One annoying aspect is that the orange capsules that contain the powerups must be touched before the powerup can be collected. In tight spots, this can require making a tricky jump twice if you need the powerup.

Tinhead is a cute looking platformer with nice (if simple) graphics. There isn't a lot of variety in the levels, with only five or six enemy types per stage. The level graphics are basic, sort of reminiscent of the original Sonic the Hedgehog. The graphics are very colourful and smooth, and would have appealed to the demographics of those who played video games at the time. There is nothing that makes it stand out from other 16-bit platformers, though.

I really liked the music in this game, but after listening to the same tune for six straight stages, it got old. In particular, I liked the music from the second level, which starts off nice and cheery, then gets manic. Having more variety would help the game go by easier, as deaths and level restarts are rampant. The sound effects are generic blips and bloops. As for gameplay, the controls work well. It suffers from what I refer to as "Mega Man Collection GameCube Syndrome", where the jump button is mapped to the "Y" button rather than the "B" button like virtually every other platform game released on the SNES. Luckily, the designers have four different button configurations, so you are not stuck with the default scheme. There are three different shot types: fully horizontal, shot upwards at a 45 degree angle, and lobbed to bounce around on the ground. Each shot type is mapped to its own button. If you use control style "3", the horizontal shot is mapped to the Y button, which is likely optimal for most gamers. The game limits the amount of shots you can fire simultaneously until you gather powerups to increase your capacity, which can lead to slow progress. Jumping is done without difficulty, though if you hit a ceiling while jumping, you lose all your momentum. Realistic, maybe, but it is downright frustrating in parts.

### Lessons in Platform Game Level Design

The part of the game that makes it subpar is not the simplistic graphics or repetitive music: the level design is very poor. A lot of the problems likely would be resolved if the view wasn't so narrow. At any rate, here are eight rules of designing platform games.



**> tinhead, cont.**

**Rule 1:** When making a platform game, never put in a spot where you have to make a jump that is pretty much impossible to achieve without getting hit. The example above shows a point in the first part of the third sector in level one where you have to get through this gap that has spikes above and below you. Jump too high, and you get a spikes to the head, and you will most likely miss the platform as your momentum gets killed. Jump too low, and you miss the platform and get hit by the spikes from below. It is lose-lose all around unless you get very lucky (after probably 20 attempts, I still couldn't do it).

**Rule 2:** When making a platform game, never force the player to go back to the start of the level unnecessarily. In level one, there are various chutes that transport you to different parts of the stage. However, there is little indication to suggest whether or not the chutes will progress you through the level or send you backwards. In one stage, I was about halfway through, and went through one of these chutes, and I was sent to start of the stage. I would have been just as well off to have perished!

**Rule 3:** On a similar note, when making a platform game with very large levels, it is always a good idea to have midpoint saves so that when you die, you don't have to restart from the beginning of the level! The stages in this game are incredibly long, which is not a bad thing on its own, but if you are near the end of the level and you die, you have to start over again. I found myself dying a lot, so this made the game much more frustrating than it would have otherwise been. There really isn't any excuse for it, considering that the concept of the midway save point has been around since Super Mario Bros. for the NES (and the levels in that game are much shorter than the ones in this game).

**Rule 4:** Variety is the spice of life, so they say, and there isn't much of it in this game. The graphics in all six stages for the levels do not change. The simple graphics are fine, but after seeing the same scenery and listening to the same level music for six stages, it gets pretty old. When designing a platform game, change things up every couple of levels or so!



**Rule 5:** When making a platform game, do not place a powerup directly over a bunch of spikes that you can't avoid because you fall straight down after getting the powerup. I never was able to get the powerup above without getting hit.

**Rule 6:** When making a platform game where you have things like fans that blow you to great heights, there are a couple of rules. Number 1: If there are spikes to avoid, make sure they are visible before jumping! In the example above, there are three fans, with two that are directly underneath spikes of death that you cannot see at fan level. Number 2: Ensure that the fan blows you to where you need to go. The screen above shows me in a position where I am completely stuck. The fan doesn't blow me up to the platform I need to get to, nor is there any way to go down. This is essentially forces you to hit restart. Mind you, it is a pretty uncommon occurrence to be in this position, but it happened to me more than once in this spot. It's terrible, but perhaps an indication that this game was not 100% finished.



**Rule 7:** You know that I love slopes. I thought that the slopes in Super Mario Bros. 3 were a real treat and made for some interesting levels. Tinhead uses

slopes, but makes them so that they seem like they are covered in some sort of low viscosity fluid. You slide down these hills rapidly, and for whatever reason, you walk up them just as fast. This makes fighting enemies on slopes or at the bottom of slopes nearly impossible without taking damage. When designing a platform game, don't make the character slide down slopes too fast!

**Rule 8:** The last point I would like to make on level design is what I call "the unseen threat". In Super Mario World, you could press L and R to scroll the screen to the left or right to get a view of what was ahead, though it was not entirely necessary as you could always see threats as they came. In Tinhead, you can also do this, but you soon find that it becomes a necessity to constantly hold down the scroll button. The level graphics are nice and large in this game, but the zoomed-in view serves as a handicap when it comes to the actual gameplay. If you play this game, you will run into many points where you make a jump to a new platform, and immediately run into an enemy that takes more than one hit to kill, giving you no recourse but to take a hit. Sure, there are tons of health powerups in this game, but the real problem is that you lose one of your simultaneous shots every time you get hit. This makes it a slow affair to tackle parts of the level not yet explored. Not only that, but there are many points where you must make a leap of faith, and when falling not know what is below (often there are spikes and enemies!). When designing a platform game, make sure that the player can see enemies and other dangers before making a leap!

**Comparison with the Genesis version**

The Genesis version of Tinhead is pretty much exactly the same as the Super NES version. Some of the powerup graphics are different (for example the star you need to collect before you can complete a level). The sound in the Genesis is inferior to the SNES version. In particular, the sound effects and music sound tinny compared to the SNES version. The controls are much different than the SNES version due to the lower amount of buttons on a standard Genesis controller. There are no buttons for manual scrolling of the screen. Also, there is only one button for shooting: to switch between the different types of shots you have to press the A button. The game also plays

> tinhead, cont.



fast, almost as if they didn't bother to optimize it for a NTSC console. Due to the wider resolution of the Genesis, there are somewhat fewer problems with "the unseen threat". As you can see from the screenshot (on next page) comparison, the problems with level layout still exist. Which version of this game you play is a matter of preference, I suppose.

**Developer's goodies**

On Stuart Whyte's webpage on Tinhead, there is a zip file full of raw graphics used during the development of the game. I converted these graphics from Amiga bitmap to PNG for your viewing pleasure (see the screenshots section). The graphics appear to come from both the SNES and Genesis versions of the game. I can't comment on the amount of unused tiles for the game, but as you can see from the image on the right, there are instances of graphical changes during the development of the game. There are many images that are identical, but have different palettes. There also are several images showing different models for the Tinhead character itself.

Another interesting developer bit is this document on sound design. This particular document is for the Mega Drive version of the game (I would assume the game was in development for the Mega Drive/Genesis before porting to the SNES). It is interesting because it gives insight on how music and sound effects were planned for the game. Things of interest include the fact that this game was designed for the PAL version first, with compensation to make sure the sound effects do not go too far out of sync in the NTSC conversion. As an example of how the sound was designed, here is a description of the first level music:

*"The Level One music should be a fast paced, cheerful tune, in a similar style to the main theme music (hardcore rave meets Kylie Minogue) but with a different tune and without the cartoon sound effects. Emphasis should be placed on conveying a sense of urgency, and there should perhaps be echoes of 'chase scene' music. The piece of music should be two minutes long, and should loop."*

**Codes**

There are several codes for the game. All are taken off Stuart Whyte's page.

- Level 1-2 - LAMBDA
- Level 1-3 - SARTRE
- Level 2-1
- QUANTA
- Level 2-2
- MESONS
- Level 2-3
- TENSOR
- Level 3-1
- LEPTON
- Level 3-2
- GORGON
- Level 3-3
- BOSONS
- Level 4-1
- BARYON
- Level 4-2
- GIBSON
- Level 4-3
- NEUMAN
- B A L -
- ROG - password to send you to the final boss, I assume
- C A M -

ELS - The only thing I could see affected by this code is that it sets your shots to max, and that your shots don't decrease when you get hit.

**Summary**

Tinhead, whether on the released Genesis version or the unreleased Super NES version, is a sub-par platform game. I found it to be very frustrating, and I never even bothered attempting to get past the second level. In fact,

at times I wished I was playing Batman: Revenge of the Joker! The graphics and sounds in this game are nice, but the poor level design and zoomed in playing field drove me nuts. With the plethora of platform games available on the Super NES, this game would have been lost in the shuffle to far superior games in the genre. The game's brutal difficulty makes this one a hardcore-only affair. It is really no wonder no publisher bothered to pick this game up for the SNES.

Visit Evan's website for downloads, more images and more articles!

<http://www.snescentral.com/article.php?id=0956>



## 'TWAS THE NIGHT BEFORE NA CHRISTMAS

> *CHRIS MACLEOD battymo*

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through N-AGE,  
 Not a user was flaming, not even post rage;  
 The collectors were posting, in all of the threads,  
 While visions of Stadium Events danced in their heads;  
 When out in the forum there arose such a chatter,  
 I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.  
 Away to the computer I flew like a louse,  
 Grabbed on the keyboard and hooked up the mouse.  
 When, what to my wondering eyes I exam,  
 But a chat room, complete with sound and webcam,  
 With a few users there, so lively and quick,  
 I knew in a moment it must be a trick.  
 More rapid than fast they all came,  
 And I looked at the faces and I called them by name;  
 "Now, Bronty! now, Bella! now, Arseface and Pserge!  
 Oh, Penguin! oh K-Han! oh, Frisbee and Ross Burdge!  
 To the top of the window! To the top of the screen!  
 Showing some games off, a sight to be seen"  
 And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the speaker  
 "There he goes! Get a shot of that streaker!"  
 As I looked at the screen, mouth ready to froth,  
 I saw a nude kid; t'was the son of that Roth.  
 The webcam goes blank and we erupt in a roar,  
 Then NGD logs in to show us his score!  
 A beer in his hand, and a cock on his shoulder,  
 To give away free games, what could be bolder?  
 He takes down my address and he's gone in a flash;  
 The doorbell rings and I run, jump and dash,  
 I open the door and I cover my mouth,  
 NGD has arrived, a tall man from the south!  
 His lips start to move, and he thinks what to say,  
 "Something Something sale... a lot of eBay!"  
 No one knows what he said, but I heard him so clear,  
 NGD is the man, he brings me great cheer!  
 He hands me a package, gift wrapped and so bright,  
 "Which way to the bathroom?", "Third door on your right",  
 I wait fifteen minutes and knock one-two-three-four,  
 No answer inside and no word from that whore,  
 What could he be doing for nearly an hour?  
 That son of a bitch better not have pissed in my shower!  
 Bored from the wait, I tear open the gift,  
 Something's in the bottom, through the layers I sift,  
 I grab and I pull, I rip with such malice,  
 Out pops his penis, a dildo, and phallus,  
 I scream to the world and then I recite,  
 "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good-night."

### NINTENDOAGE TIMELINE

NintendoAGE.com goes live	Battymo joins NintendoAGE	Dain hints at Collection Tool	Original NA chat room is launched	Dain announces Collection Tool is coming soon	First Cornerstone Contest is announced	Powerpak is released
8/15/06	10/3/06	10/16/06	1/8/07	1/16/07	3/9/07	6/11/07

## INTERVIEW WITH A NINTENDO GAMEPLAY COUNSELOR

> OTTO HANSON *limbofunk*

Tom Kristensen's start with Nintendo began innocently enough when he was hired as a GamePlay Counselor in Nintendo's infamous call center back in 1990. Little did he know at the time, this job would lead to a career spanning nearly 2 decades in the gaming industry (but we'll get more into that later)! Tom was gracious enough to take the time to answer a number of questions regarding his time at Nintendo and beyond. Within the interview, he divulges some of the inner-workings of the call center, some of his personal experiences while working there and much, much more!

**[Limbo]:** How exactly did you go about becoming a Nintendo GamePlay Counselor? Was it something you were actively looking to do or did you just fall into it by happenstance? Was there some sort of test where you had to prove your skills as a gamer?

**[TK]:** I had recently graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in Political Science. I only had vague notions of what I wanted to do in the real world – perhaps law enforcement or teaching – until one day when a roommate found THE ad in the classifieds.

It read something like: “How would you like to get paid to play games for a living?” I thought that sounded like a great idea to help me pass the time until I chose a “real” career. My folks were none too pleased at first (“We put you through college for THIS?!?”) but they came around eventually.

I don't recall any screening tests – if you knew how to turn on a system and start a game, you were pretty much good to go. As it turned out, your gaming skills were helpful on the job, but they weren't the primary



focus.

**[Limbo]:** About how long were you employed with Nintendo as a GPC?

**[TK]:** I worked at NOA for 5 ½ years, and I was in the Call Center for 4 ½ of those years.

**[Limbo]:** What did a typical work day consist of? Was it very laid back, or moderately strict?

**[TK]:** Fairly strict, for sure. Punctuality was crucial, and schedules were strictly adhered to. There was a low tolerance for the habitually late and the total slackers. Having said that, the atmosphere was fairly laid back in general. There was no rigid dress code, and I would be lying if I said people didn't try to have fun and goof off a bit. I mean, come on – we were playing games and helping other gamers play their games – on the average day, that's not a bad way to spend your time at work!

It should be noted that GPCs had performance metrics to live up to. Once you hit ‘Ready’ on your phone, you put yourself in the queue to take a call. When the call was completed, you went into ‘Wrap Up’ where you needed

to enter the code for the call you just took (each game and/or situation had a unique code assigned to it). If you needed to fill out any paperwork, etc, you could also do that. There was also ‘Idle’ which was used for grabbing a drink, stretching your legs, chatting with your fellow cube farmers, etc. But you could only spend a certain amount of time each day in ‘Idle’ and ‘Wrap Up’ – Big Brother was watching!

The antithesis of the typical work day took place during Hell Week – the week or so immediately following Christmas day. We were slammed! The CSRs were helping everyone hook up their new systems, and the GPCs were helping ev-

eryone with their new games. On an 8 (7.5 with breaks) hour shift, it was not uncommon to take over 200 (!) calls. That's what, about 25 to 30 calls an hour, roughly 2-3 minutes per call if you didn't get a long one to mess up the average. That's a LOT of talking!

**[Limbo]:** How was the hierarchy of GamePlay Counselors set up (ie: subsections of teams, each with a team lead or something else)?

**[TK]:** When I was there, the Call Center was open 20 hours a day (4am to midnight), and the GPCs were sorted out according to their shift. The morning teams started at 4, 5, and 6 I believe; the day teams from roughly 8 to 10, and the evening teams from 1 to 3.

There was the overall department manager, the three shift supervisors, and then each GPC team had a Lead and an Assistant Lead.

And of course there were also teams of CSRs (Consumer Service Representatives), who did tech support and pretty much any non-gaming question as well as the Correspondence Department for good old snail mail questions and issues.

**[Limbo]:** Were there any particular games or even specific obstacles within games that you remember receiving calls about all the time?

**[TK]:** Wow, I wouldn't know where to start with this one. How much space do you have? The Warp Whistles in SMB3; the Minus World in SMB; how to find a specific item in Zelda, Metroid, etc; how to navigate a particular room in Legacy of the Wizard (ugh) or Solstice (double ugh); some well-hidden items in Destiny of an Emperor...

**[Limbo]:** Did you receive a frequent amount of ‘No-brainer’ questions throughout a typical day (i.e.: Where do I get the first sword in Zelda, I start out with no weapons!)?

**[TK]:** Oh yeah, did we ever. But those calls were your bread and butter calls, the kind you could answer from memory while playing your game and not miss a beat. The GPC training program made sure you knew the answers to the most common FAQs from the core titles – Mario, Zelda, Metroid, etc.

**[Limbo]:** Were there any outlandish, ridiculous or just plain peculiar calls you remember receiving that still resonate with



## NINTENDOAGE TIMELINE

NintendoAGE suffers server crash	AI Bailey's Sudoku is released	Hounder's scam exposed	Dangevin and Battymo become mods	NA eZine debuts	Battymo launches NintendoAGE radio	NintendoAGE reaches 400 members
6/26-29/09	7/5/07	7/20/07	8/20/07	9/3/07	10/5/07	6/11/07

> *counselor interview, cont.*



you to this day?

[TK]: For me, one of them was something along these lines:

*(caller) "Help! I'm stuck in a room of the castle in Dragon Warrior!!!"*  
*(TK) "If there are no exits in the room, do you see any stairs in the room? Go up the stairs."*

*(caller) "Yes, I can see the stairs, but I can't go up them!"*

*(TK) "Call up your menu and choose the 'Stairs' command."*

*[the caller fumbles around for a bit and then comes back]*

*(caller) "It didn't work! Do you even know what you're talking about?!?"*

*(TK) "Look, if your character is standing on the stairs and you activate the 'Stairs' command, you WILL go up the stairs. Honest!"*

*[the caller fumbles around some more, and eventually an exclamation of success is heard]*

*(caller) "Hooray! It worked! Thanks...now what do I do?"*

*(TK) \*sigh\* "OK, what level are you? Where have you been? And what have you done?..."*

I have no idea what the malfunction was. Maybe the caller was facing the stairs, but not actually standing right on them. Or was he standing on the square above the stairs, and decided that he was "on" the stairs? Was he pressing the A Button to execute the 'Stairs' command, or did he keep canceling it with the B Button? Hard to tell, since you have no visual reference.

Another GPC call legend is regarding a young gamer who was playing SNES Zelda: A Link to the Past, and had been waiting for his Uncle to come back (this is right at the beginning of the game). After a long line of questioning, it finally came to light that the young gamer was heeding the on-screen instructions of the Uncle to "not leave the house" and had yet to walk out of the house and search for his missing Uncle in the game. Heh.

And many gamers from the South, they cracked me up when they would talk about "mashin' them buttons" on the controllers. Thanks for playin' y'all!

[Limbo]: Were there people who called the hotline so frequently that you got to know them?

[TK]: Yes, after a while, you would begin to recognize certain callers. And some consumers wanted to know your Agent Number (3-digit extension) to they could request you every time. Official policy was to not transfer callers unless they were instructed by a GPC to do just that, or if they were becoming "difficult" to put it nicely. I helped a gentleman by the name of Jim from St. Louis quite a few times. He was a fan of RPGs, and I was able to help him out of a jam once, so he tried to speak with me if possible. Nice guy.

Of course, we also got to know a small handful of crazies, too. "Christine" was this gal who was missing a few contacts on her 72-pin connector, you know? She rambled, she vented, she accused, she was just plain nuts. We were obligated to help all callers, and as long as they were not cussing you out or threatening you, you just tried your best. When consumers became unglued or irrational, you could always turn to a Lead or Assistant Lead for support. Now if they were just plain nasty, you ended the call right away. Some GPCs were more patient than others.

[Limbo]: How were personal calls handled?

[TK]: If someone needed to contact you at work, they needed to call your team lead. Each lead had a standard phone on their desk in addition to the super gee-whiz Call Center phone. Of course, if someone knew your extension, they could just call the GPC line and ask to get transferred to you. But that was against official Call Center policy, and if your lead or supervisor happened to catch you taking personal calls on the GPC line, you were busted.

[Limbo]:

The fiasco with Tengen's licensing has always been a big point of interest with NES fans and it seemed that Nintendo has al-

ways held a grudge, even taking Tengen's three licensed Nintendo games (RBI Baseball, Pac-Man & Gauntlet) and Cyberball (Developed by Tengen) off of their official released games list. Do you remember any notices that came out about Tengen or helping callers with any of their games?

[TK]: The policy was this: Nintendo GPCs could ONLY answer questions on officially licensed games. So yes, Tengen games were excluded, the Wisdom Tree Bible-themed games, bootleg multi-pak games, and games played while using products like the Game Genie were not supported. If it did not have the Official Nintendo Seal of Approval on it, you were out of luck.

Since the GPCs and CSRs (Consum-



NINTENDOAGE TIMELINE

Original Hall of Shame debuts	First Poll of the Day "Sit down to pee?"	Retrozone releases Airball	Nerdy Nights makes 1st appearance	NA is relaunched with new layout.	Dain announces Collection Tool coming soon	Collection tool announced
10/30/07	10/30/07	11/1/07	12/5/07	1/21/08	2/12/08	3/13/08



> *counselor interview, cont.*

er Service Reps) were the front lines of consumer contact, we were the ones who caught grief from consumers who didn't care about the difference between licensed and unlicensed games, or were too young to understand the difference.

I don't recall ever helping anyone with any Tengen games, licensed or unlicensed. I know I had to turn at least a few calls away from folks with unlicensed Tengen games. I'm pretty sure some GPCs would answer quick questions about Tengen games if they didn't think they were being monitored, but those were always the exception to the "we don't support Tengen products" policy.

**[Limbo]:** I've heard some stories of people calling the Nintendo hotline back in the day for codes/passwords for certain games and being told by GPCs that they weren't allowed to divulge that type of information. Was this due to Nintendo's internal policy, or was it just that a few GPCs decided to be snarky and wanted to rile up some of the kids who called requesting them?

**[TK]:** This was a sore spot for a lot of callers back in the day. NOA had a strict policy: NO codes or passwords were shared with consumers. The logic was if you gave out codes and passwords, the consumer was losing out on quality gameplay with their particular game. In other words, what's the point if you go out, drop \$40-50 on a new game, come home, call the GPCs and get something like an Invincibility code and beat the game in one day? Kind of a let-down. In other words, NOA wanted you to play the game as it was meant to be played. You needed to earn any codes or passwords that may have been available in any given title.

Like I said, it wasn't a very popular policy with most consumers. I can't remember what we did if a code was published in Nintendo Power – I think we asked them to write in. Not 100% sure on that one. In any event, the No Code/Password policy was eventually reversed. My opinion was pretty much in agreement with NOA – just play the game and try to have fun, OK? After the policy reversal, I remember more than a few calls were consumers said they just bought a game, got all the codes/passwords, and beat the game in a matter of a day or two, or even less than a day. Wow, got your

money's worth out of that one, didn't you? \*sarcasm off\* To each his own, I guess.

**[Limbo]:** On your bio from 1990, it says your favorite NES game was a tie between Metroid and Final Fantasy...do these games still hold top honors with you or have they been replaced?

**[TK]:** I'd have to go with Metroid, for sure. FF is good, but after you play through it more than once, it gets old real fast. Zelda and Link would also be high on my list, along with SMB3.

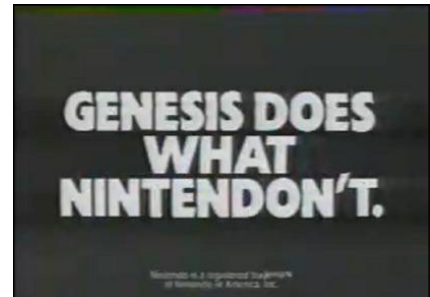
**[Limbo]:** Your bio also states that your best accomplishment at the time was completing Jackal with one jeep which is quite an accomplishment! Are there any other amazing feats of gaming greatness that you remember doing?

**[TK]:** The Jackal stunt was a pain because I started over quite a few times, but eventually I really did finish it with one Jeep. I don't recall trying any similar stunts, except maybe things like trying to score crazy goals in games like NES Goal! and SNES NHLPA '93.

**[Limbo]:** Your GPC bio in Nintendo Power is one of the few I have ever seen that didn't have a mullet. Are there any peculiar stories you remember regarding your co-workers' mullets? Did you ever feel any peer pressure to grow one yourself?

**[TK]:** LOL! I did a couple of years in the UW's Army ROTC program, and liked the short-hair look, so a mullet was never even on my hair radar. But yeah, we did have our share of mullets, rocker hair, and whatnot. The GPCs were the melting pot of NOA, from guys like me (short hair, clean-cut, t-shirts & shorts) to rockers to a couple of guys who actually wore suits to work every day. The GPCs were pretty much as non-conformist as it gets in a big business.

**[Limbo]:** There have always been open rivalries between competing companies in the videogame hardware market, with hordes of fanboys choosing sides throughout...the time you worked for Nin-



tendo as a GPC was prime for the Nintendo vs. Sega war. What are your thoughts on this, and were there any points while at work that this 'war' made itself known?

**[TK]:** It was a lot of fun back when the Sega vs Nintendo war was in full swing. Sega fans with nothing better to do would call us up and tell us "Genesis does what Nintendo't!" and tout "Blast Processing" as well as the usual intelligent statements like "Nintendo sucks!" and lesser jabs, many of which are not printable. It was always fun to ask the callers "Tell me, exactly what IS Blast Processing?" and listen to them stumble over some clumsy reply, because of course "Blast Processing" was pretty much just a clever marketing phrase cooked up by Sega. Most of the time you usually just got a hearty "Nintendo sucks!" in reply. Heady days, indeed.

I will give Sega credit for waging an effective battle, though. They knew how to use catchphrases and marketing tactics effectively, and their commercials were usually pretty good. Everyone remembers the SEGA! shout at the end of almost every commercial at the time. Nintendo pretty much tried to stick to the "put up or shut up" approach, using commercials that mostly featured gameplay footage rather than gimmicks and mudslinging.

It's too bad Sega eventually went out of the console business, because they did



NINTENDOAGE TIMELINE

Geminim by Sivak released	NGD's Hall of the Century	Dr. Morbis becomes a moderator	Jumpman Jr. becomes a mod.	Tower of Radia is released	Zzap's Chunkout 2 is released	Burdger becomes a moderator	Sivak releases Siamond
3/14/08	4/3/08	4/9/08	4/16/08	4/21/08	5/1/08	5/17/08	5/19/08

> *counselor interview, cont.*



have some good products. I think it's ironic that a lot of people were predicting Nintendo was going down the same road, insisting that dominating the handheld market with the DS and developing future consoles like Wii were signs that Nintendo was finished in the console business. Heh.

Speaking of Nintendo's premature demise, I can't tell you how pleased I am with their success with the Wii. I too was one of many who thought Wii was waaay out there, even for Nintendo. But I can honestly say I have always rooted for them, so of course I am pleased that Wii has done as well as it has to date. All the haters, all the Sony and Microsoft fanboys, all the media who laughed and wrote off Nintendo – how do you like them apples now? That's what I thought.

**[Limbo]:** I've heard of community binders that were full of walkthroughs and tips for everyone to use, and have also heard mention of items called 'Game Tip Notebooks.' Could you explain what both were and what each were used as?

**[TK]:** I'm a little fuzzy on the names, but this is what I remember: each GPC had a set of Green Binders with FAQs, maps, walkthroughs, and notes. You could expand them with your own work, and copies of info provided by your fellow GPCs.

And now that you mention it, I can picture a big flip-file type setup at the end of cube rows here and there throughout the Call Center. I think they had game info plus items like copies of instruction manuals and the like.

Of course, that was before ELMO – when we finally joined the PC age! I think



ELMO was an AS/400 database, but then again, a tech guy I am not, so my apologies if I am wrong on this account. It was a beast of a system, but it worked – most of the time. Still, we kept the Green Binders around until ELMO was housebroken. And even then, some of us still kept our own personal binders with maps and notes, stuff

not always found in ELMO.

**[Limbo]:** What were some of the games you contributed to making walkthroughs or maps for? Were you assigned to the games you played during work hours or did you get to pick and choose what you played? Obviously there were some stinkers put out for the system so someone had to play them...

**[TK]:** I remember doing extensive work on Dragon Warrior II, and a bunch of lesser titles too. Some teams assigned games, but for the most part, you could pick and choose. Whenever a big title was about to hit the street, we would usually all have to play that in anticipation of a spike in call volume. I remember big department-wide contests and promotions for titles like Final Fantasy, StarTropics, and a few others where everyone was playing the same game.

And yes, sometimes you played a game that you personally did not like, but



NINTENDOAGE TIMELINE

Batty & Braveheart NA reaches 1000 members	Braveheart69 becomes a mod	Site update with trans. & feedback	Random good BIN debuts	Joel makes epic first post. Hilarity ensues.	Antofarabia SE debacle	NA Mobile site is launched
6/3/08	6/4/08	4/9/08	6/12/08	6/13/08	6/22/08	6/26/08
						7/23/08

> counselor interview, cont.

you did it to better help the consumers. For me, I could use the info at hand to help out callers stuck in games like Legacy of the Wizard, but unless you have actually played the game yourself, sometimes you struggled with the answers – and savvy gamers could tell when you have and have not played a particular game! I never finished Legacy of the Wizard, but I played it enough to handle some of the more challenging calls about the game.

**[Limbo]:** Were there any special perks you received from Nintendo for being a gameplay counselor (games, systems, game memorabilia, free tickets to events, etc)?

**[TK]:** Well, we could buy hardware and software from the employee store at a modest discount, and sometimes they would get rid of excess software so I remember picking up NES and SNES titles on the cheap from time to time.

When Final Fantasy was released, I seem to recall an in-house promotion where everyone who played the game and took a test got to keep their game pak. So yes, sometimes you got freebies.

And every now and then Marketing or some other department would dump their excess t-shirts and other swag in our area, and it was always snapped up by cir-

cling GPCs.

When Mr. Yamauchi (Mr. NCL) invested in the Seattle Mariners (in 1992), it was not uncommon to have lottery drawings for tickets to M's games. Good seats, a row or two behind the first-base dugout.

**[Limbo]:** How was the section where GPCs would 'rent out' games to play set up? Was there ever a time when you wanted to play a game on the job but couldn't because it was already logged out? Did they auction off outdated stock, or did they just sell it to whoever was there to buy it?

**[TK]:** There were big cabinets full of games for the GPCs to check out and play. I think some of the GPCs had GPC Check-Out as an assignment. I can't remember for sure, but there may have been specific check-out times throughout the day. There were usually enough titles to go around, but yeah, I can recall having to wait to play a game here and there.

I want to say they culled all the old stock once a year and had an in-house used game sale. I think SNES titles were a couple of bucks more than NES titles, but they were all sold cheaply. It was hit or miss - most were just game paks and sleeves, and maybe some had manuals and possibly boxes. Oh, and they all had big white stickers on them (inventory numbers, etc).

**[Limbo]:** What were some of the other projects you were given while working as a GPC?

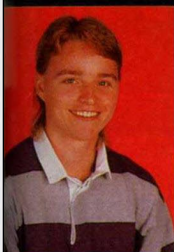
**[TK]:** ...Some GPCs were part of the Evaluation pool, and got to play work-in-progress and pre-release titles. You were always encouraged to take initiative and do FAQs, walkthroughs, and write-ups for each and every game that wasn't already covered.

I was fortunate enough to be selected to become a GPC Trainer for a spell. That was a good assignment because it A) got you off the phones for a decent part of the day and B) you could demonstrate to management that just maybe you had your shit together and might be a candidate for a Lead or Assistant Lead position, etc.

And then there was Team Nintendo... basically some GPCs who could make promotional appearances, do product videos, media interviews, you name it, we did it. I can go into detail on that later.

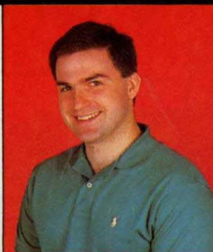
*Tom was gracious enough to answer a lot more questions than I could fit into one interview, so stay tuned for part 2: "Life After the Call Center aka I Don't Want To Answer One More F\*\*\*\*\*G Call Ever Again!"*

**GAME PLAY COUNSELOR PROFILES**



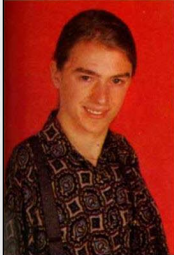
**Name: Tony Clayton**

Became GPC: August, 1989  
 Hobbies: Skiing, Golf, Bass Guitar  
 Best NES Accomplishment: Beat Chaos in Final Fantasy with a Knight and Ninja at Level 26  
 Favorite NES Game: Mega Man II



**Name: Tom Kristensen**

Became GPC: March, 1990  
 Hobbies: Riding Motorcycles, Playing Soccer, Reading, Parachuting, Fishing  
 Best NES Accomplishment: Completed Jackal with one Jeep  
 Favorite NES Game: A tie between Metroid and Final Fantasy



**Name: Josh Shepard**

Became GPC: August, 1989  
 Hobbies: Skateboarding, Art, Music, Climbing, Hiking, Skiing  
 Best NES Accomplishment: Completed Kid Icarus in one life  
 Favorite NES Game: Romance of the Three Kingdoms

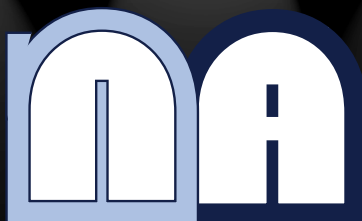


**Name: Caesar Filori**

Became GPC: September, 1989  
 Hobbies: Music, Beating other GPC's at Baseball Stars, Playing Australian Rules Football  
 Best NES Accomplishment: Completed Contra in 15 minutes, in one life, with the Power Glove  
 Favorite NES Game: Mega Man III

**NINTENDOAGE TIMELINE**

Dain says CT is coming soon.	NA server is upgraded again	Site reaches 1500 members	NOFRIENDO is banned ... again	Site updated with new systems in dbase	NA reaches 2000 members	Slew of new moderators: qixmaster, TheFrisbee, xARSEFACEX, Zzap, and Uncletusk.
9/12/08	10/2/08	10/10/08	12/3/08	6/13/08	3/11/09	3/12/09



# Webmaster Spotlight: **DAIN**



## NINTENDOAGE TIMELINE

burnambill333 banned	CT is launched. APRIL FOOLS!	Ultimate Frogger Champion released	Batty's Poll of the Day returns	Site Rules & FAQ officially published	NA Audio/Video chatroom launched	NA Campout Weekend
3/24/09	4/1/09	5/27/09	6/1/09	6/18/09	8/7/09	8/14-16/09

**[Name:]** Dain M. Anderson.

**[Age:]** 36.

**[Location:]** Durham, NC.

**[Occupation:]** Web Application Architect / Database Programmer.

**[Children:]** I have one beautiful, wonderful daughter Jarah.

**[Why did you get into collecting?]**

I think there's always been a part of me I was never willing to leave behind that I truly long for again -- It's like a nagging itch you can't quite reach. I guess I just miss spending wintery days cooped up indoors playing Gradius or Kid Niki with my brothers. The smell of dinner cooking, the pops and snaps coming from the fire next to us, the oohs and ahhs coming from all of us as we play, just paints a picture of nostalgia I dearly miss. I'd give anything to experience that feeling again, even for a day or two. Collecting has been a way for me to partially reconnect to that moment in my youth, and now that I have children, I hope to share with them some new memories.

**[Describe your collection.]** I originally started out collecting only for the NES. , After coming close to a complete set a few years ago, I decided to branch out a bit. I'd heard that the original Gameboy was a tough system to collect for and being someone who enjoys a certain level of punishment, I dove right in. Other than NES and Gameboy, I passively collect for just about every Nintendo platform, when I can find good deals. As CIBs/sealed, I have 500+ DS,

100+ GBC, 300+ GBA, 100+ Wii, 500+ SNES, and a near-complete N64 collection. I haven't started Virtual Boy or Gamecube at all, yet.

**[What are the most prized possessions in your collections?]**

Having rare games is nice, but rare games don't score very highly on my most prized possessions list. I'd have to say my most prized gaming possessions are items I never expected that are very sentimental, such as: the plaque from PSerge and the gang presented to me at the campout; the homemade Princess Peach blanket for Jarah from Bunnyboy; the custom Solomon's Key poster from Tusk; the (fake) gold NWC from Penguin; the pimp-stick from JJAAMMEESSN-NEESS; the countless thoughtful gestures from Dangevin and NGD (way too many to list); the Dana bead art from superNESman; the Tim Tams and Vegemite from Zzap (just to name a few); the thoughtfulness of the homebrewers to include me as someone who helped out; and lastly, and most importantly, the friendships I have with so many of you.

**[What is your best childhood NES memory?]**

In our neighborhood, we were the kings of the console because we had the most games. We had over 40 games in fact, a number no one could touch. The reason we had so many games, however, is something every parent would have nightmares over. As the story goes, I befriended (read: heckled into submission) a guy named Scott that used to work at Kay-Bee Toys in the Westminster Mall. One day he asked to call me (wow, really?!) for help through the second quest of LoZ; in

return, he said he'd hook me up with a free game. Seriously. So I walked into his store the day after our phone call and he asked me to point out the game I'd like. For whatever reason, I chose Tiger-Heli. He put it in a bag, handed it to me and told me to have a nice day. Seriously! So let's just say that I helped him out on another 30-40 more quests after that! For whatever reason, my mother never noticed, even when we started a cottage industry renting out our games to the neighborhood kids, she was more impressed with our business savvy than how we got the goods in the first place.

**[What is your favorite thing about NintendoAGE?]**

The thing that I enjoy the most and also the thing that I'm most surprised about is the diversity of our member base. When I say diversity, I mean gaming diversity -- we have collectors, gamers, homebrewers, releasers, artists, etc, and then just random people that enjoy talking with others about anything and everything. You can shift from being a collector to a gamer and still fit in, and that's a great thing that I think a lot of places have trouble capturing. You can go from not knowing anything about programming to making your own NES game. Basically, you can create your own place and make your own history in our community. I really enjoy seeing more members branch out.

**[What's one thing you'd like to share with everyone at NintendoAGE that most would not know about you?]**

Up until 2 years ago, I was considered legally deaf. When I was younger, I found out about it

NINTENDOAGE TIMELINE

Collection Tool mistakenly linked to NA. Dain says coming soon!

Braveheart69 revealed to the masses at Portland Game Expo

Super NES PowerPak Released

Collection Tool actually released. For real.

eZine comes out on time.

9/18/09

9/21/09

11/4/09

11/25/09

??/??/??

the hard way while being denied entrance as a finalist to the US Coast Guard Academy. The doctors at that time thought I needed a cochlear implant, but I hesitated because of the 70% success rate (which to me seemed a little low to risk permanent hearing loss). So... I waited. It wasn't until 2 years ago that it got so bad I couldn't even hold a normal conversation most of the time. With a kid on the way, I knew it was time to get it checked out again. Thankfully this time around the doctors diagnosed it as Stapedial Otosclerosis, a degenerative disease that is at least operable. So now I have two matching titanium implants that have opened my world up considerably.

**[What are your top 5 Nintendo NES games?]** If you asked me to list the 5 greatest games ever made for the NES, I'd probably start off with The Legend of Zelda or Super Mario Bros., but I find that most of my favorite games are ones I play(ed) all the time with friends and family:

1. Solomon's Key (shocker!)
2. Pro Wrestling
3. Super Spike V'Ball
4. Ikari Warriors
5. Track & Field

**[What's the most disappointing NES game you ever played?]** For me, there's no question as to the most disappointing NES games: Dragon's Lair. As a kid brother, I only got to watch my oldest brother and his friends play this in the arcade (there were very long lines to play that game!). When it came time for my turn on the NES, I was disappointed that it wasn't like the arcade

version (I didn't know any better at the time). I did manage to get my turn years later when it was released as a DVD-controlled game!

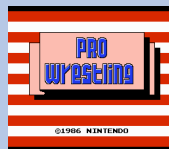
**[Any final comments?]** I take great pride in being the webmaster of NintendoAge, and how its grown so quickly. I also want to say that it's very personal to me (and sometimes

that gets me in trouble!). I feel like it's my extended family, and I try to take care of it and the people within it like they're members of my own family. That may sound corny (gag), but it's true, and I think anyone who truly knows me also knows how deeply I care about the community at NA and that I'd give the shirt off my back for anyone who needed it.



**DAIN's TOP 5 RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Solomon's Key, 2. Pro Wrestling,
3. Super Spike V'Ball,
4. Ikari Warriors, 5. Track & Field





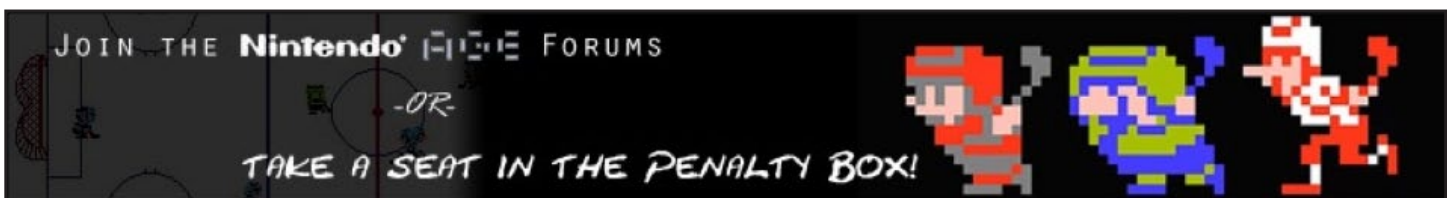
December 2009

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720	4	0	Baseball Simulator 1.000	5	0	Bugs Bunny Birthday Blowout	5	-1
1942	7	-1	Baseball Stars	8	0	Bugs Bunny Crazy Castle	7	0
1943	7	0	Baseball Stars 2	14	+1	Bump 'N Jump	4	-1
10 Yard Fight	4	0	Bases Loaded	3	0	Burai Fighter	5	0
3-D World Runner	4	0	Bases Loaded 2	4	-1	Burgertime	8	0
8 Eyes	5	-1	Bases Loaded 3	4	0	Cabal	4	0
Abadox	5	0	Bases Loaded 4	12	+1	Caesar's Palace	3	0
Action 52	92	+2	Batman	6	0	California Games	6	0
AD&D Dragonstrike	13	0	Batman Return of the Joker	10	0	Caltron 6 in 1	145	+7
AD&D Heroes of the Lance	6	0	Batman Returns	7	+1	Captain America	8	-1
AD&D Hillsfar	19	0	Battle Chess	4	0	Captain Comic	7	-1
AD&D Pool of Radiance	14	+2	Battle of Olympus	6	0	Captain Planet	7	0
Addams Family	6	0	Battleship	7	0	Captain Skyhawk	4	0
Adventure Island	8	0	Battletank	5	+1	Casino Kid	4	-1
Adventure Island 2	11	0	Battletoads	11	0	Casino Kid 2	20	+2
Adventure Island 3	19	0	Battletoads & Double Dragon	22	+1	Castelian	6	-1
After Burner	5	0	Bayou Billy	4	0	Castle of Deceit	47	0
Air Fortress	3	0	Bee 52	7	-1	Castle of Dragon	4	-1
Airwolf	4	0	Beetlejuice	7	0	Castlequest	4	0
Al Unser Jr's Turbo Racing	3	-1	Best of the Best	14	-1	Castlevania	10	+1
Alfred Chicken	20	0	Bible Adventures	9	0	Castlevania 2	6	0
Alien 3	8	+2	Bible Buffet	28	+3	Castlevania 3	11	0
Alien Syndrome	5	+1	Big Bird's Hide & Speak	4	0	Caveman Games	7	0
All Pro Basketball	4	0	Big Foot	6	+1	Challenge of the Dragon	35	+1
Alpha Mission	3	-1	Big Nose Freaks Out	10	0	Championship Bowling	4	0
Amagon	5	+1	Big Nose Freaks Out (Aladdin)	18	-2	Championship Pool	9	+2
American Gladiators	6	+1	Big Nose the Caveman	9	+1	Cheetahmen 2	800	+11
Anticipation	3	-1	Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure	5	0	Chessmaster	4	-1
Arch Rivals	4	0	Bill Elliot's NASCAR Challenge	5	0	Chiller	23	-4
Archon	5	-1	Bionic Commando	7	0	Chip N' Dale Rescue Rangers	8	0
Arkanoid	10	+1	Black Bass	5	0	Chip N' Dale Rescue Rangers 2	47	-2
Arkista's Ring	6	-2	Blackjack	20	-5	Chubby Cherub	15	+1
Astyanax	3	-1	Blades of Steel	4	0	Circus Caper	4	0
Athena	4	0	Blaster Master	5	0	City Connection	4	0
Athletic World	5	0	Blue Marlin	9	0	Clash at Demonhead	4	0
Attack of the Killer Tomatoes	7	-1	Blues Brothers	9	-2	Classic Concentration	7	0
Baby Boomer	23	-3	Bo Jackson Baseball	5	0	Cliffhanger	13	+1
Back to the Future	4	0	Bomberman	10	+1	Clu Clu Land	6	0
Back to the Future 2 & 3	6	0	Bomberman 2	24	-1	Cobra Command	4	0
Bad Dudes	5	0	Bonk's Adventure	45	-13	Cobra Triangle	4	0
Bad News Baseball	6	+1	Boulder Dash	8	+1	Codename: Viper	3	-1
Bad Street Brawler	4	0	Boy and His Blob, A	6	0	Color A Dinosaur	15	0
Balloon Fight	8	0	Break Time	6	0	Commando	4	0
Bandit Kings of Ancient China	28	+2	Breakthru	3	0	Conan	13	+1
Barbie	6	+1	Bubble Bath Babes	455	-145	Conflict	10	+3
Bard's Tale	7	0	Bubble Bobble	13	0	Conquest of the Crystal Palace	5	0
Base Wars	6	0	Bubble Bobble 2	106	0	Contra	16	0
Baseball	4	0	Bucky O'Hare	12	-1	Contra Force	30	-1



Cool World	11	+1	Dragon Warrior 2	18	0	Gauntlet (unlicensed)	5	0
Cowboy Kid	20	-1	Dragon Warrior 3	26	-1	Gauntlet 2	5	0
Crash a/t Boys Street Challenge	12	+1	Dragon Warrior 4	33	-2	Gemfire	19	-1
Crash Dummies, Incredible	9	0	Dragon's Lair	7	-1	Genghis Kahn	10	+1
Crystal Mines	13	-1	Duck Hunt	4	0	George Foreman KO Boxing	3	-2
Crystalis	9	0	Duck Tales	9	0	Ghost Lion	10	-3
Cyberball	4	0	Duck Tales 2	39	+1	Ghostbusters	8	0
Cybernoid	3	0	Dudes with Attitude	7	+2	Ghostbusters 2	6	0
Dance Aerobics	5	0	Dungeon Magic	4	-1	Ghosts 'N Goblins	6	0
Danny Sullivan's Indy Heat	10	+2	Dusty Diamond's All Star Softball	21	-1	Ghoul School	9	0
Darkman	5	0	Dyno Warz	3	0	Gilligan's Island	7	0
Darkwing Duck	10	0	Elevator Action	5	0	Goal!	3	-1
Dash Galaxy	4	0	Eliminator Boat Duel	7	+1	Goal! 2	16	+6
DayDreamin' Davey	4	-2	Empire Strikes Back	11	-1	Godzilla	6	+1
Days of Thunder	4	0	Everet/Lendel Top Player's Tennis	3	-1	Godzilla 2	22	-1
Deadly Towers	4	-1	Excitebike	6	-1	Gold Medal Challenge	8	-1
Death Race	17	-4	Exodus	7	+1	Golf	3	-1
Deathbots	11	+2	F-117a Stealth	5	0	Golf Challenge Pebble Beach	3	-1



Defender 2	3	-1	F-15 City War	5	0	Golf Grand Slam	5	0
Defender of the Crown	4	0	F-15 Strike Eagle	5	0	Golgo 13: Top Secret Episode	4	0
Defenders of Dynatron City	6	-2	Family Feud	7	-3	Goonies 2	4	0
Déjà Vu	5	0	Fantastic Adv. Dizzy (Aladdin)	23	+10	Gotcha!	4	0
Demon Sword	4	0	Fantastic Adventures of Dizzy	8	0	Gradius	5	-1
Desert Commander	4	0	Fantasy Zone	7	-1	Great Waldo Search	8	0
Destination Earthstar	3	0	Faria	20	-5	Greg Norman's Golf Power	6	0
Destiny of an Emperor	9	-1	Faxanadu	5	0	Gremlins 2	6	0
Dick Tracy	3	-1	Felix the Cat	11	0	Guardian Legend	5	0
Die Hard	22	-1	Ferrari Grand Prix	4	-1	Guerilla War	5	0
Dig Dug 2	5	0	Fester's Quest	3	0	Gumshoe	5	0
Digger T. Rock	5	0	Final Fantasy	12	-1	Gun Nac	23	-2
Dino Riki	3	-1	Fire and Ice	36	+2	Gunsmoke	8	0
Dirty Harry	4	-1	Fire Hawk	6	0	Gyromite	4	0
Disney Adventure Magic Kingdom	5	0	Fisher Price Firehouse Rescue	6	+1	Gyruss	4	0
Dizzy the Adventurer (Aladdin)	20	0	Fisher Price I Can Remember	4	0	Harlem Globetrotters	4	-1
Donkey Kong	13	0	Fisher Price Perfect Fit	4	0	Hatris	10	-1
Donkey Kong 3	9	+1	Fist of the North Star	5	0	Heavy Barrel	4	0
Donkey Kong Classics	11	0	Flight of the Intruder	6	0	Heavy Shreddin'	4	0
Donkey Kong Jr.	9	0	Flintstones	8	-1	High Speed	5	0
Donkey Kong Jr. Math	12	0	Flintstones 2 Surprise Dino Peak	155	-17	Hogan's Alley	5	0
Double Dare	6	0	Flying Dragon	4	0	Hollywood Squares	4	0
Double Dragon	8	0	Flying Warriors	5	0	Home Alone	5	-1
Double Dragon 2	7	0	Formula One: Built to Win	8	+1	Home Alone 2	4	0
Double Dragon 3	9	0	Frankenstein	10	0	Hook	5	+1
Double Dribble	3	-1	Freedom Force	5	0	Hoops	3	-1
Double Strike	6	+1	Friday the 13th	5	0	Hot Slots	650	0
Dr. Chaos	4	0	Fun House	5	0	Hudson Hawk	5	0
Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde	4	0	G.I. Joe: A Real American Hero	19	+1	Hunt for Red October	4	0
Dr. Mario	6	0	G.I. Joe: Atlantis Factor	13	-2	Hydlide	4	-1
Dracula	12	-1	Galactic Crusader	18	-8	Ice Climber	8	0
Dragon Fighter	12	0	Galaga	7	0	Ice Hockey	3	-1
Dragon Power	4	0	Galaxy 5000	10	0	Ikari Warriors	5	0
Dragon Spirit	3	-1	Gargoyles Quest 2	11	+1	Ikari Warriors 2	5	0
Dragon Warrior	5	0	Gauntlet (licensed)	4	-1	Ikari Warriors 3	10	+3

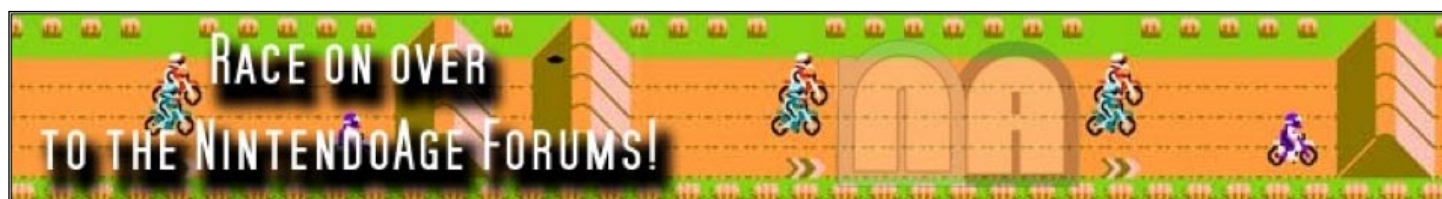




Image Fight	5	0	Legacy of the Wizard	4	0	Micro Machines (Aladdin)	13	0
Immortal	5	0	Legend of Kage	4	0	MIG-29	5	0
Impossible Mission 2 (AVE)	11	0	Legend of Zelda	11	0	Might & Magic	22	0
Impossible Mission 2 (SEI)	7	-5	Legendary Wings	4	-1	Mighty Bombjack	4	0
Indiana Jones: Crusade (Taito)	10	-4	Legends of the Diamond	6	0	Mighty Final Fight	21	-2
Indiana Jones: Crusade (UBI)	32	0	Lemmings	16	0	Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!!	14	-1
Indiana Jones: Temple (Mindscop)	4	-1	L'Empereur	24	+1	Millipede	5	0
Indiana Jones: Temple (Tengen)	6	0	Lethal Weapon	10	+1	Milon's Secret Castle	4	-1
Infiltrator	3	-1	Life Force	6	0	Miracle Piano System	7	-2
Iron Tank	4	0	Linus Spacehead	22	+2	Mission Cobra	25	+9
Ironsword: Wizards & Warriors 2	4	0	Linus Spacehead (Aladdin)	28	+17	Mission: Impossible	3	-1
Isolated Warrior	6	0	Little League Baseball	8	0	Monopoly	5	0
Ivan Stewart's Super Off Road	7	0	Little Mermaid	7	0	Monster in My Pocket	9	+1
Jack Nicklaus' 18 Holes of Golf	3	-1	Little Nemo	6	0	Monster Party	4	0
Jackal	4	0	Little Ninja Brothers	11	-3	Monster Truck Rally	8	+1
Jackie Chan's Action Kung Fu	13	+2	Little Samson	84	-3	Moon Ranger	38	-14
James Bond Jr.	9	+1	Lode Runner	5	-1	Motor City Patrol	16	+3
Jaws	5	0	Lolo	6	-1	Ms Pac-man (Namco licensed)	15	0
Jeopardy!	3	-1	Lolo 2	14	-2	Ms Pac-man (Tengen unlicensed)	13	+1
Jeopardy! 25th Anniversary	4	0	Lolo 3	22	+1	MULE	12	-2
Jeopardy! Junior	4	0	Lone Ranger	8	-1	Muppet Adventure	5	+1
Jeopardy!, Super	4	0	Loopz	4	0	MUSCLE	4	-1
Jetsons	20	-2	Low G Man	3	0	Mutant Virus	5	0
Jimmy Connors Tennis	19	+1	Lunar Pool	4	0	Myriad 6 in 1	985	0
Joe and Mac	6	0	Mach Rider	4	0	Mystery Quest	4	0
John Elway's Quarterback	3	0	Mad Max	5	0	NARC	4	0
Jordan vs. Bird: One on One	4	0	Mafat Conspiracy	4	0	NES Open Golf	4	0
Joshua	12	-2	Magic Darts	5	0	NFL Football	4	0
Journey to Silius	7	+1	Magic Johnson's Fast Break	3	0	Nigel Mansell's World Ch.Racing	4	-1
Joust	4	0	Magic of Scheherazade	6	0	Nightmare on Elm Street	14	+1
Jungle Book	9	-1	Magician	10	-2	Nightshade	6	0
Jurassic Park	5	0	Magmax	4	0	Ninja Crusaders	7	+1
Kabuki Quantum Fighter	4	0	Major League Baseball	3	0	Ninja Gaiden	7	+1
Karate Champ	4	-1	Maniac Mansion	9	-1	Ninja Gaiden 2	6	0
Karate Kid	4	0	Mappyland	6	0	Ninja Gaiden 3	18	0
Karnov	5	0	Marble Madness	5	0	Ninja Kid	5	0
Kick Master	7	+1	Mario Brothers	12	0	Nobunaga's Ambition	7	0
Kickle Cubicle	9	0	Mario Is Missing	14	0	Nobunaga's Ambition 2	14	-3
Kid Icarus	12	0	Mario's Time Machine	26	-5	North and South	15	0
Kid Klown	19	+1	Master Chu and the Drunkard Hu	14	-3	Operation Secret Storm	29	-3
Kid Kool	5	0	Maxi 15	37	-3	Operation Wolf	4	0
Kid Niki	5	0	MC Kids	9	0	ORB-3D	3	0
King Neptune's Adventure	55	+7	Mechanized Attack	9	0	Othello	4	0
King of Kings	6	0	Mega Man	18	-1	Overlord	8	-1
King's Knight	4	0	Mega Man 2	11	0	Pac-Man (Namco)	11	-1
Kings of the Beach	4	0	Mega Man 3	9	0	Pac-Man Tengen licensed	7	-1
King's Quest 5	11	-1	Mega Man 4	13	0	Pac-Man Tengen unlicensed	8	0
Kirby's Adventure	10	+1	Mega Man 5	26	+1	Pac-Mania	11	0
Kiwi Kraze	7	0	Mega Man 6	17	+1	Palamedes	4	0
Klash Ball	6	0	Menace Beach	39	-9	Panic Restaurant	72	-1
Klax	5	0	Mendel Palace	5	0	Paperboy	9	0
Knight Rider	4	0	Mermaids of Atlantis	24	0	Paperboy 2	11	-1
Krazy Kreatures	8	+1	Metal Fighter	10	0	Peek A Boo Poker	681	0
Krion Conquest	7	0	Metal Gear	7	+1	Pestermator	22	-3
Krusty's Fun House	5	-1	Metal Mech	4	-1	Peter Pan and the Pirates	5	-1
Kung Fu	5	0	Metal Storm	17	0	Phantom Fighter	5	+1
Kung Fu Heroes	4	+1	Metroid	8	0	Pictionary	4	0
Laser Invasion	6	0	Michael Andretti's World GP	4	-1	Pinball	4	0
Last Action Hero	4	-2	Mickey Adventure in Numberland	13	-2	Pinball Quest	4	0
Last Ninja	7	-1	Mickey Mousecapade	4	0	Pinbot	3	-1
Last Starfighter	6	+1	Mickey Safari in Letterland	8	0	Pipe Dream	5	0
Lee Trevino's Fighting Golf	3	0	Micro Machines	15	+2	Pirates!	10	+1



Platoon	3	-1	RoadBlasters	4	0	Smash TV	6	0
Play Action Football	3	0	Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves	4	0	Snake Rattle 'N Roll	5	0
Popeye	7	-1	Robocop	3	0	Snake's Revenge	7	-1
POW	5	0	Robocop 2	6	0	Snoopy's Silly Sports	6	0
Power Blade	7	+1	Robocop 3	11	+1	Snow Brothers	55	+3
Power Blade 2	49	+6	Robodemons	18	+4	Soccer	5	0
Power Punch 2	10	-2	RoboWarrior	4	0	Solar Jetman	4	+1
P'radikus Conflict	28	-5	Rock N' Ball	3	-1	Solitaire	25	+4
Predator	5	0	Rocket Ranger	4	0	Solomon's Key	5	0
Prince of Persia	11	+2	Rocketeer	4	0	Solstice	4	0
Princess Tomato	25	0	Rockin' Kats	13	+1	Space Shuttle	6	0
Pro Sport Hockey	20	0	Rocky and Bullwinkle	5	0	Spelunker	5	0
Pro Wrestling	4	0	Roger Clemens Baseball	3	0	Spider-Man: Sinister Six	7	+1
Pugsley's Scavenger Hunt	11	-2	Rollerball	4	0	Spiritual Warfare	9	0
Punch-Out!!	10	0	Rollerblade Racer	5	0	Spot	4	0
Punisher	7	0	Rollergames	3	-1	Spy Hunter	4	0
Puss 'N Boots	7	0	Rolling Thunder	4	0	Spy vs. Spy	6	+1
Puzzle	9	+1	Romance o/t Three Kingdoms	9	0	Spoon	13	0



Puzznic	7	-1	Romance o/t Three Kingdoms 2	20	-1	Stack Up	21	+1
Pyramid	8	-1	Roundball	4	0	Stadium Events	1727	+523
Q*Bert	7	+1	Rush N' Attack	4	0	Stanley	11	+4
Qix	17	0	Rygar	6	0	Star Force	5	0
Quattro Adventure	6	0	SCAT	12	-1	Star Soldier	3	0
Quattro Adventure Aladdin	15	0	Secret Scout	68	0	Star Trek: 25th Anniversary	8	+1
Quattro Arcade	11	+2	Section Z	3	0	Star Trek: The Next Generation	9	0
Quattro Sports	5	0	Seicross	3	-1	Star Voyager	3	-1
Quattro Sports Aladdin	13	-1	Sesame Street 1-2-3	4	0	Star Wars	8	-1
R.B.I. Baseball 2	7	0	Sesame Street 1-2-3/A-B-C	6	0	Starship Hector	4	0
R.B.I. Baseball 3	7	-2	Sesame Street A-B-C	4	0	StarTropics	4	-1
R.B.I. Baseball licensed	6	+1	Sesame Street Countdown	4	-1	Stealth	3	0
R.B.I. Baseball unlicensed	9	+1	Shadow of the Ninja	8	0	Stinger	5	+1
R.C. Pro-Am Racing	5	0	Shadowgate	5	0	Street Cop	10	-3
R.C. Pro-Am Racing 2	26	-2	Shatterhand	7	0	Street Fighter 2010	4	0
Race America, Alex DeMeo's	8	-6	Shingen the Ruler	4	-1	Strider	4	0
Racket Attack	3	0	Shinobi	7	0	Stunt Kids	18	+2
Rad Gravity	6	0	Shockwave	8	0	Sunday Funday	42	-8
Rad Racer	4	0	Shooting Range	8	+1	Super C	12	0
Rad Racer 2	4	0	Short Order/Eggsplode	6	-2	Super Cars	10	+1
Rad Racket	22	-6	Side Pocket	4	0	Super Dodge Ball	11	0
Raid 2020	10	+2	Silent Assault	20	+11	Super Glove Ball	3	0
Raid on Bungeling Bay	4	-1	Silent Service	3	-1	Super Mario Brothers	5	-1
Rainbow Islands	17	-2	Silk Worm	7	+1	Super Mario Brothers 2	12	0
Rally Bike	5	0	Silver Surfer	7	+1	Super Mario Brothers 3	11	0
Rambo	4	0	Simpsons: Bart vs. The World	6	0	Super Mario/Duck Hunt	6	0
Rampage	6	0	Simpsons: Radioactive Man	8	0	Super Mario/Duck Hunt/WCTM	5	0
Rampart	7	+1	Simpsons: Space Mutants	6	0	Super Pitfall	6	+1
Remote Control, MTV's	3	0	Skate or Die	4	0	Super Spike V'Ball	4	0
Ren and Stimpy: Buckaroos	9	0	Skate or Die 2	4	0	Super Spike V'Ball/World Cup	4	-1
Renegade	4	0	Ski or Die	4	0	Super Sprint	4	0
Rescue: Embassy Mission	3	0	Skull and Crossbones	6	+1	Super Spy Hunter	7	-1
Ring King	5	0	Sky Shark	4	0	Super Team Games	4	-1
River City Ransom	14	-1	Skykid	5	0	Superman	8	-1
Road Runner	6	0	Slalom	4	0	Swamp Thing	11	-1



Sword Master	13	-3	Toobin'	7	0	Wheel of Fortune: Family Edition	4	0
Swords & Serpents	4	0	Top Gun	3	-1	Wheel of Fortune: Junior Edition	4	0
T&C Surf Design	4	0	Top Gun 2	3	0	Wheel of Fortune: Vanna White	4	0
T&C Surf Design 2 Thrillas Surfari	9	0	Total Recall	4	0	Where in Time/Carmen Sandiego	5	0
Taboo: The Sixth Sense	4	0	Totally Rad	4	0	Where's Waldo?	5	0
Tag Team Wrestling	3	0	Touchdown Fever	4	0	Who Framed Roger Rabbit?	5	0
Tagin' Dragon	19	+5	Toxic Crusader	9	0	Whomp 'Em	7	0
Talespin	5	0	Track and Field	5	-1	Widget	10	-1
Target: Renegade	4	0	Track and Field 2	3	-1	Wild Gunman	10	0
Tecmo Baseball	3	0	Treasure Master	5	0	Willow	4	0
Tecmo Bowl	6	0	Trick Shooting	5	0	Win, Lose or Draw	3	-1
Tecmo Cup Soccer	15	-1	Trog	5	0	Winter Games	4	+1
Tecmo NBA Basketball	5	0	Trojan	3	-1	Wizardry	6	0
Tecmo Super Bowl	12	0	Trolls on Treasure Island	11	0	Wizardry 2: Knight of Diamonds	16	+1
Tecmo World Wrestling	4	0	Twin Cobra	4	0	Wizards & Warriors	4	0
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	5	0	Twin Eagle	4	0	Wizards & Warriors 3	12	+1
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2	9	0	Ultima: Exodus	6	0	Wolverine	7	0
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 3	14	0	Ultima: Quest of the Avatar	9	0	World Champ	7	-2
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles TF	33	+3	Ultima: Warriors of Destiny	22	+4	World Class Track Meet	4	0
Tennis	4	0	Ultimate Air Combat	8	-5	World Cup Soccer	5	+1
Terminator	6	0	Ultimate Basketball	3	0	World Games	5	0
Terminator 2: Judgement Day	4	0	Ultimate League Soccer	22	+1	Wrath of the Black Manta	3	0
Terra Cresta	7	+1	Ultimate Stuntman	6	+1	Wrecking Crew	7	0
Tetris (Nintendo licensed)	7	0	Uncharted Waters	15	-1	WURM	5	-1
Tetris (Tengen unlicensed)	31	0	Uninvited	18	+2	WWF King of the Ring	8	0
Tetris 2	6	0	Untouchables	7	0	WWF Steel Cage	4	0
Three Stooges	5	-1	Urban Champion	4	0	WWF Wrestlemania	3	0
Thunder and Lightning	8	0	Vegas Dream	3	0	WWF Wrestlemania Challenge	4	0
Thunderbirds	4	0	Venice Beach Volleyball	6	-1	Xenophobe	4	+1
Thundercade	4	0	Vice: Project Doom	6	-1	Xevious	4	0
Tiger Heli	4	0	Videomation	4	0	Xexyz	4	0
Tiles of Fate	9	+2	Vindicators	4	+1	X-Men	6	0
Time Lord	3	0	Volleyball	4	0	Yo! Noid	6	-1
Times of Lore	9	0	Wacky Races	21	-4	Yoshi	5	0
Tiny Toon Adventures	7	0	Wall Street Kid	3	-1	Yoshi's Cookie	5	0
Tiny Toon Adventures 2	8	0	Wally Bear and the No! Gang	11	-2	Young Indiana Jones	14	-2
Tiny Toon Cartoon Workshop	7	+1	Wario's Woods	11	-1	Zanac	5	0
To The Earth	4	0	Wayne Gretzky Hockey	4	-1	Zelda 2: The Adventure of Link	9	0
Toki	11	0	Wayne's World	30	-7	Zen Intergalactic Ninja	8	-1
Tom and Jerry	8	0	WCW: World Champ. Wrestling	5	-1	Zoda's Revenge: StarTropics 2	5	-1
Tom Sawyer	4	0	Werewolf	4	0	Zombie Nation	26	-5
Tombs and Treasure	10	0	Wheel of Fortune	4	0			



## Don't do it!

This list has been compiled objectively using only information gathered from eBay listings for the last three months. As such, it is presented as a guide by which one may compare game values, but of course individual transactions will vary. Figures are for loose cartridges, and include an adjustment added to the closing price to represent average 'padded' shipping costs that most eBay sellers charge. This data is copyright NintendoAGE.com and may not be reproduced without permission except for personal use.





## BUNDLE UP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

> **DENIZ KAHN** *supernesman*

Wait! Don't start selling just yet! Wait a few more days and sell during the Christmas rush and bundle. It's a merry time to resell!

During Christmas, the prices of games on eBay go up significantly. Why, you ask? Well there are a number of reasons. Sometimes old-school gamers get nostalgic because of recent big Xmas-release games (such as the new Super Mario that just came out for the Wii, but in the past also licenses like Metroid and Donkey Kong) and want to relive the long-lost games of their childhood. They may buy them outright, or put them on a wish list. Either way, the eventual buyer likely will not research prices more than superficially, being happy to just find the right lot with specific games, conveniently shipped to their home. This kind of seasonal buyer loves our liquidated and bundled commons more than any collector would the rest of the year.

You may be wondering what's the most profitable or sure-fire resale-fodder. When reselling, you want to keep a few things in mind. Make sure you don't confuse "rare" with "popular." Myriad, Caltron, and Stadium Events all fall under the "rare" category. They are only sought after because of their rarity, not because they are good/fun games. Collectors buy these year-round, but may actually have LESS money to invest in them at Christmastime, making it a risky season to auction rare games! The three Super Mario Bros games, Contra, Mike Tyson's Punch-Out, Bubble Bobble and the Mega Man series fall under the "popular" cate-

gory, and are all noteworthy resale-fodder because they're so common, yet yield good returns. These are the ones you want to sell during the holiday season since they are the ones that people reminisce about and want to play; the games they had when they were kids. You can go about selling these games in 2 different ways: bundles, or individually.

To maximize your profit, you want to bundle popular games and the system (if you have extras!) altogether. For example, selling Mario 1, 2, and 3 individually won't sell for as much as all three together, because those Christmas buyers want to spend their money on all three, and will actually drop more on the bundle than if they were buying all three individually because the bundle gives them all the games they are looking for. For instance, the average basic toaster system will only sell for \$50 with only SMB/DH, whereas if you simply bundle SMB2 and SMB3 with it, you'll net \$80 or more. SMB 2 & 3 only sell for about \$10 apiece!

Some other popular titles that you may want to think about bundling or selling during Christmas are: Contra and Super Contra, Super Mario Bros 1, 2 and 3, Mega Man 1-6, Zelda 1 and 2, Castlevania 1, 2, and 3, and also other bundles of popular games that wouldn't necessarily sell so well by themselves, like Tetris, Tetris 2, Dragon Warrior I and Metroid. You can even throw in a Dr. Mario with your Mario 1, 2, 3 bundle!

Another big seller during Christmas is the SNES. The SNES has lots of popular titles that sell very well, and would be great to bundle together with the system. For example, instead of selling a SNES system + Super Mario World, try selling it with Super Mario World, Zelda, Donkey Kong Country, and Super Mario All-Stars. This is a great package that old gamers would look for. You can expect in the neighborhood of \$100 (or more if there's a bid war!) on a lot of this caliber. And it's important to note that if you create a real "gamer's lot" that is perceivably better than substitutes being auctioned off, you greatly increase the likelihood that there WILL be a



bid war. All it takes is two people who think they've found the perfect gift that has all the games on that wish list!

Don't be afraid to dig into your personal collection for a few treasures to let go, either. After hoarding cool vintage and promo items that you pick up as you're working on eBay (hey, everyone shops where they work!), you might take a second look at the pile of old relics and realize that you have no interest in them anymore! How can you tell? You may want to ask yourself a few questions first: Have you forgotten you even owned it? When you bought it, were you in an... altered state of mind? Are you hoarding it JUST because it's valuable, not particularly because you like it? Well, if you have them stored in a bin or tucked away in the closet, you probably aren't having fun in collecting them anymore. It's a great time to let them go, and spend that money on something that WILL satisfy you.

Signs, rare posters, promotional toys, apparel and other large and showy items all make great gifts, and when listed properly in the right time frame, will really attract the bidders. Contrary to the bundling mindset, focusing on just one game or character might yield huge Christmas rewards. What about a cheap Playchoice cabinet-header, bundled with an old Nintendo Power poster and the matching NES game? How about some old opened toys or trading cards that feature the character, along with a boxed copy of the selfsame 8-bit game? There really are some kids (young and old!) that just want "Everything Metroid!" this Xmas, and if you're there to supply, the holiday shoppers demand.

Be creative, and post your best bundles in the discussion thread! Let's watch them together and see if the "SC Effect" (Santa Claus, come on!) is a reality!



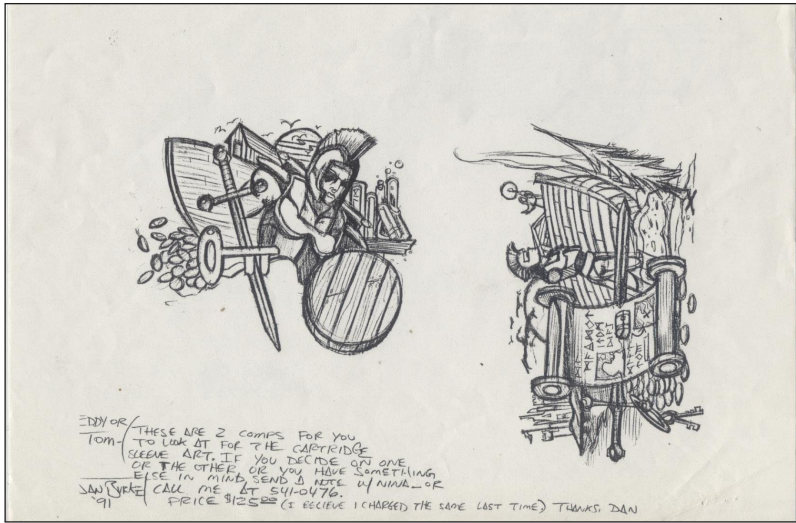
# NGD SHOWERS US WITH MORE COLOR DREAMS CHEER



> **JASON SMITH** *nationalgame depot*

As most of you know I have piles and piles of Wisdom Tree / Color Dreams items that I bought out directly from the company. I have original art, the company signs, slides, employee handbooks, production notes, and loads of other random crap. I few months ago I got in another random lot of stuff and I thought I would share a little bit of the unseen stuff with my NA brethren.

Below is the original concept artwork for the Wisdom Tree dust sleeves. I included a pic of an actual dust sleeve for reference. Also notice the signatures at the top right corner. The company required that 3 of the 5 shareholders sign off before a item was approved. There is also a random neat little sticker than I found that I have never seen before in the scan.



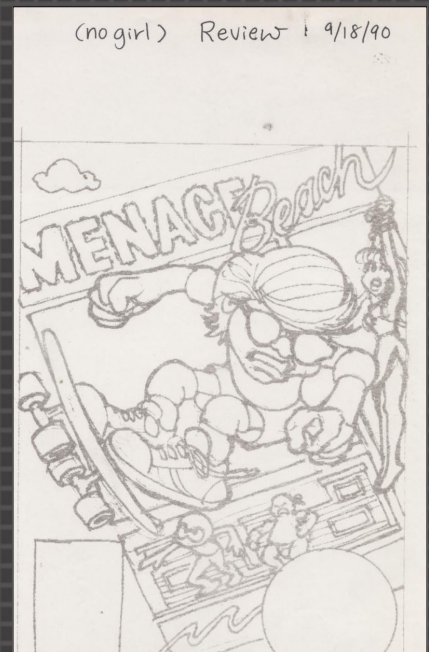
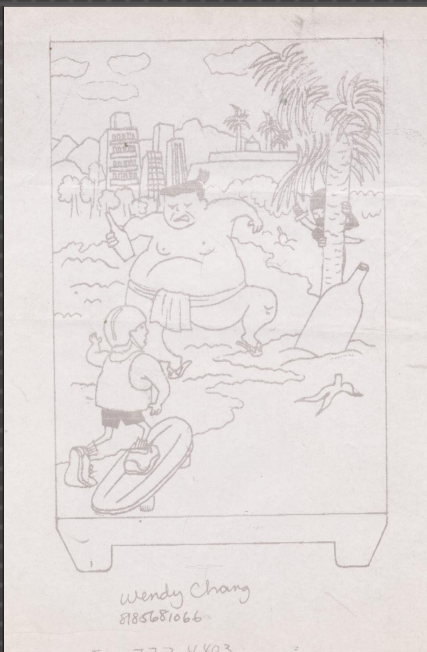
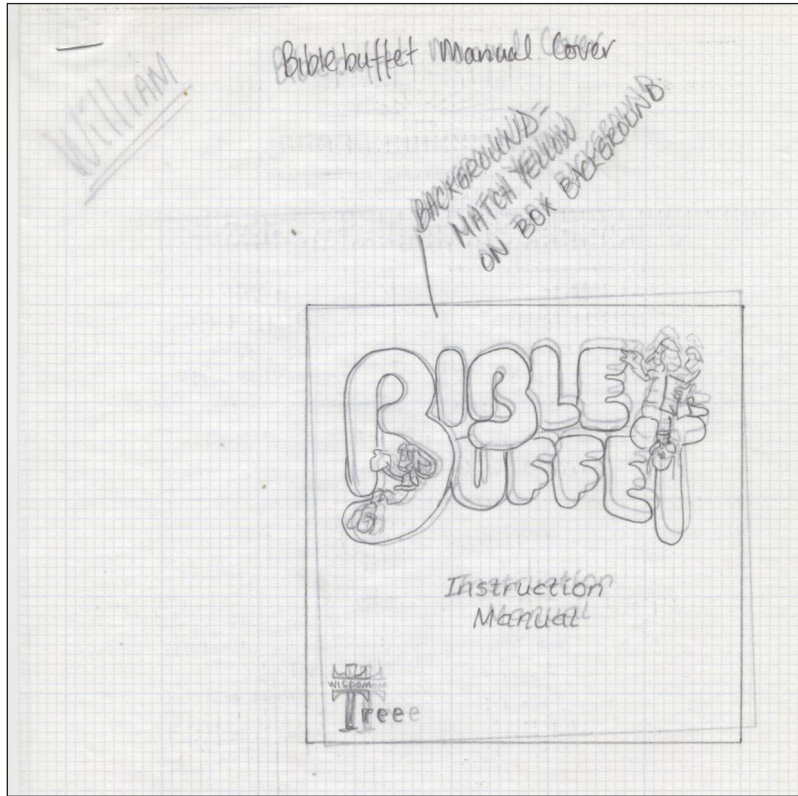
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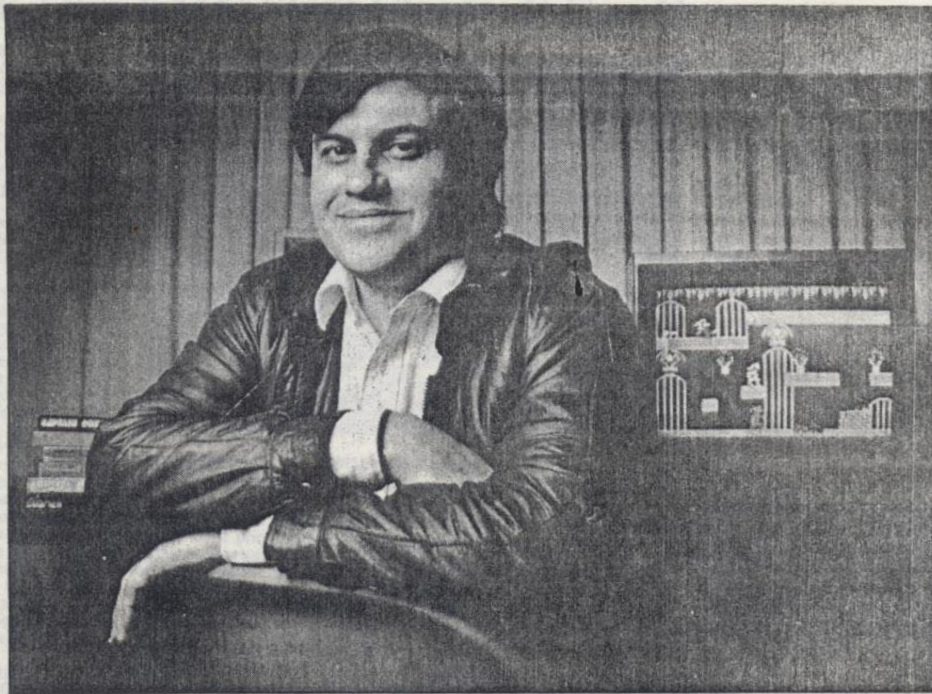
I also discovered that I have 2 more unused concept ideas for the dust sleeves that the company decided not to use (see previous page - right). The image also shows that the original artist was paid \$150 bucks for the artwork, which to me is super cool cause I love the whole history aspect of how stuff fell into place.

I thought this was also a neat little piece of history. To the right is the original manual cover drawing for the Bible Buffet manual. It was drawn on graph paper and had trace paper underneath it to make copies for small editing.

Also in the latest batch of goodness I discovered that I have 4 new and unseen concept artworks for Menace Beach. These don't look to be the originals but ones copies on trace paper from the originals. I just thought they were way to cool to now share, especially since no one has seen them in 20+ years. I personally like the ones with Pserge the sumo wrestler!

Last but not least I received an old newspaper article from years ago. It was wrote about Dan Lawson (one of the founders of Color Dreams) and his fight against Nintendo over the lockout chip protection. I really enjoyed the article and thought you guys would as well. Check it out on the next page.





KARI RENE HALL / Los Angeles Times

Color Dreams founder Daniel Lawton with one of his company's Nintendo-compatible video games called "Robodemon."

## Brea Firm Won't Give Up on Nintendo

■ **Patent Fight:** Color Dreams founder says he can now compete legally with Japanese company in marketing video game.

By JONATHAN WEBER  
TIMES STAFF WRITER

BREA—A small local company's daring effort to loosen Nintendo of America's chokehold on the video game industry received at least a temporary setback this week when a federal court ruled that retailers can be held liable if they carry products that infringe on Nintendo patents.

Color Dreams says it has developed a legal way of circumventing Nintendo's patents and is marketing seven video games that work on the highly popular Nintendo system but are not licensed by the Japanese company.

But the court ruling, part of a complex legal battle between Nintendo and Atari Games, is likely to make toy retailers even more reluctant to carry products that don't display the official Nintendo seal.

"I would be skeptical of carrying [unlicensed Nintendo games] because I wouldn't know about their quality," said Larry Ruffin, owner of Toy Express in Anaheim. "And reading that Nintendo can sue retailers—that would help keep it off the shelves."

But Daniel Lawton, the self-educated computer wizard who founded Color Dreams last year, is undeterred. "We can stand up and say we're legal," he declared, "and we're competing nicely right now." He said Color Dreams games have already "saturated" the video-



Video games produced by Color Dreams will work on the Nintendo system.

game rental marketplace, and that it's only a matter of time until major retailers begin selling them.

The controversy surrounding Nintendo centers on the company's determination to control the production and distribution of the individual game cartridges that play on the Nintendo Entertainment System machine. Nintendo says such control is necessary to prevent the shoddy quality and overproduction that virtually destroyed the computer-game business in the early 1980s.

To ensure that games are produced only by Nintendo-licensed software developers—who must pass rigorous quality-control tests, accept strict limits on the number of games that they can produce and agree to let Nintendo manufacture the cartridges—Nintendo

has developed a patented security system.

The patents are for a pair of microprocessors—one in the game-playing machine and one in the cartridge—that exchange special numerical routines when the cartridge is inserted. If the cartridge doesn't have the patented chip, the game won't function.

Nintendo sued Atari Games early last year for violating the patent on this so-called "lock-out chip" and another patent on the design of the cartridge, and Atari sued Nintendo for patent infringement and monopolistic trade practices. The case is not scheduled to go to trial until next year in U.S. District Court in San Francisco.

On Wednesday, a federal appeals court has ruled in favor of Nintendo. Please see COLOR DREAMS, D6

# COLOR DREAMS: Firm Claims It Can Compete

Continued from D5

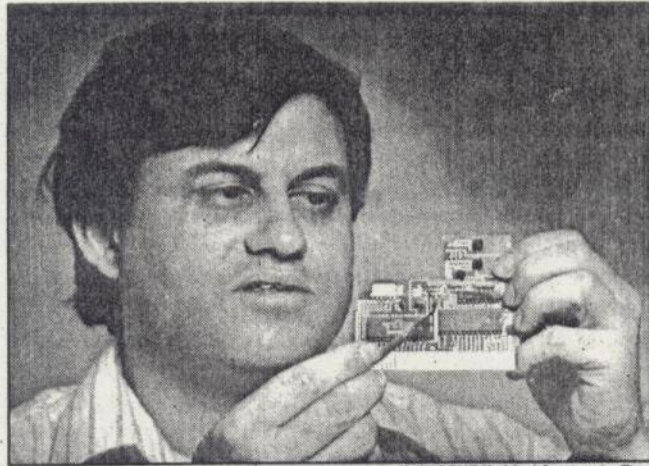
court in Washington overturned a district court ruling that prevented either party from suing retailers who carried the games.

Color Dreams, however, says it has developed a way to circumvent the lock-out device without violating the Nintendo patent. Lawton won't say exactly how it's done since his technique is not yet patented, but he cites the fact that Nintendo has not yet sued as evidence that the system is not considered a violation.

John Kirby, an attorney for Nintendo, said the company is still analyzing the Color Dreams cartridges to determine what action to take. He noted that Nintendo was "very careful about protecting trademark rights" as well as patent rights.

A patent attorney familiar with the situation, who asked not to be identified, said it appeared that the Color Dreams games did not infringe the Nintendo patents, and that Color Dreams could avoid trademark problems by using the Nintendo name carefully. But retailers "won't take the risk with unlicensed games until there is a large body of stuff out there," said the attorney, who is not involved with either party.

Lawton said that major retailers have rejected the Color Dreams games despite incentives offered by the Brea firm, and he suspects Nintendo of pressuring the stores not to sell his products.



KARI RENE HALL / Los Angeles Times

Lawton points out a key circuit board element that he says allows his cartridges to be sold legally for use with Nintendo's game unit.

"We've offered them at significantly lower prices; we've offered guaranteed returns; we've offered to make special games just for them," he said. "But the retailers are afraid they won't get their full Christmas shipment" of games from Nintendo. Nintendo denies engaging in unfair marketing practices.

Color Dreams, though, believes that its products will soon be irresistible. The company is planning a new "super-cartridge" using a microprocessor that it claims

will provide much better graphics and sound than other games on the market. The company, which now employs about 50 people and also uses independent software engineers, has a liberal licensing policy to encourage quality games from outside developers; it now has two licensees.

Color Dreams also offers to produce customer-specific games that a store or any other company could use as a promotional device.

And Lawton also believes that Color Dreams' U.S. identity will

help. He said Nintendo's Japanese roots are reflected in the theme used in its games, and that an American firm can do a much better job of creating entertainment for the American market.

"They don't begin to understand how to make something that Americans will think is funny," Lawton said. And he hopes that just a little bit of patriotism—Color Dreams games are developed and manufactured in the United States—might help too.

Lawton said he expects at least four more companies to soon begin marketing unlicensed Nintendo games using other methods of getting around the patents, but he is not worried about them either. "We worked 16 hours a day for a year to get this thing up and running," he said. "I wish there were more."

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