

The Official

NEO GEO

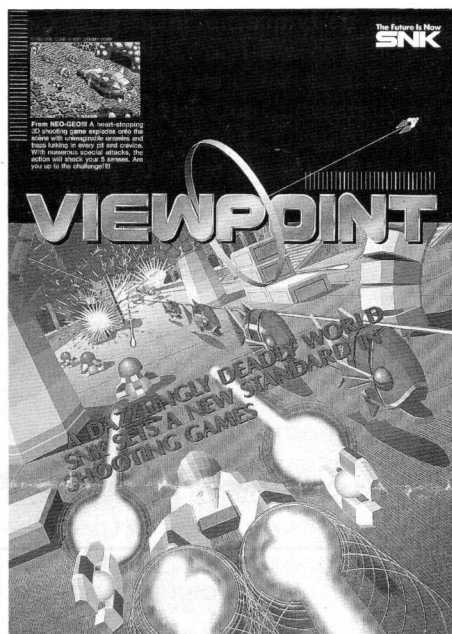


Newsletter

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Viewpoint



The Neo Geo has established a lead in quantity and quality of its game titles, a lead that makes owners of other cartridge system go green with envy. The launch of VIEWPOINT will turn that green to red as they fume with jealousy over one of the best Shoot-em-up titles to be released in the arcades, let alone on a games cartridge machine.

Those that played this game in the arcades heralded the experience as one they will not forget, the game was tailor made for the Neo Geo machine, with impressive music and sound-effects that gather a crowd when ever you play it. The hope that this game would reach the European Neo Geo Community was in doubt until DGM Ltd. intervened to exclusively arrange the sale of this 'all time great' in cartridge history. The

product uses 74 megabyte of the cartridges memory, and offers a big punch to fans of great action games.

The only way to make a comparison of Viewpoint, compared to other arcade smashes is to imagine the making of an arcade game 'cocktail'. First you would have to add a little 'Zaxxon' - a famous game of the early days in video arcades, that used an isometric 3D style of presentation that gave the game more depth, and the player more control of his craft. Next comes a dash of 'R-Type' - a mega popular shoot-em-up, of the late 80's, the game used the unique feature of a firing boost that allowed player to hold down the fire button to increase the effectiveness of his weapons, as well as great collectable weapons.

The last bits to add to the Viewpoint 'cocktail', would be a splash of 'Last Resort' - a great Neo Geo shoot-em-up which had great background levels, and lots of hard end level opponents. Once viewed as the best Shoot-em-up on the machine, the crown has just been stolen by Viewpoint, and the standard of Neo Geo graphics pushed right to the top.

The player starts the game with a standard space craft which is equipped with a laser weapon, which has the unique ability of getting a major boost if the button is held, using the 'wave' feature. The ship is agile and responsive to the players demands. The player starts the game with three smart Bombs, of differing destructive effects able to clear a screen if things get too hot. As the player navigates through each level he will be able to collect bonus items which first added extra laser guns to each side of his ship, others increase the fire power and the effectiveness of the smart bombs.

The different bombs are never enough to wipe-out all your worries when the screen gets too crowded with enemy missiles

and ships. Each Smart Bomb has a different effect, with some acting like a wall of fire destroying all in its path, or other that act like millions of missiles flying to targets on screen. The player will have to venture further into the game to find other variations that offer better and better fire-power to aid his progress.

The games levels are the real stars of the product with a selection of enemy craft and obstructions that are colourful and very dangerous. The playability succeeds because of the use of interactive, and unique obstructions, such as gates that block the players progress. The turnstiles have to be shot to slide out of the way. There are even enemy that roll or slide towards the player, in the early stages, set in a metal world gone mad.

Other levels offer strange fish opponents, and end level guardians to be defeated that resemble mechanical crabs or giant bug aliens. Like most shoot-em-up each of these monsters has a weak spot, represented by a blue heart which if the player shoots a number of times the monster explodes. The Memory Card will be a real must with this game, allowing the player to come back again, and again to try and complete difficult levels.

Most of the fun playing this game is to make it to the next level, but also seeing the different backgrounds, and pitting your wits against larger and more complicated opponents, is still a big thrill.

VIEWPOINT is a must to play!

By Fred Bolitho
Master Blaster

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RRP: £225.00

Fatal Fury 2



It is very easy to look at Fatal Fury 2 as another in a long line of Beat-em-up titles to come from SNK. But do not be mistaken. This is a monster of a product and has such a depth of playability and astounding effects/music that all owners of other cartridge systems will be wishing that they had a Neo Geo with this game installed.

Heralded by many who played the game in the arcades, as the successor to Street Fighter 2, Fatal Fury 2 is a strong beat-em-up with explosive gameplay and a details of graphics that makes it feel like an interactive film, rather than a cartridge game.

On powering up the cartridge the polish of the attract mode and the excellent music hits you. The Player now has the selection of eight fighting hero's, able to select to battle the rest. All have hidden 'Power Blows' that enable them to beat the opposition, as well as special characteristics that make them unstoppable in the right hands.

The storyline is simple. Wolfgang Krauser has thrown down the gauntlet to bring the worlds best fighters back into the ring for the major battle to become world champion. An extra bonus is that the whole conflict will be broadcast, live, at the Pau-Pau Cafe in Southtown. In this 'Sultan of Slugs Battle Royal', the player takes part after selecting his hero in three falls match, the best of two winning the fight.

All four buttons of the Neo Geo controller are used in this game, one of the few that actually pushes the whole system to its limits to achieve the various combination of moves available. Just by moving the joystick the player can complete jumps, and strong punches and kicks. This does not include the 'Power Blows' Feature which will require skill in performing set joystick and button patterns to activate player character features.

A quick profile of the characters-Terry Bogard, and Andy Bogard, are the two brothers from the original game. This time they have extra features including Power Wave, Crack Shot, Sonic Split, and Dragon Blast, making their fighting skills second to none. Joe Higashi is the last of the old characters given a second chance in this game, and as Kick Boxing king he is able to use his Tiger Kick, and TNT Punch to best effects in the game.

New characters include big Bear -Wrestling Maniac, Jubei Yamada Martial arts master, Chin Shin Zan-Junk food Addict, Kim Kap Hwan - Kwando Champion, and Mai Shiranui - Knock out Ninja. The special power Blows that each of these characters have are fabulous, having three special moves each and making them super powerful in combat. The instruction booklet is a must to read before playing the game, though I found it hard to keep my hands off the cartridge while reading the important 'Fundamental Player Movements' list.

The 3D movement option in the game blasts Fatal Fury 2 into a new dimension of gaming allowing players to jump from foreground to background to avoid enemy attacks or special power blow effects. Other great features include Super Power Attack boosting the abilities of the players character, and the Teaser which means that in two player action characters can 'raz' your opponent into attack.

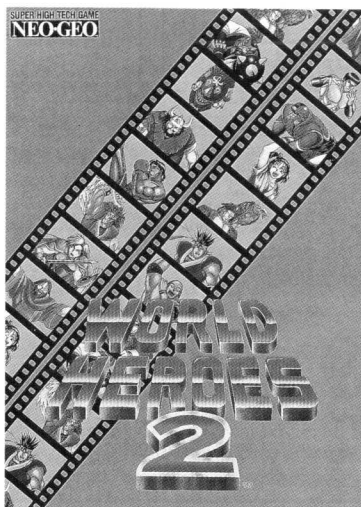
The game architecture is standard to most Neo Geo game carts. The player is able to manipulate the game level Settings. The player can select Easy Mode -to practise moves, Normal Mode- to polish skills and master Power Blows, Hard Mode -to test your mettle in the final arena, and MVS Mode -to practise for your return to the arcades, enjoying arcade action at home.

The memory card feature is a great bonus, allowing players to be stored, and level action to be returned to even after the machine has been switched off. More than twice during the review of the cart did I have to leave the machine and have a rest from the non stop action. The different levels also includes a Bonus Stage at selected parts of the action, allowing the player to acquire more points and show off the characters moves, breaking blocks against the clock.

The music in the game is the best so far in a Neo Geo game, and the end battle against Krauser is a lavish affair with a full orchestra playing while the Final Battle takes place. The moving landscapes are also major pieces of work and catch to the eye as well as interacting with the combat action, making this a hard hitting game!

By Fred Bolitho
Master Blaster

World Heroes 2



The Neo Geo is really cooking when it comes to fighting games in this issue of Newsletter, with reviews of two of the best beat-em-up products available. World Heroes 2 takes the action one step further with the addition of more thrills per minute in this 146 Megs cart.

The game now includes 6 new characters for the player to select and master, with each having special moves that blast them into new areas of combat. The game is unlike most of the other fighting carts available, with the player able to select the mode in which he is to fight the enemy.

At the beginning of the game in the Selection Mode, after picking the skill level, the player selects whether he wants to play in Normal Mode or Death Match Mode. The first offers a standard three round, two win confrontation, but the DeathMatch Mode allows the player to play in a one fall, timed match. This new feature is great and allows you to stick with your favourite character, even if he cannot defeat the enemy in the normal mode, he can jump into the second, and whittle down his opponent's defences.

The Death Match Mode has a seesaw gauge which slides back and forth depending on the number of hit sustained during the match, the highest number of blows losing the match. This new addition means that the game has twice the levels, and even after finishing, the player can still go round again and attempt to beat all the enemy on the normal Mode or DeathMatch.

This new feature includes a referee that calls the action, and the player, after being knocked down, can use some quick joystick wiggling to get this character back on his feet to start the attack again. It will take some real skill to get back up after the third knock down in the Death Match game!

The game now jumps the player back and forth through history, to fight against some of the great warriors of the worlds past, these include, Janne - French Sword Swing Chick from 1431, J. Carn - Heroic leader of the Mongolian Marauding Hordes from 1198, Rasputin - Messenger of love and eternal bliss from Russia in 1914, Captain Kidd - Rebel of three-fourth of the worlds surface, and many more.

Each of the 14 different characters have their own Power Strike, that allows them to defeat the enemy with a special animated sequence applicable to the characters personality. These Power Strikes come in three forms and allow the player to practise different effects to succeed in the game.

The Power Strikes are great animated sequences that include Dragon Wave - a magical dragon wrapping itself round the character Hanzou knocking down anything in range, The hundred Blows - a stream of devastating punches from Kim Dragon destroying the opponent, Mongolian dynamite - a exploding wave from J. Carn knocking off anything in its path, and the Thunder-spark - 10,000 volt shock from Brocken eliminating any competition.

One of the best feature of the game are the animated backgrounds, with little features of detail that take place while the player is battling his opponent. These include singing monks, running cats, brawling sailors, rumbling tanks, and screaming crowds. The sound effects are great and the whole action is well presented, being as much fun in one player mode as in two.

The game does not end with the vanquish of the 14 opponents available but moves to a final battle which includes a shape changing opponent able to form himself into the rest of the different heroes. This allows the player to not battle one enemy but two or three at the same time. The last levels of the game are worth the wait and make this one of the most engrossing Neo Geo fight games available, just for the fun and the different opponents.

The ability to save the last level played is essential, as the game is very hard to play, and will keep the owner very busy for a long time, while he attempts to master all of the different moves on all of the different characters. The player using the Memory Card can save the last achieved score, player, and level and come back to the action at a later date.

Some special cheat features were found while reviewing the cart for the Neo Geo Newsletter, and it is hoped in later issues to print them to allow the players to achieve higher scores, and progress past tricky opponents.

By Fred Bolitho
Master Blaster

Samurai Shodown



From SNK's 100 Mega Shock Series: "The Mother of all Fighting Games!". This is no ideal boost by SNK, for soon to burst onto the market is a game that takes the current style of fighting games and turns them on their head.

Samurai Shodown, is a mixture of the best features out of the current crop of beat-em-ups, all the features that you, the players, have liked the best, and wanted to see again, in a new product, which has large colourful action, and lots of opponents, and skills to learn.

The player will be able to choose from 12 different warriors of wonder, each with special tactics and weapons. The different player char-

acters will use not only weapons but, explosives, and their animal friends.

All the action takes place in medieval Japan as these Samurai, Ninja, and Warriors Knights fight their way towards the showdown with the malevolent 'Satan's Shogun'. The player will have the ability to get right into the centre of the action, and chop, cut, blast, and bites his way to win each battle, with a never ending selection of opponents.

Samurai Shodown will allow the Neo Geo to blow away the competition one more time, and prove that this machine is the only machine for great Beat-em-Up action that is really hot, the new 'Katan-Action Game' is coming!

Memory Card

Thanks for the Memory.

We all should have one, but do we use it properly, and can it be doing more for us? A short report on the exclusive Neo Geo Memory Card and some hidden facts.

The current Neo Geo Memory Card, is one of the many features of this Mega gaming system which makes the machine stand out from the rest. The ability to store information during a game has proven to be a great aid in playing many of the current carts available, which would otherwise be a real mountain to complete.

The history of the Card is an interesting one. The Neo Geo MVS machine, (the arcade big brother), in Japan and America has an interface for these cards, and in these markets player play on these machines saving scores, and level progression. At the end of the day they can then rent the Home Neo Geo system, and the game they were playing, and continue at home thanks to the Memory Card (this is one reason that most carts have a MVS skill level mimicking the arcade machine).

Sadly, most of the Neo Geo games in the arcade in England, are not on MVS systems, but converted onto PCB, (Printed Circuit Board), upright arcade cabinets which have no Memory Card slots. But there are a small numbers of

MVS machines manufactured by Electrocoin Automatics Ltd, in some of the larger venues in England. It pays to keep your eyes open when in a arcade, and to keep your card on you.

When using your Memory Card with your Neo Geo machine, it is important to make sure that the card is slotted in correctly, do not force the card in, but insert the card carefully, and make sure that the interface is seated properly. There are 68 pins to connect with the card and all are vital to the correct saving of game information.

The Machine, with a installed card is now able to save cartridge information, and the feature for retrieving or saving information will be displayed at the beginning or end of a game. Information stored on the card consists of the last character in play, score, and location, or level achieved. When the card is activated at the beginning of a game the player can continue where he left off, able to progress further in a game than by the normal means of using the continue option a set number of times (some Neo Geo games automatically save information to the card but most have a Yes, No selection).

Many rival cartridge systems are envious of the 2K Ram Memory Card used on the Neo Geo, as it is a help device that they can not easily add to their machines, and the only similar device available for their system is the 'Game Genius' manufactured by a British games company. The Memory Cards

great memory capacity allows for five different cart scores to be saved on the same device, allowing for multiple gaming and quick level advancement.

A common pastime between friends and Neo Geo owners, is the swapping of information from one card to another. If a player has achieved level six on World Heroes and want his mates to try their hand at it, they will usually gather round one machine and swap the information on that level to play back on their own machines.

One important point that has to be remembered with a new Neo Geo Memory Card is to format it. All new cards need to be formatted to allow the data to be correctly stored within the memory space of the card. To achieve this the player must first set up his Neo Geo with any game cart and a memory card correctly installed. Then press all four buttons on the joystick, then press the Neo Geo reset button.

The Data screen will appear, allowing the player to choose the card format command with the joystick, and then press a button to format. An important note is that all information stored on a Neo Geo card will be erase when formatting, the same as saving new data on the card from the same game, will erase previous stored information.

Remember to look after your Neo Geo Memory Card, following all the care instructions, and you should have a long and happy life together.

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