

# YESTERDAY'S GAMER



## Shadow Of The Colossus

Taking a stroll down memory lane with the Colossi.

**Mega Drive, today.**

The best games for the system, for the modern gamer.

**Plus:** Pokémon Snap, Kid Dracula, DonPachi, Tekken 3, Raiden III, Ms Pac Man, God of War, Metal Slug, Gomola Speed, Earthworm Jim 64 and so much more.



# Welcome to Yesterday's Gamer.

This magazine started in a vain attempt to have something physical to show for an ageing video game website. Back then games such as Silent Hill 2 and God of War were still some of the generations finest, and some of my most viewed reviews. If I'd of known when I started to plan out this magazine that so many of the games were to get HD releases; I *probably* would have not chosen most of them.

The video game industry is changing, downloads are now commonplace, and physical media for many is just nuisance, but to keep with the old I had to have this magazine printed. I am one of those whom can not buy a game without the box, and in some ways I feel the same about Yesterday's Gamer, it would be contradictory to say this is to be only a digital production, though I hope in time to get this onto digital devices.

This magazine is the first; it's something that's taken more of my time than any other project (bar that of getting the misses into video games) in my life, and it's still very much an amateur production, though that doesn't change it's charge and I hope like me you're happy you waited. There are of course things I'd like to tweak, and some things I'd like to outrightly rip out; but yeah, to the next issue.

For those whom like a limited edition, then be safe in the knowledge that your issue is only available through MagCloud.

There are plans for a next issue, but its direction is completely different (still retro, not so many reviews), and you'll be glad to know I'm not writing it alone, and I'm hiring. I pay in retweets, and free-ish-range chicken eggs.

I hope you enjoy reading this as much as I enjoy seeing it finished.

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# DONPACHI

In the wake of Toaplans bankruptcy, with the sour taste of unjust failure in their mouths an unknown number of Toaplans ex employee's went on to form Cave. Onwards they went on to create some of the best shoot 'em ups to date, and single-handedly rejuvenated the genre.

Released on the Sega Saturn in '96, DonPachi is a vertical shoot 'em up that has gone on to become one of the best known shoot 'em ups in the world. Though it's not the first shoot 'em up for the Saturn, it is the first popular 'bullet hell' title. One which gained a lot of respect and fans due to its acute graphics and its addictive, highly satisfactory 'Get Point Scoring system'.

Unlike most shooters DonPachi's story is more offbeat, and certainly more touching than most. You're journey is only your training, a fresh pilot whos task it is to survive an 8 year long training mission in order to join an elite squadron known as the DonPachi Squadron. The plot thickens however when you learn that during your training you're facing your future comrades, there are attempting to stop you so that only the very best can enter their elite ranks.

The training takes place across 5 different terrains, all of which are some of the most consistent and engaging you're likely to see for a vertical shoot 'em up. The levels house a multitude of fight levels with enemies both on the ground, sea and in air. Visually engaging and highly detailed, so much so that you won't get bored in your second play though, or your two hundredth, neither will you stop noticing new things. The levels are coupled by brilliantly designed enemies of all shapes and sizes, ranging from the smallest humble air planes to screen size Mechs, all of which are pixel perfect.

The enemies never relent, their attack patterns are flawless, and sadly you're up against it from the start, however you're not without your own firepower. You've got a choice of 3 ships, all of which vary slightly in attack. None are deemed inadequate, though it's possible you might be. The player's ship has two modes of fire: by tapping the fire button, shots are fired; holding it down produces a powerful vertical beam, but reduces the ship's speed. A combination of the two attacks will prove most beneficial, if you're to survive. With such a simple 2 button game, it's almost obvious that controls come down to the directional pad, the Sega Saturn's D-pad is one of the best ever created, and therefore you needn't worry about losing any arcade authenticity, or control.

One of the most important parts of DonPachi is its scoring, after understanding how the 'Get Point System' works, you're more than likely to rack up millions. Simply, shoot as much as you can quickly to build up your combo, the higher the combo the more points you're going to get. If you become good, then you're going to want to research the fruitfulness of the game, collecting items and not dying are pretty much the way to go, oh and don't bomb either that'll keep your score up.

The player hit box is one of my bigger qualms with DonPachi, establishing where the hit boxes are on each ship is difficult, and unlike many games they're not clearly defined. Much trial and error would have been needed to find out, but now a quick google search will lead you to the answer. It's also worth knowing that the hit boxes for all 3 ships are in different places, or different shapes, so mastery of one ship isn't going to carry over easily.

As you progress through each of the five levels you'll eventually meet the level bosses, which aren't easy. Each one progressively gets harder, and after level 2 each one demands dedication to master. In design they're not without their beauty; their designs are fantastic and until their younger brethren were born these were some of the most impressive enemies around, albeit in a similar style to old Toaplan games.

Whilst playing it's impossible to not notice the sound, it's crisp, clear and motivating. Classical war music to demolish high scores to, with the occasional input of the captain, spurring you on. Bullet collision sounds are also perfect, even up against all the other explosions you can still hear each individual bullet shot, and boom.

A game so brilliant isn't without its faults; DonPachi is on the short side, with everything that makes a brilliant shooter there, its sad to see it over so quickly. The game loops, (you play the first 5 levels again) but is much harder the second time round with only being able to find reward in finally being greeted by a revered boss.

DonPachi is brilliant, though it's not a great choice for any genre newcomer. Many people recommend DonPachi and of course I can see why, but for the beginner I just feel they may get overwhelmed by the sheer amount of enemies, and bullets.

Though on the short side its replayability has not faltered, I go back to DonPachi often for a quick high score run regularly. Many reasons lead me to keep going back to this, it's a similar feeling as of that I have for Metal Slug, yes there are better Metal Slugs, but I still keep playing the first, I'm sure many of you know what I mean.

Not the forefather of bullet hell that people speak of (Batsugun, I'll give you your credit here), but it's revered to as one of the first, and at the very least it set a standard that every bullet hell game after it should adhere to. A well balanced and replayable shoot 'em up; it is as good today as it was 15 years ago. Sharp, relentless and a challenge to finish. It's got one of the lowest import price points of any shoot 'em up; just go buy it, it's essential.



## POKÉMON SNAP

It's 1999 and the Pokémon franchise is at its peak, with Pokémon Gold, Silver, Pinball and Stadium getting overly hyped and publicised '99 releases; Snap, the hidden half-brother was somewhat pushed to the side. Now, having sifted through the crap, and finally getting to stumble upon Pokémon Snap it's apparent what a mistake ignoring Snap was.

All the big hitters had been released on the Nintendo prior to Pokémon Snap, only Pokémon Stadium was scheduled to release 2 months later. Understandably some people were put off, or worse still ignored

Pokémon Snap completely. I would say this is their loss, but from a parents point of view, a child can only have so much Pokémon before Christmas.

Pokémon Snap is best described as an On the rails, 3rd and 1st person shooting photograph capture game. Being unique, and featuring those lovable phenomenon that are Pokémon; Snap had that luxury of an already bursting audience. Although aimed primarily at Pokémon fans I wouldn't say that they're Pokémon Snap's only audience. This is where the problem with all Pokémon games comes into

play, Pokémon is not just for children. Pokémon Snap at its core has some key gameplay that plays right into the hunter gatherer in all of us.

In true Pokémon style, you're tasked by professor Oak to go to a and capture some Pokémon, this time though you're on a new island and now you've not got PokéBalls, but rocks, apples and a digital camera to photo document the Island. This island houses 7 levels, all of which can only be unlocked by getting enough Pokémon captured on film via the previous, which in return Professor Oak rewards you points

based on the picture quality. How Professor Oak grades your photos is arguable, but you'll learn to accept it. As you progress through you will unlock a few extra unlockables which allow you to get at them Pokémon which would have been unobtainable for you until now. Apples are used as bait, to lure out a Pokémon into a pose, or onto an object; rocks generally just piss Pokémon off, or scare them out of hiding.

Pokémon Snap plays great, the controls are fluid and the game flows exactly how you'd want it too. Albeit a simple game in concept and in build, Pokémon Snap takes you on a little journey, which will no doubt keep you enthralled for the best part of a day. It's impossible to capture every Pokémon on each level on the first run through, and of course having to get enough points and unlockable items will make this game go far further for the inexperienced player. Pokémon Snap also plays on the score system in some great detail, and there will always be the opportunity to improve, or better still go back and replay it, beating your first go. The developers made great use of the controls, though with being unable to walk the developers had a lot more free buttons.

The graphics in Pokémon Snap, are somewhat bulky when compared to other N64 titles, and in parts textures can go a little astray. This is only apparent when you're up close to these objects. From afar the game looks the part, and you'll easily be convinced into thinking the graphics are great - from a 1999 point of view.

Sound doesn't let down Pokémon Snap either, accurate Pokémon sound effects, and a good selection of environmental sounds wind together a true feel of a Pokémon filled world. You won't feel like this game isn't a Pokémon full safari anyway.

Pokémon Snap isn't all great though, the gameplay is somewhat limited. With poor texturing, and the occasional glitch, it's easy to get a little downhearted at what could be argued as a slapped together game. With only 62 Pokémon to capture the game can easily be completed within a morning. Not necessarily easy to complete for a child or inexperienced player - but 90% of Pokémon will be easy to locate, and some skill will show you the rest, or an online guide.

With a lack of Pokémon, and a small amount of levels, I feel slightly robbed. A great concept, which was executed perfectly, just certain parts didn't glue together. 5 more levels, and 151 Pokémon could have easily been manageable - not to mention the extra amount of gameplay that would have added, taking it from a good game, to almost perfect.

# Yesterday's Gamer

Issue One.  
MagCloud Edition.