

THE RETRO UNIVERSE ZINE

ISSUE 5

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05/19/20

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1 PREFACE

The zine has been reborn! I don't have much to say this time for a preface, but other than that I'm happy to see it get a second chance. Hoping you guys will like the thought put into it.

2 Game Station

2.1 Streets of Rage 3

2.1.1 Intro

With the release of Streets of Rage 4, the SoR series has been projected back into the limelight. I personally haven't played SoR 4 yet, but am looking forward to giving it a go.

Now, what is SoR 3 all about? That depends on the region of the game you're playing it in. I don't feel the need to denote these differences, however, because you can find that information elsewhere very easily. Suffice to say, Mr. X is up to his shenigans again, and it's up to your squad to once again put him behind bars.

In the American release, the difficulty was cranked up significantly. Because of this, I was never able to beat it, compared to SoR 2, which I consider to have a fairer difficulty.

2.1.2 Music

The music is amazing in this one yet again, all thanks to the mighty Yuzo Koshiro! There's not much more to say, other than it has a different style compared to SoR2. The style has more a techno edge, compared to SoR2, which was more electro-funk. There's still some similarities between the 2, but overall not too much really.

2.1.3 Gameplay

This release is really rockin' with all the various weapons you can get, and the gameplay enhancements such as rolling, new super move activation and much more! I wish that had been in SoR2.

2.1.4 Final Thoughts

I've decided to do a new ratings system, this time it's based on the American school grading system. So from A-F. With A being the best, with F being the worst.

With that said, here we go!

Grade: B-

[Link: Streets of Rage 3 OST](#)

3 Retro System Oddities

3.1 Nintendo 64 DD(Disk Drive)

3.1.1 Intro

This system add-on came out only in Japan. It was deemed not viable enough to make it to American shores or internationally. Nevertheless, the games on it were rather cool, well, some of them at least. Today we'll be covering just one, F-Zero X DD.

So, lets get onto what the 64DD could do. It used disks similar to PC zip disks in order to store more data than what the carts could hold. Interesting concept, but sadly it came too late, because a year later the GameCube and Gameboy Advance came out. It feels similar to what happened to Sega's add-on for the Genesis, the 32X.

3.1.2 F-Zero X DD(Expansion Kit)

With the F-Zero X Expansion Kit, you could create your own courses and cars. There was also the fact that it added new tracks and new music. Very cool stuff that sadly showed what the F-Zero could really be capable of before Nintendo decided to retire the series.

I've seen someone on Twitch play the Expansion Kit, and it was amazing. Finding a real Disk Drive for your real hardware N64 is out of the reach for the majority of people, though. He said that to get the DD, it cost him \$1200 CAD(Canadian Dollars). That's an unbelievable amount. I don't know the current status of 64DD emulation, but I hope that it will be possible soon to play it, because everyone needs the chance to experience it.

3.1.3 Final Thoughts

This add-on was ahead of time in many ways, as were many add-ons of a similar nature. Basically, the idea of add-ons similar to these was to turn your console into a PC in a way, but still make it easy to access. In fact, I feel that's still a dream that hasn't been fulfilled yet.

[Link: F-Zero X Expansion Kit YouTube video](#)

4 Musically Enhanced

4.1 Tetris Effect Soundtrack

4.1.1 Quick Review

Tetris has always had neat music, starting with the Gameboy version. Usually the music has been Soviet sounding, however. With more recent releases, such as Tetris DS for the Nintendo DS, Tetris music really started to branch out.

The newest Tetris entry, Tetris Effect, is by none other than the creator of Lumines for the PSP. Lumines is another sort of puzzle game involving blocks, but in this case, the beat is very important to the gameplay. The same is true in Tetris Effect. As for the music, it's a very eclectic mix that sound vaguely trance-ish. It's awesome.

They recently released the vinyl edition of Tetris Effect, which is what I got, but it also came with a download code for Bandcamp. I heartily recommend this soundtrack as it's got so many great tunes.

[Link: Tetris Effect Soundtrack](#)

5 DOS Game Corner

5.1 Stellar 7

5.1.1 Intro

Stellar 7, a fun game from my childhood. It was more than that, however, because it was one of the first games I ever played on PC. The gameplay is similar to Battlezone in many respects, but it actually has a story. I played the floppy version, so I didn't get to experience any of the cool music from the CD version which came later.

5.1.2 Story

Apparently, while there is a story, it doesn't amount to much really. There is the evil Gir Draxon, and he wants to take over the galaxy. It's up to you and your special hover tank to take him on. So yeah, not much more of a story than say, Gadius.

5.1.3 Gameplay

This is where the game really shines. How it improves on the base Battlezone gameplay is that you have a health meter and access to limited use special weapons and abilities. You also have limited continues. There's also a variety of enemies and even bosses.

5.1.4 Overall

I would give this game a thumbs-up. It was later followed by a sequel called Nova 9, which tried to up the ante a bit. If you can find these games, give them a try. They were made by Dynamix, which at the time was part of Sierra. Sierra, quite obviously, was known for adventure games like King's Quest, Space Quest and so on.

[Link: Stellar 7 YouTube video](#)

6 OS Room

6.1 FreeDOS

6.1.1 Quick Review

If you need something with more compatibility than DosBox, then I say give FreeDOS a try. You can also install Windows 3.1 on it and it will still run just fine. If you don't use Linux, you won't have access to Wine, which makes it easy to run even 16-bit Win 3.1 applications. In any case, I would recommend you try out FreeDOS in a virtual machine just once, setup an FTP server on it, and send your favorite DOS games to it and see how they run compared to DosBox.

[Link: FreeDOS site](#)

7 Contact

If you enjoyed this issue or have any questions, comments or whatever, send them to mhj@sdf.org. Thanks!
